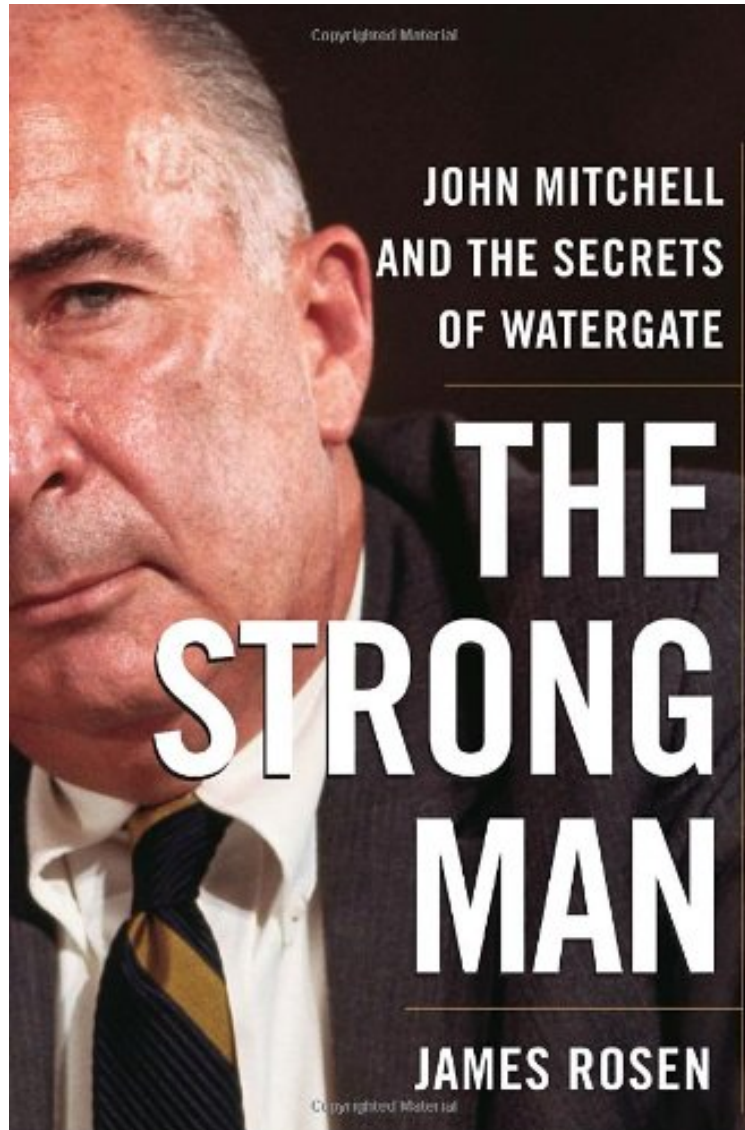


[Download pdf ebook] The Strong Man: John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate

## The Strong Man: John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate

*James Rosen*

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**James Rosen : The Strong Man: John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Strong Man: John Mitchell and the Secrets of Watergate:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Essential but flawed.By Peter M.An essential book for Watergate enthusiasts, especially for new sources and information revealed within. As others have pointed out, the major flaw seems to be making constants excuses for Mitchell's innocence of most charges. After the 6th or 7th time, it starts to

wear thin. 117 of 120 people found the following review helpful. Review by one of Mitchell's lawyers By Plato Cacheris The author, James Rosen, has written a painstaking reproduction of the events that occurred during the Watergate hearings and trial. This book is a meticulous and detailed recitation that Mr. Rosen has set forth in this very well-written book. Mr. Mitchell is deserving of criticism for his role in Watergate and suffered the consequences of a conviction for his activities. The book is not a proclamation of Mr. Mitchell's innocence, but an exposition of his role and raises questions of the complicity of others who were also convicted. Having served as one of Mr. Mitchell's defense counsel, I found the book to be an accurate recitation of the events of the Watergate affair. 14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A Fair Deal for John Mitchell By Marie Allen As part of my job, I worked with the records and tapes of Watergate, beginning in August 1974. I've read most of the books on the subject in the years since and have never found one as good as this one. Rosen has done an incomparable job of sifting the evidence to try to arrive at the truth. In the process he has finally given John Mitchell a fair deal. John Mitchell made mistakes at Watergate and paid a heavy price for them. He was not, however, the originator of the wiretapping adventures of the Nixon administration or the approver of the Watergate break-in. He talked Nixon out of the Huston plan, which was an earlier version of the Plumbers operation. John Mitchell's name was freely used by Jeb Stuart Magruder and John Dean to cover their own bad judgments. Giving evidence implicating Mitchell (the "big enchilada" in the Prosecutor's terms) was what Dean and Magruder used to curry favor and reduce their own sentences. What a pity that G. Gordon Liddy refused to testify until after he had served his prison sentence! Liddy's testimony directly contradicted Dean's in many of the allegations involving Mitchell. As Americans, we can be proud that our system of checks and balances worked at Watergate, and the President who thought he was above the law was forced to leave office. It is troubling, however, that the dynamics within the offices of the Watergate Special Prosecutors encouraged individuals to testify falsely in order to implicate higher officials. We've heard about Nixon's abuse of power. Maybe we need to look more closely at the abuses of power within our system of justice.

