Politics seems almost unimaginable without secrecy and lying. From the noble lie of Plato's Republic to the controversy about former President Clinton's “lying” in the Monica Lewinsky case, from the use of secrecy in today's war against terrorism to the endless spinning of political campaigns, from President John Kennedy's behavior during the Cuban missile crisis to cover ups concerning pedophile priests in the Catholic church, from Freud's efforts to decode the secrets beneath civilized life to contemporary exposés of the private lives of politicians, politics and deception seem to go hand-in-hand. This course investigates how the practices of politics are informed by the keeping and telling of secrets, and the telling and exposing of lies. We will address such questions as: When, if ever, is it right to lie or to breach confidences? When is it right to expose secrets and lies? Is it necessary to be prepared to lie in order to advance the cause of justice? Or, must we do justice justly? When is secrecy really necessary and when is it merely a pretext for Machiavellian manipulation? Are secrecy and deceit more prevalent in some kinds of political systems than in others? As we explore those questions we will discuss the place of candor and openness in politics and social life; the relationship between the claims of privacy (e.g., the closeting of sexual desire) and secrecy and deception in public arenas; conspiracy theories as they are applied to politics; and the importance of secrecy in the domains of national security and law enforcement. We will examine the treatment of secrecy and lying in political theory as well as their appearance in literature and popular culture, for example Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Primary Colors, Schindler's List, and The Insider.

The following books, marked with a (P) on the syllabus, are available at the Amherst Books.

Machiavelli, The Prince
Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon
Toni Morrison, Beloved

All other readings are available on line through the CMS Course Listing for our course.

There are seven films scheduled for this course. Those films are also available on line. They should be seen prior to the class in which they will be discussed.
SYLLABUS

1. INTRODUCTION

1. On the “Right” to Conceal and Deceive: What We Get to Know About Those Who Govern (Sept. 9)

   Michael Sandel, “White Lies”
   Anthony Lewis, “Sex and Leadership”
   Andrew Sullivan, “Lies That Matter”

2. On the “Necessity” of Secrecy and Deception: What The Government Gets to Know About Us and What We Get to Know About What Our Government Does (Sept. 14)

   Center for National Security Studies v. DOJ, No 02-5254 USDC for the District of Columbia, June 17, 2003

FILM: Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

3. Politics and Lost Innocence (Sept. 16)

   Michael Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands”

FILM: Primary Colors

4. Virtue in Politics: Learning Not to Be Good (Sept. 21)

   Machiavelli, The Prince (P)

II. SECRETS, LIES AND POLITICS: THE ‘CLASSICAL’ UNDERSTANDING

5. On the Quest for “Truth” (Sept. 23)

   Plato, The Apology and the Crito, 49-96, 189-195

FILM: Schindler’s List

6. Does Anything Justify the Lie? (Sept. 28)

   Henry Sidgwick, “The Classification of Duties-Veracity”
7. Publicity and the Possibilities of Democracy-I (Sept. 30)


III. SECRETS AND LIES: DOES THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT MATTER?

8. Democracy and Distrust (Oct. 5)

*The Declaration of Independence*
*The Federalist Papers 10 and 51*

9. Rewriting History-I (Oct. 7)

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, “Pericles Funeral Oration”
Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address*
Gary Willis, “The Words That Remade America”

10. Rewriting History-II (Oct. 14)

Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* (P)

IV. SECRETS AND LIES IN THE PRACTICES OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

A. National Security

11. The Enemy Within (Oct. 19)

*Korematsu v. United States*, 65 S.Ct. 193 (1944)
Gary Gerstle, “Pluralism and the War on Terror,” *Dissent* (Spring, 2003)

12. State Secrets (Oct. 21)

Hannah Arendt, *Crisis of the Republic*, 3-47

FILM: Why We Fight

13. State Secrets-II (Oct. 26)


B. Fighting Crime
14. Is Anyone Above the Law?: On the Claims of Executive Privilege (Oct. 28)


**FILM: The Conversation**

15. Ferreting Out Sin and Corruption: Surveillance, Duplicity, and Entrapment as Law Enforcement Techniques (Nov. 2)

*Sorrells v. United States,* 287 US 435 (1932)
*United States v. Williams,* 705 F2d 603 (19), 603-616

16. Responding to Accusations: On the Obligations of Candor (Nov. 4)

*People v. Brooks,* 51 Ill. App.3d 800 (1977)
*Brogan v. United States,* 118 Set 805 (1997)

17. Responding to Accusations: The Lawyer/Client Privilege (Nov. 9)


**FILM: Capturing the Friedmans**

18. On Danger, Suspicion, and Community Notification of the Presence of Sex Offenders (Nov. 11)


V. WHEN SECRECY BECOMES PRIVACY

19. Privacy and Intimacy (Nov. 16)

*Griswold v. Connecticut,* 381 US 479 (1965), 479-486, 507-527
Michael Sandel, “Privacy Rights and Family Law,” 91-119

20. Privacy and Sexual Pleasure (Nov. 18)

*Lawrence v. Texas,* US Supreme Court, No. 02-102 (2003), 1-15, 20, 24-28, 30-32
**FILM: 1000 Acres**

21. Family Secrets (Nov. 30)

   Barbara Whitehead, “Dan Quayle Was Right”

**VI. ON THE SOCIAL LIFE OF CANDOR**

22. Terror: Has Everything Changed (Dec. 2)


*Hamdi et. al. v. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, et. al.* (June 2004) 1-14, 24-31

23. To Know or Not to Know?: Truth as a Response to Injustice (Dec. 7)

   Michael Ignatieff, “Digging Up the Dead”
   Timothy Garton Ash, “True Confessions”

24. A Truth Too Painful? (Dec. 9)

   Toni Morrison, *Beloved* (P)

**FILM: The Insider**

25. The Fate of the Truth Teller (Dec. 14)

26. Conclusion