

WU?@therep

FROST/NIXON

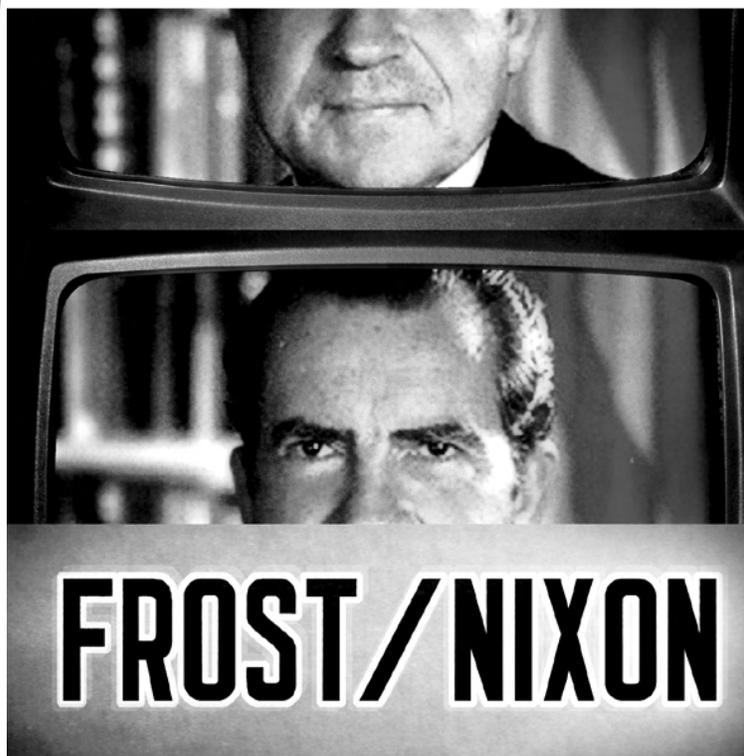
by Peter Morgan

Directed by Steven Woolf

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At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth slowing

down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), biographical information (**F&F**), historical context (**B4U**) and other bits and pieces (**HTH**). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

CU@therep!



The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials more accessible to students and easier for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, www.repstl.org, for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

NEATO!

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 5, 6, 7; FA 2, 3, 4, 5; SS 1, 2, 3, 6 and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25, 27.

MIHYAP: Top Ten Ways to Stay Connected at The Rep

10. TBA Ushers will seat your school or class as a group, so even if you are dying to mingle with the group from the all girls school that just walked in the door, stick with your friends until you have been shown your section in the theatre.

9. SITD The house lights will dim immediately before the performance begins and then go dark. Fight off that oh-so-immature urge to whisper, giggle like a grade schooler or yell at this time and during any other blackouts in the show.

8. SED Before the performance begins, turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and watch alarms. If you need to text, talk or dial back during intermission, please make sure to click off before the show resumes.

7. TMI Not to sound like your mom, but "if you need to go now, you needed to go then." Leaving the theatre during the performance is disruptive, so take care of any personal needs before the show starts.

6. RTM When you arrive at the theatre, read the production program. It's like a deluxe version of liner notes and a free souvenir, all in one.

5. P-ZA? NW! Though your ability to eat ten slices at one sitting may impress your friends, no one wants to listen to you chew, slurp or smack, so please leave all food, drink and gum outside the theatre.

4. TLK-2-U-L8R We know that you will be dying to discuss what you see onstage with your friends, but please wait until intermission. Any talking—even whispering—is very distracting for both the actors onstage and the audience seated around you.

3. LOL Without you, we really wouldn't have a show. It's your job to laugh when a scene is funny or maybe even shed a tear or two in a tender moment. However, since you are not the audience at *The Jerry Springer Show* please refrain from inappropriate responses such as talking, whistling, making catcalls or singing along with the performers.

2. SOP While it's great that you want a celeb picture of your day at The Rep, the theatre is off-limits to the paparazzi. Flash photography interrupts the performance and along with videorecording is prohibited by Actors Equity rules. You can sneak a peek at production photos on our website, www.repstl.org.

