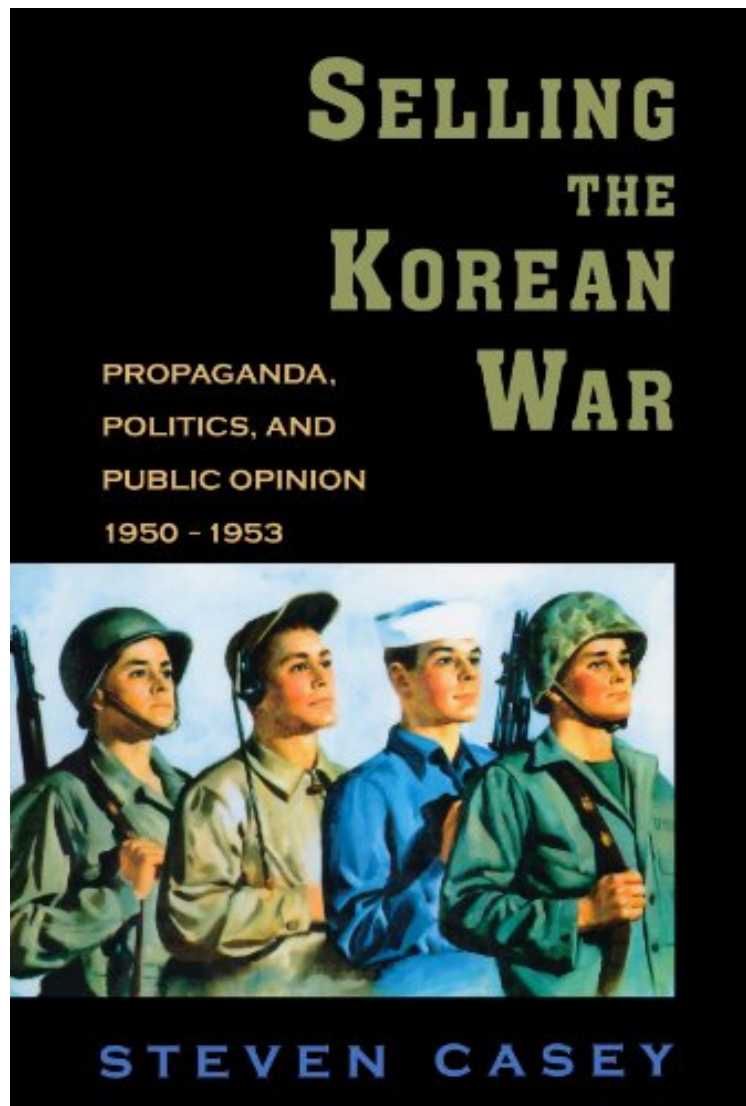


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Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950-1953

Steven Casey

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While this book addresses the political machinations to maintain public support and the rationale to downplay this most bloody foreign war in US history, this book does a poor job of covering how the government got away with keeping the most violent battle of the Korean War since 1951 -- the Battle of Kumsong, out of public awareness. As a result of this subterfuge by the government, there is virtually nothing written today of this sacrifice on the part of US and coalition forces in July 1953 in which thousands were wounded, killed, or lost in action. If Casey had included in this book, it would not only have added considerably to his argument, but it would have provided the first valuable discussion on this most forgotten battle of the forgotten war.

How presidents spark and sustain support for wars remains an enduring and significant problem. Korea was the first limited war the U.S. experienced in the contemporary period - the first recent war fought for something less than total victory. In *Selling the Korean War*, Steven Casey explores how President Truman and then Eisenhower tried to sell it to the American public. Based on a massive array of primary sources, Casey subtly explores the government's selling activities from all angles. He looks at the halting and sometimes chaotic efforts of Harry Truman and Dean Acheson, Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles. He examines the relationships that they and their subordinates developed with a host of other institutions, from Congress and the press to Hollywood and labor. And he assesses the complex and fraught interactions between the military and war correspondents in the battlefield theater itself. From high politics to bitter media spats, Casey guides the reader through the domestic debates of this messy, costly war. He highlights the actions and calculations of colorful figures, including Senators Robert Taft and Joseph McCarthy, and General Douglas MacArthur. He details how the culture and work routines of Congress and the media influenced political tactics and daily news stories. And he explores how different phases of the war threw up different problems - from the initial disasters in the summer of 1950 to the giddy prospects of victory in October 1950, from the massive defeats in the wake of China's massive intervention to the lengthy period of stalemate fighting in 1952 and 1953.

