

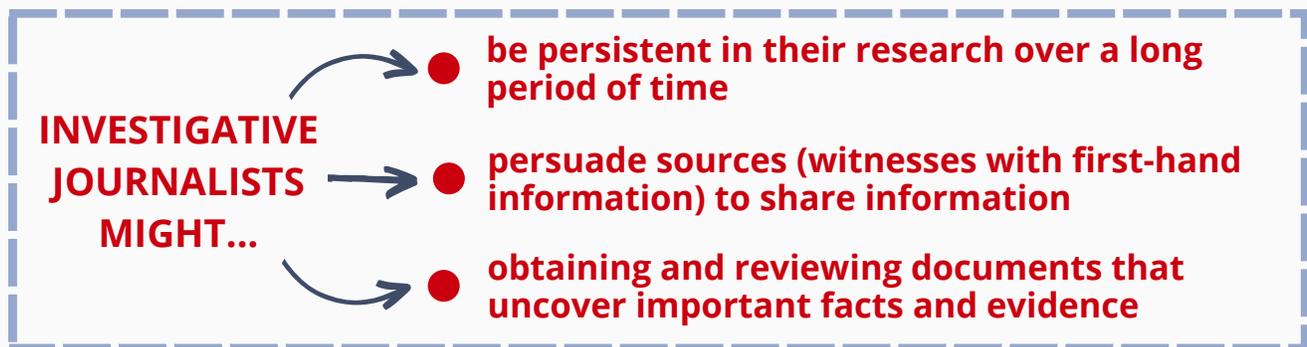
## Media Literacy Mini-Lesson #6

# INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Journalists try to understand important events of the day and share that information with their audiences. Sometimes, gathering information is simple and direct — a journalist might record a speech given by the president or other public figure, for instance. They might report on the details of an accident by speaking to witnesses. They might review an important document such as a new law and share its most important details.

But other times, journalists have to dig deeper to uncover important facts. Sometimes they must even uncover facts that others don't want them to know, such as evidence of corruption, law breaking, or other harmful actions. This type of journalism is called **investigative journalism**.

Without investigative journalists, the public might not ever find out about improper or illegal actions that may affect their safety and freedom, or the security of the country.



### Watergate

One of the most famous episodes of investigative journalism in U.S. history began when two journalists for the *Washington Post* investigated a break-in at the Democratic National Headquarters in the Watergate hotel complex in Washington, D.C. Reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward wanted to understand the reason for the break-in, which led to years of investigation into President Richard Nixon and his advisors.

Woodward and Bernstein's investigative reporting on the theft of a political party's campaign documents helped lead to President Nixon's resignation when it was determined that he had known about the break-in and used the power of the presidency to cover it up.

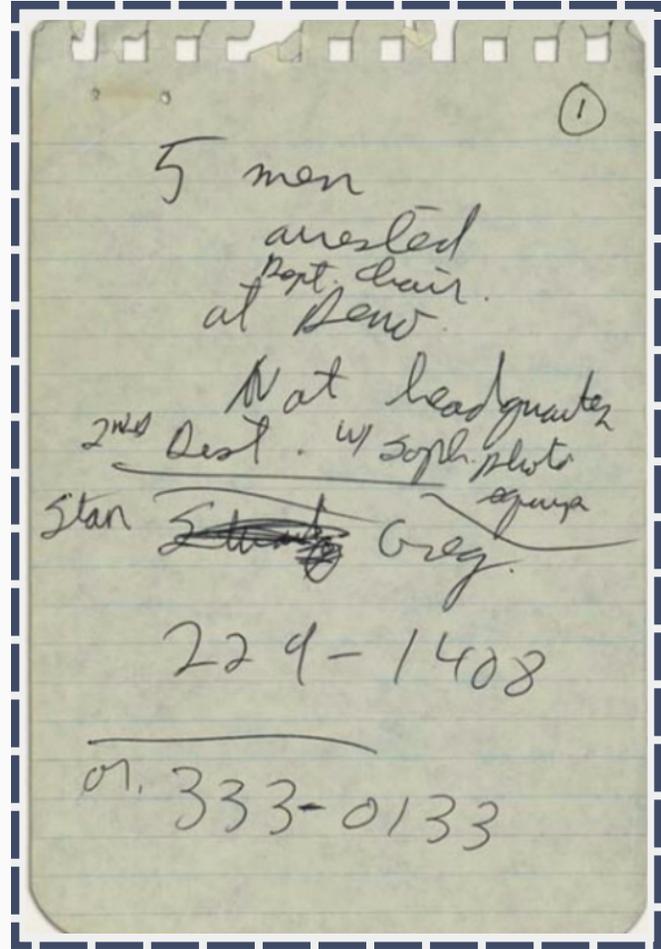
The image to the right consists of the notes taken by Bob Woodward at the first court hearing of the Watergate burglars. In it, he notes “leads” or information that he learns or can follow up on to learn more.

**Notes, with abbreviations spelled out:**

***“5 men arrested at Dem[ocratic] Nat[ional] headquarters. Dep[uty] chair. 2nd dist[ri]ct w/ soph[isticated] photo equip[ment]. Stan Greg 229-1408 or 333-0133.”***

Note that “Dept. Chair” and “Stan Greg” refers to Stanley Greigg, the deputy chair (assistant to the head) of the Democratic National Committee. It was Greigg who first heard from the police about the break-in and filed the complaint against the burglars in court.

Source: Woodward's notes from the arraignment of the Watergate burglars. June 17, 1972. Permission has been granted for educational purposes only courtesy of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas–Austin.



**Describe what is happening in the notes. What did you notice or wonder about?**

**What evidence appears in these notes that Woodward and Bernstein may have wanted to know more about?**

**What actions do you think Woodward and Bernstein took next based on these notes?**