

A Level Global Perspectives

LOGS

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Global Perspectives A Level Research Journal

Log Entry #1

8/13/19

Through an open discussion with my instructor Dr. Crihfield and the rest of my fellow researchers, I learned of both the structure of the course and the common issues that arise for students during the research process. This day in my eyes was crucial to my understanding of the year that now lies in front of me. I believed myself to be an excellent AS Global Perspectives student, and while this course is far different, I am both excited and confident for the work that lies ahead. I learned of several exercises that I could use to refresh my understanding of key research elements in the form of analysis, evaluation, and evaluations. I began the process of research by doing just basic research on the current problems that plague us as a society. Furthermore, I partnered up with my fellow researcher who I will work closely alongside during the early days of the research process, and I am sure her input will be invaluable to selecting a question I both find interesting and researchable.

Log Entry #2

8/14/19

On this day, I began the research process that will hopefully take me down the path of excellence within this course and endear me with the necessary skills to not only flourish in the remainder of my high school life but within my future career. I began this process by creating two concept maps on the subjects I hope to learn more about, corruption and then authoritarianism within the 21st century. While my research at this stage barely scathed the surface of what these two subjects have to offer, I have still learned a lot such as how one out of three people in the Earth's population lives in what is known as a backsliding democracy, a highly troubling concept. I can already see a paper developing for either subject. The reasons I chose these topics came after evaluating the world as it is today and my place within it; I saw the plethora of world problems that stem from either of these topics, and in my eyes they can both traced and identified as the culprit of much of the threats we as a society face today.

Log Entry #3

8/15/19

Today, I met with my partner and presented my two concept maps in the hope of gauging a new perspective on these two research subjects. After this activity, I added several new branches to my concept maps that translates into new avenues I could explore through research. With her input, I added the avenue of educational corruption within both the United States, a pressing issue due to the recent college admissions scandal as well as abroad, and furthermore with her help I decided to end a brief interest I had in the subject of animal cruelty within zoos, as it was far too limited in terms of a research

proposal. While at home, I plan on formulating appropriate questions for the two subjects I have chosen to spend time on, an important endeavor as wording can change the entirety of the research project in just a simple misgiving. To avoid this, I plan to utilize prior AICE Global Perspectives questions for insight. While I am extremely early into understanding my final concept, I am incredibly eager to participate within this course and improve my research skills whilst addressing such a pertinent issue.

Log Entry #4

8/16/19

I have presented my two topic ideas to my fellow researchers and instructor and in doing so made much progress. I have now settled on merging my two topics as I now understand that corruption is a defining characteristic of authoritarian leaders, and am now set on utilizing the question, “Why is Democracy Failing in the 21st Century?”, and utilizing corruption within the United Nations and other democratic organizations/institutions as well as the rise of authoritarianism all over the world to back it up, or, “Does Leadership Inherently Lead to Corruption” and address the psychological affects leadership has and examples of corruption across the globe with specific focus on those with a leadership position. Over the weekend and in class on Monday I plan to narrow these ideas into one question and discuss it with my class and address any possible errors in my judgment. Since I have my specific area of study set in stone, I will continue to research areas pertinent to the issue of global affairs to expand my understanding. At this stage of the process, I am beginning to become frustrated, it feels as though my final question is just out of reach, I will get there soon.

Log Entry #5

8/19/19

Today, through a seminar with my classmates and instructor, I was warned of the possible pitfalls that my two questions could entail. First of all, for the question, “Is Democracy Failing in the 21st Century?”, I was told that possible word choices could lead to complications further down the research process, for example what warrants the name “democracy”, should I discuss representative democracies or more direct forms of government in the case of Ancient Greece, or perhaps to include the word “institutions” to possibly expand my horizons into other organizations not related to government. Furthermore, my teacher was weary of the term “21st century” as that would limit my research potential to only the past 19 years. By erasing this specific portion, I could expand my research to all of history and find instances of failed democracies, a great revelation as history has always been a fascinating topic. With reference to the question on corruption, my teacher informed of the possible avenue of corruption within religion and other institutions.

Log Entry #6

8/20/19

Today, my classmates and I continued to analyze each other's questions and methodologies to both provide both positive insights as well as critiques into our research capabilities. Today my question took a back seat as we focused on the other ideas of my classmates, but even then, my research question was evolving after seeing the common issues people were running into. I learned the threat of loaded words and phrases that could lead your question open to interpretation and thus invalidating your research. It is because of this newly found insight that my question will yet again need to be critiqued. My interest still remains firmly aligned with the world of government and global affairs and therefore the problem lies in how to formulate a question that does it justice. I was considering narrowing the topic slightly and focusing on what does it take for corruption to take place and then explore avenues such as an uninformed society, rigged elections, an unsuccessful economy and more. I am very much intrigued into the reasonings as to why corruption is able to run so rampant in today's world, however I want to cement my question in stone as soon as possible to finally feel confident enough to delve into high level research.

Log Entry #7

8/21/19

Today, through research on my two subject matters, I have proposed the question, "Has democracy passed its prime?". I feel as though this question is precise, and promotes argument instead of just a flat our yes or no. Within this topic, I hope to discuss the rise of authoritarianism within recent years, the failures of democratic institutions that led to this trend back sliding democracies, the inefficacies of democracies to combat the issues of the modern world, and the rampant corruption throughout the system which ruins the perception of these styles of government. I performed basic research to test the waters on this field of study and found ample takes on this question, and tonight I plan to delve deeper and hopefully settle on this question for my permanent topic and begin the planning document. I am incredibly excited at this point as now with a solid question to work with, I can truly begin to work on the issue, while still having the option to expand upon it.

Log Entry #8

8/22/19

Today I completed the planning document to aid in putting all my thoughts down and onto paper. This was vital as it allowed for me to truly evaluate why this topic was so important to the world. Democracy today serves as the leading form of government, a beacon for all developing nations to strive for, but today 1/3 of the human population lives in a back sliding democracy, and through this I plan on evaluating the reasons as to why this is the case to hopefully come up with a comprehensive solution as to how as a society we can tackle the inefficiencies of free government. Furthermore, I was able to consider

why this problem was important to me as an individual. As an individual on the cusp of being able to voice their political opinions, I want to ensure that my voice matters. This thought further spurred another research avenue, as I hope to now discuss why children of the modern world are no longer invested in the government process and why democracy cannot work with an uninterested and uninformed society. While excited to delve into these issues, I am hesitant in a way because I almost feel that this question in the first place should never have to be asked. Throughout history people have been fighting back against tyrannical rule to install free government, yet in doing so they may have caused more harm than good by implementing an institution ill-equipped for the modern world.

Log Entry #9

8/23/19

Today I researched in the hopes of finding scholarly sources on the topic of why democracy has failed. After just a brief google search a plethora of sources arose. Reputable publications such as the New York Times and The Wall Street Journal have voiced their opinions on this topic, with specific focus on the financial and economic sector, and I hope to delve deeper and use their writings as a form of launching pad into higher level works. Furthermore, I have seen several books that I will validate before reading but based on the synopsis they seem to have a number of valid arguments that could be central to my argument, such was the case for *The People vs. Democracy* by Harvard professor Yascha Mounk. Over the course of the coming weekend I plan to evaluate some more sources just to grasp all the angles of my question I can explore and see where it leads me. Where once I was feeling pessimistic and frankly quite frustrated with the avenue I chose to explore, I am now filled with hope at the concept of providing a full argument into an issue so pertinent to our modern society.

Log Entry #10

8/26/19

On this day I finalized some basic research just to get a grasp as to the scope of this question and see if there is enough research available to satisfy the demand necessary to provide a full and balanced argument. I have come across several workings of Harvard professor Yascha Mounk, one of the leading experts on the crisis of liberal democracy and the rise of populism. For example, in collaboration with fellow professor Roberto Stefan Foa, Mounk published a peer reviewed article titled, "The End of the Democratic Century – Autocracy's Global Ascendance", where he addresses the failures of democracy and why populism is on the rise where the world has never been more forward thinking. Furthermore, his novel titled, "The People vs. Democracy", Mounk discusses the reasonings as to why there is a growing disconnect between the people and democratic institutions, and from here I hope to gain greater insight

into the issue at hand. Furthermore, I found a number of websites that I plan to use as launching points titled “The Great Democracy Meltdown” and “Democracy is failing in the West”. Seeing how there is so much research to delve into even at this current stage of the research process, I am confident in my ability to propose a valid argument over this issue, and I am eager to read more and develop this paper into something that stands out.