"Steven Casey has drawn a masterly analysis of what is certain to become the standard work on its subject...The whole study is, moreover, conveyed with real verve and at a cracking pace...An exceptionally good book which does full justice to the complexity of the domestic politics of the Korean War and the role of the media, official institutions, and politicians in shaping public opinion."--Matthew Jones, *Journal of American Studies*
"Casey provides the best account to date of the relationship between domestic politics and the war in Korea...His book is a significant contribution to the literature on the Korean conflict and the relationship between politics and diplomacy during the early years of the Cold War. Most impressive is the author's ability to place the war in a broader context."--Thomas W. Devine, *H-Diplo Roundtable*
"As a study on the complex relationship among the executive branch, congress, the media, and the public within a constitutional democracy, Dr. Casey's *Selling the Korean War* is unparalleled in both detail and insight. It is a major addition to the literature--in any language--on the Korean War, and merits a careful read by all who share an interest in the subject."--Sung-Yoon Lee, *H-Diplo Roundtable*
"This careful study not only fills a notable gap in the literature on the Korean War, it also makes a valuable addition to the short list of books dealing with the conflict's impact on domestic affairs inside the United States. Although Casey's main purpose is to explain 'the government's efforts to sell the war at home,' he achieves much more in persuasively challenging the conventional wisdom about well-known key events and advancing perceptive new interpretations of old issues."--James I. Matray, *H-Diplo Roundtable*
"This well-written and thoughtfully argued study...warrants reading not only by specialists on the Korean War but also by those interested in the crucial foreign policy debates which occurred during the final third of Truman's presidency."--Wilson D. Miscamble, *H-Diplo Roundtable*
"This is, quite simply, a fantastically good book. Steven Casey's exhaustively researched account of the hesitant, ambivalent effort to sell America's first limited war to a reluctant public is a brilliant evocation and analysis of the domestic shape of the Korean War. Comparisons between the wars in Iraq/Afghanistan and Vietnam are commonplace; readers may be surprised to discover how much of the present dilemmas of U.S. foreign policy were pre-figured over half a century ago."--Marilyn B. Young, co-editor of *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam: Or How Not to Learn from the Past*
"An exhaustively researched, highly readable, and path-breaking study of the American political process experiencing the stresses of the nation's first large-scale limited war. It is required reading not only for students of the Korean era, but also for anyone wishing to understand the divisiveness and rancor that recurred in Vietnam and, most recently, in Iraq."--Ralph B. Levering, author of *The Cold War: A Post-Cold War History*
"As a long-time claimant of expertise on the Korean War, I am humbled by how much I learned from this well-written book, both in information combed from the archives and in penetrating insight."--William Stueck, author of *Rethinking the Korean War*
"A masterly analysis certain to become the standard work on its subject...The whole study is conveyed with real verve and at a cracking pace."--Matthew Jones, *Journal of American Studies*
"An exhaustively researched and insightful volume...[that] breaks new ground in the analysis of the postwar era's first limited war. Steven Casey has convincingly shown that, because of its unique place in Cold War history, the Korean War produced unprecedented ambivalence in the American national consciousness."--American

Communist History"Exquisitely documented and exceptionally detailed."--Tae Yang Kwak, *Journal of World History*
About the AuthorSteven Casey is Senior Lecturer in International History at the London School of Economics. He is the author of *Cautious Crusade: Franklin D. Roosevelt, American Public Opinion, and the War against Nazi Germany, 1941-1945* (OUP).