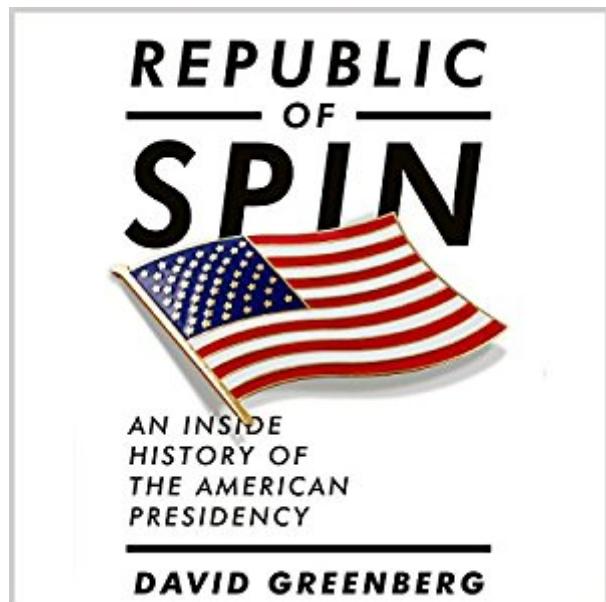


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Republic Of Spin: An Inside History Of The American Presidency



Synopsis

The most powerful political tool of the modern presidency is control of the message and the image. In *Republic of Spin* - a vibrant history covering more than 100 years of politics - presidential historian David Greenberg recounts the rise of the White House spin machine, from Teddy Roosevelt to Barack Obama. His sweeping, startling narrative takes us behind the scenes to see how the tools and techniques of image making and message craft work. We meet Woodrow Wilson convening the first White House press conference, Franklin Roosevelt huddling with his private pollsters, Ronald Reagan's aides crafting his nightly news sound bites, and George W. Bush staging his "Mission Accomplished" photo-op. We meet, too, the backstage visionaries who pioneered new ways of gauging public opinion and mastering the media - figures like George Cortelyou, TR's brilliantly efficient press manager; 1920s ad whiz Bruce Barton; Robert Montgomery, Dwight Eisenhower's canny TV coach; and of course the key spinmeisters of our own times, from Roger Ailes to David Axelrod. Greenberg also examines the profound debates Americans have waged over the effect of spin on our politics. Does spin help our leaders manipulate the citizenry? Or does it allow them to engage us more fully in the democratic project? Exploring the ideas of the century's most incisive political critics, from Walter Lippmann and H. L. Mencken to Hannah Arendt and Stephen Colbert, *Republic of Spin* illuminates both the power of spin and its limitations - its capacity not only to mislead but also to lead.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What is the correct role of the media in national politics? Does government propagandize the electorate or enlighten them? Will it allow us to scale up traditional New England town democracy to a national level, or create a society of conformists, eventually marching in lock step to disaster? Historically, how malleable has the public been? What was the media's role in advancing Vietnam and the civil rights movement? When does taking advantage of and playing the media cross the line into misuse? And what of the media in society? Could it empower the lowest common denominator and institute the *tyranny of the majority* • through demagoguery? Is it even possible to be objective?, since no single person can know all (even reasonable) points of view on a major issue. Starting at a certain level of abstraction, is truth simply a matter of spin and bias? And when the media has what one regards as biased reporting • is it due to an honest bias?, or does it come from the dictates of the outlet owner on which positions their writers should be hired for or favor? Given the role of the internet in articulately advancing so many opinions at odds with each other • in the future will it be possible to even produce consensus about anything meaningful? I have previously purchased and tried to make my way through several books featuring Edward Bernays (Propaganda, Crystallizing Public Opinion, The Father of Spin). Past the first few chapters of nicely summarized insight I found them to become so full of routine minutia and pontification that they lost my interest. *The Republic of Spin* • traces the role of the media (newspapers, radio, TV), starting with Teddy Roosevelt's administration.

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