Discussion #2: The Bush Doctrine---Building a New Consensus?

What? Please complete a review for reading #1, Lemann, The War on What? and reading #2, Krauthammer, Democratic Realism.

How? Use the form and space suggested below. Add a page if you need it. Write concisely and legibly.

When? Due at the beginning of class, Thursday, April 20 (10 points)

Preface: The Bush administration’s response to 9-11 was to articulate a new foreign policy grand strategy—a statement of the nation’s foreign policy goals and the means and methods for pursuing them. Lemann (writer for the left-liberal New Yorker magazine) summarizes the ideas, players, and events that went into the new grand strategy circa: 2002. Krauthammer (a prominent conservative columnist for the Washington Post and ally of the Bush foreign policy) updates and makes a case for the Bush approach to the world and its definition of the national interest circa: 2004. The remaining readings for this week elaborate on the development of the Bush Doctrine. The most useful of these sources is #4. The West Point Speech (#3) is generally regarded as the President’s most direct statement of his administration’s thinking and intentions. The National Security Strategy (NSS), the official expression of the grand strategy may be found at #7. The video, The War Behind Closed Doors, documents the process within the Bush circle of foreign policy advisors by which a grand strategy was developed. This grand strategy explains the logic of the US aggression in Iraq circa: 2003-2007.

1. Focus on Lemann’s article and briefly summarize two points: 1) the general differences in viewpoints and strategies of hawks and realists; and 2) the specific analyses of the problem of terrorism and what to do about it. Which voices here seem most influential? Which voices seem most sensible to you?
2. Focusing on Krauthammer’s article, briefly summarize the author’s description of the (post-Cold War) unipolar world. Then briefly discuss his answer to his question, “what do we do?” by summarizing his list of the options and his preference.

3. Briefly comment on these two readings. What is the bottom line in Lemann? In Krauthammer? What questions are you left with?

4. Make note of any words or concepts that caused you problems or seem particularly central to this reading.