The Matador's Cape delves into the tangled causes and devastating consequences of American policy at home and abroad since 9/11. In a collection of searing essays, the author explores Washington’s seemingly chronic inability to bring “the enemy” into focus, detailing the ideological, bureaucratic, electoral, and (not least) emotional forces that have warped America’s understanding of, and response to, the terrorist threat. He also shows how the gratuitous and murderous shift of attention from al Qaeda to Iraq was shaped by a series of misleading theoretical perspectives on the end of deterrence, the clash of civilizations, humanitarian intervention, unilateralism, democratization, torture, intelligence gathering, and wartime expansions of presidential power. The author’s breadth of knowledge on the War on Terror leads to conclusions about present-day America that are at once sobering in their depth of reference and inspiring in their global perspective.

After receiving his Ph.D. from Yale in 1976, Stephen Holmes taught briefly at Yale University before becoming a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton in 1978. He then moved to Harvard University’s Department of Government, where he stayed until 1985, the year he joined the faculty at the University of Chicago.

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For Francesco
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