Log Entry #11

8/27/19

Today I created a OneNote notebook through Microsoft that I feel will be necessary in keeping my thoughts clear and concise throughout the research process. The notebook is divided into tabs labelled, *Info/data, Quotes with references, Analysis, Evaluation, Reflections, Theory/Arguments, Emerging Themes, Calendar, Annotated Bibliography*. This will prove to be a valuable resource in the coming months as it will allow me to keep all my thoughts in one place where I can change tasks at ease. So far I have seen growing evidence to support my original reasons as to why democracy has failed, including in the form of corruption, rise in authoritarianism, however a large piece of this complicated puzzle lies in the fact that there has grown a deep divide between the people and government, and therefore democracy cannot function in a manner that is successful. At home I will plan out some research paths, and most likely visit Selby library to check out “The People vs. Democracy” as well as to see if any more sources catch my eye, as well as delve into more online sources found through scholarly search engines provided by my instructor.

Log Entry #12

8/28/19

Today I began with researching democracy’s failure when it comes to the ever-pressing modern issue of climate change. Through Google Scholar I found the novel titled, “The Climate Change Challenge and the Failure of Democracy” written by David J. C. Shearman, Joseph Wayne Smith. The novel discusses the impending crisis of climate change and why democracy as a style of government is ill-equipped to handle it. I feel as though this path into will be quite bountiful, as climate change is perhaps the greatest problem of modern times and democracy’s ineffectiveness in dealing with it shows that it is a failing institution and change is required. Tonight at home I plan on looking for more sources at the Selby Library in downtown Sarasota for more information into this topic, and hopefully I shall have more to work with in the coming days to continue my progress into the research of democracy as perhaps the greatest failure of modern times.

Log Entry #12

8/29/19

Today I continued the basic research process to expand my horizons on the topic of democracy's failure as the leading form of government within society. I found two new sources, one being from the University of North Carolina and is on the democracy's wrongdoing when it comes to the field of ecology and how immediate action is necessary. Furthermore, I utilized the World Democracy Report which I plan to use as quantitative data to back my thesis that democracy is indeed failing as it is becoming far more scarce in the modern world. I learned through this source that the issue at hand is far more pressing than I previously thought. I learned that a mere 5% of the world's population lives in what the report considers a "full democracy" and nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom, two extremely influential and developed nations are within the category labelled, "flawed democracy". I plan to utilize the report from several years to see if there are any noticeable trends or to discover that the downward spiral of democracy projected in this report is just a fluke.

Log Entry #13

8/30/19

Today I began to research the failure of democracy to rally younger generations to support the political process and instill trust in the government. In the United States alone, a mere 19% of the population believes that they can trust the government, and that in part is due to rampant corruption, In 2016 alone, more than \$3.15 billion was spent lobbying the U.S. Congress, roughly double the amount spent in 2000, and the ineffectiveness of leadership to create any substantial change. The ineffective leadership is in large part due to the voters themselves, who are largely uninformed and therefore elect unqualified individuals and are prone to thinking in the short-term. To further use the United States for example, the country is in desperate need of repair. A 2017 report by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the country a grade of D+ for overall infrastructure, citing 2,170 high-hazard dams, 56,007 structurally deficient bridges (9.1 percent of the nation's total), and \$1 trillion in needed upgrades to drinking water systems over the next 25 years. However, due to the political process' of democratic government, the will as well as the long-term thinking needed to tackle these endeavors seems to be entirely absent.

Log Entry #14

9/2/19

No school.

Log Entry #15

9/3/19

Today I continued with research into why democracy fails to inspire younger generations to participate in the political process. In a published paper titled, “Young People and Political (In)Activism: Why Don’t Young People Vote?” by Matt Henn and Mark Weinstein, the very same issue is discussed in depth with specific regards to the British Parliamentary System. To save the data and overall conclusion that would be vital to my research paper, they said, “The survey results clearly indicate that the main political parties are perceived to make no more than marginal advances towards young people—and the trend toward more media-cent red and less interactive political campaigning is leaving today’s youth generation feeling cut-off from politics. By a large majority (59%:12%), respondents agreed that those elected to parliament soon lose touch with people” This just brushes over the fact that even highly developed nations with strong democratic leanings are still marginalizing future generations, failing to engage its population which in turn fails them and the planet they are no longer aiding in fixing.

Log Entry #16

9/4/19

I began to piece together the beginnings of my annotated bibliography, and the effects of doing so were quite profound. By delving into the detailed information both presented within the source and the information about the source itself, such as credibility, vested interest, ability to see and more, I was able to better judge the state of my argument in this current stage of its development. Through this process, I bettered my understanding of the current weak sections of my argument, specifically in regards to how democracy has failed the area of study, ecology. While this area of the argument may itself not be weak, the source in fact is not up to the standard of advanced research and I will effectively remove any arguments presented by them and begin anew with fresh eyes. This lesson was actually quite valuable as I am now better aware of the obstacles, I will have to overcome to ensure that the data I provide within this research paper are of the highest quality. It is my goal to provide a product that is reflective of the effort and attention I have put into it and won’t be let down by inaccurate or sources.

Log Entry #16

9/5/19

I began to delve into the opposite argument that democracy has not failed as an institution and is in fact doing more harm than good. Through the works of David L. Rousseau who is Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, my understanding of this issue was improved astronomically. Professor Rousseau authored the novel, “Democracy and War”, where he aims to demonstrate that institutional constraints, rather than peaceful norms of conflict resolution, are responsible for inhibiting the quick resort to violence in democratic politics. It is this reasoning that

contradicts my thesis, as it highlights that the slow-moving policy making of democracy may be a weakness or a strength depending on the manner at which you approach the subject matter. This was a comforting sight to see as I am now fully confident that I possess the ability to find credible research on both sides of my argument pertaining to democracy as a failure. I feel as though I am in a very solid standing with my research and understanding of the issue, and with every passing day, despite the world load, I become more and more excited at the thought of presenting something of real value.

Log Entry #17

9/6/19

Today I performed an important task where I collected every perspective, I have analyzed over the course of the research process into this particular topic of democracy. So far, I have realized that the ecology perspective for my thesis is the weakest link of my argument. I came to this conclusion due to the almost weak nature of my original source, Val Plumwood. While this source provides a launching point and by now way will be a part of the final product, I currently am unable to find information to further this topic and will most likely remove it for sake of providing a purely objective argument. I am worried that establishing the connection between government style and environmental issues will be quite a stretch and will ultimately hinder the argument, however I am considering utilizing pollution and related problems as a factor where democratic government has failed, while also leaving it open to the concession argument where I can evaluate democracy's strengths.

Log Entry #18

9/9/19

In class today I took the time to reformat my logs as to better prepare myself for the research process. This research journal aims to give me a relocation of insight and information that I can reflect upon in the future. At the time of this entry, I simply felt as though my entries were far too limited in scope and should be expanded upon in order to provide me with the best aid possible in the future, thus saving the most valuable commodity to the researcher, time. I expect to utilize these to aid my research when I feel stuck or need to collect my thoughts. Furthermore, this log promotes some real-world skills such as self-reflection and critical thought, necessities that will both aid me in school and beyond. Despite the practical uses for this research journal, I simply wish to have this anthology for my own personal appreciation, to see however the course of this course my abilities have improved and reflect upon the journey I took. As of today, I am incredibly optimistic of how things are going, and starting tomorrow will continue the research process.

Log Entry #19

9/10/19

I furthered my research into different sources of information to gather more perspectives and data to support my thesis that democracy has indeed failed. I researched for novels and therefore this coming Friday I shall pick up three sources from my local library, *The People vs. Democracy*, *Western Democracy at Risk*, *Making our democracy work: a judge's view*. Based on their authors I am quite certain of the source's credibility, however upon receiving the novels I will conduct a reasoned validation to ensure the data provided is of the strongest quality and provides backing to my paper and is not a hindrance. While there I shall continue my search and hopefully leave with a few more books to delve into, however I am hesitant to get my hopes up. I feel as though online data bases on peer-reviewed papers will provide me with the best opportunity to find pertinent information to the issue. It has been years since I have collected books from the library, and the idea of doing it for this class excites me beyond belief.

Log Entry #20

9/11/19

Today I engaged in a task that was both intriguing and encouraged reflection on the state of the United States. My fellow researchers and instructor engaged in discussion over the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers. As a group, we discussed possible questions that could be answered much like that of a Global Perspectives paper, and my group and I settled on, "Should the 9/11 terrorist attacks influence policy decisions 20 years later?". We then proceeded to evaluate the reasons for why it should, for reasons such as security and psychological safety, and why it shouldn't, mainly due to economic factors and by how giving into fear is feeding into the cycle of terror. The day concluded with us finding quotes from reputable sources who could increase our knowledge of the topic. This assignment I found very useful as it provided yet another opportunity to practice the skills necessary to succeed in this course, such as analysis, higher level research, evaluation, and judgment. I feel as though I retain information at a higher rate when it is provided via discussion and not just regurgitated to me, and therefore today provided an excellent opportunity to develop my skills and reflect on the tragedy that occurred 18 years ago.

