

Dear 2010-2011 Government students,

Congratulations on making it almost to your senior year at Mercy! We are looking forward to having you in our government classes next fall (well-----right now we're not looking forward to it but we will be by August!)

You do have one little task before class starts - the ever-popular summer reading. You will need to read the book Hardball: How Politics is Played by One Who Knows the Game. (New York: Touchstone: 1999)_ by Christopher Matthews.

This book is a first hand account of how politics works in Washington D.C. Mr. Matthews was an aide to Senator Tip O'Neill when he was the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Along the way he learned a lot about how things get accomplished in politics. Each chapter of the book describes a different technique used by politicians to achieve their goals. **You will need to complete the following written assignment as you read the book:** (typed of course)

After you read each chapter do the following: (in separate paragraphs for each chapter with the chapter number and title noted)

- 1) Summarize – **in your own words** - the main technique or strategy discussed.
- 2) Explain - **in your own words** – one specific example that Mr. Matthews used to show the strategy. Do this for each chapter of the book. (*Do not copy or quote the examples*)

After you have finished the book: For 5 different techniques do the following:

- 3) Research to find newspaper, internet or newsmagazine articles that show the techniques currently being used in politics (either on the local, state or national level). (**within the last year**) Cut out the article/information and paste it on a piece of paper. (Be sure to cite the source of the information) On that paper also discuss - **in your own words** - which strategy it illustrates and your explanation for how the incident reported illustrates the political strategy outlined in the chapter. (*See the sample paper on the second page of this letter*) Do this for 5 of the different techniques. (You will end up with 5 papers)

Turnitin.com: (did you notice how many times we said “in your own words”???)

The day after the assignment is due you will need to use turnitin.com. Please turn in your chapter summaries and examples and your analysis of the current articles. **Do not** turn in the newspaper articles themselves. ***You will need to turn everything in as one document***

This assignment will be due on the second day of class.

So, read and enjoy, and remember that this written assignment will be your first grade of American Government.

You can purchase the book at most bookstores and on Amazon.com. It will cost around \$12-\$14. *Make sure you get the 1999 up-dated edition.* **But don't wait until the last week of summer before you get the book - it might not be available immediately and that will not be an acceptable excuse for not having completed your assignment.**

Have a great summer and start paying attention to political issues.

“US Official Gropes to Explain Clinton's Outburst”

Subject: Part IV: “Reputations” Chapter 12: “The Press Is the Enemy”

The [State Department](#) struggled Tuesday to explain Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's face-off with a Congolese student and suggested that the questioner's nervousness sparked the outburst with the mention of her husband's name. Clinton snapped at the university student in Kinshasa on Monday when he asked what her husband, former President [Bill Clinton](#), and Congo native and former [NBA](#) star [Dikembe Mutombo](#) thought about an international financial matter. Mutombo was appearing with her at the university. "Wait. You want me to tell you what my husband thinks?" Clinton asked in response. "My husband is not the secretary of state; I am. So you ask my opinion, I will tell you my opinion. I'm not going to be channeling my husband." State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said Tuesday that Clinton reacted that way because of the question. "As the question was posed to her, it was posed in a way that said, 'I want to get the views of two men, but not you, the secretary of state,'" Crowley said. The French-speaking student later said he had meant to say President [Barack Obama](#), according to U.S. officials traveling with Clinton. It was unclear whether that meant he misspoke or the translator erred. "Perhaps he was nervous," Crowley said. Asked if Clinton had any regrets about losing her cool, Crowley tried to deflect the question, saying she was not available to get her thoughts. At the time, Clinton was en route between stops during her 10-day tour in Africa, and she did not address the outburst to reporters traveling with her in the Congo. Clinton's trip was overshadowed at the start by her husband's secret diplomatic mission to North Korea, where President Kim Il-Jung turned over two U.S. journalists who had been held after straying across the border.

“US Official Gropes to Explain Clinton's Outburst”

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory?id=8307049>; August 11, 2009

Summary/Analysis:

Hillary Clinton had an outburst at a press conference on Monday in Kinshasa, Africa while on a 10-day tour. A student asked what her husband, former president Bill Clinton, and former NBA star Dikembe Mutombo, who was appearing with her, thought about a certain financial issue. Hillary then reacted uncharacteristically, and had a brief outburst in which she seemed annoyed that the student was asking for her husband's opinion and not her own. The State Department is trying to quell the attention surrounding the outburst, saying Clinton was caught off guard by the way the question was asked. Hillary declined to comment on the situation. As a major public figure, Clinton should have realized that “the press is the enemy” and on a slow news day, anything she says could become headline news. She also should have remembered that in her position, and at such an event, any question is fair, and that her reactions to questions could, as is the case with this story, have the potential to become top news.