Security and the War on Terror (Contemporary Security Studies)
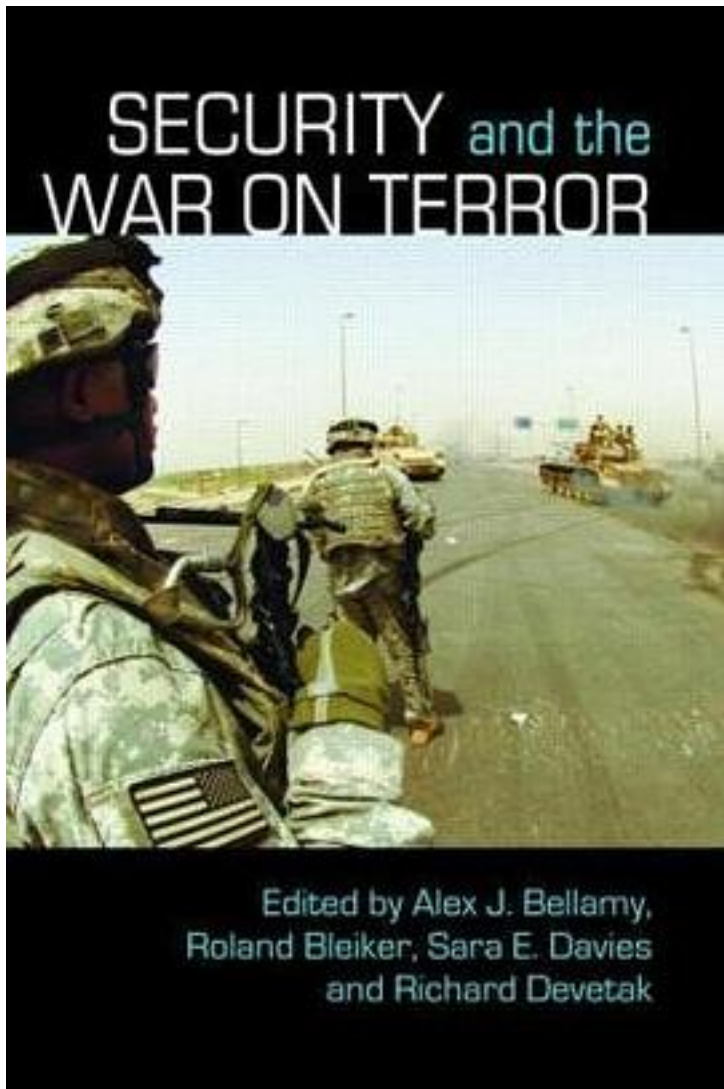

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著者:Bellamy, Alex (EDT)

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The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 undoubtedly marked a key turning point in international politics. 9/11 represents a different type of threat, one that cannot easily be anticipated or prevented, through prevailing state-based structures of security alone. A fundamental paradox emerges: while security threats have changed significantly, our means of understanding and responding to them remain largely unchanged. The ensuing challenge constitutes the central theme for this book: How can we assess the origin, meaning and implication of a major historic turning point, such as 9/11, if the prevailing conceptual means and policy responses are inadequate for providing enhanced security? The main contribution of this volume is therefore to provide new dimensions in the debate on global terrorism by opening up interdisciplinary conversations between strategic, economic, ethical and legal approaches, which offer important and practically relevant opportunities to rethink how states can respond to terrorist threats. The contributors included offer a unique combination, from leading conceptual theorists and policy oriented analysts, and from senior academics to up-and-coming researchers. By bringing together these diverse sets of inquiry into the context of a well-defined common research agenda, the present book seeks to recognize a fundamental issue linked to terrorism: while major crises initially tend to reinforce old thinking and behavioral patterns, they also allow societies to challenge and overcome entrenched habits, thereby creating the foundations for a new and perhaps more peaceful future. Major traumas have, indeed, always played a central role in redefining political communities. Questioning the key assumptions that guide security thinking should therefore be an essential element of coming to terms with 9/11. And it should entail fundamental discussions about the nature and meaning of security in a rapidly changing world - discussions that include the use of a range of hitherto neglected sources of insight, such as those between political, economic, legal and ethical factors. This book will be of great interest to students of International Security, Political Science and International Relations.

作者介绍:

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