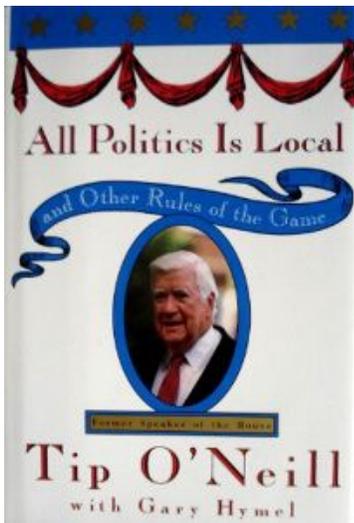


AP U.S. Government and Politics Summer Assignment

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*, of which



the required reading is basically a condensed, easy-to-read version. Local libraries have this book or you may find a used copy on Amazon for under \$5. Of course, you may purchase a new copy if you wish.

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 tool 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. Then, write a final paragraph explaining why reading this book changed how you think about American government and politics. In addition, write down ten questions that arise as you read through the book... there will undoubtedly be many terms and ideas concerning American politics that you do not recognize prior to taking this course. Be prepared both to discuss

in class what you have read, to turn in the written portions of the assignment, and to have your questions answered!

**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). You will be learning about how individuals form their political beliefs as well as the fact that there are more than two political parties in American politics in this class.*

It will also greatly benefit you to follow current events over the summer. If your parents get a newspaper every day, read it. Or just occasionally turn on one of the numerous 24-hour news networks on television that cover nothing but politics. This is not required, but will enhance your ability to engage with the class material (in addition to keeping you updated on what is actually going on in the world- current events will be discussed often in this course).