

**Study Questions: Fred Kaplan, *Daydream Believers*, Chapters 4-6**

1. How did Bush speechwriter Michael Gerson's views on foreign policy differ from those Condoleezza Rice expressed in *Foreign Affairs* just prior to the 2000 presidential election? (pp. 116-121) Before 9/11, whose views did Bush adopt?
2. Why were Bush's neo-conservative foreign policy advisors able to exert more influence within the administration after the 9/11 attacks?
3. What were the basic arguments of Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky regarding the importance of spreading democracy? How did Sharansky's views shape President Bush's foreign policy statements?
4. According to Kaplan, what were some of the weaknesses of Sharansky's arguments? Why didn't they accord well with past history or seem applicable in the post-9/11 Middle East? Why did Arab leaders resent Bush's calls for reform and democracy?
5. Sharansky and others pointed out that Reagan and Gorbachev had worked together to end the authoritarian system in the USSR and that the same could be done in the Middle East. Why does Kaplan believe that the comparison is a false one?
6. What factors contributed to Condoleezza Rice's "conversion" from Realism to Bush's "freedom agenda"?
7. What were some of the key mistakes the United States made in the early days of the Iraq occupation that led to the subsequent violent insurgency?
8. According to Kaplan, why do critics who blame Donald Rumsfeld for miscalculating how many troops would be needed to stabilize Iraq after the war miss the point? What was Rumsfeld's agenda for Iraq? Why was his agenda unrealistic?
9. Who was Ahmad Chalabi? Why did officials in the Pentagon "want" to believe in him while others saw him as a "used-car salesman" (p. 155)?
10. Kaplan concludes (p. 159): "As Bush's second term began, the problem wasn't that he and Rumsfeld had won the war [in Iraq] but not the peace; it was that they had not yet won the war, in part because they hadn't understood the war or what they needed to do to win it." What does he mean by this statement and what evidence does he cite to support it?

11. President Bush equated the holding of free elections with “democracy.” Why does Kaplan argue that the two were not synonymous? How could free elections actually undermine the development of democracy?
12. Why did many Arab leaders not take seriously (and, privately, denounce as hypocritical) Bush’s calls for democratic reform?
13. In Kaplan’s view, why was the Bush administration’s decision to “go it alone” after 9/11 a missed opportunity?
14. How does Kaplan explain the anti-Americanism that flared after the beginning of the Iraq war? Why, in his view, have U.S. attempts to combat it met with little success?
15. Why does Kaplan believe that the Bush administration’s attempt to advance democracy around the world ended up weakening the United States?
16. Bush compared his policies after 9/11 to those of President Truman, who had laid down the enduring strategy for fighting (and ultimately winning) the Cold War. Why does Kaplan believe the comparison is not accurate?
17. Why does Kaplan believe Bush’s ideas about freedom violate historical reality and even common sense?
18. What alternative guiding principles for foreign policy does Kaplan offer? How do these principles differ from those of the neoconservatives, realists, and “fantasists” of the Bush administration?