



Zero-Sum World: Politics, Power, and Prosperity After the Crash

Gideon Rachman

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From one of the world's most influential commentators on international affairs, chief foreign affairs columnist for the *Financial Times*, comes a stark warning about a gathering global political crisis.

Successive presidents have welcomed globalization and the rise of China. But with American unemployment stubbornly high and U.S. power facing new challenges, the stage is set for growing rivalry between America and China. The European Union is also ripping itself apart. The win-win logic of globalization is giving way to a zero-sum logic of political and economic struggle.

The new world we now live in, an age of anxiety, is a less prosperous, less stable world, with old ideas overthrown and new ideologies and powers on the rise. Rachman shows how zero-sum logic is thwarting efforts to deal with global problems from Afghanistan to unemployment, climate change to nuclear proliferation.

This timely and important book details why international politics is now more dangerous and volatile—and suggests what can be done to break away from the crippling logic of a zero-sum world.

Zero-Sum World: Politics, Power, and Prosperity After the Crash Details

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!Tæmbu?u says

KOBOBOOKS

Reviewed by The Independent

Herzog says

The author worked for the Economist and, currently, the Financial Times so he is extremely well-informed. He does an excellent job of summarizing recent history beginning with the rebirth of China under Deng Xioping and consistently emphasizing Fukuyama's End of History thesis. The historical review, which takes up over half of the book, is well written but doesn't provide much insight if you're familiar with current events. The final section of the book tries to put more recent events into context and, as a result, was, to me, the book's most interesting section. Since any book that attempts to predict the future is likely to be inaccurate, it was impressive that Rachman cited the democratization of Egypt specifically before it ever happened!

Sam says

I was surprised, as I thought this would be an up to date book, which it is, but not much new, and a lot of waffle.

Simon says

Yeah. The world is pretty much fucked.

Szplug says

As other reviews have noted, Rachman engages in far more journalism than analysis and interpretation, while his conclusion—in the face of all that has been sequentially aggregated and anticipated in the pages before, including that of his postulation that the financial crash of 2008 slipstreamed us back into a *zero-sum* mindset—an *Age of Anxiety* appended to those of *Transformation* (80s) and *Optimism* (90s & 00s up to the Goopy Kablooie)—in regard to nations engirt within a globalized politico-economic environment—is remarkably mundane in its *let's not do anything rash* messaging. Still, Rachman is a pleasant writer, the summation is solid, and his thematic speculation reasonably interesting.

Katherine Collins says

Rachman (of the FT) makes a case here against a zero-sum, protectionist, you win/I lose sort of mindset when it comes to world affairs. It is one of those meta-notions that seems to be deeply seated in our minds (and not just regarding world affairs) – the idea of a fixed pie that we need to fight for, as opposed to a cherry tree that we can nourish together to produce many more pies for all. (Don't worry, Rachman does not use corny gardening analogies like I do).

Iris Wynants says

Rachman presents a clear and truly global overview of the rise of capitalism and globalization. He manages to do this in understandable language but due to the fact that he covers several decades in just under 300 pages some background knowledge is recommended. Though the author is clearly pro capitalism and globalization his opinion doesn't get mingled with the facts. My main criticism would be the lack of nuance. On the other hand it will be hard to find another book this manageable and yet thorough about the recent economic and political history.

Matt says

An interesting look at the last few decades and where things might be heading.

Ashish says

The book provides fantastic historical insight into the economic and geopolitical history of the world. It clearly lists the problems that each country faces. In some cases I even agree with the author's solutions to the problems, but the solutions though logical will mostly be unimplementable in the current political state of world. The only solution that I disagree with is that for the world to prosper America needs to return to its seat of absolute power. I don't mean that America and Americans should suffer continued economic insecurity. But what I would prefer as the ultimate solution is that the most successful democracies should come together to implement and execute the solutions that the global economy so desperately needs

Fredrick Danysh says

A discussion of the economic and political factors of economic globalization whose supporters say is a win-win situation and zero-sum theory whose supporters say is a win-lose situation. The author appears to support a global economy along the lines of theoretical communism where everyone is supposed to benefit when those with more make sacrifices to give to those with less. It was a dry and condescending read to me and I came away with the impression that the author feels that we should be citizens of the world first and Americans last even if it means giving up our national sovereignty.

Marc says

This book well exceeded my expectations. Although the thinking is heavily stooped in the thinking common during the period immediately following the 2008 financial crisis, it includes many valuable insights that have since fallen by the wayside. Enjoy the book, it reads quite fast.

Adam says

Informative if you have ignored the worlds events going on around you for a few years. I agree with the notion of zero sum economics which is explained well here. Author extrapolates that a little further to portray a zero sum quality of life. Interesting but still the book is mostly background information.

Brendan McAuliffe says

This is pretty good. Parts one and two are all review (you could skip part one if you've been awake for the last 30 years)
