

Summer Assignment 2020

APUSH

- Please read Robert Dahl's *How Democratic is the American Constitution* over the course of the summer (**ISBN-10:** 0300095244 **ISBN-13:** 978-0300095241). This book should essentially force you to ask more questions than provide satisfying answers. Dahl challenges the perceived infallibility of the U.S. Constitution, highlights some of its limits, provides oft-neglected historical context for the "framers," and suggests potential solutions to modernize a document written over 200 years ago. Hopefully, Dahl's examination will challenge you, evoked some reactions to his argument, and help you appreciate the difficulty of examining your own national history that is (like all others) steeped in myth and exceptionalism. You don't have to agree with everything he is saying, but he should evoke some thoughtful disagreement. There is no writing assignment over the summer (it will be assigned in the first week), but be prepared to discuss the book in the first couple of classes.
- As you read, consider Dahl's argument in the context of the modern US political climate, and the current challenges this democracy faces. Spend a little time researching one of the following topics (reading reliable online news articles):
 - COVID-19 pandemic
 - US racial tensions and BLM movement
 - Congressional partisan legislative gridlock
 - Voting Accessibility for 2020 ElectionAs you research one of these areas, consider Dahl's critique of the US political system, and how these issues are affected by the concerns he highlighted.
- Also - please subscribe and listen to an American history/politics podcast of your choice! This is an excellent way to absorb content information that will be invaluable to success in APUSH! You can find many of them on Apple iTunes & Podcasts, and they should be free!