The Strong Man is the first full-scale biography of John N. Mitchell, the central figure in the rise and ruin of Richard Nixon and the highest-ranking American official ever convicted on criminal charges. As U.S. attorney general from 1969 to 1972, John Mitchell stood at the center of the upheavals of the late sixties. The most powerful man in the Nixon cabinet, a confident troubleshooter, Mitchell championed law and order against the bomb-throwers of the antiwar movement, desegregated the South's public schools, restored calm after the killings at Kent State, and steered the commander-in-chief through the Pentagon Papers and Joint Chiefs spying crises. After leaving office, Mitchell survived the ITT and Vesco scandals but was ultimately destroyed by Watergate. With a novelist's skill, James Rosen traces Mitchell's early life and career from his Long Island boyhood to his mastery of Wall Street, where Mitchell's innovations in municipal finance made him a power broker to the Rockefellers and mayors and governors in all fifty states. After merging law firms with Richard Nixon, Mitchell brilliantly managed Nixon's 1968 presidential campaign and, at his urging, reluctantly agreed to serve as attorney general. With his steely demeanor and trademark pipe, Mitchell commanded awe throughout the government as Nixon's most trusted adviser, the only man in Washington who could say no to the president. Chronicling the collapse of the Nixon presidency, *The Strong Man* follows America's former top cop on his singular odyssey through the criminal justice system: a tortuous maze of camera crews, congressional hearings, special prosecutors, and federal trials. The path led, ultimately, to a prison cell in Montgomery, Alabama, where Mitchell was welcomed into federal custody by the same men he had appointed to office. Rosen also reveals the dark truth about Mitchell's marriage to the flamboyant and volatile Martha Mitchell: her slide into alcoholism and madness, their bitter divorce, and the toll it all took on their daughter, Marty. Based on 250 original interviews and hundreds of thousands of previously unpublished documents and tapes, *The Strong Man* resolves definitively the central mysteries of the Nixon era: the true purpose of the Watergate break-in, who ordered it, the hidden role played by the Central Intelligence Agency, and those behind the cover-up. A landmark of history and biography, *The Strong Man* is that rarest of books: both a model of scholarly research and savvy analysis and a masterful literary achievement.

From Publishers Weekly Casting the 66th attorney general and Watergate felon as the most upright man in the Nixon administration is faint praise indeed, to judge by this biography. Fox News correspondent Rosen applauds Mitchell for his tough law-and-order policies, school-desegregation efforts and hard line against leftist radicals, and for enduring wife Martha's alcoholic breakdowns and raving late-night phone calls to reporters. The book's heart is Rosen's meticulous, exhaustively researched study of Mitchell's Watergate role, absolving him of ordering the break-in and most other charges leveled against him. Instead, Mitchell is painted as a force for propriety who was framed by others—especially White House counsel John Dean, who comes off as Watergate's evil genius. (Rosen also claims Watergate burglar James McCord was secretly working for the CIA and deliberately sabotaged the break-in.) Unfortunately, Rosen's salutes to Mitchell's integrity and reverence for the law clash with his accounts of the man's misdeeds: undermining the Paris peace talks, suborning and committing perjury, tolerating the criminal scheming in Nixon's White House and re-election campaign. Mitchell may have blanched at the Nixon administration's sleazy

