

The Wolfe Institute

*The Ethyle R. Wolfe Institute for the Humanities,
in collaboration with the Kurz Chair of Constitutional Rights,
the Departments of English, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Puerto Rican and Latino Studies,
Sociology, the American Studies Program, and the Women's and Gender Studies Program,
present*

The U.S.A. and President Trump: Democratic, Authoritarian, or Other?



Is our democracy in danger? Since assuming the office, President Trump has alarmed many by exhibiting and normalizing authoritarian behavior. His spokespersons regularly disparage accurate but unfavorable media coverage as “fake news.” Trump tweets admiringly of authoritarian leaders like Rodrigo Duterte and Vladimir Putin, has attacked the independent federal judiciary, and violated other democratic norms. All these developments have happened despite the U.S. Constitution’s safeguards.

To understand the Trump Administration, one approach is to go international and instead of revisiting U.S. history, we examine other countries around the world who have struggled under authoritarian regimes. Perhaps Mussolini’s Italy and Hugo Chavez’s Venezuela are the more appropriate comparisons instead of Nixon’s Watergate. As the Trump presidency unfolds, scholars of comparative and international politics have been alarmed because they recognize the elements of authoritarianism that appear in less democratic countries. Two scholars of international relations will visit Brooklyn College.

Jeff Colgan is the Richard Holbrooke Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science and the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University. His research focuses on international order, especially as it relates to energy politics.

Rob Blair is the Joukowsky Family Assistant Professor of Political Science and International and Public Affairs at Brown University. His research focuses on international intervention and the consolidation of state authority after civil war, with an emphasis on rule of law and security institutions.

Anna Law, Herbert Kurz Chair in Constitutional Rights at Brooklyn College, will moderate the discussion.

**Wednesday, March 21, 2018
11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Alumni Lounge, 4th Floor
Brooklyn College Student Center
Campus Road and East 27th Street**

For information: alaw@brooklyn.cuny.edu | [@wolfe_institute](https://twitter.com/wolfe_institute)