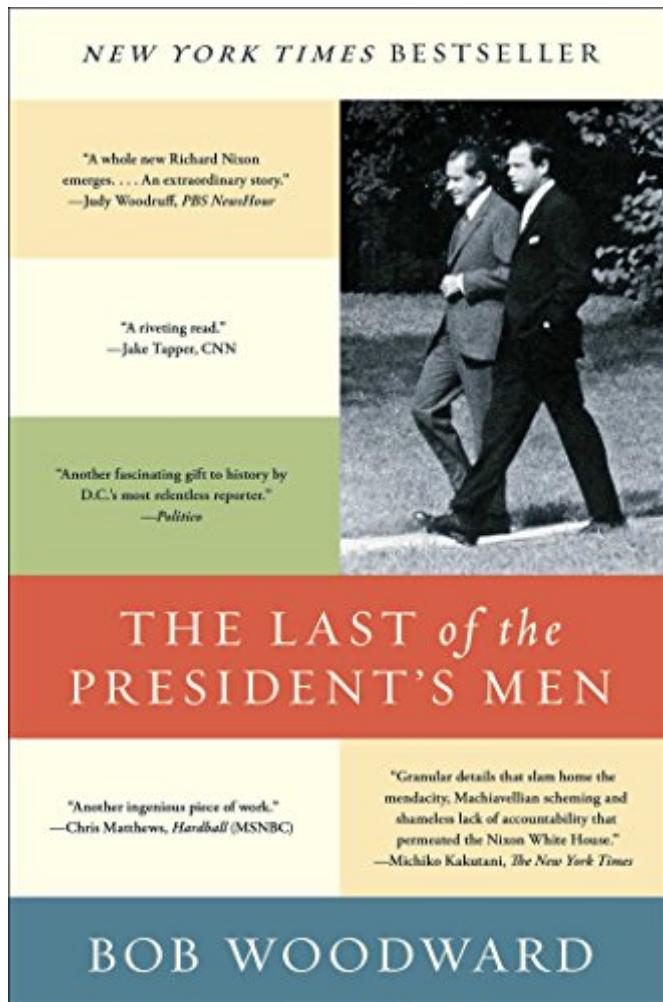


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The Last Of The President's Men



Synopsis

Bob Woodward exposes one of the final pieces of the Richard Nixon puzzle in his new book *The Last of the President's Men*. Woodward reveals the untold story of Alexander Butterfield, the Nixon aide who disclosed the secret White House taping system that changed history and led to Nixon's resignation. In forty-six hours of interviews with Butterfield, supported by thousands of documents, many of them original and not in the presidential archives and libraries, Woodward has uncovered new dimensions of Nixon's secrets, obsessions and deceptions. *The Last of the President's Men* could not be more timely and relevant as voters question how much do we know about those who are now seeking the presidency in 2016 •what really drives them, how do they really make decisions, who do they surround themselves with, and what are their true political and personal values?

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Customer Reviews

Richard Nixon was thinking towards posterity when he ordered taping machines to be added to the Oval Office and the Cabinet Room and telephones in both rooms. Later, machines were added to other places Nixon used for meetings. The machines were voice-activated and Nixon did not have

