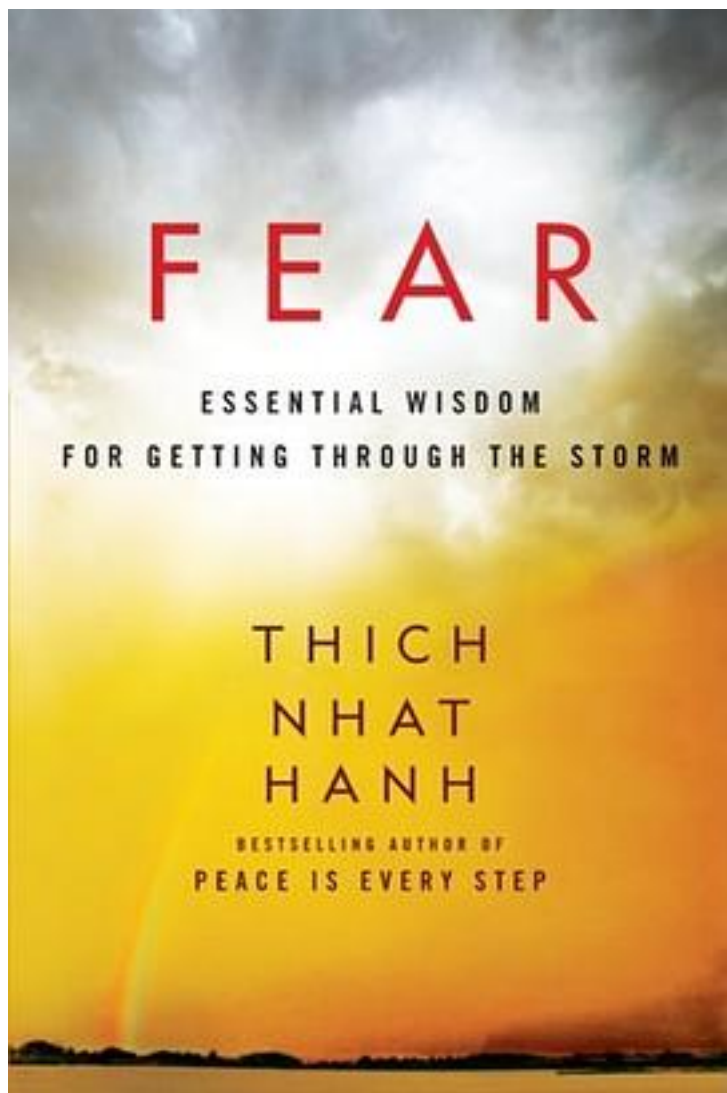


Fear



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著者:Robin, Corey

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Book Description

For many commentators, September 11 inaugurated a new era of fear. But as Corey Robin shows in his unsettling tour of the Western imagination--the first intellectual history of its kind--fear has shaped our politics and culture since time immemorial. From the Garden of Eden to the Gulag Archipelago to today's headlines, Robin traces our growing fascination with political danger and disaster. As our faith in positive political principles recedes, he argues, we turn to fear as the justifying language of public life. We may not know the good, but we do know the bad. So we cling to fear, abandoning the quest for justice, equality, and freedom. But as fear becomes our intimate, we understand it less. In a startling reexamination of fear's greatest modern interpreters--Hobbes, Montesquieu, Tocqueville, and Arendt--Robin finds that writers since the eighteenth century have systematically obscured fear's political dimensions, diverting attention from the public and private authorities who sponsor and benefit from it. For fear, Robin insists, is an exemplary instrument of repression--in the public and private sector. Nowhere is this politically repressive fear--and its evasion--more evident than in contemporary America. In his final chapters, Robin accuses our leading scholars and critics of ignoring "Fear, American Style," which, as he shows, is the fruit of our most prized inheritances--the Constitution and the free market. With danger playing an increasing role in our daily lives and justifying a growing number of government policies, Robin's *Fear* offers a bracing, and necessary, antidote to our contemporary culture of fear.

Review

"A worthy, if gloomy, contribution to the political-philosophical literature." --Kirkus Reviews

"Given daily terror alerts and news reports of violence, Robin, professor of political science and contributor to New York Times Magazine, offers a sober analysis of fear's Janus-faced potential as a catalyst for economic progress and the *raison d'être* of repressive regimes. A brilliant synthesis of historical perspective and the critically revealing story of 'Fear, American Style,' the account explores the classics of political thought by Hobbes, Montesquieu and Tocqueville and the portrayal of evil by Arendt." --Publishers Weekly

"Robin's account of the place of fear in American life is refreshingly clear--and timely." --Tony Judt, New York Review of Books

"Brilliant.... What he does in *Fear* is show us, by carefully plotting the progress of modern fear politics from the Enlightenment to present day, that we are as dependent on fear as a political vehicle, if not more so, as we are the charades of left/right/middle factionalism." --National Post

"A thoughtful, often brilliant, radical polemic against the insufficiencies and pitfalls of liberalism.... Let us hope that in his next work he will try to construct a defense against political fear as spirited as this provocative and discouraging dissection of its multiple forms." --Stanley Hoffman, Foreign Affairs

"By means of an innovative rereading of four influential political theorists--Thomas Hobbes, Montesquieu, Alexis de Tocqueville and Hannah Arendt--Corey Robin offers a fascinating analysis of how we have formed many of our ideas about the role of fear in society." --New Statesman

"Learned and original, Robin argues that whereas Hobbes and Arendt appreciated the political dimensions of fear, Montesquieu and Tocqueville relegated the idea to the realm of the psychological--a view of fear that has endured, blinding us to the self-serving ways elites deploy fear for political ends. Along the way, Robin delivers trenchant and original critiques of writers who deal with fear. The journalists Michael Ignatieff, Philip Gourevitch and their ilk, who have made a cottage industry of condemning genocide, come under withering criticism for implicitly romanticizing the mass killings they deplore.... When...Robin takes on a congealed conventional wisdom, he is at his best." --Newsday

"His book is an appeal for social democracy which American intellectuals and the political elite have abandoned since the New Deal.... With great lucidity, Robin identifies many disturbing excesses in thought and travesties in deed, all of which are bound up in some way with fear." --Michael Kimmage, New York Times Book Review

"Liberalism, he insists, sends working men and women unprotected into battle against the forces of privilege, a battle they are bound to lose. Defeating fear, US-style, requires a new politics that actively confronts power rather than the current apologetic, ameliorative American liberalism. He may not be right that only a strong state can protect its citizens from fear (which is what, with Hobbes, he ends up arguing), but he makes a strong case that the job is too important to be left to the market." --Financial Times

"Fear is a central, but little investigated, concept in modern political thought. In a deft and well-written analysis of this crucial concept and its political implications, Corey Robin not only gives us a masterful survey of its history but also, of its current abuse by the Bush administration. Passionate, erudite, and partisan, this book is an original contribution to our political vocabulary." --Seyla Benhabib, Eugene Meyer Professor of Political Science and Philosophy, Yale University

作者介绍:

About the Author

Corey Robin teaches political science at Brooklyn College, City University of New York. His writings have appeared in The New York Times Magazine, The Washington Post, Raritan, Dissent, The Times Literary Supplement and American Political Science Review.

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书评

在政治理论里，对恐惧的政治的讨论在9/11之后达到过一个巅峰。例如，2004年Social Research (Vol. 71, No. 4, Winter 2004)出版过一期题为Fear: Its Political Uses and Abuses的特刊，包括Corey Robin在内的一些政治理论家（Andrew Arato、Cass Sunstein、George Kateb）都参...

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