

**BOWDOIN COLLEGE**  
**GOVERNMENT & LEGAL STUDIES 2001**  
**WATERGATE AND AMERICAN POLITICS**  
**SPRING 2018**

**Prof. Andrew Rudalevige**

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*Office Hours: Monday 9:30-11:30; Thursday, 1-2; or by appointment*

The “third-rate burglary” at the Watergate complex in 1972 ultimately revealed broad abuses of presidential power, led to the resignation of the president, and lent its suffix to a wide range of scandals yet to be born. This course examines both Watergate itself and what it wrought in American politics. We’ll look at the history of the 1960s and 1970s but also, more broadly, at the relationship between the executive and legislative branches; at the war powers; the role of the press; campaign finance reform; governmental ethics, investigations, and impeachment; and the use of Watergate in political and popular culture. Readings for the course will include secondary literature from various fields, along with memoirs, court cases, and original archival materials (including the famous Watergate tapes.)

The following assigned books are available from various online sellers, including Bowdoin’s Chegg site: you are *strongly* encouraged to shop around. Other materials will be made available on reserve, normally on-line via the class Blackboard site.

- Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, *All the President’s Men* (Simon & Schuster, 2014)  
[other editions may be used]
- Stanley Kutler, *The Wars of Watergate* (Norton, 1992)
- Andrew Rudalevige, *The New Imperial Presidency: Renewing Presidential Power after Watergate* (University of Michigan Press, 2006)

*Not required, but a very useful one-volume biography:*

John A. Farrell, *Richard Nixon: The Life* (Doubleday, 2017)

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**Course requirements.** Final grades will be based on the following components. Due dates are subject to change, with notice, except for the final paper:

- A *short paper* (15%) and *brief in-class presentation* (5%) based on your research into an individual associated with Watergate – as conspirator, investigator, etc. -- and his or her role and legacy. Your subject will be assigned in the first week or so of the semester. Presentations will begin shortly thereafter, following a roughly chronological order based on your subject’s involvement in the scandal. Papers will be **due March 1**.
- A *review* of a popular treatment of Richard Nixon and/or Watergate (20%), grounded in your now-expansive knowledge of the facts of the man and the era. **Due April 10.**

*{continues overleaf}*

- *In-class reading exam* (25%), an identification test covering syllabus materials: **May 3.**
- A *policy case study paper* (30% total), researching the development of presidential-congressional relationships after Watergate in a subject area of your choice (within reason). **Due May 18, 5 p.m.** [in lieu of final exam.]
- *Course attendance and participation* will also factor into your final grade (5%). I expect regular attendance and vigorous in-class participation. The latter, obviously, cannot happen without the former.

*And keep in mind...*

If you are taking this course on a Credit/D/Fail basis, a 'credit' grade requires completion of all work for the course (exams, papers, etc.).

Late papers or other assignments will not receive full credit: extensions will be granted only in advance and in exigent circumstances.

Recent research universally holds that the use of computers as notetaking devices is counterproductive: the physical act of writing enables far more recall than does typing, and foregoing a computer provides far fewer potential distractions to yourself and others sitting near you. Further, my Powerpoint slides are made available to the class at regular intervals during the semester. **Thus I ask you not to use electronic devices of any kind during class.** Obviously there may be valid reasons for exceptions to this rule (for instance, see the next paragraph) and you should certainly approach me if you feel one is warranted.

Students requiring learning or testing accommodations need to be in contact with Lesley Levy in the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs. You are encouraged to address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Additional information can be found at <http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/student-handbook/college-policies/accommodation-policy.shtml>

I expect all students to be aware of and abide by the Bowdoin Academic Honor Code. It goes without saying – and yet I will say it! – that you are responsible for your own work. This means following the most stringent rules of quotation and citation in your written assignments. In this course we will use footnotes in the Chicago Manual of Style format, unless otherwise specified -- see [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)). If you have any questions or concerns about this, please consult me and/or a reference librarian. **Plagiarism is never acceptable** within a community of scholars (or, frankly, anywhere else); it is grounds not only for a failing grade on a given assignment or in the course but also, potentially, for dismissal from the College.

