

Expert Available for Comment:

Lindsay M. Chervinsky, PhD

*Senior Fellow at the Center for Presidential History at Southern Methodist University*

Author of:

***Making the Presidency: John Adams and the Precedents that Forged the Republic***

(Oxford University Press, September 2024)

Dr. Lindsay M. Chervinsky is a historian of the presidency, political culture, and U.S. government institutions. She is Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Center for Presidential History at Southern Methodist University. She also teaches on the American Presidency at the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University. Previously, she was a historian at the White House Historical Association and a fellow at the Kluge Center at the Library of Congress. She received her B.A. in history and political science from George Washington University and completed her master's and Ph.D. from the University of California, Davis. Dr. Chervinsky is the author of the award-winning book [The Cabinet: George Washington and the Creation of an American Institution](#) (Belknap / Harvard University Press, 2020) and co-editor of [Mourning the Presidents: Loss and Legacy in American Culture](#) (University of Virginia Press, 2023). Her third book, [Making the Presidency: John Adams and the Precedents that Forged the Republic](#), will be published by Oxford University Press on September 5, 2024.



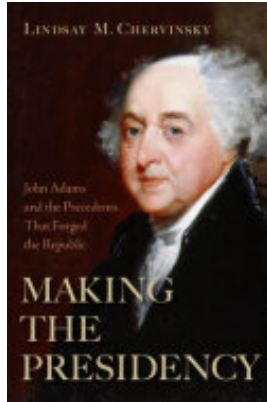
Dr. Chervinsky regularly writes for public audiences in publications like the [Washington Post](#), [TIME](#), [USA Today](#), [CNN.com](#), [The Wall Street Journal](#), [Washington Monthly](#), [The Daily Beast](#), and many others. She frequently provides political commentary and historical context on current events for outlets like [CBS News](#), [CNN](#), [The BBC](#), [Associated Press](#), [Washington Post](#), [New York Times](#), and [CBC News](#).

A presidential historian whose work Ron Chernow (*Washington: A Life*) has called “cogent, lucid, and concise,” Dr. Chervinsky has appeared on [C-SPAN](#) numerous times and appeared on [Face the Nation](#), [CBC Newsroom](#), and [MSNBC](#) to discuss Donald Trump’s indictment. She also writes criticism, with recent pieces published in the [Wall Street Journal](#), [Los Angeles Review of Books](#), [The National Book Review](#), and the [Financial Times](#). When Biden tried to cancel student debt and faced pushback, Dr. Chervinsky was invited to appear on [CBS News](#) to offer her opinion on the balance of power in the US, and how it has changed from what the Founding Fathers initially intended it to look like.

Last August, when [NBC News](#) asked Dr. Chervinsky what it’s like being a presidential historian living through an unprecedented, historic moment, she said, “Like those that have come before us, we know history when we see it, we just don’t know how it will turn out yet.”

You can learn more about Lindsay and *Making the Presidency* on her [website](#) as well as view clips of Lindsay speaking [here](#). You can also follow her on Twitter at [@lmchervinsky](#).

### **ABOUT MAKING THE PRESIDENCY**



The United States of 1797 faced enormous challenges, provoked by enemies foreign and domestic. The father of the new nation, George Washington, left his vice president, John Adams, with relatively little guidance and impossible expectations to meet. Adams was confronted with intense partisan divides, debates over citizenship, fears of political violence, potential for foreign conflict with France and Britain, and a nation unsure that the presidency could even work without Washington at the helm.

*Making the Presidency* is an authoritative exploration of the second US presidency, a period critical to the survival of the American republic. Through meticulous research and engaging prose, Lindsay Chervinsky illustrates the unique challenges faced by Adams and shows how he shaped the office for his successors. One of the most qualified presidents in American history, he had been a legislator, political theorist, diplomat, minister, and vice president—but he had never held an executive position. Instead, the quixotic and stubborn Adams would rely on his ideas about executive power, the Constitution, politics, and his wife Abigail to navigate the hurdles of the position. He defended the presidency from his own often obstructionist cabinet, protected the nation from foreign attacks, and forged trust and dedication to election integrity and the peaceful transfer of power between parties, even though it cost him his political future.

Offering a portrait of one of the most fascinating and influential periods in US history, *Making the Presidency* is a must-read for anyone interested in the evolution of the presidency, the peaceful transfer of power and the creation of political norms and customs at the heart of the American republic.

### **TO BE IN TOUCH WITH LINDSAY:**

Contact Sarah Russo: [sarah@page1m.com](mailto:sarah@page1m.com) | (917) 627-5993

Contact Isabella Nugent: [isabella@page1m.com](mailto:isabella@page1m.com)

### **THEMES AND IDEAS THAT LINDSAY CHERVINSKY CAN DISCUSS:**

- Impeachment in history, as well as current methods, norms, and protocols
- The purpose of impeachment and its use in this current political moment
- The striking similarities between the era of John Adams's presidency and today
- Presidential transitions, from the first (Washington to Adams) to the present
- The history and norms of government institutions and how they come to bear on the present

### **A FEW QUESTIONS FOR LINDSAY CHERVINSKY:**

*Q: Why does John Adams's legacy matter? As we go into this upcoming election, what can he teach us about honesty and integrity in the election process?*

*Q: Many are feeling lost and confused about this upcoming election. What are your predictions for this fall? Regardless of the outcome, what do you believe the elected president must do to weather the storm of COVID and the war in the Middle East, along with ensuring a peaceful transfer of power?*

*Q: As you conducted your research into John Adams's legacy, what information surprised you the most? Was there anything that felt particularly resonant with the times we're living through today? What do you hope people learn from Adams's life?*

*Q: What has been the significance of Trump's indictment in this upcoming election cycle? Regardless of the outcome of the election, what lasting impact will it have on our country's history?*

*Q: The Trump administration's barrage of violations of government norms led to one of the most chaotic administrations in presidential history. If Trump is re-elected this fall, do you have concerns about four more years of this type of administration and can you advise us on what the long-term impacts might be to the Constitution if these types of norms continue to be under attack and disfunction becomes normalized?*

I'm deeply concerned about the future of our democracy with four more years of the Trump administration. President Trump has shown that he is willing to break every norm, custom, and law with impunity knowing that he can't be charged with a crime while in office. There is no reason to think his behavior would be tempered in a second term. The guardrails put in place to protect against violations require Congress and the Department of Justice to act in good faith and they have mostly failed. The Department of Justice won't hold the administration accountable or push back on inappropriate, partisan demands. While Republicans hold the majority in the Senate, there is little Congress can do to effectively push back against the president as Majority Leader Mitch McConnell won't allow any of these measures to be considered on the Senate floor. The states have a bit more authority and flexibility to resist federal action, but their powers only extend to their borders. For example, California can't do much to protect the American troops serving in Afghanistan with bounties on their head. If the federal government won't demand that Russia stops paying the Taliban to kill U.S. soldiers, the states are pretty stuck.