Securing Liberty through Unilateralism

Liberty v. American Exceptionalism
- McDougall: US acts ‘normally’ to preserve domestic liberty

- Treaty of Paris, 1783
  o Does Franklin negotiate a “separate peace” (p.25)?
  o 1778 Franco-American alliance required French consent
  o France and Spain signed separate treaty with GB
  o De-militarization: navy disbanded in 1785

- French Revolution (1789) and European war
  o Hamiltonian/Federalists v. Jeffersonian/Democratic-Republicans
  o Debate over national identity
  o Neutrality Proclamation

- 1793: Britain intercepts US trade with French West Indies
  o Navy re-established in 1794
  o Jay Treaty, 1794

- Quasi-War with France (1798-1800)
  o In 1795: France seizes US ships trading with Britain (under 1778 treaty terms)
  o US establishes Navy Dept.
  o Authorizes seizure of armed French vessels
  o 1800 Treaty of Mortefontaine
- 1803 Louisiana Purchase
  - nearly doubles the size of US
  - secures US trade on Mississippi River
  - grants French and Spanish ships trading rights for 12 years
  - US pays $11.25 million plus other interest

- War of 1812
  - US tries to balance GB against France.
  - 1805: Britain interferes with US trade with France (return to Jay Treaty principles)
  - Nov. 1806: France interferes with US trade with Britain by declaring blockade of British Isles
  - 1807: US embargos **all exports to all countries** but allows imports, effective in 1808
  - March 1809: US bans all US exports to British and French ports; **other trade reopens**
  - 1810: president can re-impose ‘non-intercourse’ on countries that do not allow free ships (May 1810- Feb 1811 trade resumes)
  - Napoleon agrees; so does, Britain, but too late to avert war
  - US and GB settle at 1814 Treaty of Ghent after GB is distracted by on-going war against France
  - 1817: Great Lakes de-militarized

Does idealism or self-conscious exceptionalism influence US foreign policy?

- Why does US use economic methods rather than military ones?
- Why not ally with France?
Why Not “Isolationism”
- US trading actively abroad
- Continued cultural ties to Europe
- Alliance with France from 1778-1800

Why Unilateralism?
- Avoid “garrison state”
- Would be junior partner to more powerful allies
- Prevent foreign influence on domestic politics
- Wars would be fought in Americas

Factors McDougall omits
- Alliances would restrict trade
- No ideal alliance partners