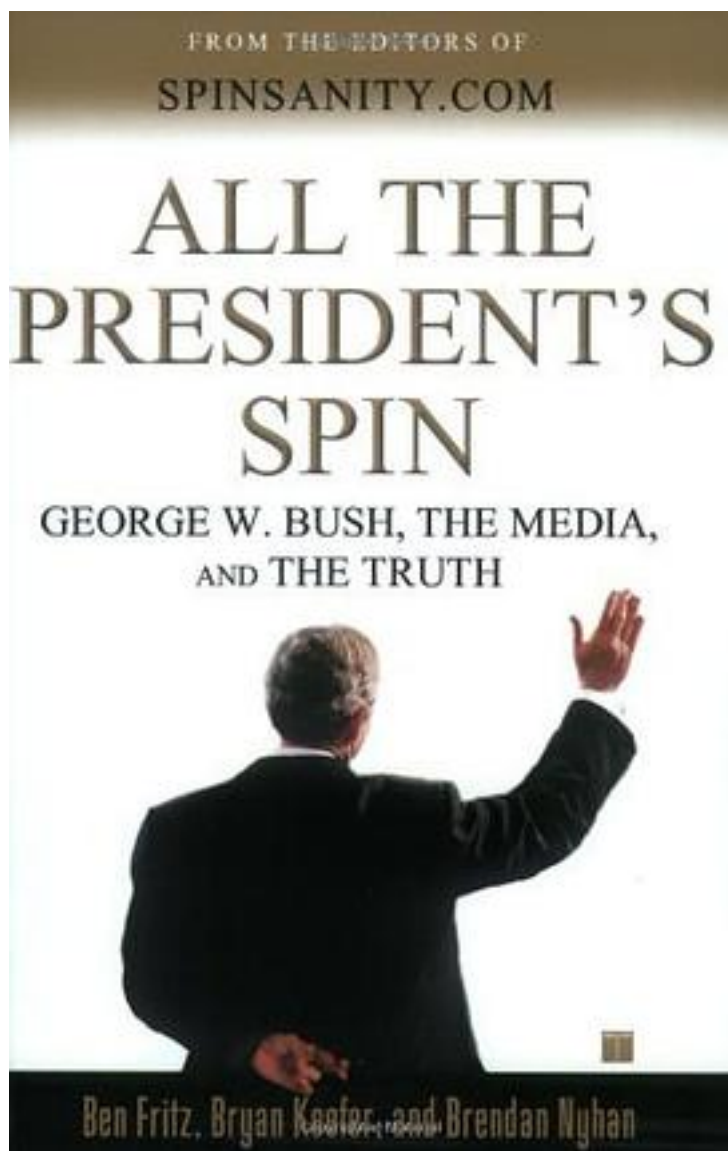


All the President's Spin



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Book Description

"All the President's Spin," the first book from the editors of the acclaimed nonpartisan website Spinsanity, unmask the tactics of deception and media manipulation that George W. Bush has used to sell his agenda to the American people. From his campaigns for tax cuts to the debate over war in Iraq, President Bush has employed an unprecedented onslaught of half-truths and strategically ambiguous language to twist and distort the facts. Fritz, Keefer, and Nyhan's powerful critique of Bush's record of policy deception explains why the media has failed to hold him accountable and demonstrates the threat these tactics pose to honest political debate. This is the essential book for every citizen who wants to understand how George W. Bush has misled the nation and why, if left unchallenged, all the President's spin could soon become standard practice -- a devastating development for our democracy.

Amazon.com

It's no shock that an American president would employ skilled PR pros to carefully hone a message that makes the administration's objectives more palatable to the general public. It's a tradition that dates back decades. But it's another matter entirely to base an entire presidency on the bending, twisting, and distorting of the truth. According to authors Ben Fritz, Bryan Keefer, and Brendan Nyhan, the George W. Bush administration tiptoes around the definition of lying but still uses ambiguous language, selective use of facts, and shaky evidence to sell the American people on issues like the effect of tax cuts, the impact of a business-friendly environmental policy, and the reasons for going to war in Iraq. While the authors have plenty of blame to place on the administration, the news media are also fingered for parroting administration spin and reporting it, without verification or context, as objective fact. Fritz, Keefer, and Nyhan, founders of the political analysis web site Spinsanity, detail how Bush and company, more than any administration in history, cherry pick information that they find helpful, regardless of how representative it is of the overall truth, and then package it with a forceful and persistent presentation that eventually takes on the patina of reality. Democrats will also find that 2004 presidential candidate John Kerry appears very much up to playing the political game on Bush's terms as the authors dissect and deflate plenty of misleading primary season anti-Bush charges made by the Democratic nominee. All The President's Spin is richly detailed, not surprising given the sound bite-free task of picking apart political spin, and while it is intensely critical of Bush's messaging, it does not pass judgment on the wisdom or efficacies of the policies themselves. Any politician could take a lesson from the authors' clarity and comprehensive scope.

--John Moe

From Publishers Weekly

George W. Bush vowed to restore "honor and integrity" to the White House during his 2000 presidential campaign, but instead he has launched an "assault on honesty," argue the authors, who founded the watchdog Web site Spinsanity.com after concluding during the 2000 election that the "national debate had been reduced to an endless barrage of spin." In this lucid critique of Bush's "permanent campaign of policy disinformation," the authors evenhandedly point out instances when other politicians, including Kerry, Clinton and Reagan, have distorted the truth to their advantage, but they contend that Bush is the "current leader of the arms race of

deception." Bush's weapons: "emotional language designed to provoke gut-level reactions, slanted statistics that are difficult for casual listeners to interpret, and ambiguous statements that imply what Bush does not want to state outright." The authors support their claims with many solid examples. For instance, when commenting on the method that Bush used to imply a connection between Saddam and September 11, they point to a televised address that aired prior to the war in which Bush linked Iraq, al Qaeda and September 11 without saying directly that Iraq was responsible for the attack. The book isn't just a critique of Bush's spin tactics, however. The authors also reproach the media for letting statements like this go unchecked and for being so overly concerned about objectivity that they've become a mere outlet for politicians' "talking points." Well organized and heavily referenced, this passionate indictment will pique readers' awareness of political spin and of the outlets—bloggers, publications like the Economist and "infotainment" programs like Comedy Central's The Daily Show—that are purportedly fighting it.

Book Dimension

length: (cm)20.8 width:(cm)14

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