to decide who or what to record. Everything was recorded - not always so clearly - and most on Nixon's staff were unaware that the machines were there. One of the few who did was Alexander Butterfield, hired on as an assistant to Nixon's close assistant, Bob Haldeman. Butterfield had been in charge of having the system installed. The system remained secret and was only disclosed during the Watergate hearings. Alexander Butterfield, at age 89, is one of the few Nixon confidants still alive and he worked with author Bob Woodward on Woodward's newest book, "The Last of the President's Men". Using interviews between the two men and an unpublished manuscript of Butterfield's, Woodward gives a fairly straight-forward account of Butterfield's time in the Nixon White House and the devastating consequences when the existence of the tapes were disclosed in the Watergate hearings in July, 1973. For the next year - the tapes and what was on them - was one of the main sources of conversation and speculation from Washington out to the rest of America. Richard Nixon wasn't the first president to have a taping system in his White House, but the others devices seemed to be the type where the president had to decide to record. Nixon's tapes recorded everything - theoretically, anyway. Nixon wanted to preserve his administration in the history books he was planning to write, and having correct tapes of conversations was necessary. The president seemed to forget about the existence of the recordings, which were full of both "official" discussions, but quite a few "off the record" ones, as well. It was the latter that got Nixon - and his staff - into trouble. Butterfield gives details on the Watergate Hearings, where he was "ground zero" on the tapes. Later, he wondered why he had disclosed the existence of the tapes. But I suppose even if he hadn't, these ultra-secret tapes would somehow have come to light. Alexander Butterfield's book is both a history of the taping system which ended in the Watergate Hearings, but also gives a pretty good look at Richard Nixon the man. Nixon was capable of petty tyranny...and words of compassion. He was both physically and emotionally awkward. There have been many good biographies of Richard Nixon which sketch his character in much fuller detail than the Butterfield/Woodward book. This book looks at a pretty important - though small in time - portion of Nixon's life. Butterfield is also candid about the others he worked with in the White House, and looks at Nixon's views of those who both surrounded him at work, but also in the wider world. His "Enemies List" was not even a secret at the time. Butterfield's time in the White House covered a very important time in US history and the authors are not shy in giving the ins and out of both foreign and domestic policies. The chapters on the Vietnam war are particularly insightful; "everyone lies" seemed to be an SOP in Nixon's White House. Curiously, the Butterfield/Woodward book is not particularly long. The text in the e-book is about 160 pages long and the rest is devoted to Documents, Index, and Acknowledgements. "The Last of the President's Men" is a good read for

those interested in Watergate and the times. Richard Nixon IS preserved for posterity...

Bob Woodward raised expectations more than he delivered in this Watergate follow-up. There is some interesting material on Alexander Butterfield (the subject of the book) and also some speculation re his motives. But, what we are told in the introduction is that Butterfield apparently made off with a great deal of historical material from the Nixon Administration, and little of that seems to have made the editor's cut. The result is an overall average appendage to the Watergate story -- usefull for those interested in the case but less than what it could have been with more effort.

It seemed a long shot: after so many years much could be disclosed about Watergate. Typically, Bob Woodward is at his best giving his reader the sense of having an insider's view in the high places of political power. But even this priestly position can't make a paucity of new topical information stretch into a book-length manuscript. The jaunts into Vietnam tries this reader's patience. A Watergate junky can get pulled into what material is offered on the topic. Otherwise, this book is a curious addition to Mr. Woodward's bibliography.

An incredible work by Bod Woodward. The Last of the President's Men close the chapter of Nixon Era with great details. This is a work that you are forced to revisit every now and then, full of details, information from a man that was paranoid.I strongly suggest this reading. You can finish the book in two days because it would forced you to keep reading it, even if you do not like Woodward writing style.

I enjoyed this look into Mr. Butterfield by Bob Woodward. I had viewed him as sort of the hero who told the committee there were tapes of all conversations in the oval office. To me he was just a one dimensional person. This book shows the good and bad sides and still is fair to Mr Butterfield. It is a fast read but that doesn't mean it is light reading, just interesting enough to make me keep turning the pages.

It was a close call between a 3 star and a 4 star rating. After all that's been written about Nixon, I realized that there can't be much more to learn about him. The title of the book actually hints at this. When I read about history, I like to find out what the people "were really like." In this regard, the book was well worth reading, at least for me, On the other hand, I can understand why some

reviewers were disappointed with the book's length, its low level of new content, and its price. Perhaps Woodward did use the Vietnam War as "filler" and maybe what was new could have been covered in a magazine article, however, I think he did a good job of putting Butterfield's story together in a well written composition. It's worth reading.

(Refers to the audio book version - Campbell Scott was excellent as the reader!) Very excellent book! Please disregard comments from those that give the book one star. Obviously these people did not bother to read the book. It is not about Bob Woodward's opinion of President Nixon's administration as Woodward only gives very minor thoughts on this issue. The book is about Colonel Alexander Butterfield's time as an aide to the President and Butterfield's thoughts toward the President. Backed up by numerous memorandum, Butterfield gives a conflicted view of an administration he tried hard to work with and like. For those that are interested seeing the inner workings of the White House, add this to your library!

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