1. LLTA Let the actors know that you respect their work by remaining for the curtain call at the end of the performance. Show your appreciation through applause.

A/S/L

A man not particularly inclined to being social, RICHARD NIXON is a former president shrouded in secrecy and scandal.

Stuck as something like an *Entertainment Tonight* or *Access Hollywood* reporter, DAVID FROST craves the respect he feels he deserves as a real journalist.

JIM RESTON, a hard-nosed university lecturer, is bent on making Nixon confess to his involvement in the Watergate scandal.

Always ready to defend the former president, JACK BRENNAN is one of Nixon's closest advisors and friends.

Organized and experienced in broadcast television, JOHN BIRT is the first man Frost turns to for help when taking on the Nixon interview.

Wily and sometimes a little too slick, IRVING PAUL LAZAR (also known as SWIFTY LAZAR) is a legendary Hollywood agent currently representing Nixon for his interview with Frost.

BOB ZELNICK, a veteran Washington reporter, brings an added credibility to Frost's interview.

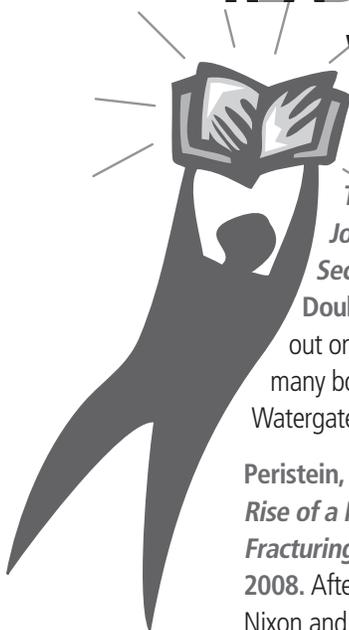
An attractive intellectual, CAROLINE CUSHING catches Frost's eye during a flight to California.

Besides having a cool name, EVONNE GOOLAGONG is a famous tennis player.

MANOLO SANCHEZ serves as Nixon's valet.

READ MORE ABOUT IT

We encourage you to explore the following books, movies and websites for more information.



Rosen, James. *The Strong Man: Jon Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate*. Doubleday, 2008. Check out one of James Rosen's many books on the subject of Watergate.

Peristein, Rick. *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America*. Scibner, 2008. After you've read up on Nixon and Watergate, check out the world in which they came to be. This book examines the state of the nation and what was happening before and during the time of Nixon's fall.

Nixon, 191 minutes, Walt Disney Video, 1999. Directed by Oliver Stone and starring Anthony Hopkins as Richard Nixon, this film is a biographical journey through the life of one of our most infamous presidents.

All the President's Men, 139 minutes, Warner Home Video, 1997. This Oscar-winning film classic starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman takes a look at another journalist pair investigating the scandal of Watergate—the famous Woodward and Bernstein.

<http://www.musarium.com/watergate.html> Want to see more on Watergate? Check out this online photo essay.

<http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/web/woodstein/> Interested in the behind-the-scenes stuff that went into Woodward and Bernstein's notes? Check out the Watergate papers on this website.

<http://www.rockthevote.com/home.html> Find out just how important your vote is, and check out some of the cool events inspiring people to vote.

<http://pbskids.org/democracy/mygovt/index.html> What is the government and what role does it play in your life? Take a look at this page and you'll see all the ways the government affects us.



AS *FROST/NIXON* OPENS, it's August 8, 1974, and a series of scandals have rocked the White House. Though jovial with the camera crew, Richard Nixon is all business once he goes live on national television to resign his post as President of the United States.

ALMOST IMMEDIATELY after his resignation, Nixon falls into a severe illness that prevents him from standing trial for his role in Watergate. Though he is fortunate enough to be granted a full pardon by his replacement as president (Gerald Ford), Nixon never has a chance to vindicate himself and tell his side of the story.

MEANWHILE, popular culture reporter David Frost has a scheme that might earn him real credibility as a journalist—give Nixon his chance to speak via an interview. Frost cannot gain such credibility, however, simply by giving Nixon a platform to speak. He's got to somehow make Nixon confess to his involvement in the Watergate scandal.