Log Entry #21

9/12/19

Today my fellow researchers and I continued to develop our understanding of the 9/11 terrorist attacks through the use of essential research skills. It was our main goal today to truly delve in deep as to the many effects of the attacks as possible, and I decided I wanted to present the political ramifications to

the group. Through the use of Google Scholar found primary source documents from congress and the White House which provided me insight into how dramatic the change in American life was. Just one month after the attacks congress, just one vote short of unanimous bi-partisan support, passed the Patriot Act which gave dramatic new powers to law enforcement agencies in terms of surveillance and search and seizure. Furthermore, in the ensuing conflicts in the Middle East the Bush administration was able to label captured individuals as 'illegal enemy combatants' instead of the proper prisoner of war. This paved the way for the government to ignore many human rights laws and engage in acts such as torture to prevent future acts of terrorism. By finding this information, I was able to practice finding strong sources, evaluating the data provided and much more, which was a great vote of confidence and I am excited for days to come.

Log Entry #22

9/13/19

Today I utilized another day of learning to correct my research journal, as I feel it is not a true representation of the research process. As I look over it, I can see my paper come together, however at this stage I am coming to the realization that I need to make it more reflective and truer to the research I have performed. I find this to be a crucial component of the process, as the research log provides a point of reference to my daily train of thought and accomplishments, which will save me valuable time in the future while also improving my understanding of the topic. In terms of research tonight I am collecting three novel sources, and over the course of the weekend I will search for data to include in my paper. I am fairly optimistic at this stage, as where once I was confused at what the specific methodologies for my research would be, I have now settled on using social, political, and economical reasons as to how democracy has and has not failed in the modern world. Of course, these are flexible, and I will add to them or take away if the situation arises.

Log Entry #23

9/16/19

I have officially begun to use novels as a source to find data for my upcoming research proposal, and I have directed to utilize the works of Yascha Mounk in his novel *The People vs. Democracy*. I began the process by viewing the different sub-headings as I expected they could lead me towards potential methodologies, and indeed it did, the most useful of these I plan to integrate economic stagnation, the increasing role of money, and the fact that democracy is deconsolidating. This novel I feel offers the greatest potential for a staging point for more research, while also allowing me to find strong evident for my thesis that democracy has failed. A strong quote to support this claim is, "The French economy, for example, grew by an average of 5% in the post war era. For the past 20 years, it recorded annual growth of only about 1.5 percent". This I feel is something along the lines that I wish to pursue as it does

highlight democracy's ability to produce economic growth is stagnating. Finding information like this in such a reliable source is quite comforting, and I am eager to continue the research process.

Log Entry #24

9/17/19

Today I continued to utilize the novel by Yascha Mounk and came across an interesting statistic that I feel I could implement into a form of social methodology. In this novel the idea is proposed that democracy is ill equipped to handle technology in the modern world. It is stated that, "According to one pole, taken in August of 2016, 42 percent of registered voters had come to believe that Hilary Clinton was 'evil;'. In an even more striking finding recorded in North Carolina, days after Trump had referred to Clinton as 'the devil', 41 percent of his supporters claimed to believe that believe that this was literally true" (page 145). Will the ideas of the people is not necessarily the fault of any government institution, the argument can be made that democracy has in fact failed as it fails to maintain a voice of reason and allows for claims absent of reason to influence its most crucial practice, elections. I will further ponder this specific topic at a later date, but it did open my eyes that there are many different avenues out there to explore, which does instill a sense of confidence in me for the future of this research paper.

Log Entry #25

9/18/19

Today, I wanted to evaluate an emerging theme I saw occurring, that one of the biggest problems of democracy is that it eventually becomes stagnant. Based on research, the Demographic Transition Model possess a step by step process by which population grows and countries develop. It is the later stages, 4 and 5 respectively, the population growth begins to stagnate and decline. What's alarming is that these countries are all highly developed nations such as the United States, Germany, Eastern Europe, and more. I aim to research the connection between these countries, as they have all seen the emergence of far right or authoritarian leadership within their borders. For example, Germany has seen the election of far-right parliamentary representatives for the first time since WWII, and authoritarian leaders are popping up at alarming rates such as in Turkmenistan. This emerging theme could have a number of applications within my research paper, as a stagnant population could have both positive and negative connotations depended on the manner at which you look at it. Overall, I am very happy with the direction I see my paper taking at this current moment, and tonight I will evaluate some more points within Yascha Mounk's novel and see where it takes me.

Log Entry #26

9/19/19

Today, I reviewed the components necessary to complete the AICE Global Perspectives proposal. With my fellow researchers, I reviewed the components of the proposal and common mistakes that are made, which would prove to be invaluable in getting my question and beginning research approved, which will provide a number of benefits. I am excited as a portion of this assignment is to relate it back to your personal interest into the topic and why you find it important. This means a lot to me as this topic is so personal to me and due to the pressing global concerns related to democracy, I am eager to share my interests with others through this research. Furthermore, the insight I gained through viewing past examples of proposals was incredibly useful, as I witnessed what was and wasn't acceptable via AICE standards, and in doing so I felt almost relaxed at the prospect. I am eager to begin writing this proposal and delve into further research.

Log Entry #27

9/20/19

Today I submitted my research logs to fellow researchers and instructor, to better my understanding of what AICE is looking for in terms of a reflective anthology of my individual research process. It was at this point that I hit the ground running and delved into the three sources I carry with me. I found a plethora of evidence to support a number of arising themes I see developing in terms of democracies many failing attributes, in that they are structurally flawed, fail to attract and inspire, and inherently corrupt. For example, Yascha Mounk stated, "'Even in consolidated democracies like Germany or the United States, there are cases of this kind of explicit exchange of an agreed sum of money for a particular political favor- what legal scholars call 'quid pro quo' corruption... In the dozen years between 1990 and 2002, about 10,000 US officials were convicted for corrupt practices ranging from the blatant to the ridiculous" (Mounk, page 80). While this is just a singular quote, it is comforting that individuals as experienced and knowledgeable as Professor Mounk share my interest in this ongoing global dilemma and are attempting to understand it. Over the coming week I will locate more evidence and address it in a way that I can add it to my proposal that is looming on the horizon.

Log Entry #28

9/23/19

I have located a plenty of evidence to support my arguments. As of now, I am eager to say that I feel like I am making great strides into the actual information necessary to support my arguments. In terms of structure, democracy is inherently flawed, and in the novel *The people vs Democracy* I found a very enlightening quote reading, "Plato's great worry about democracy, that citizens would "live from day to day, indulging the pleasure of the moment", has proved prescient. Democratic governments got into the

habit of running big structural deficits as a matter of course, borrowing to give voters what they wanted in the short term, while neglecting long-term investment. France and Italy have not balanced their budgets for more than 30 years". The idea that the great minds of the past questioned democracy even its infancy is incredibly interesting and points to the idea that this style of government practice was doomed from the start. As of now, I am excited to see where the research takes me, and I hope its towards more information that makes me question the very foundations of the world we live in like I have found today.

Log Entry #29

9/24/19

When reviewing the information I had already compiled and the remaining arguments to address, I made the consciences decision to take a step back and review my work in totality. I received feedback on my research journal and the response was overwhelmingly positive, which came at great relief as these daily entries hold a high amount of sentimentality within their lines. I then reviewed the components of my research folder, and decided to begin analyzing my current level of information, however I seem to have hit a road block. While I know what I want to say and the point I wish to make, the words simply won't formulate into cohesion. I feel as though I need to step back for a moment, and touch upon the skills that made me such a competent AS student, and develop them further with the experience I have gained over the past weeks. My instructor, Dr. Carihfield, has a plethora of resources at my disposal that I plan to use over the next two days to ensure my ability to analyze, evaluate, and judge my research is at its highest level possible to ensure my research topic is approved through the proposal. I am both nervous and excited to hear feedback, only time will time.

Log Entry #30

9/25/19

Due to a family matter that arose, my ability to continue the research process was quite limited, however, my brain simply couldn't help but return to the pressing question of democracy and its failures in the modern world. I have found some recurring themes within the arguments I have uncovered, and it is my goal to address them at one point or another within the paper itself. It has become evident that democracy is a mere reflection of the people it serves, and to right its wrongs change must be initiated from the ground up. Thus I pose the question, has democracy failed us, or have we failed democracy. I feel as though I can work this idea into my social methodology and utilize the lack of voting in democracy's and civil pride within the institutions. While I did miss a day to perform actual research, I am happy to say that my understanding of the topic has bettered in some way.

Log Entry #31

9/26/19

I met with my instructor today and had a casual discussion on some possible themes I could implement into my final paper. She suggested to research the Watergate Scandal and other examples of when government was really called into question, which could tie into the social methodology. Furthermore, she suggested to review quotes from George Washington who had reservations about the government he was about to lead, and upon hearing this I established how I wish to begin my proposal, by addressing historical reservations about democracy, and then discuss how these fears have in fact come true.

Log Entry #32

9/27/19

At this moment in time, I began completing my research proposal. To say it was an amazing feeling to finally see these past weeks of effort come to fruition would be an understatement. This paper, even in its infancy, has already had an impact on my life. My horizons have been broadened, my ability to research is been heightened, and I have never felt more capable in terms of life outside of high school.

