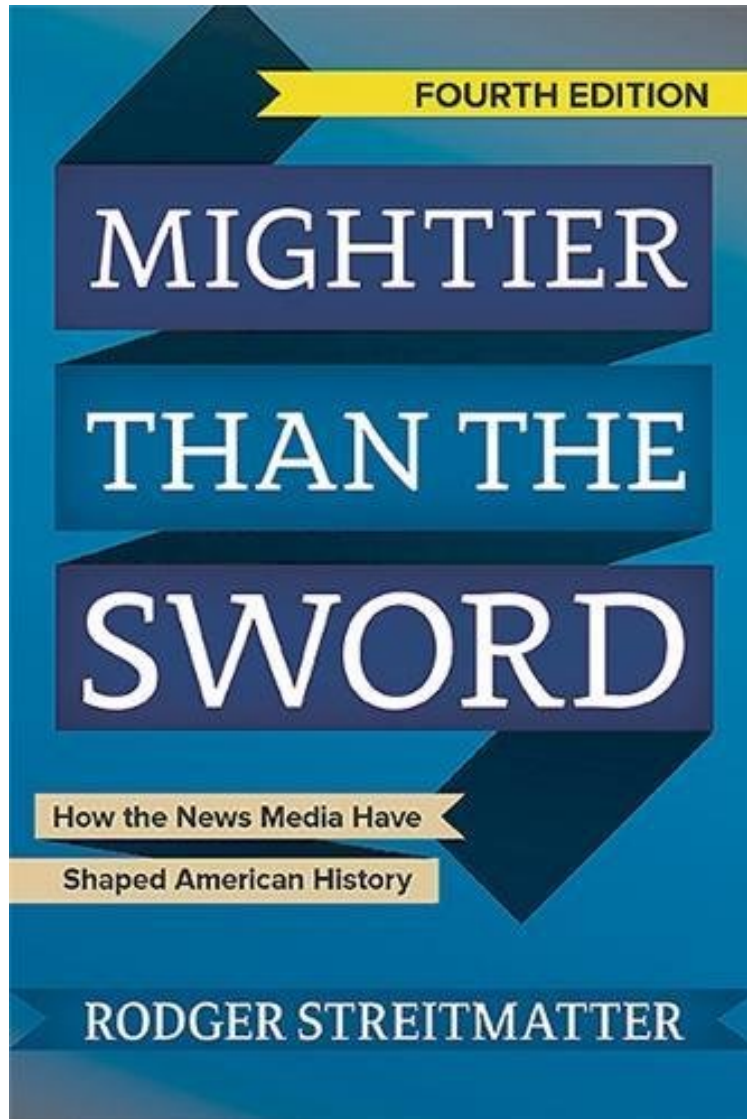


Mightier than the Sword: How the News Media Have Shaped American History

Rodger Streitmatter

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In this engaging examination of the media's influence on US history and politics, Rodger Streitmatter visits sixteen landmark episodes, from the American Revolution to the present-day fight for gay and lesbian marriage equality. In each of these cases, Streitmatter succinctly illustrates the enormous role that journalism has played in not merely recording this nation's history but also in actively shaping it. Mightier than the Sword offers students and professors a highly readable and accessible alternative to journalism history textbooks. Instead of trying to document every detail in the development of US media through dry, dull lists of names, dates, and headlines, this book focuses on sixteen discrete episodes that illustrate a point that is much larger than the sum of their parts: media have played and continue to play an enormous role in shaping this nation. The fourth edition features an entirely new chapter on the way US media have championed various gay and lesbian rights initiatives, from the 2003 Lawrence vs. Texas sodomy case through the June 2013 Supreme Court decision striking down DOMA (the Defense of Marriage Act). Balancing criticism and celebration of news media and exploring both print and electronic platforms, Mightier than the Sword provides students with a sense of the power and responsibility inherent in the institution of journalism.

In succinct, engrossing prose, Streitmatter shows how courageous, effective communicators have accepted their own and their media's limitations to shape the outcome of events from abolitionism to anti-Semitism, women's rights to civil rights, the Ku Klux Klan to Vietnam. Booklist An easy-to-digest . . . overview of the media's influence on American history and politics. . . . A fine introductory textbook for a journalism class. Kirkus sA novel approach to journalism history, presenting key episodes in an engaging style bound to appeal to students and the general public alike. Streitmatter's lucid prose draws on study of both primary and secondary source material to provide a provocative synthesis and serves as a basis for thoughtful examination of the role of the news media in American society. Maurine H. Beasley, University of Maryland at College Park A nice, tight package of meaningful topics quite readable balanced a fine work short but substantive innovative in form and content accessible and insightful dynamic range of topics. A great supplemental text in a mass media survey or media and history course. Charles Lewis, Minnesota State University Accurate, engaging, and succinct. Provides ample starting point for further discussions and exploration Very readable; the author has a sure hand on his history and makes it accessible to the reader extensive bibliography is a real plus. Joe Zubrick, University of Maine, Fort Kent Streitmatter's book stands alone as the best thematic approach to history available. Students respond to the storytelling tone; the narratives connect the dates and people for them. Susan English, Gonzaga University Impressive. Many texts are chock-full of facts and figures that put students to sleep, not so with Streitmatter's accessible story-telling approach. The evolution of news, from the American revolution to journalism's current condition, is outlined in manageable chapters that capture the imagination. Selene Phillips, University of Louisville