THOUGH NIXON is reluctant to talk, he is willing to allow legendary Hollywood agent Swifty Lazar to wheel and deal on his behalf with Frost. When Swifty is able to convince Frost to offer half a million dollars for the interview, Nixon believes the price is right. Further footwork from Lazar yields even more money, including unprecedented royalties and further payments down the line.

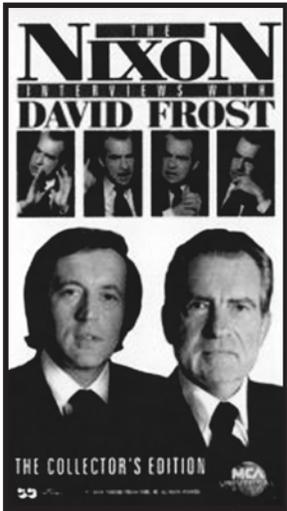
FROST QUICKLY sets to assembling a solid team around him for the interview including the supremely organized and experienced John Birt. Frost also surrounds himself with

credible Washington reporter Bob Zelnick and Jim Reston who is bent on getting a full confession out of Nixon. Meanwhile, close friend and advisor Jim Brennan assures the former president that the Frost interview will be a chance for Nixon to help bolster his image by erasing the shame of Watergate.

AS THE INTERVIEWS fire up, Frost is ready to have Nixon on his knees. Opening with the hard questions, it seems he has Nixon on the ropes from the very beginning. However, the seasoned lawyer and politician doesn't respond the way Frost thought. Over the course of a series of interviews Frost continually attempts to draw out the scandal while Nixon comes away smelling like a rose.

CLOSING IN on the final day, Frost's team is desperate to make something of the interviews. Though seemingly calm and cool, even Frost himself is beginning to unravel. Luckily, some research that Reston stumbles upon holds the missing link the team needs. When Frost enters the final interview, he's armed and ready to take Nixon down.

AS THE INTERVIEW begins, the tide seems to have changed. With each question, Nixon digs himself further and further into guilt. Even a last ditch effort by Brennan cannot save Nixon, as in the end he gives over to Frost and admits his role in Watergate.





AESCHYLUS: a famous ancient Greek playwright best known for his trilogy the *Oresteia*, which consists of the tragedies *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroe* and *Eumenides*

HUBRIS: excessive pride or self-confidence

IMPEACHMENT: to charge a public official with misconduct in office

ABHORRENT: inspiring disgust and loathing; repugnant

SYNDICATED: published or broadcast simultaneously in a number of newspapers, television stations, etc.

ABORIGINAL: inhabiting or existing in a land from the earliest times or from before the arrival of colonists

DILETTANTES: persons who cultivate an area of interest, such as the arts, without real commitment or knowledge

PHLEBITIS: inflammation of a vein

QUINTESSENTIAL: representing the most perfect or typical example of a quality or class

INCONGRUOUS: not in harmony or keeping with the surroundings or other aspects

EFFEMINATE: having or showing the characteristics regarded as typical of a woman; unmanly

EXONERATED: absolved or released from blame, fault or wrongdoing

TELEXES: international telegraphs

DELUGE: a great quantity or flood of something

HOMILIES: tedious moralizing speeches

DUPLICITY: deceit; double-dealing

LITANY: a repetitive chant or series

HORTICULTURAL: having to do with the art or practice of garden cultivation and management

CALAMITOUS: disastrous and distressful

FLAGELLATION: beating someone with a whip or stick as punishment or torture

WHO'S WHO?