Log Entry #33

9/30/19

I have now completed my research proposal and throughout the week I will convene with my fellow researchers and compare and contrast proposals and edit them to ensure that our proposals offer a clear and concise insight into the argument we plan to present. Off the cuff I have realized that my excitement and interest pertaining to democracy and its failures has put me at a disadvantage, as I have gone way too deep in my depth of analysis and explanation. Furthermore, my selection in expert evidence to highlight the existence of a multiple-perspective argument did not clearly highlight such a thought, but provided examples to the argument which are more appropriate within the research paper itself. At this point in the research process, I am in fact becoming frustrated at the fact that this week is centered on revisions to a proposal that I am incredibly excited to share with Cambridge. However, this week may prove to be invaluable in terms of my success through this course, so I will endeavor.

Log Entry #34

10/1/19

As of right now, I am revising my proposal down to fit within the confines of the first page, as compared to my fellow researchers it is far too in depth and long based on what is needed as a proposal. My first method in doing so will be by removing all evidence that is not outright stating the argument for which

I am researching, and instead are examples as to the extent of the argument. A prime example of this was the quote provided by Professor Reaussua, the Assistant Professor of political science at the University of North Carolina. While this piece of evidence is in fact beneficial to my argument and absolutely useful within the confines of my research paper, it is not yet necessary. This was in fact beneficial to my understanding of the topic and I am therefore grateful. Today offered an excellent method for me to take a step back from the excitement of gathering research and view the methodologies I have collected to represent the argument, and be able to evaluate the different levels in which my evidence lies, and thus bettering my ability to provide a cohesive argument.

Log Entry #35

10/2/19

While revising my research proposal, I actually discovered some new information from which I wish to include in my research paper. This evidence comes from the Lancet Journal, one of the world's most prestigious and historical medical journals on the face of the Earth. In reference to the benefits of democracy, the researchers behind the study stated, "“Democracy appears to play a bigger part in health outcomes than a country's GDP--accounting for about 25% of the reductions in deaths from cardiovascular disease and transport injuries over time." While this is simply one piece of evidence, it is comforting in a way that even when I am not exactly trying my hardest to find new and pressing information to my argument, the skills I have attained at this point in the research process are able to drive me in the path of success. This fact makes up for the frustrations I experienced earlier in the week. I am as confident and renewed as ever. I am ready to submit my proposal as soon as possible and continue my research.

Log Entry #36

10/3/19

Yet again, a new and useful piece of evidence has come to light that I am excited to include in my research proposal. The quote comes from Admiral Stavridis, the 16th Supreme Allied Commander at NATO and operating executive at The Carlyle Group. He stated, "Liberal democracy, in its various forms and with its inevitable imperfections, is adapting to different cultures and histories, and delivering. Human nature is not on authoritarianism's side, nor is history." This almost perfectly sums up my opposing perspective, in that democracy despite its flaws is beneficial to society and in turn has not failed modern society. I will be sure to include this within my final draft of the research proposal to show that those in admirable standing believe this viewpoint and in turn increasing the value of the my work. I am

elated at the progress I am making within the confines of the research I am involved with, and plan to utilize this renewed confidence to aid in my future endeavors.

Log Entry #37

10/4/19

I have now officially completed the revision process and it is an excellent feeling. After cutting over 400 words, and correcting my extensive grammar mistakes which stem from my excitement over the topic, I have now officially submitted my proposal to Cambridge. In a way I am scared that it will be rejected, and the revisions I have made were actually detrimental in conveying my argument. However, what's done is done and I am mostly confident that the skillset I have refined within the confines of this course will eventually lead me to success. Tonight I will return my previous set of sources at the local library and begin research for other credible books and other physical outlets. As we await feedback on our proposals, we will touch over the skills necessary for advanced research writing, which I am highly excited for. This moment marks the highest point for which I have achieved so far this year, I am well in the swing of the research process, feeling confident in my abilities and the work I have put forth, now only time will tell as to how based in reality my beliefs are.

Log Entry #38

10/7/19

In surprisingly quick fashion, I received my proposal from Cambridge and thankfully my argument was approved. To see the culmination of my efforts over the past 9 weeks come to fruition and receive positive feedback was an amazing feeling, and I am more excited than ever to continue the research process. Today we began to hone our skills in terms of analytical writing and it was a refreshing experience as it contracts the repetitive nature of looking for information to support my perspectives. Analysis has proven to be one of the most vital components of Global Perspectives and I am excited to take it to the next level and apply it to research I genuinely care about, and thus this purpose will be reflective in my work. As a group we will continue to write analytical response's to each other's work and improve as a group.

Log Entry #39

10/8/19

As a group, my fellow researchers and I continued to practice the skills necessary to achieve the highest honors within the course. Specifically, we reviewed skills such as accurate citing and paraphrasing, as these were recurring issues that raised in our proposals. We of course learned these necessary skills in AS Global Perspectives, however it was incredibly refreshing to touch up on them to ensure that the information we present is properly referenced with no chances of plagiarism. These touch ups on skills are proving to be quite necessary as I seem to have lost touch with much of the basics necessary for higher level research, and furthermore it is refreshing to take a small break from constant research.

Log Entry #40

10/9/19

Now that I have a small break from research, I decided today to truly delve into the comments of my AICE Global Perspectives grader. Based on their response, I feel as though my research paper is now capable of reaching new heights. My grader first suggested I paraphrase the information stated within my quotations. This I expect will shorten my word count considerably, thus allowing me to analyze and evaluate the points I am arguing thus rounding out the research and making it as strong as possible. This is seemingly a small point however I am confident with this advice I will be able to truly delve deeper than I previously had imagined. Furthermore, I realize that one skill I had thought I had mastered from AS Global is not what I had expected it to be. Citations are a pivotal part of research both in terms of academic honesty and legality, so honing this essential skill in order to better my research will be top priority moving forward.

Log Entry #41

10/10/19

Today, I practiced research skills, particularly validations. Validating sources is key to conveying to the researcher the strength and reliability of the content you are in fact providing, and therefore it is a skill within this course that is absolutely necessary. We did so by practicing based validating the New York Times, a prestigious news source with 127 Pulitzer prizes, a massive network of expert journalists across the globe and much more. Therefore, by utilizing this source in an example, the goal is to then apply that information to my sources, such as Yascha Mounk, Harvard professor author of *The People vs Democracy*. By providing both his strengths and weaknesses, I am in turn providing a balanced argument even to my sources of information which ultimately shows a deeper level of research than before. To reflect, at the rate my research skills are improving and my ability to write expanding beyond that of previous courses, I am more confident than ever in my ability to excel in this course.

Log Entry #42

10/11/19

This Friday, I chose to update my daily research log in order to put myself in the best position for next week when I begin to research once more. The research journal allows me to reflect upon my past experiences within the course and give myself direction in the future. This was a week that I valued greatly, as it gave me a much needed break from constant research while also providing me with the opportunity to develop my research and writing skills. I expect that as time marches on I will use this journal as a reminder as to the knowledge I have gained and skills I have ascertained and use it as a staging ground for the paper I will soon begin to write. I am nervous to once again begin the research process, however an overwhelming sense of confidence cannot be ignored. Over the course of the coming weekend I will begin to locate more resources from local libraries to begin dissecting in the coming days.

Log Entry #43

10/14/19

No school

Log Entry #42

10/15/19

As I delve back into the research process, I chose to begin by dissecting my opposing perspective, that indeed democracy has not failed in the 21st century. I began by utilizing an article from the *European Economic Review*. The source itself was written by two highly qualified individuals, Doctor Jose Tavares, and professor/ economist Romain Wacziarg. The source builds upon the assertion that democracy inherently inhibits economic growth and thus putting the people of these nations financially weaker, a clear failure in regards to democracy as a government. Through inventive methodologies and statistical analysis the two individuals in fact supported their hypothesis and give reasons as to why, and as a result I am comfortable including this into my work. Being able to locate such pertinent information in a short manner of time is highly comforting, and my enthusiasm is only growing to create the best paper for which I am capable. Tonight I will continue to look for more sources at local libraries and see what comes up.

Log Entry #43

10/16/19

I aimed to address some of the sources I have collected over the recent weeks and begin to validate them whilst the information I have received in terms of this skill is still fresh in my memory. As of right now, I am syphoning information from the likes of Harvard professors, NATO leaders and other prestigious individuals from the international community, reputable newspapers and more. While the strength of my sources will not diminish from the standard necessary to achieve within this course, as of right now I am highly pleased with the reliability of the individuals and organizations I have utilized up until this point. Knowing that such reputable sources have aligned themselves with both the opposing perspectives of my argument is a great boost of confidence, showing me that both my concerns regarding the problem of democracy are not alone, and that I am on the right track in terms of the content that I am creating.