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***Watergate and American Politics: Schedule of Topics and Readings (subject to change, with notice)***  
(\* ) reserve reading, normally on Blackboard unless otherwise specified

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*January 23. Introductory session*

- (\* ) Michael Barbaro and Alexander Burns, "In Trump's Voice, It's a New New Nixon," *New York Times* (July 18, 2016), A1.

**Prelude: American Politics in the "Long 1960s"**

*January 25, 30. RN: Nixon and the 1960s*

Kutler, *Wars of Watergate*, Ch. 1-3

- (\* ) Evan Thomas, "The Lives of Great Men Remind Us," from *Being Nixon*
- (\* ) Richard Nixon, "Alger Hiss," from *Six Crises*
- (\* ) Richard Nixon, "Checkers" speech (September 23, 1952)
- (\* ) Robert Dallek, "Lyndon Johnson's War," from *Flawed Giant*

*February 1. The Politics of 1968*

- (\* ) Michael Nelson, *Resilient America: The Election of 1968*, excerpts
- (\* ) Rick Pearlstein, *Nixonland*, Ch. 9, 12, 14-15
- (\* ) Jacey Fortin and Maggie Astor, "50 Years Later, It Feels Familiar: How America Fractured in 1968," *New York Times* (January 15, 2018)

**Presidency and President**

*February 6. The Basics of Presidential Power.*

- (\* ) The Constitution of the United States, as amended
- (\* ) *The Federalist*, papers #51, 65, 68-70, 74
- Rudalevige, *New Imperial Presidency*, Ch. 1-2

*February 8, 13. Nixon in the White House, and on Capitol Hill*

Kutler, Ch. 4, 6-7

- (\* ) Joan Hoff, "Bold Attempts at Welfare, Health, and Economic Reform," from *Nixon Reconsidered*
- (\* ) William Safire, "Us and Them," from *Before the Fall*
- (\* ) Joel Aberbach and Bert Rockman, "Clashing Beliefs in the Executive Branch: The Nixon Administration Bureaucracy," *American Political Science Review* (1976)

**Watergate**

*February 15, 20. Dirty Tricks and Police Powers*

Rudalevige, Ch. 3

Bernstein and Woodward, *President's Men*, begin (Ch. 1-7)

Kutler, Ch. 5 & 8

- (\* ) James Rosen, "Nixon and the Chiefs," *The Atlantic* (April 2002)
- (\* ) selected White House tapes

February 22, 27. *The Cover-Up*

Kutler, Ch. 9-12

(\*) selected White House tapes

[Note: You will need to watch the film version of *All the President's Men* during this part of the semester, either on your own or in a scheduled group viewing.]

March 1. *The Cover-Up Unravels: The Media.*

Bernstein & Woodward, remainder

(\*) Edward Epstein, "Did the Press Discover Watergate?" from *Between Fact and Fiction*

(\*) James Mann, "Deep Throat: An Institutional Analysis," *The Atlantic* (May 1992)

March 6, 8. *The Cover-Up Unravels: Congress Investigates*

Kutler, Ch. 13-17

(\*) selected White House tapes

(\*) Richard Nixon, selected speeches on Watergate

[Note: No classes March 13-22. Enjoy spring break!]

March 27, 29. *The Cover-Up Unravels: The Tapes, and the Court*

Kutler, Ch. 18-19

(\*) H.L. Pohlman, "U.S. v. Nixon," from *Constitutional Debate in Action*

April 3. "Our Long National Nightmare is Over"?

Kutler, Ch. 20-21

(\*) statements by Presidents Nixon and Ford

Rudalevige, Ch. 4

[No class session April 5. Midwest Political Science Association Meetings.]

## **The World after Watergate: An Imperial, or Imperiled, Presidency?**

April 10. *Watergate and the Media, redux*

(\*) Larry Sabato, *Feeding Frenzy* (excerpt)

(\*) Steven E. Clayman et al., "A Watershed in White House Journalism: Explaining the Post-1968 Rise of Aggressive Presidential News," *Political Communication* 27 (2010): 227-43.