KEY PEOPLE MENTIONED IN THE PLAY

JACK ANDERSON: Journalist for the *Washington Post*

ALEXANDER BUTTERFIELD: Deputy Assistant to President Nixon

CHARLES COLSON:
White House Special Counsel

JOHN CONNALLY: Secretary of the Treasury

JOHN EHRLICHMAN:
Chief Domestic Affairs Advisor

PAT GREY: Director of the FBI

AL HAIG: Chief of Staff (1973–74)

BOB HALDEMAN: Chief of Staff (1969–73)

HENRY KISSINGER: Secretary of State

TRICIA NIXON: Nixon's eldest daughter

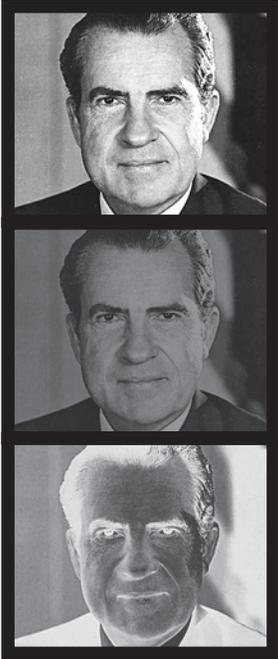
MIKE WALLACE: Anchorman of *60 Minutes*



WHILE *FROST/NIXON* takes certain liberties in telling the story of the Frost/Nixon television interview, it is based on real people and events in American history. The subject of various films, books, news articles, television shows and more, Richard Nixon is one of the most controversial figures ever in American government.

RICHARD MILHOUS NIXON was born on January 9, 1913 to Frank and Hannah Nixon. His father taught him the value of hard work through the family business, and his mother taught him Quaker family values as she stayed home and raised the family. Between struggling financially (Nixon grew up during the Depression) and caring for oft-unwell siblings (two of Nixon's four siblings died during childhood from tuberculosis), Nixon's parents didn't have enough time to give Richard. While he never blamed them, his parents helped to shape a shy, lonesome adult.

AS A YOUNG MAN, Nixon offset his social awkwardness with scholastic achievement. Offered scholarships to both Harvard and Yale, Nixon finally decided on Whittier College due to economic circumstances. Nixon made the most of his college years, shining as a fierce debater, an energetic actor and was even a member of the college football team (though he often sat the bench). Nixon graduated second in his class from Whittier College, going on to Duke University School of Law on a full scholarship. He continued to stand out as a graduate student, finishing third in his class.



AFTER LAW SCHOOL, Nixon returned back home to work in a law office. He was not pleased, however, with merely being a small town lawyer. The success he tasted in college made him desire more action—the kind of action found in Washington and politics. In 1946, Nixon got his shot at Congress, defeating opponent Jerry Voorhis on an aggressive anti-communist campaign that linked Voorhis to communist sentiment (communism was often considered a social, political and economic system standing in direct opposition to capitalism). In 1950, Nixon moved up from the House of Representatives to the Senate, again on the strength of an anti-communist platform.

BY 1952, it seemed Nixon's rise to power was almost complete. As vice president to Dwight Eisenhower, Nixon seemed to be laying the groundwork for an upcoming presidential bid. In fact, Nixon even had on-the-job experience, stepping in to run the government for Eisenhower on three separate occasions (Nixon was the first vice president to do so).

HOWEVER, when Nixon's big chance came in 1960, he lost narrowly to a young John F. Kennedy. Historians say it was the invention of the televised debate that did Nixon in, as during the first of their four debates he was recovering from illness and was unshaven. A clean, charismatic Kennedy edged Nixon out in the election, sending Nixon home to sulk. In 1962 (after losing the California governor's race), Nixon announced his retirement from politics. He resurfaced, however, in 1968 with a bid that made him the 37th president of the United States.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Though he lies and covers up the scandal for most of the play, Nixon eventually comes clean with Frost, owning up to all of the mistakes that he's made. When you've made mistakes in your life, how have you dealt with them once you've been caught? Did you blame other people or did you take responsibility for your own actions? What if you hadn't been caught?

TRUTH

Amid the media frenzy, everyone seems to have their own agendas about what the interviews should yield. Frost wants to revive his career, Reston wants to crucify the former conservative president and Nixon wants to be free of the Watergate scandal. No one seems truly interested in reporting the story—reporting the truth. Even though they ended up with the truth in the play, were any of the characters right in what they did? Once they found the truth, how did they react to it? Have there been situations in your life in which you ignored the truth and instead pursued your own desires?

