

The War in Iraq and Why the Media Failed Us



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Polls show that throughout the war in Iraq to date, a sizeable portion of the American population has believed that troops found WMD in Iraq and that Saddam Hussein was somehow responsible for the attacks of September 11. Even after the 9/11 Commission Report and numerous other reports have concluded that U.S. intelligence was flawed, people in the self-proclaimed freest nation on earth continue to be misinformed about something that could not be more vital to understand - the reasons for sending troops into harm's way. The media should have done a better job of performing its traditional role of sceptic and watchdog. In this insightful analysis, the author examines what went wrong. There are, of course, many people whose support for going to war in Iraq was not contingent on the existence of WMD or a connection to al-Qaeda. But many others based their support for the war on misinformation. Dudge investigates why the media did not aggressively investigate the claims made by the administration and intelligence agencies; in short, why they did not do their job, which is to fully inform the citizenry to the best of their ability. He examines pressures from the Bush administration, pressures from corporate consolidation of media ownership, patriotism and self-censorship, and other factors. He concludes with recommendations for ways in which the U.S. media can improve their reporting on government.

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