



# **Selling Fear: Counterterrorism, the Media, and Public Opinion (Chicago Studies in American Politics)**

*Brigitte L. Nacos, Yaeli Bloch-Elkon, Robert Y. Shapiro*

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While we've long known that the strategies of terrorism rely heavily on media coverage of attacks, *Selling Fear* is the first detailed look at the role played by media in *counterterrorism*—and the ways that, in the wake of 9/11, the Bush administration manipulated coverage to maintain a climate of fear.

Drawing on in-depth analysis of counterterrorism in the years after 9/11—including the issuance of terror alerts and the decision to invade Iraq—the authors present a compelling case that the Bush administration hyped fear, while obscuring civil liberties abuses and concrete issues of preparedness. The media, meanwhile, largely abdicated its watchdog role, choosing to amplify the administration's message while downplaying issues that might have called the administration's statements and strategies into question. The book extends through Hurricane Katrina, and the more skeptical coverage that followed, then the first year of the Obama administration, when an increasingly partisan political environment presented the media, and the public, with new problems of reporting and interpretation.

*Selling Fear* is a hard-hitting analysis of the intertwined failures of government and media—and their costs to our nation.

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