(\*) Marvin Kalb, *One Scandalous Story* (excerpt)

(\*) Clyde Haberman, "Amid Leaks, Recalling an Epic Battle Over Press Freedom in Nixon Era," *New York Times* (March 26, 2017).

(\*) Jack Shafer, "Who's Winning Trump's War with the Press? Assessing Year One," *Politico* (December 27, 2017)

April 12, 17. *Opening the -Gates: Ethics and Campaign Finance*

(\*) selected White House tapes

Kutler, *Wars*, pp. 574-85

Rudalevige, pp. 155-66, 253-55

(\*) *Morrison v. Olson* (1988)

- (\*) Victoria Farrar-Myers, "The Ripple Effect of Scandal and Reform," from *Watergate Remembered*
- (\*) Kenneth Vogel, "How the Koch Network Rivals the GOP," *Politico* (December 30, 2015)
- (\*) Lawrence Norden et al., "How Citizens United Changed Politics and Shaped the Tax Bill," *NYU Brennan Center* (December 14, 2017) – see too the links embedded therein

#### *April 19. Scandal and Impeachment*

- (\*) Presidential articles of impeachment (Johnson, Nixon, Clinton); review *Federalist* #65
- (\*) Nancy Kassop, "The Clinton Impeachment: Untangling the Web of Conflicting Considerations," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30 (June 2000): 359-73.
- (\*) Shaun Illing, "President Trump is Considering Pardoning Himself," *Vox* (July 21, 2017)
- (\*) Matthew Nussbaum, "The Definitive Timeline of Trump-Russia Events," *Politico* (updated December 1, 2017)

#### *April 24. The Imperial Presidency at Home?*

- Kutler, *Wars*, pp. 585-95
- Rudalevige, pp. 139-55, 167-92, 233-53
- (\*) *Clinton v. City of New York* (1998)
- (\*) Molly Reynolds, "Four Lessons from the Senate Tax Bill," Brookings Institution (December 2, 2017)
- (\*) Eric Cantor, "The Imperial Presidency," Office of the House Majority Leader (2014)
- (\*) Nick Tabor, "55 Ways Donald Trump Structurally Changed America in 2017," *New York* (December 21, 2017)
- (\*) Matthew Glassman, "Donald Trump is a Dangerously Weak President," *Vox* (December 27, 2017)

#### *April 26, May 1. Foreign Relations, the War Power, and Covert Operations*

- Kutler, *Wars*, pp. 595-607
- (\*) War Powers Resolution (1973) & veto message
- (\*) Authorization for the Use of Military Force (2001)
- Rudalevige, pp. 192-233
- (\*) Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Committee Study of the Central Intelligence Agency's Detention and Interrogation Programs* (December 2014)
- (\*) Christopher Pyle, "Barack Obama and Civil Liberties," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (December 2012)
- (\*) Charlie Savage, *Power Wars*, excerpt
- (\*) Andrew Rudalevige, "Here's Why the Trump Administration May Actually Want Congress to Pass a New Authorization for Military Force," *Washington Post* (November 20, 2017)

### **Concluding Thoughts**

#### *May 3. In-class exam.*

- (\*) "Richard M. Nixon: End of a Remarkable Career," *CQ Weekly Report* (August 10, 1974)

*May 8. The World After Watergate: Did the System Fail, or Succeed?*

(\*) Bernstein and Woodward, "40 Years after Watergate," *Washington Post* (June 8, 2012)

*Note: this is included as the afterword to the 2014 edition of ATPM*

Kutler, pp. 607-11 and Ch. 23

(\*) Hunter S. Thompson, "He Was a Crook," *Rolling Stone* (June 16, 1994)

(\*) President Bill Clinton, "Remarks at the Funeral of Richard Nixon," (April 27, 1994)

Rudalevige, pp. 255-59 and Ch. 8

*May 18, 5 p.m.: Final paper due*