

CALIFORNIA HISTORY, HST 370  
UNIT 3 – POLITICS & POWER IN CALIFORNIA HISTORY  
ESSAY PROMPT

Here are links for a news story that played out in 2008:

“Palm and California Hands Free Law”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2uNIQwPrvHU>

“Palm Supports California Bill Forcing Drivers to Put Phones Down”

<http://www.dailytech.com/Palm+Supports+California+Bill+Forcing+Drivers+to+Put+Phones+Down/article4194.htm>

“Simitian: ‘Hands-free Law Saving Lives’”

<http://www.ibabuzz.com/politics/category/sacramento/california-state-senate/joe-simitian/>

“Hands-free is not Risk Free”

<http://www.nsc.org/learn/NSC-Initiatives/Pages/distracted-driving-hands-free-is-not-risk-free-infographic.aspx>

Screen the video and read the articles. The links have been checked on 3/24/17. They all work. If they don't work for you, cut and paste the link into your browser.

NOTE: Joe Simitian and Mary Doyle have known each other since they were both members of Junior Statesmen of America in the early 1970s.

THE ASSIGNMENT:

Write an essay of around 600 words but no less than 550 and no more than 650 words commenting on the story the materials above have to tell. Base your essay on your understanding of history of how politics has been done and how it has evolved in California since the state ratified its first constitution in 1849. This means that history must be the lens through which you examine this story. You should be sure that most of your essay is about establishing the meaning of that history in relation to the hands-free law.

As you will have only 600 words, you must focus your argument carefully by starting with a well-crafted thesis.

For evidence to support your argument, your response **must** rely on the materials, lectures, and videos we have encountered in this class. Apt use of this evidence will be one of the key hallmarks of an excellent response. **YOUR ARGUMENT MUST RELY ENTIRELY ON YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THE HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA POLITICS & POWER OVER THE COURSE OF THE PAST TWO WEEKS.** You may relate this history to some of the arguments being made or some of the above materials, but your argument must mainly draw on a historical perspective. The richer your historical argument, the higher your evaluation will be.

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FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS

The following instructions may be viewed as a rubric. Papers that meet all these requirements will be judged of highest quality, and those that fail to do so will be judged of lower quality.

- Your paper should begin with an introductory paragraph that states the thesis of your paper. A thesis is a statement of the opinion or point of view you will develop and support in your paper. It should be specific, and it should suggest how you will support your opinion.
- It might be possible to write this paper WITHOUT drawing on the readings, discussions, and lectures for this class, but papers that don't draw on class materials to support their thesis will be deemed unsatisfactory (D) work.
- Your rendering of the evidence from sources must be accurate.
- Every aspect of your paper should engage with supporting your thesis.
- The ideas you express should follow a logical sequence that builds to the complete proof of your thesis.
- The language you use should be clear and free of grammatical or spelling errors.
- The paper should have your name and class time on each page. Please do not include a title page.
- The paper should be double-spaced with the first line of each paragraph indented a half inch. See the example on the following page. Papers that do not conform to this format will be dropped from Turnitin, you will be informed, and you will have 48 hours to correct and resubmit your essay. Failure to go through this process will result in you getting NO CREDIT for the assignment.
- Your paper should be no less than 550 and no more than 650 words. This parameter refers to the actual text of the paper exclusive of headers and title, etc. Papers that do not conform to this format will be dropped from Turnitin, you will be informed, and you will have 48 hours to correct and resubmit your essay. Failure to go through this process will result in you getting NO CREDIT for the assignment.
- Tips on creating a thesis can be found on the course website.

TURNING IN YOUR PAPER

All papers are to be turned in via the Turnitin link posted on Blackboard under Course Documents. The drop dead due date is Midnight, MAY 20 (That is MAY 20, 11:59 PM plus one minute). No late papers will be accepted.

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PLEASE NOTE: If for some reason you have trouble with the Turnitin link, you must email me a copy of your paper in Microsoft WORD or .pdf format as an attachment. This email must land in my Inbox by the drop dead due date. No late papers will be accepted.