GUILT BY ASSOCIATION

Though Nixon was not a part of the initial robbery at Watergate, he was a part of the cover up. He felt that if the robbery were to be made public, he would be considered guilty by association. Instead of doing what was right, he tried to hide the situation, only making things worse. Have you ever been in a situation where you knew someone was doing something wrong, but you didn't tell because you were afraid you'd get in trouble too? What would have happened if you would've told immediately? What happened because you waited?

LEGAL ILLEGALITY

In the play, Nixon begins to argue that what he did was legal because it served a stronger purpose—the betterment of the American people. That is to say, he justified doing something wrong by saying it led to a greater good. Do you agree with Nixon—does the end justify the means?



BU

THOUGH OFTEN regarded with disgrace, Richard Nixon's presidency was not merely a series of obscure scandals hidden from the public eye. Though he brought a lot of shame upon himself and his country, Nixon also worked hard to improve the nation he loved and believed in.

MOST PROMINENT in Nixon's contributions to America were his core values centered on New Federalism. Essentially New Federalism was all about breaking down big government (and the money invested in it) and balancing the power more with state and local authorities. This helped Nixon cut costs while allowing the government to more quickly and effectively respond to the needs of the people.

RICHARD NIXON was also a champion of civil rights, boldly setting out to desegregate schools in the South. He was sensitive to the rights of both women and men, increasing the number of female appointments in administrative positions in Washington.

WHILE WE MAY take environmental efforts for granted today, Nixon spearheaded the movement with the Clean Air Act of 1970. He also initiated two agencies that continue to work hard today, the Department of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency.

HAVING MAJOR SUCCESS in diplomatic relations with China (a country cut off from America and the West for almost 30 years), Nixon opened up new doors for American foreign policy. As a cornerstone to our modern-day policy, Nixon established what would be called the Nixon Doctrine—a commitment to aiding third world democratic nations with financial and military aid (though not troops).

FOR ALL THE GOOD Nixon would do in office, however, there were some issues that he simply could not address adequately. Most notably was the Vietnam War, a conflict centered on Vietnam's internal struggle to find itself as a nation. Having recently been released from colonial rule by France, strife broke out between North Vietnam and South Vietnam as they attempted to come together as a unified country. The North Vietnamese favored a communist government while South Vietnam wanted a free democracy. The United States harbored a severe distrust for anything communist and three of Nixon's predecessors (Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson) became ever more involved (along with American military forces) with the growing conflict, siding with the South Vietnamese. Meanwhile, countries like China and the Soviet Union took interest in the



conflict, though siding with the North Vietnamese.

THE TANGLED MESS came to a head during Nixon's presidency, and he promised to end the war during his election campaign in 1968. The war's rising unpopularity and American death toll seemed to make for an easy rationale to withdraw, but privately Nixon could not stand to be the only president in office to lose a war. His strategy to remove troops counter-intuitively included broadening the scope of U.S. involvement, a tricky process that drug on until 1973. In January 1973, more than four years after Nixon's promise, the United States finally pulled out of Vietnam completely.

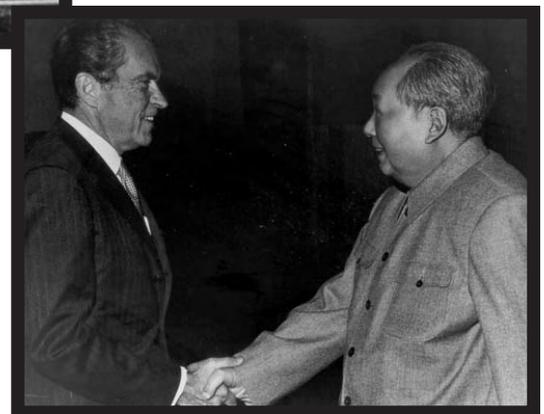
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, questionable negotiation tactics (including secret bombings) came to light in 1969, drawing further criticism to the President. Nothing could match what would happen in 1972, however. The Committee to Re-elect the President (also known as CREEP) was caught burglarizing the Democratic National Committee offices in the Watergate Hotel. Though Nixon had no knowledge of the robbery nor did he endorse it, he feared if the crime got out he would not be re-

elected. He swiftly took to covering up the robbery by ordering the FBI to halt its investigation while forking out hush money to the burglars.