Log Entry #44

10/17/19

I feel as though at this current point in time within the research process, one that at one point I was so excited to perform, as seemingly becoming more and more difficult. While it is not the skills that I am lacking or the will to carry on, I seem to have lost my direction. To correct this, I read through my logs in their totality in an effort to align myself with the enthusiasm I once had and to witness how far I have actually come. In short, it worked. Seeing how far I have come and seeing how both the ups and downs have accumulated into where I am now was truly a much needed boost. I have now rejuvenated interest into the structural components of democracy and how that both limits its ability to succeed in the modern world, and how its structure is one of its greatest strengths in terms of theological principle and practical applications like preventing armed conflict. I expect in the coming days I will achieve much progress.

Log Entry #45

10/18/19

Today I took the time to go more in depth into the opposing argument, that democracy has indeed not failed in the 21st century. This assertion is supported by the fact that socially, democracy is far more positive in terms of transparency. According to B. Peter Rosendorff¹ from New York University and James Raymond Vreeland from Yale University, who published their findings after performing in depth statistical analysis on data transparency and access to information within different nations with varying governmental types, and found democracy is by far the most advanced in this regard. This evidence adds to the argument as it shows just one example of the perspective that democracy has indeed not failed, and thus making my paper far more well-rounded. Considering the rut I was in yesterday, it is a relief to find such strong evidence from a reputable source such as these two individuals. Over the coming weekend I

plan to continue looking for more physical sources to find at local libraries to continue the research process.

Log Entry #46

10/21/19

To begin the new week of research, I took the time to collect my thoughts and review my previous research journal entries and the comments by my A-level grader in order to avoid the pitfalls I ran into last week where I drew a blank on the progress of my research. From this I plan to move away from physical books from surrounding libraries and instead utilize more academic journals that are both more prestigious and easier to access on the internet, bolstering the arguments I plan to make as they come from scholarly primary evidence. This I expect will lessen the workload slightly and cut down on the unnecessary legwork to make the primary this paper as substantial as possible. This week will be strongly focused on finding sources and providing myself with more information to work with that I can begin to weed out and find only the strongest information for my perspectives. At this point in the research process, I am more dedicated than ever to progress as much as possible and make strides towards being the best researcher I can be.

Log Entry #47

10/22/19

This morning I aimed to research more into the works of Roberto Fao, one of the leading experts I originally encountered at the very beginnings of the research process. Based on what I have seen within his work, I am confident that he will be invaluable to providing a sound argument. In 2016 he was published in the Journal of Democracy and addressed the idea that the citizens of wealthy, established democracies are becoming less satisfied with their governments than they have been at any time since opinion polling began. While most scholars have interpreted this as a sign of dissatisfaction with particular governments rather than with the political system as a whole, Professor Fao begs to differ which aligns well with the arguments that I am making. Finding this source would only have been possible by reflecting on my research journal which was emphasized by my instructor, so at this stage I am incredibly grateful. Throughout the week, I will further review his work and collect evidence and use it as a staging point for moving onward. I am incredibly excited to see where this goes.

Log Entry #48

10/23/19

Absent

Log Entry #49

10/24/19

Absent

Log Entry #50

10/25/10

Due to sickness, my ability to continue my work streak has been significantly impeded and the past two days have been a serious letdown when considering what I had aimed to accomplish. Where I left off I was in the midst of reviewing the published literature of the esteemed Roberto Stephan Fao, and seeing where not only his evidence led me but where he himself gathered information that I could also incorporate. What I have found recently is that his work can be applied to both perspectives within my research. In his paper titled Development, Freedom, and Rising Happiness: A Global Perspective (1981–2007), he reviews a longitudinal study that proves that a rise in global happiness heavily in part due to free choice, which is a classic attribute of democratized nations. Due to the length, scholarly authors, and over 1,000 citing's, I am confident in the credibility of this work and plan to use it in length to develop the opposing perspective . This is perhaps one of the strongest sources I have found to date, and bolsters the less strong opposing perspective and develop a more rounded argument. This evidence makes the past two days of being inhibited research wise almost worth it in a way, and I am ecstatic at locating this incredible information and I am excited to see where else I can go.

Log Entry #51

10/28/19

My fellow researchers and I have been taking turns telling each other of where we are currently situated in terms of developing their differing perspectives. While today I personally didn't discuss my perspectives, I got to hear valuable insight about others that ultimately did help me avoid some underlying pitfalls that have been plaguing some other students. The main issue has been the scope of the perspective, as some students are thinking too macro while the others are going far too micro with how they are applying their perspectives. This made me reflect upon my own perspectives, which as of now are social, political, and economical. Through these different approaches, I aim to argue the points that democracy has and has not failed in the 21st century. At this current stage I feel they offer the best opportunity to tackle this issue, yet I am curious to see what my fellow researchers have to say regarding

my research. I continue to feel confident and excited over what I expect to achieve over the course of the research process.

10/29/19

Today my research was up for discussion and I gained much valuable insight into what my research could in fact turn into. For example, I was suggested that I could assess democracy's failures on different stages of society's hierarchy such as on an individual level, a national level, and an international level, which would emphasize the scope of democracy's presence in everyday life. However, I do in fact feel as though I will touch over this idea on my current methodologies so I do not expect to change them, but I do plan on emphasizing democracy's scope all thanks to this activity. After seeing how my research seemed to hold up against my fellow researchers, my confidence was once again supported and I am every more excited to continue this paper. As I have began to find a rhythm that works for me in this stage of the school year, I am excited to say I will be able to dedicate more time to this process. Soon I plan to begin choosing which specific data I shall implement into the final product, an important task indeed but crucial in order to provide the most sound argument possible and do the research justice.

Log Entry #53

10/30/19

I have decided to gather the several expert inputs that I have accumulated over the past several weeks of research, both on the affirmative and counter perspective of my paper. Today I emphasized the affirmative perspective and gathered the details pertaining to the two leading minds on the idea of democracy's failures in the modern society. The first expert is Yascha Mounk who received his BA in History from Trinity College, Cambridge, and his PhD in Government from Harvard University. He is now an Associate Professor of the Practice of International Affairs at Johns Hopkins University, where he holds appointments in both the School of Advanced International Studies and the Agora Institute. He argues that inherent flaws within democracy and social changes have rendered democracy as ineffective style of government in its current stage. Next is Roberto Fao who from late 2019 will be University Lecturer in Politics and Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, following over three years as Lecturer at the University of Melbourne. His research examines quality of government, regimes, and comparative social indicators. At this point in the research process, I slowly regaining the confidence I had earlier in the research process, and seeing the brilliant minds leading the charge of my question, I am reassured that I will be able to find ample evidence to provide a sound argument.

Log Entry #54

10/31/19

Today I continued to collect the expert insight I have accumulated over the research process up until this point. I gathered the two leading experts that I have found so far on either side of my paper, the affirmative side with the perspective that democracy has failed, and today I focused on the the opposing, with the perspective that democracy has indeed not failed. On the affirmative I first have David L. Rousseau a Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, and former professor at the New York University. He is currently teaching at the Department of Political Science at SUNY Albany. He is author of Democracy and War: Institutions, Norms, and the Evolution of International Conflict. Next is Admiral Stavridis, the 16th Allied Commander of NATO. This individual graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1976. While in the Navy, Stavridis served as the commander, U.S. Southern Command and commander, U.S. European Command and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe, the first Navy officer to have held these positions. Stavridis further earned a Ph.D and Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University in 1984, where he won the Gullion Prize. By accumulating these top individuals and the reasonings behind their strengths, I am more clearly able to see the strengths of my research, and where I need to ascertain more detail, which I expect will be incredibly valuable when it comes time to begin eliminating a portion of the evidence I have collected that is not up to the standards I have for this paper. This past several days has been incredibly valuable, and I aim to continue this effort into the following week.

Log Entry #55

11/1/19

Absent

Log Entry #56

11/4/19

I have begun the process of evaluating my sources in order to get ahead of the game so I can focus on more pressing issues down the line like bolstering opposing perspective of my paper that supports how democracy has indeed not failed in the 21st century. I am confident in the works of Yascha Mounk and can say without a doubt that he will make it into my final draft. He has his doctorate from Harvard, is internationally recognized as being the leading mind behind the crisis of liberal democracy, published by

reputable sources like the New York Times, and is currently a professor at Johns Hopkins University. The only negative I can think of at this time of this source is his relatively young age that limits his experience in the field of research. This negative can be considered both a positive and negative, so therefore I hope to include it. This week has started off strongly and I am excited to see how much I can accomplish before the weekend. At home tonight I will continue to locate valuable research from Roberto Stefan Foa to give me head start for tomorrow.

