ABSTRACT

TITLE:	An Analysis of the Development of US Foreign Policy Attitudes Toward Humanitarian Intervention in the Post Cold War Era
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ABSTRACT: In the years leading up to the end of the Cold War, the United States followed along traditional realist notions of foreign policy when considering any actions taken abroad. These realist notions placed U.S. national, security, and economic interests as the priority for any involvement in the international scene. Following the fall of the Soviet Union, a new era of U.S. dominance and leadership came to light, as well as a new global order and new issues facing the world concerning humanitarian concerns. Given this context, new questions have arisen concerning the stances U.S. foreign policy makers have made concerning the intervention of U.S. military and diplomatic forces in cases of severe humanitarian crisis. I hypothesize that since the early 1990's, a shift has occurred from realist principles of foreign relations towards more pluralist and solidarist notions, which claim the relevance of morality as a motivator and key component in humanitarian intervention. The analysis begins with four case studies--U.S. involvement or lack thereof in Somalia (1993), Rwanda (1994), Darfur (2004), and Libya (2011). By doing a qualitative study of the independent variable of policy attitudes, as measured by a rhetorical analysis of presidential and administrative speeches and addresses, as it relates to the outcome variable of actual intervention, as operationalized by boots on the ground, humanitarian aid, and diplomatic action, I am able to see not only how policy attitudes have affected decision-making, but also how those attitudes and actions have shifted in the past 40 years of American foreign policy. In conclusion, my hypothesis is both confirmed and complicated. Though there have been slight shifts in foreign policy attitudes in the Post-Cold War Era, this movement has been small, often case by case, and not linear in any fashion. The most pressing deduction is that the United States does not have a comprehensive or definable foreign policy framework in place—which has implications for the future of its entanglements abroad.