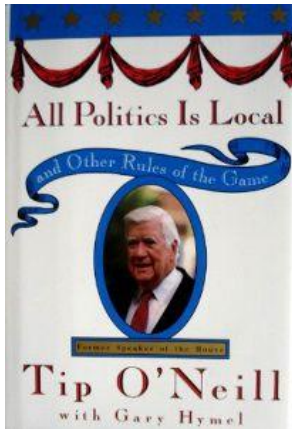


AP U.S. Government and Politics Summer Assignment

In preparation for the AP U.S. Government and Politics course, you will need to purchase and read Tip O'Neill's book *All Politics is Local*. There are a couple of different editions of the book. It does not matter which one you obtain. Just be sure to not accidentally purchase his autobiography, *Man of the House*. Local libraries have this book, you may find a used copy on Amazon for under \$5, and, of course, you may purchase a new copy if you wish to do so.



Tip O'Neill was a Democrat from Boston, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for over 40 years and served as Speaker of the House, one of the most important positions in all of American government, for 10 consecutive years (1977-1987). Even though the book was published during President Clinton's first administration in the early 1990's, it contains a wealth of information and remains a great introductory text for individuals new to the study of American politics. The book is written in a very easy to digest style... it is a collection one-line "rules of the game" followed by short stories (no more than three pages) from O'Neill's own storied career that illustrate, with great humor and insight, how American politics works. The stories are divided into seven different thematic sections of the book.

Your assignment is to select what you believe to be the ten most important rules that he discusses in the book (at least one from each of the seven sections) and write a paragraph (3-5 intelligible sentences) describing why you think that "rule" is important based on your current understanding of American politics, including any questions that are raised as well (there will undoubtedly be many terms and ideas concerning American politics that you do not recognize prior to taking this course). Then, write a final paragraph explaining how reading this book changed the way you think about American government and politics. Be prepared to turn in the written portions of this assignment the first week of class, to discuss what you found thought-provoking in class, and to have any questions answered!

*****It will also greatly benefit you to follow current events over the summer. If your parents get a newspaper every day, make an effort to flip through it a couple of times a week. Or just occasionally turn on one of the numerous 24-hour news networks on television that cover nothing but politics. This is not a requirement, but simply a recommendation that will enhance your ability to engage with the class material and your fellow students. Current events will play a key role in class discussions and greatly enhance your understanding of class material.**

Disclaimer- *Your assigned reading of this book has nothing to do with the fact that O'Neill was a member of the Democratic party and everything to do with his unique experience in American government and politics. If you identify with the Republican party, great... it always helps to read the arguments of the other side so that you can better understand your own positions. If you identify with the Democratic party, great... you get to learn about one of its most influential Democratic leaders of the twentieth century. Chances are that you aren't even really sure which party you identify with, or if you are more of an independent, which is why you cannot vote until you are 18 years old (ref. 26th amendment to the U.S. Constitution). You will be learning about how individuals form their political beliefs, that there are more than two political parties in American politics, and that members of the same party often disagree, as well as much more in this class!*