



Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public

Jon Western

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Selling Intervention and War examines the competition among foreign policy elites in the executive branch and Congress in winning the hearts and minds of the American public for military intervention. The book studies how the president and his supporters organize campaigns for public support for military action. According to Jon Western, the outcome depends upon information and propaganda advantages, media support or opposition, the degree of cohesion within the executive branch, and the duration of the crisis. Also important is whether the American public believes that military threat is credible and victory plausible. Not all such campaigns to win public support are successful; in some instances, foreign policy elites and the president and his advisors have to back off.

Western uses several modern conflicts, including the current one in Iraq, as case studies to illustrate the methods involved in selling intervention and war to the American public: the decision not to intervene in French Indochina in 1954, the choice to go into Lebanon in 1958, and the more recent military actions in Grenada, Somalia, Bosnia, and Iraq.

Selling Intervention and War is essential reading for scholars and students of U.S. foreign policy, international security, the military and foreign policy, and international conflict.

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