

# Annotated Film Bibliography

## Political Science 121 – Introduction to US Government

Lough, A. B. (Writer and Director). (2018). *Alt right: Age of rage*. [Documentary].

United States: Gravitass Ventures.

*In the first year of Donald Trump's presidency, Daryle Lamont Jenkins, an Antifa activist, combats the rise of the alt-right movement, while Richard Spencer, an alt-right leader, fights to gain ground, culminating in a tragic showdown in Charlottesville.*

Second Thought. (Writer and Producer). (2020). *America's two-party corporate*

*duopoly*. [Video]. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vW->

*ImCVDsWk*

*The two major parties aren't as different as you think they are. Democratic and Republican voters are more divided than ever, but that's not the case for elected officials. In this episode, we'll discuss the similarities between the two major parties, and consider whether trying to build a competitive third party would make a difference.*

Pillischer, M. (Producer and Director). (2012). *Broken on all sides*. [Documentary].

United States. Matthew Pillischer.

*The project began as a way to explore, educate about, and advocate change around the overcrowding of the Philadelphia county jail system. The documentary has come to focus on mass incarceration across the nation and the intersection of race and poverty within the criminal justice and penal systems. The feature-length documentary will be available for activists and educators to use in order to raise consciousness and organize for change. After its completion, the director, Matthew Pillischer, hopes to tour the documentary, setting up meetings in cities across the country, where a screening of the movie can kick off discussions by formerly incarcerated people and allies on how we can dismantle the system of mass incarceration. The documentary centers around the theory put forward by many, and most recently by Michelle Alexander (who appears in the movie), that mass incarceration has become "The New Jim Crow." That is, since the rise of the drug war and the explosion of the prison population, and because discretion within the system allows for arrest and prosecution of people of color at alarmingly higher rates than whites, prisons and criminal penalties have become a new version of Jim Crow. Much of the discrimination that was legal in the Jim Crow era is today illegal when applied to black people but perfectly legal when applied to "criminals." The problem is that through conscious and unconscious choices, black people have been targeted at significantly higher rates for arrest and prosecution. So, where does this leave criminal justice? Through interviews with people on many sides of the criminal justice system, this documentary will aim to answer questions and provoke questions on an issue walled-off from the public's scrutiny.*

**Minault, E. (Director). (2020). *Crash: Are we ready for the next big crisis?***

**[Documentary]. France: Java Films; Yuzu Productions.**

*After the last financial crisis everyone agreed that the system needed to change. But since then, our sense of distrust in the markets has grown. Now, with fears of another bust looming, what can be done to restore trust in the bankers? Since the 70s, the idea that self-regulation is the best and most efficient way to govern the markets has taken root. Even after the crash of 2008, there has been no major change in the way in which bankers work. Instead, a shadow finance industry has been allowed to develop, enabling the rich to avoid paying tax and creating financial and political instability. There's a pervading sense that our politicians are mainly interested in protecting the markets and that the system is rigged to serve the rich. But as we face the biggest challenge of our time, which is also the biggest risk of causing economic shock, could this be about to change? By looking back at past crisis and examining the challenges faced today, this investigation reveals how we can reclaim the reigns of finance – and reinvent it.*