AN INTRICATE cat and mouse played out on the evening news each night, as journalists dug further and further into the scandal. The main tug of war involved tapes of White House conversations held by Nixon, which were finally released only in edited transcript form just prior to Nixon's resignation.

DESPITE ALL of his efforts, the truth slowly came to light. By 1974, the White House had been implicated in the scandal, and Nixon was forced to resign the presidency. As in the play, the intimate details would not come out until much later, but everyone saw the writing on the wall—Nixon was guilty.

THOUGH HE CONTINUED to advise later presidents because of his foreign policy savvy, Richard Nixon's legacy remains forever tainted by the Watergate scandal. He died from a severe stroke in 1994, never fully escaping the guilt brought upon him by his presidential actions.



VOTE!

A PLAY LIKE *Frost/Nixon* might make you think of the government as a corrupt, petty organization driven by scandals and run by thieves. While the play does illuminate what can go terribly wrong, it offers us a solution in the matter—getting involved yourself and making your voice heard.

THOUGH VOTER REGISTRATION is at an all-time high, recent numbers show that actual voter participation is not. Why should you vote when you have the opportunity, or encourage those around you to vote? Well, first of all, it's your right as an American citizen, and whether you like it or not, you live under a government that provides a vast array of services to you, your friends and your family on a daily basis. Think about it—the parks you enjoy? The government runs those. They provide protection and safety services for the community as well, by way of police and firefighters. The library, the transportation systems we utilize, even public schooling is all thanks to the government.

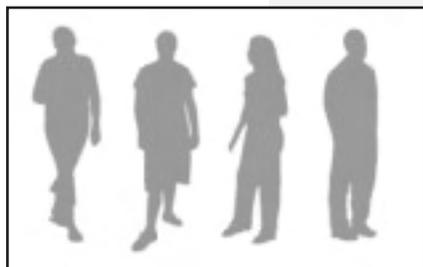
WHAT DOES YOUR VOTE have to do with any of these things? Well, when you vote for a politician you consider his or her position on items like health care and education. Once elected, a politician will make decisions that will affect the issues. The vote you cast may influence how many new schools are built or how many new police officers are walking the beat in your neighborhood; and

let's not forget, if you're going to pay the taxes to fund all of these programs, wouldn't you like a say in how they're carried out?

NOW I KNOW what you're thinking, "But one vote doesn't count! Nobody will miss me if I don't vote." Wrong! Did you know that had it not been for one single vote, California, Idaho, Oregon, Texas and Washington would not have become states? And maybe you didn't know that Lyndon B. Johnson won his seat in the senate by one vote? Were it not for that victory, he may not have later moved on to become our president! And what if everybody thought his or her one vote didn't count? Then no one would be heard!

NOW MORE THAN EVER, your vote (and that of your friends) is crucial to the direction our country takes. The young voters of America (age 18–29) are a growing part of the voting population, comprising 44 million people. That's more than one-fifth of the overall voting population! You can be a part of helping your country forward.

IF YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH to vote and are registered, make your voice heard. If you are old enough but aren't registered, get registered as soon as you can. It might just be your vote that makes all difference.



- * Have you ever voted in an election?
- * What inspired you to make your choice?

IRL²

IN THE PLAY, David Frost does not relent in his pursuit of a full confession from Richard Nixon. Though technically Nixon had been fully pardoned by President Ford, both Frost and Reston were bent on using the interview as a trial for Nixon. For them, the role of the media was to convict a man they felt was guilty of a crime. Today's celebrity culture, however, has placed the media in a whole new light. What is the role of the media today, and what responsibility do they owe the general public?

