

The Selling of the Constitutional Convention



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During the long summer of 1787, while half a hundred men deliberated in utmost

secrecy over the fate of a nation, newspaper editors went to great length to win support for the federalist cause. By launching one of the greatest media marketing campaigns in American history, publishers repeatedly promoted the anticipated results of the Constitutional Convention while actively stifling its antifederal critics. In this revealing expose of media management in the eighteenth century, historian John K. Alexander demonstrates how publishers' tacit political assumptions and their tightly woven information networks channeled public debate over the issue. He quantitatively and qualitatively shows how publishers turned their papers into propaganda instruments in an effort to create and solidify a popular consensus around the yet unknown results of the Convention. In the words of one New York editor, "they conceived it a duty incumbent on them to prepare the minds of their readers for [the Constitution's] reception." "The evidence from 1787," writes Alexander, "suggests that independent ownership and operation offer no guarantee of a truly free and informative press." The Selling of the Constitutional Convention is a fascinating analysis of news management in the 1780s that sheds new light on the role of the press in early American political culture.

作者介绍:

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标签

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评论

角度新鲜有趣，1787年夏天，精英们在秘密制宪，被挡在门外的新闻界在干什么？属于新闻社会史范畴，主要观点是：“制宪会议”是桩好买卖。感觉略略腹黑了一些——那个年代还是有些共和精神的。

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书评

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