**Duong, R. (Director). (2019). *David Graeber about bullshit jobs.* [Documentary].**

**Netherlands: VPRO Productions.**

*What is a bullshit job, and who has a bullshit job? Do you think that your work has no sense? Then you likely have a bullshit job, that does not bring any satisfaction or any other benefit. In this documentary vpro and American anthropologist, David Graeber looks more closely at bullshit jobs, why they exist, and what they do with us. More than twenty percent of working people in the West have the idea that what they do makes no sense at all. Yet they work themselves into an accident and earn billions together. Why don't we just quit those bullshit jobs? There are even people who know for sure that their work is not contributing. Sometimes their work goes against all their principles. It is work that if it were not done, nobody would miss it. The world would be even better if the work were not done. The phenomenon "bullshit job" was put on the map by the American anthropologist David Graeber. The image he paints explains a lot of contemporary phenomena, which economists, sociologists and political scientists have previously been unaware of. The expanding bureaucracy in companies, for example, where nothing or nobody becomes more effective or productive. According to Graeber, today's managerial culture is a new feudal system, within which top managers build their kingdoms under the flag of efficiency. The building blocks are useless departments where people lose their way. But there are (former) employees that are no longer willing to go on with their bullshit jobs. They have left behind their work at the government, in companies or multinationals. Their work, they say, makes no sense. They paint a shocking picture of an office garden in which the employee's most important task is to play a role in the bullshit puppet show. How long do we still believe in paid work as the highest attainable goal in life?*

**Shockley, J. (Producer and Director). (2009). *Golden rule: The investment theory of politics.* [Documentary]. United States: Available at:**

**<http://goldenruledocumentary.blogspot.com/>**

*This film is based on Thomas Ferguson's book Golden Rule: The Investment Theory of Party Competition and the Logic of Money-Driven Political Systems. Many people appear in it, but it is based primarily on a 5 hour interview I conducted with Ferguson (with the help of 2 fellow youtubers), and on numerous appearances & interviews with Noam Chomsky. The film offers an in depth look at the influence of money in politics--analyzing social forces and events that the*

*mainstream media and scholarship have largely distorted or kept hidden. It also analyzes the meaning of democracy.*

**Ambros, J. (Writer and Director). (2015). *Immanent threat*. [Documentary]. United States: Assembly Line Entertainment.**

*From the Authorization to Use Military Force passed by Congress immediately after 9/11 to the 2014 NSA revelations from Edward Snowden, the documentary looks at the violations of our civil liberties and gradual deterioration of political discourse. Interviewees cross party lines and include members of the U.S. Congress, Code Pink, A.C.L.U. and the Cato Institute.*

**Talbot, S. & Kaplan S. (Producers). (1999). *Justice for sale (Frontline)*. [Television broadcast]. New York: Public Broadcasting Service.**

*Campaign financing is a serious issue in the executive and legislative branches. But has the judicial branch fallen prey to the mad scramble for money too? Bill Moyers investigates the problem of campaign cash in the branch which can probably least afford to be bought and paid for by special interests.*

**Kennebeck, S. (Director and Producer). (2016). *National bird*. [Documentary]. United States: Ten Forward Films.**

*National Bird follows the dramatic journey of three whistleblowers who are determined to break the silence around one of the most controversial current affairs issues of our time: the secret U.S. drone war. At the center of the film are three U.S. military veterans. Plagued by guilt over participating in the killing of faceless people in foreign countries, they decide to speak out publicly, despite the possible consequences. Their stories take dramatic turns, leading one of the protagonists to Afghanistan where she learns about a horrendous incident. But her journey also gives hope for peace and redemption. National Bird gives rare insight into the U.S. drone program through the eyes of veterans and survivors, connecting their stories as never seen before in a documentary. Its images haunt the audience and bring a faraway issue close to home.*

**Oscar, C. & Hecker, D. (Producer, Writer, Director). (2013). *Project Censored: The movie*. [Documentary]. United States: Hole in the Media Productions.**

*Project Censored The Movie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News takes an in depth look at what is wrong with the news media in the US today and highlights the work of 37 year veteran media democracy organization Project Censored (PC) and their commitment to media literacy education as an antidote to top-down, managed news propaganda and censorship. This film, made by former PC Sonoma State University student Doug Hecker and longtime Project supporter Christopher Oscar, features original interviews about PC and media censorship with Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn, Michael Parenti, Greg Palast, Oliver Stone, Daniel Ellsberg, Peter Kuznick, Cynthia McKinney, Nora Barrows-Friedman, John Perkins, Jonah Raskin, Khalil Bendib, Pacifica and KPFA Free Speech Radio personalities, Abby Martin of Breaking the Set, Al Jazeera English, several PC affiliated faculty, students, and features Project founder Dr. Carl Jensen, former director and president of the Media Freedom Foundation Dr. Peter Phillips, current director Prof. Mickey Huff, and associate director Dr. Andy Lee Roth and much, much MORE!*

Hutchison, P., Nykes, K., Scott, J. (Producers and Directors). (2016). *Requiem for the American dream*. United States: Naked City Films.