Log Entry #57

11/5/19

In an effort to hone my essential writing skills before writing the actual research paper, my fellow researchers and I have begun to write source analysis and evaluation. The need to master these writing styles cannot be overstated, as by including these components in any form of written piece shows a heightened understanding of the information and ability to tie its relevance to the topic at hand, thus being the most proficient researcher possible. I have begun to analyze Yascha Mounk and draw evaluation from both his strengths and weaknesses and coming to a conclusion of sorts that cements his place within this research paper. Evaluation has proven to be one of my weaker skills in terms of writing higher level research so I am excited to have the opportunity to truly evaluate my current proficiency and improve. After two days of evaluating and analyzing my sources, I am excited to get back into research considering the progress I made earlier in the week. My focus for the remainder of the week will to branch off from Roberto Stefan Foa and see who he has collaborated with in the past and study their work for possible evidence that I can implement in the future.

Log Entry #58

11/6/19

Senior Pictures

Log Entry #59

11/7/19

Today I began to research once again. Roberto Foa. In one of his better known publications, which was included in the prestigious Journal of Democracy, an academic source has focused on the study of democracy and its regimes for over thirty years. From this source, I found a plethora of evidence that bolsters my affirmative perspective that democracy has indeed failed, and it reads, "Second, as authoritarian-capitalist regimes have grown stronger in economic terms, their leverage in international

affairs has consequently increased. From 1990 to the present, the share of global GDP accounted for by autocratic states has risen from 12 to 33 percent. According to projections by the International Monetary Fund, this figure will surpass the share held by Western liberal democracies within the next five years.¹⁰ This shift is weakening the hard-power advantage of Western democracies, undermining their ability to promote democracy effectively through sanctions, to utilize conditionality in aid and development loans, or to play a dominant role in international organizations". This evidence is perfect for the affirmative point of my argument with specific reference to the economic methodology, showing just how beneficial economic wise for non-democratic states, emphasizing democracy's failure to maintain its presence in the world. I am ecstatic to the say the least at founding a whole scholarly journal to utilize for my research, and in the future I plan to study it extensively to find points for both the affirmative and opposing perspectives.

Log Entry #60

11/8/19

To conclude a productive week for research, I once again studied the Journal of Democracy. I took the time read an interesting source titled Populism and the Decline of Social Democracy, which was quite an interesting read to say the least.

Log Entry #61

11/11/19

Veterans Day celebration

Log Entry #62

11/12/19

This morning I delved farther into the abundance of information that the Journal of Democracy has to offer. I began the week of research by reading the work of Ronald J. Deibert, who is a professor of political science at the University of Toronto and director of the Citizen Lab at the University's Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy. In his publication he delves into the subject of social medias undermining of democratic systems by stating, "Not surprisingly, people with authoritarian inclinations are actively taking advantage of the propitious environment that social media offer. A recent survey by the Oxford Internet Institute found that 48 countries have at least one government agency or political party engaging in shaping public opinion through social media". This is far from the only insightful piece of evidence found in this piece, and I'll be sure to include the rest of it in another document when the time

comes to start selectively choosing my strongest evidence. At this point in the research process I am excited to keep the chains moving forward and to finally begin constructing the paper I have spent so much time preparing for.

Log Entry #63

11/13/19

Today marks the beginning of the two days where my fellow researchers and I took the time to further hone our abilities of analytic writing and evaluation, to crucial components to success in this course that I expect will be invaluable time spent. We began the day by analyzing the New York Times as a credible source to discuss the topic of President Donald Trump, and whether or not he is a charismatic individual in terms of his political presence. Clearly this source is qualified to discuss perhaps any source due to its many credentials such as winning 127 Pulitzer prizes throughout its time as news source, so this exercise seemed intended to allow us the opportunity to get her heads back in the game and heighten our thinking as researchers and not just students. I've always been a confident writer in terms of presenting an argument, but the chance to practice it alongside other capable students who are like minded and focused on the same goal of writing the best paper possible is always worthwhile, and I value the inputs of my fellow researchers highly. I thoroughly see no obstacle which can get in the way of our shared success if we continue to work together to improve as we have done so far this year.

Log Entry #64

11/14/19

We continued our practice into analytical writing once again, this time on the Pope as an outlet of information on the subject of artificial intelligence on the building of communities. I found this exercise to be the most useful of the whole course up until this point, as it taught me that with strong writing and a heightened understanding of the topic, one can tie any source into the field at which they are reviewing. The Pope while clearly may not come as quickly to mind as the world's plethora of technology tycoons, but reasons such as his worldwide influence, youth advisory group, and more all make his input into the topic at hand quite valuable. This aids me in the process of research pertaining to the modern state of democracy as I can now expand my horizons on who I can include to aid my arguments, as with my newfound skill to tie unlikely sources to the content, I am no longer extremely limited in my capabilities. I am extremely thankful for this day of practice and plan to carry its lessons long into the research process, and I am even more excited to get some more research done in the next three school days and advance my paper ever more closer to the finish line.

Log Entry #65

11/15/19

As the week comes to a close, I once again delved into the content of the Journal of Democracy, and what I found was incredibly insightful. In a paper written by Amichai Magen, who is the head of the Diplomacy and Conflict Studies Program at the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy, and Strategy of the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) in Herzliya, Israel, and is also a senior researcher at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism, it was proven that one of the most consistent gripes against democracy was a falsehood. He wrote, "in the post-9/11 era, the annual number of fatalities in terror attacks has averaged 6.7 among liberal democracies, and 17.8 in polyarchies. In contrast, the average annual number of people killed in closed autocracies—the regime type that the latest scholarship says is virtually equal to high-quality democracy in terms of safety from terrorism—stood at 57.2. That is more than eight and a half times higher than the average death toll across all liberal democracies..." This evidence is incredibly interesting, as so far I have read that due to the international influence of modern democratic states, they were far more under threat. This evidence aligns well with my social perspective on the opposing argument that democracy has indeed not failed, as it shows the safe nature democracy provides against the modern threat of terror. After my episode where I felt as though I lacked any real direction, I now realize how much I am in control over the essay I put forth and have never been more confident to continue my work.

Log Entry #66

11/18/19

To begin the week, I took the time to validate the Journal of Democracy, to ensure that the range of evidence I have so far collected was of the highest caliber. I found that The Journal of Democracy is perhaps the world's leading publication on the theory and practice of democracy, and since its first appearance in 1990, it has engaged both activists and intellectuals in critical discussions of the problems of and prospects for democracy around the world. Furthermore, the source has been published in a variety of leading news outlets including The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, and the New York Times. To fill its pages, the journal relies on the writings of eminent social scientists and historians, statesmen and leaders of democratic movements, and renowned intellectuals, all reliable insights into the topic at hand. By asserting how reliable this academic journal is, I feel ever more confident considering how much my paper is beginning to rely on the arguments within it. This week I expect to focus more on

my writing skills instead of research, as I am confident in the accumulation of arguments and evidence I have collected up until this point, and I am excited to see what I am capable of.

Log Entry #67

11/19/19

Today I did something rather different in terms of my research, as I read an article that I did not plan to deconstruct for my paper, but instead to simply gain a better understanding of the history of democracy and its influences on modern day political trends. The article is titled Democracy and Dictatorship in Europe: From the Ancient Régime to the Present Day, and was written by Sheri Berman, a Cambridge professor. It was truly enlightening to see just how reflective the modern political landscape is of historical conflicts, trends, and more. I am incredibly thankful to have done this, as I feel as though I jumped into the topic of democracy's failure at the beginning of the school year.

Log Entry #68

11/20/19

At Immigration Services

Log Entry #69

11/21/19

Sick

11/22/19

Log Entry #70

Due to the fact that I was out of school for the several days where my fellow researchers practiced their writing skills, I took the time today to catch up by reviewing their work and rewriting them if they were not up to the standards of such a high-level course. I have learned through experience that to truly reach the highest levels of advanced writing, one must be able to better the works of others and to educate those struggling. Therefore, I am truly grateful for this opportunity as I was able to make the best out of a poor situation due to my absences. In terms of where I want to go in the future, I want to create a form of visual organizer to aid in collecting all the evidence, perspectives, and experts I have accumulated thus far in the research process. I expect this will better my chances of keeping my thoughts in one place and prevent me from losing direction as I did in the past and make the process of selecting my final evidence much simpler. As the time approaches to begin the paper, I must admit I am slightly burnt out. In a

positive light, it could not have come at a better time as I now have Thanksgiving break which will allow me to take a step back and come back more focused than ever.

11/25/19-

11/30/19

Thanksgiving Break

Log Entry #71

12/2/19

As thanksgiving break comes to a close and my fellow researchers return and becomes reacclimated to the research process, I found it necessary to take a day to look over the works I have done so far and give myself more direction after being away from the reigns for over a week. Throughout my time today, I revisited my variety of evidence and realized that as time progressed, my evidence has grown in complexity and I can't help but feel a sense of pride at that fact. As I read the Journal of Democracy once more, I plan on utilizing their podcasts whilst outside of the classroom to gain a heightened understanding of the topic at hand and also gain direction from different outlets that previously I had no way of accessing.

