

Pre-course reading assignment – Hardball

Due: FirstMonday of the new semester: Currently January 25, 2009

Assignment:

1. After reading Chris Matthews' book, Hardball, update his book by incorporating lessons learned from President Obama's 2009 successes and failures (success and failure from Obama's perspective). Your essay should clearly describe three of the lessons (other than wholesale/retail politics) that Matthews teaches using events of the past year (at least 3 separate and distinct examples) to bring the book up to date. Feel free to use lessons from the 2009 political year that are inconsistent with Matthew's theories as well.
2. On a separate page (epilogue), elaborate which political style (wholesale, retail etc...) you feel is most consistent with your character and personality and relevant examples in your own life to support it. Make sure that you fully understand the difference between wholesale and retail politics. NOTE: Retail politics at a high school does not mean making speeches, having rallies or other national campaign types of strategies.

Your essay should be typed and approximately 3 to 4 typed pages in length (2x spaced, don't 4x space between paragraphs), plus a ½ to ¾ page epilogue. You will be graded on your factual presentation, synthesis of the material, as well as the structure and format of your essay.

Citations are not necessary.

NOTE: In analyzing the lessons of Hardball you need not simply find that every move by President Obama was good or bad. Political analysis should be dispassionate and intended to better understand the process, including what traits tend to help a person and which hurt.