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### All the President's Men

In the 1970s during which the film *All the President's Men* is set, and therefore the period during which the Watergate Scandal occurred, practically every facet of daily American life was changing. American journalism both affected and was effected by this array of social and political changes, as new types of journalism became more popular. Journalism during the 1970s was characterized by the growth of "gonzo" journalism, which effectively throws out any claims of objectivity of reporting. While there is not an explicit example of gonzo journalism in the film, it is important to discuss when comparing the journalism of the 1970s to modern journalism because it has influenced the more personal, opinion-based reporting that is prominent today.

The most significant form of journalism portrayed in the film is investigative journalism, which was also very popular during the 1970s. Woodward and Bernstein represent the best parts of journalism's "watchdog" role concerning the actions of the government, which is best exemplified in the scene in the film in which Woodward is furiously typing the story while Nixon is giving a speech concerning in his speech about a second term. The journalism of today is arguably less investigative and more concerned with public journalism and the concerns of the political spectrum of American society. In the film, the last scene shows how long the Watergate story really took to develop fully, spanning over at least about a year. However, with the existence of the internet and social media as well as "hacktivists," a story such as Watergate would not be allowed to develop as slowly in today's era of journalism.

The most obvious difference between the periods of journalism is the difference in technology used by journalists in both research and reporting. In the film, Bernstein and Woodward can be seen doing research for their story by searching through huge tomes of phone books and other records or meticulously sifting through Library of Congress research cards in order to find out what they need to know. If a case such as the Watergate incident were to develop today, a journalist could use a vast array of public and private databases that would store important information about prominent members of American society. A reporter today would

also have the advantage of the Internet and social media which would give them greater avenues of research and also communication. In the film, Woodward and Bernstein are limited to taking notes on traditional pads of paper and are limited to using traditional corded phones or phone booths while journalists today have the advantage of personal laptops and cell phones.

An important difference between the journalism of yesteryear and today is the relationship between the media and the government and the relationship between the media and the American people. The events of the Watergate scandal and the subsequent articles and investigation leading to the resignation may have shown that journalists in the 1970s could be devoted to exposing corruption in the government, but it also led to the growing distrust in both of these relationships. The aftereffects of this growth of distrust can be seen in the distrust of the media that is encouraged by President Trump and the rise of “fake news” as well as the American public’s continued distrust of established media and the shift in trust towards social media sound bytes as a credible source of news.