Log Entry #72

12/3/19

To continue my research into democracy, today I aimed to focus on my opposing perspective where democracy has indeed failed in the 21st century. From the Wall Street Journal, I found that, "The countries in the top quarter of the freest economies have average incomes more than 7 times higher than those countries listed into the bottom quarter (the least free). This is even true for the poor: the average income of the poor in free economies is 6 times that of the average in unfree economies. The lowest income group in free economies still 50% greater than the overall average is least free economies". This clearly insinuates that less free nations fail in terms of economic growth, which I feel is too basic to include in such high level research so in the future I will plan on discovering out why this trend exists in the modern world and include that either alongside the evidence supporting this economic failure or entirely on its own. With where I am at in the research process, I am confident that I am mostly done with my research and am just aiming to bolster my arguments in any way I can so I shall continue to investigate source material until time no longer allows, and I expect this will give me the best opportunity to earn a score reflective of the time and effort I have put forth.

Log Entry #73

12/4/19

On this fine Wednesday morning, I took the time to add once more to my research folder to hopefully expand upon my total understanding of the topic on which I have spent so much time researching. The research folder has proved invaluable in collecting the many abstract thoughts and components of this research paper and allowing me the opportunity to turn it into a refined piece of work that I am proud to present to the world. Today I focused on the emerging themes component of the research folder which aims to put into words the different topics I see developing from the leading experts of the field. So far I have realized that I should most likely define democracy as “liberal democracy” which researchers state is what is under threat with the current rise of authoritarian government. It is best defined as a liberal political ideology and a form of government in which representative democracy operates under the principles of classical liberalism and is the most common practice of democracy across the globe. At this point in the research process as I am so close to beginning the finished product, it is still refreshing to nit pick the small details of this assignment and take a break from the broad strokes of the piece.

Log Entry #74

12/5/19

Today I spent time with my fellow researchers and began to finally write the research paper, and in short it was an incredible feeling. After months of collecting information, reevaluating my questions and methodologies and more, finally beginning to write was a weight off my shoulders. I will take the rest of the week to write the introductory paragraph to the piece, a highly important task when considering this is the first glimpse the reader has at the argument you shall be presenting and it is vital that it provides the best foot forward. I reviewed some previous papers from past successful students and a number of other tools available to complete my best work. My goal for today is to complete a brief planning document to ensure I hit the essential points of the introduction, and tomorrow to finish it in its entirety. Again, this date will prove to be one for the memory books as I reflect fondly on the day I began to truly write the most important paper of my life.

Log Entry #75

12/6/19

To continue on my progress from yesterday, I continued my efforts to complete my introduction paragraph for the research paper. The biggest point I aim to hit is the presentation of argument, not simply a collection of evidence which was more aligned with the works of AS global perspectives that I have had issues understanding as this research paper has developed. After careful writing and deliberation, I completed the introduction and it was another milestone I can cross of the calendar as I work towards the finished product. I expect to have this beginning paragraph read by my fellow researchers to ensure a higher level of quality, and I am sure I am in good hands. To reflect, I am astounded at the progress I as well as everyone else in the course has accomplished and I am excited to see it come to fruition in the coming months.

Log Entry #77

12/9/19

Absent

Log Entry #78

12/10/19

Absent

Log Entry #79

12/11/19

Absent

Log Entry #80

12/12/19

Despite recurring ailments inhibiting my research abilities, I continue to make progress in working on my first methodology, which I have decided will be that of politics. I chose this specific methodology to be presented first as outside of its relevance to the arguments that I am presenting, it also offers useful background information into the ins and outs of democratic government that could be useful in providing insight into readers with particular lack of context into the realm of this paper. This decision encompassed most of my available work time today as in my eyes the flow of the paper is incredibly important to maintaining the attention of the reader and creating a well-reasoned discussion. At this point in the

writing process I am hesitant to begin to write the first methodology as it becomes easy to worry that the essay, I write does not live up to my aspirations for it, however I shall persevere.

Log Entry #81

12/13/19

After yet another short week of school, I am displeased with the amount of work that I was able to accomplish. Today I made the decision to take all the accumulated evidence of arguments pertaining to the political nature of the question, Has Democracy Failed? The main points worth noting came from Yascha Mounk and David L. Rousseau, two highly qualified individuals who's input into this issue is highly reputable. Over the coming weekend I will work to paraphrase the quotes I have accumulated to ensure I remain within the 5000 word parameters set for this assignment and once Monday rolls along I will begin to finally work on the body of this methodology, an exciting task to say the least and one that I have awaited since the beginning of the school year.

Log Entry #82

12/16/19

To begin the week, I have narrowed down the different pieces of evidence that I could have utilized for this specific methodology and come to those that offer the best arguments for both the opposing and affirmative perspectives. These pieces of evidence from Yascha Mounk, David Rousseau, and The Economist combine both groundbreaking quantitative and qualitative data to support the notions as to why and why not democracy has failed in relation to the realm of politics. It is important for future reference to note that the political methodology aims to evaluate the structure of democracy itself and determine if it is a hindrance or benefit to democracy as a practical application of government. I included this aim in a brief introduction to the methodology in order to provide clarity for the reader. While this start was seemingly small, it was enough to allow me to reflect upon the work I have accomplished prior to this moment and in short, I have never felt more determined to write the best essay of which I am capable.

Log Entry #83

12/17/19

To continue past the brief introduction to the lens that I created yesterday, I pasted all the refined quotes into the paper and finally began the analysis and evaluation that such intricate pieces of information deserve. In these coming days, my focus will primarily be set upon the argument that democracy has

indeed failed. The passion I have accumulated for this topic was on full display today as I analyzed the information I was presenting and evaluated its relevance and impact on terms of the question I have posed to the reader, and most surprisingly of all I did so effortlessly as I let my interest for the topic carry me through to the completion of this task. At this time I was truly thankful for the instruction I received in AS Global Perspectives and A Level US history, two incredibly writing heavy courses that instilled with me the skills to analyze and evaluate evidence with ease. At this point in the writing process I am delighted with the progress I am making and am more confident than ever at my ability to do this argument justice.

Log Entry #84

12/18/19

To build upon the progress I made yesterday, I decided to analyze and evaluate the information presented by the opposing argument which states that democracy has indeed not failed in the 21st century. This task proved to be far more difficult as I repeatedly caught myself using far too powerful language and allowing my personal biases on the topic to bleed through, which if allowed to occur would hinder the balance of the argument I am trying to present and undermine the goal that I have been trying to ascertain since the beginning of the school year. I attempted to remain as neutral as possible in this regard, yet only the peer reviews we will participate in later down the line will truly be able to lift the guise of my own biases and show the error of my ways. I am thankful that I am able to see the errors of my writing, a skill that I am sure that I did not possess at the beginning of this experience and will continue to press forward in regards to this paper.

Log Entry #85

12/19/19

Last night was a late one to say the least as I finished the first lens of this research paper, and what a marvelous feeling it was. To finish the lens, I validated each of my experts to ensure to the reader that the information I am providing is as valid and trustworthy as possible and write a mini conclusion to wrap this portion of the argument up and transition to the next methodology, which I believe will be in regards to the social reasons as to why democracy has or has not failed in the 21st century. Up until this moment, this has been the most elated I have felt in this course, no small feat when one considers the numerous feelings of accomplishment I have experienced after a days work or finding that perfect piece of evidence

to bolster your argument. Reflecting on this moment was a welcomed break from the writing process, but I am sure once I return from Christmas break, I shall be well rested and prepared to continue forward.

Log Entry #86

12/20/19

While most classes wind down before a prolonged absence from school, A Level Global Perspectives never takes a day off. I along with my fellow researchers were assigned to three other people in an effort to peer review each other's first lens's and introductions and evaluate their work from a new, unbiased perspective with the intent of improving each other's work in a manner unattainable if we were to carry on alone. Over the coming break I shall read the papers I have been assigned, and hopefully provide insight where necessary and above all else learn how to be the best writer I can be. This time off I hope to recharge and come back more dedicated than ever, however only time will tell.

December 23rd - January 6th Christmas Break

Log Entry #87

1/7/20

After a long absence of school, it is often times difficult to transition quickly back into process. Over break I read two wonderfully crafted essays, one on the topic of student data and its relation to success and the other on the breakdown of the nuclear family, and seeing the stark contrast of ideas was interesting to say the least. The two papers were similar in structure, and from them I took a number of key ideas away that I could implement into my own work, including the use of more subheadings to maintain clarity within the paper and more transition words to make the paper less choppy. This process of peer reviewing so far has been quite helpful and I am eager with anticipation to see how my paper was received by my fellow researchers.

Log Entry #88

1/8/20

Ove the course of last night and today, I took the time to read the final two papers that I was assigned to read and annotate, and after I was filled with an undeniable sense of pride at how far we as a class have come. The two papers again covered a wide variety of topics, with the first addressing the positives and negatives of running while the other addressed the implications of video games on ones societal actions.