intrigues, as Rosen insists, but he seems not to have risen above them. (Feb. 19) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From *The New Yorker* After Richard Nixon lost the gubernatorial race in California, in 1962, he moved to New York to practice law and fell in with John Mitchell, a self-assured municipal-bond lawyer, who went on to run Nixons 1968 Presidential campaign and serve as Attorney General. Mitchell's fame, such as it was, sprang from Watergate; in 1975, he went to prison for his role in the cover-up, and never broke his silence about the affair. Rosen, a correspondent for Fox News, believes that Mitchell's story has not been properly told. He spent years researching his life and his downfall, and arrived at the fascinating and disputed theory that the White House counsel John Dean was the mastermind behind the Watergate break-in. Mitchell, with a public image of beady-eyed, pipe-smoking arrogance, was never a lovable figure, but he was in many ways a sad one. Particularly wrenching for him was the fate of his wife, Martha, who was regarded as a somewhat comical figure a Southern Gracie Allen for the Nixon era even as she was falling apart. Copyright 2008 Click here to subscribe to *The New Yorker* PRAISE FOR THE STRONG MAN James Rosen has brought us a fascinating and provocative account of John Mitchell's life. Using fresh and unexpected sources, *The Strong Man* dispels some of the mysteries that still linger around this central figure of the Nixon administration and Watergate. Rosen has achieved the difficult task of showing us heretofore unseen facets of the subculture that led to the greatest scandal in American history. Michael Beschloss, author of *Presidential Courage: Brave Leaders and How They Changed America, 1789-1989* James Rosen's *The Strong Man* is excellent. Few novels read as well as this first-rate blend of history and biography. Crammed with new information and steeped in deep research, political street smarts, fresh insights, and crisp, clear writing, it is a major contribution to the history of Watergate and the Nixon presidency. Dan Rather, CBS News White House correspondent, 1969-1974 *The Strong Man* is a fascinating work: a sympathetic portrait of John Mitchell, the Big Enchilada, Richard Nixon's campaign manager and attorney general, who went to prison rather than talk about Watergate and then took his secrets to the grave. Richard Reeves, author of *President Nixon: Alone in the White House* Rosen has captured the players in Watergate as if he were on duty at the White House during the scandal. It is a tragic story that reads like a novel. . . . The most accurate book on Watergate and the president's men and the president yet to be published. Dwight L. Chapin, special assistant to President Nixon For anyone who lived through Watergate or has studied it since, John Mitchell was always the dour, jowly, menacing embodiment of the nefarious Nixon administration. James Rosen's original and penetrating portrait of Richard Nixon's attorney general, the only alumnus of that office ever to land in prison, unveils the more complex figure lurking beneath the caricature. *The Strong Man* sheds important new light on a defining episode in American history. David Margolick, author of *Beyond Glory: Joe Louis vs. Max Schmeling, and a World on the Brink* This book is a veritable hologram. You feel that you are watching John Mitchell, *The Strong Man*, move and bend wills, whack and get whacked right here! in real time! and at the end you will feel it neurally, in the solar plexus, when he pays the stiff price of D.C. Hold Em politics. Tom Wolfe, author of *A Man in Full* and *I Am Charlotte Simmons* Relentless...engrossing...Displays wide-ranging and obsessive reporting, especially about the Watergate story...John Dean comes across as a duplicitous manipulator, Jeb Magruder as a spineless liar, Gordon Liddy as a maniacal soldier of misfortune." -- Washington Post "Engrossing...unfailingly honest reportage...Rosen makes a convincing case that perjured testimony, especially from White House aides John Dean and Jeb Magruder, formed the basis of the case that made Mitchell the highest-ranking government official ever to serve time." -- Robert Novak, *Weekly Standard* "[A]s both detective and investigative reporter, Rosen cuts through conflicting accounts of Mitchell's life, tapping into previously unpublished documents...and presenting a thoroughly documented but vibrant portrait of a complicated and deeply flawed public figure." -- Jonathan Karl, *Wall Street Journal* "Superb...Rosen, a reporter for Fox News, has performed Herculean labors in unraveling Mitchell's career...arguing persuasively that Mitchell was essentially ambivalent about, if not opposed to, the machinations of Nixon's subordinates." -- Jacob Heilbrunn, *The National Interest* A surprisingly fresh look at the scandal...Rosen makes a compelling case that Mitchell was more sinned against than sinning in Watergate. -- Boston Globe "The most revealing and insightful book I've read about that era. Profoundly researched for 20 years by a reporter scrupulous about source notes, it is both a sympathetic and an unsparing character study of a complex historic figure previously portrayed as the caricature of a villain. I knew the dour Mitchell almost in full and can attest to this being a Pulitzer-quality biography. -- William Safire, *New York Times Magazine*