*REQUIEM FOR THE AMERICAN DREAM is the definitive discourse with Noam Chomsky, widely regarded as the most important intellectual alive, on the defining characteristic of our time - the deliberate concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a select few. Through interviews filmed over four years, Chomsky unpacks the principles that have brought us to the crossroads of historically unprecedented inequality - tracing a half century of policies designed to favor the most wealthy at the expense of the majority - while also looking back on his own life of activism and political participation. Profoundly personal and thought provoking, Chomsky provides penetrating insight into what may well be the lasting legacy of our time - the death of the middle class, and swan song of functioning democracy. A potent reminder that power ultimately rests in the hands of the governed, REQUIEM is required viewing for all who maintain hope in a shared stake in the future.*

Peabody, F. (Director). (2018). *The corporate coup d'état*. [Documentary]. Canada: Ontario Creates, Telefilm Canada.

*The Corporate Coup D'Etat takes a complex political/historical theme and brings it to life. In the style of '13th', 'Manufacturing Consent', 'The Corporation', and 'All Governments Lie' it creates a powerful cinematic experience that explains how President Trump is the result of failed neoliberal globalist policies, and a 'corporate coup d'état' in which corporations and billionaires were able to gradually take control of the political process in the U.S. and elsewhere. In the words of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Chris Hedges: 'Donald Trump is not an anomaly. He is the grotesque visage of a collapsed democracy. The creeping corporate coup d'état that began 45 years ago is complete. It has destroyed the lives of tens of millions of Americans no longer able to find work that provides a living wage, cursed to live in chronic poverty.' Threaded through the film are the stories of the ultimate victims - working class and poor people in 'sacrifice zones' like Camden, New Jersey and Youngstown, Ohio. Many working-class whites voted twice for Barack Obama, in '08 and '12, but in 2016 they felt abandoned by the elites of both parties, and voted for Donald Trump who promised he would be different. Featuring Chris Hedges, the main 'voice' of the film as he visits Americans fighting for change and Canadian author John Ralston Saul, who warned prophetically in 1995: 'We are now in the midst of a coup d'état in slow motion. Democracy is weakening... corporatism is strengthening.'*

Second Thought. (Writer and Producer). (2020). *The Electoral College is anti-democracy*. [Video]. Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SHgd74fjMk>

*Over two hundred years ago, some guys slapped together a temporary system to elect the president. They never replaced it. Ever since then, we've been stuck with a convoluted, undemocratic system that all too often allows the candidate with less support to win the presidency. In this episode, we'll look at how the electoral college operates, examine its flaws, and consider how we might move past this ill-conceived relic and actually implement real democracy.*

**Falconer, D. (Director). (2019). *UnRepresented*. [Documentary]. United States:  
Detroit Documentary Productions.**

*UnRepresented is an award-winning documentary that uncovers the mechanisms that drive the cycle of corruption in Congress—giving political insiders enormous, unchecked power. The film explores how special interests bankroll political campaigns and relentlessly lobby to rig the system in their favor, all while following the letter of the law. Featuring luminaries and leaders including Harvard Law professor Lawrence Lessig and former member of Congress Rep. Justin Amash, the film reveals the powerful possibilities to reform our government to better represent the people. UnRepresented serves as a rallying call to bring committed public servants, activists and everyday Americans together to take action across partisan lines to change our flawed political system.*

**Davisson, J. (Executive Producer). (2020). *Who vote counts, explained*.  
[Documentary]. United States: Netflix.**

*Why is the right to vote in America still a fight? From voter suppression to disenfranchisement, see the roadblocks that stop voices from being heard.*