From these two papers I specifically found issues with their analytical language within their work, and in doing so I feel more confident in my ability to further develop this skill and be the best writer that I myself can be. To reflect, tomorrow I will be able to see how my paper was received and I am feeling an undeniable sense of nervousness at the notion that my work was lackluster, however only time will tell.

Log Entry #89

1/9/20

I received my essay back and to say a load was taken of my shoulders would be an understatement. In all my paper was received very well by the rest of the group, which was a huge relief, but my work is far from over. Outside the occasional grammar issue and lapse in structure, only one issue really stood out. I sadly forgot to properly cite my sources in the correct APA format, which would invalidate my paper entirely if submitted in its current form. I am incredibly disappointed that after this amount of time I am making these basic mistakes that continue to hinder my progress, but in all I am filled with a sense of gratitude that my fellow researchers took the time to point out this issue on my behalf. Over the coming days I plan to rectify the issues highlighted within my first lens and continue onwards. This paper seems to be coming together so quickly these days, and I am both eager and hesitant to continue with worry that I do not do this argument justice.

Log Entry #90

1/10/20

Today I made the effort to have one on one conversations with the authors of the papers I had read to ensure my comments were well received and that I am able to expand and clarify where needed in terms of critiques I had made. I have never before seen the value in peer reviewing content before this course, and I expect this skill to translate well into my college experiences and eventually into the career I eventually chose to explore. In short, the conversations went incredibly well and I am more confident than ever in our ability as a class to create the best essays of which we are capable. These conversations also proved helpful in the development of my essay as well, as my worry that my personal biases would show through my writing was supported. To rectify this issue, I worked closely with my fellow researchers to neutralize my writing and be as objective as possible before coming to a judgement in my mini conclusion where I can come to a definitive point. At this point in the writing process, I am more confident than ever. With the people around me being so passionate and hardworking, I know my efforts are in excellent hands.

Log Entry #91

1/13/20

Absent

Log Entry #91

1/14/20

Absent

Log Entry #92

1/15/20

Absent

Log Entry #93

1/16/20

Once again, sickness limited my ability to attend school and continue my efforts to work on expanding upon my efforts and continue the essay. I did however manage to coordinate with my fellow classmates from home and in doing so was able to reap the benefits of the workshop on proper APA citations that I missed in my absence. Over the past several days, I corrected my errors in leaving out proper in body citations and proper long quote format, two components that are vital in terms of accurately citing my sources and maintaining an organized paper. I plan to evaluate my first methodology once again on my own terms and go over everything with a fine-tooth comb before moving on and beginning my second lens, the social realm of democracy in terms of its failure or lack thereof. To reflect, as time seems to be flying by its still nice to learn something new and rectify the mistakes, I have made prior in this process. With everything I have learned from this peer reviewing process, I am excited to move onto my second lens.

Log Entry #94

1/17/20

To conclude this short week, I began to plan out my second lens. This manifested itself via creating a scaffolding for the lens that allowed me to maintain the same structure of my first methodology and ensuring that I continue to hit on the main points for which this paper earns its points. It was comforting to note that I had all the evidence for this specific methodology already preselected and thus could get right into the analysis and evaluation as soon as school returns to session on Tuesday. Although I may sound like a broken record, it still seems necessary to note just how fast this paper is coming together at

this current time, and my confidence that I will be able to write the paper worthy of such an advanced course and does justice to such a globally pressing issue remains as high as the first day I sat down to begin devising a question all those months ago.

No School

1/20/20

Log Entry #95

1/21/20

To continue on my efforts of the previous week, I began to build upon the four pieces of evidence I have settled upon from the leading minds of the social sciences who have argued both for and against democracy as a government practice. Today I spent the majority of my time expanding on the affirmative perspective that democracy has indeed failed as a practical application of government. This methodology appears to be far more objective in terms of the points it provides, specifically as it utilizes more examples of quantitative data to support its assertions, thus in my eyes making it a more reliable platform from which one can judge democracy in the 21st century. It was because of the objective nature of this piece it become more difficult to analyze and evaluate the meaning of what I was presenting as it became increasingly easier to fall into the familiar pit traps of simply restating the evidence instead of deconstructing it. Despite this notion, I am confident in the work I have put forward in this regard and will look over it once more tonight to ensure my work is of the highest standard.

Log Entry #96

1/22/20

The rhythm that I have found myself in has been incredibly useful in terms of cranking out work that I am proud to share to my fellow researchers. I spent most of the time I had available to flesh out the opposing argument that democracy has indeed not failed in the 21st century. This side of the argument was easier to expand upon, as the affirmative side required more explanation behind why this evidence was relevant to the question while maintaining a social relevance. I made sure to include the fact that the rise of authoritarian government was a social threat, as it directly affect aspects of society and the wellbeing's of individuals in both a mental and physical state. Doing this after the fact while clarifying the direction of the piece did not make my efforts any less difficult yesterday, however I am happy with the finished result. Tonight I plan to finish validating my experts and to be sure to include the proper APA citations to

avoid the setbacks I experienced on my first lens. In all, I am delighted at how this paper is coming together and the skills I have gained along the way, it is just my hope that the effort shows.

Log Entry #97

1/23/20

Out of Class for a meeting

Log Entry #98

1/24/20

To conclude a week of hard work, today I completed the conclusion for my second lens. To think that my paper is over half way completed is something I could never have imagined up until this point in time and I am more confident in sharing this methodology for peer review. Today was mostly mandated by creating the mini conclusion for the second lens where I came to the conclusion that democracy has indeed failed as it has been found that failed democracies pave the path towards extremist government practices that put the lives of its citizens in harm's way. This conclusion did not come easy as the worlds experts made great arguments for why democracy is a benefit to society in a social context with specific regards to healthier lifestyles and transparency. While this week was not flashy by any ones, I got a large amount of work done that I am proud to share with my fellow researchers and beyond, and even more thankful the skills I have developed thanks to my instructor that has allowed me to do so.

Log Entry #99

1/27/20

ABSENT

Log Entry #100

1/28/20

ABSENT

Log Entry #101

1/29/20

The remainder of this week I expect will be quite slow and will most likely warrant a lack of input into this log book. My passion for the issue at hand has allowed me to complete my second lens ahead of schedule and now must await others to do the same before peer reviewing can begin once more. Over the next several days I will continue to fine tune both my first and second lens before eventually beginning to read and critique others next week. The third and final lens to finish this paper shall delve into the economic reasoning's as to why democracy has or has not indeed failed in the 21st century, and after selecting the arguments I shall include it has become evident that analyzing such straightforward evidence may prove challenging. It is my conclusion that I will review past papers and my instructors extensive teaching aids to heighten my skills before I begin to write to avoid any setbacks and ensure my final methodology concludes the paper as strong as it began. At this point in the process, I am beginning to feel the fatigue of writing continuously for days at a time, however with the finish line in sight I am excited to see the end result.

Log Entry #102

1/30/20

Not Applicable

Log Entry #103

1/31/20

Not Applicable

February 3rd-7th no school due to broken collar bone

Log Entry #104

2/10/20

After an unfortunate setback in the form of a broken clavicle, it is needless to say that the development of my paper took a back seat for the weak as I took the proper time for my body to heal. It is of the utmost regret that I write that I missed the opportunity to peer review my second methodology with my fellow researchers, as in doing so previously greatly strengthen my first lens and made it much stronger than I could have seen with my own two eyes. It is now my goal to find a way to discuss this lens with my fellow researchers outside of the classroom setting and get much needed feedback. I have often struggled

to correct my own after the fact, and I am incredibly thankful for this course within instilling me with this skill that I expect will prove vital in my future college experiences. After my accident, I am ever more thankful for the hard work and preparation I put in prior, as now I am not at a disadvantage due to my slower ability to work.

Log Entry #105

2/11/20

In the continuing effort to make my research paper as good as possible, today I took the day to correspond with my instructor to work on the mini conclusions at the end of my two current complete lenses. These conclusions act to wrap up the arguments presented on both the opposing and affirmative perspective while also translating to the reader which in my eyes presented the most persuasive point to further their perspective. From this meeting I took away that my first attempt was rather strong, and that I just need to focus more on the experts. The presentation of experts has been a continuous issue of mine in that I often times fail to understand that this work is similar to that of an anthology of expert researcher arguments from which I then analyze and develop based on my question. Yet it has come to light that I have instead been simply giving points, and not been developing the experts behind it as I should. I aspire to correct this issue before moving onto my final methodology, something I never thought I'd say, and final conclusive paragraph.

Log Entry #106

2/12/20

I have just today learned that this will be the last log that is submitted alongside my research paper and it would be an understatement to say I was shocked to hear that the collection of my emotions, setbacks and triumphs, and research advancements would now come to a close. I am extremely proud of the work I have put in to make this log as accurate a representation of my unique research process and considering where it began, I would never have imagined it would have become so useful in paving the forward when times were tough. I will most likely continue this log for my own benefit until my paper is entirely

finished but until then it has been more than pleasant to reflect upon this portion of the process and revel in what it has done for me.