Notes on Foreign Policy Logics:
Prescriptions for basic foreign policy strategy and analysis of
US national interest.

1. Hegemonism: this has been the most prominent US foreign policy logic since it became a superpower during WW II. Hegemonism calls for the US to exercise the influence and authority necessary to ensure the ‘effective functioning’ of the international political and economic system. The view is that such leadership will provide the world community with a stable order that is prerequisite for all other good things. The effective functioning of the international system is essential to the national interests of the US. And, the US has sufficient power to provide the necessary leadership---its resources dominate contemporary international relations and is augmented by other countries’ willingness for the US to be the leader. This viewpoint continues to play a significant part in the policy thinking of the foreign policy establishment.

2. Realism: because there is no effective world government, international relations are inherently a competition for the power necessary to guarantee national security. Military power is the essence of national power. Therefore, foreign policy must attend first and foremost to maintaining the balance of power by increasing the country’s military power and preventing adversaries from gaining power. Balancing power involves either militant realism or diplomatic realism strategies. The US has no national interests beyond maintaining the global balance of power. The US has sufficient power to maintain the balance of power but its power is limited and therefore must be focused on that purpose only. The US has no moral obligations to the rest of the world because morality has no place in international relations. US diplomacy has largely conformed to realist principles throughout its history, but the logic has not dominated the way that Americans see their country’s international role. This viewpoint played a significant part in the policy thinking of the GW Bush administration and is a building block of the Obama approach to foreign policy making.

3. Liberalism: the US should seek to expand the realm of freedom in the world by promoting market economies and free trade, democracy, human rights, and national self-determination. This view has been integral to US foreign policy since WW I. Promoting liberty is a moral obligation as well as a means to advance US interests. The logic of liberalism derives directly from classical liberalism and the core thinkers of western capitalism---John Locke, Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson, and John Stuart Mill. This viewpoint is an ingredient in the policy thinking of the Bush and Obama administrations.
4. **Liberal Internationalism**: the essence of this strategy is *cooperative multilateralism*—i.e. the US should join others in devising common policy for solving shared problems. Its rationale is based on the view that national security no longer is primarily a military matter but includes protecting the US from dangerous side effects of interdependence such as global pandemics and pollution, reducing the level of world armaments, and accelerating economic growth in poor countries. Because the most important issues are global, their solution requires extensive international collaboration. International institutions have become increasingly competent and important. The traditional agenda of military power and security has less and less importance. The US has a legitimate leadership role but it must be leadership without dominance. The US has a moral obligation to contribute substantially to solving global problems. In the end, the national interest depends on the common interest. The logic of liberal internationalism has played a sporadic role in shaping US foreign policy. Because it downplays the traditional agendas of security issues it represents an alternative strategic perspective on the means and ends of foreign policy.

5. **Radical Anti-Imperialism**: this view does not prescribe what the US should do in the world so much as it prescribes what is should stop doing: manipulating international relations and intervening in the internal affairs of other countries in order to maintain an empire that exploits the world’s poor for the benefit of economic elites—i.e. this view indict US foreign policy for being imperialistic. It contends that the US, for at least a century, has engaged in a program of expanding domination over other countries in order to exploit them. The American empire has served economic and political purposes and has been created and maintained by intervention using economic, political, cultural, and military means. The empire abroad is a necessary condition for the preservation of capitalism at home. The empire serves not the national interests of the US but the class interests of an increasingly global capitalist elite. The empire is morally reprehensible. This view is espoused by critical analysts including Noam Chomsky and Chalmers Johnson.

**Consult these 3rd Week readings for GW Bush impact on US doctrines:**

Nicholas Lemann, *The Next World Order*
Charles Krauthammer, *Democratic Realism*