During the early years of the Iraq War, George W. Bush drew attention to the ways in which American presidents try to “sell” war to the public. The “Mission Accomplished” banner in 2003 and the misleading linkages of Saddam Hussein to the 9/11 terrorist attacks awoke many Americans to the techniques used by the White House to put the country on a war footing. Yet Bush was simply following in the footsteps of his predecessors, as the essays in this standout volume reveal in illuminating detail.

This impressive collection assembles original contributions from some of the most preeminent American diplomatic historians working today. It also features the last written reflections of the late Pulitzer Prize–winning journalist David Halberstam, whose early work covering the war in Vietnam made him an enemy of presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

Written in a lively and accessible style, Selling War in a Media Age is a fascinating, thought-provoking, must-read volume that reveals the often brutal ways that the goal of influencing public opinion has shaped how American presidents have approached the most momentous duty of their office: waging war.

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