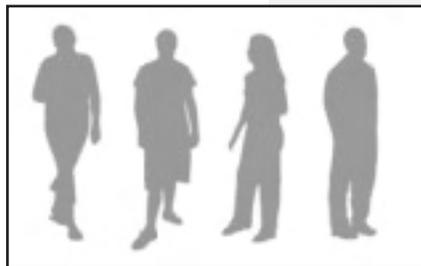
NOW MORE THAN EVER, Americans enjoy the benefits of an information superhighway—instant updates on the internet, in-depth coverage on cable television, news that goes with you on your cell phone, and much, much more. Each outlet for news and information is called a mass medium, or all together they make up the mass media. Each has the potential to reach a larger audience than just one or two people. In fact, today's mass media can reach all corners of the globe, literally billions of people. It's no wonder that it's nearly impossible to live in today's society and not be influenced by some sort of mass medium or another. The information is everywhere!

THE BENEFITS OF mass media include easy access to almost any conceivable notion, from a local news article about the St. Louis Cardinals to Wikipedia's account of the French Revolution to Brad Pitt's

favorite flavor of ice cream. It's all at your fingertips, just waiting for you to access it. Another benefit of mass media is a kind of checks and balances service for governments, corporations and other organizations. Though we often think of these entities as too big to be messed with, no one is immune to the media. With the freedom of the press, journalists can reveal scandals of all kinds, just like in the play.

WHILE ALL THE POWER of the media may seem like the best thing since sliced bread, that power unchecked could lead to some problematic situations. Luckily, there are a series of loosely bound ethics for those working in the various media outlets. Truth in journalism is a key standard for the integrity of reporting, while journalists must also consider the taste of a story presented to the public. Standards are established for the respect of privacy as well as the manipulation of the news.

TODAY, THE LINES of ethical and unethical are continually skewed, as the horizons of mass media expand further on the internet and beyond. With this expansion comes an expansion of audience, since anyone can receive any information at any time. In direct conflict with regulation of the information, however, is the freedom of speech. Questions of privacy, taste, truth and manipulation continue to refine what we receive and how we receive it.



- * What it is that we have a right to know? What it is that we don't?
- * How has today's media changed the way we view public figures?



SWDYT?

"Aeschylus and his Greek contemporaries believed that the gods begrudged human success, and would send a curse of 'hubris' on a person at the height of their powers; a loss of sanity that would eventually bring about their downfall. Nowadays, we give the gods less credit. We prefer to call it self-destruction."

- * Before we get a chance to fully understand what it is that's happened to Nixon, Reston begs the question of accountability. He notes that ancient people might have blamed the gods for bad fortune, while today we own both our success and our failures. Do you agree with Reston? When you are successful, who is the cause of your success? When you fail, is it your fault?

"... And so, I say to all of you, be proud of what you have done. Continue to give your best. Never be discouraged. Never be petty. Always remember, others may hate you, but those who hate you don't win unless you hate them and then destroy yourself!"

- * In spite of being hated by the world, Nixon remains proud and stands tall. He encourages his staff to remember all of the good things they've done, as opposed to dwelling on the final moment of despair. When you're faced with a hard moment in life, do you simply give in and give up? Or do you keep your head held high and honor the accomplishments you've forged?

"What makes life mean something is purpose. A goal. The battle. The struggle. Even if you don't win it."

- * While we all want to retire and take it easy, Nixon points out that there's a reason we all work. Sure, we all need to contribute to society in order for it to work, but just putting in our time isn't enough. Nixon believes that life is about chasing your dreams, fighting the good fight and enjoying the ride whether you achieve or not. What is important in your life? What goals are you reaching for? What ideals are you fighting for? What can the journey to attain these things teach you?

"The first and greatest sin of television is that it simplifies. Diminishes. Great, complex ideas, tranches of time, whole careers, become reduced to a single snapshot."

- * In Nixon's first attempt at the presidency, he lost because of his television debates with John F. Kennedy. Those who watched the debates on television said that Kennedy clearly won, though individuals who listened to radio broadcasts of the same debates said that Nixon had won. Why do think the different audiences reached different conclusions? What can we tell by seeing a person that we can't by just hearing them? And what about the other way around—what can we tell by hearing that we can't by seeing?