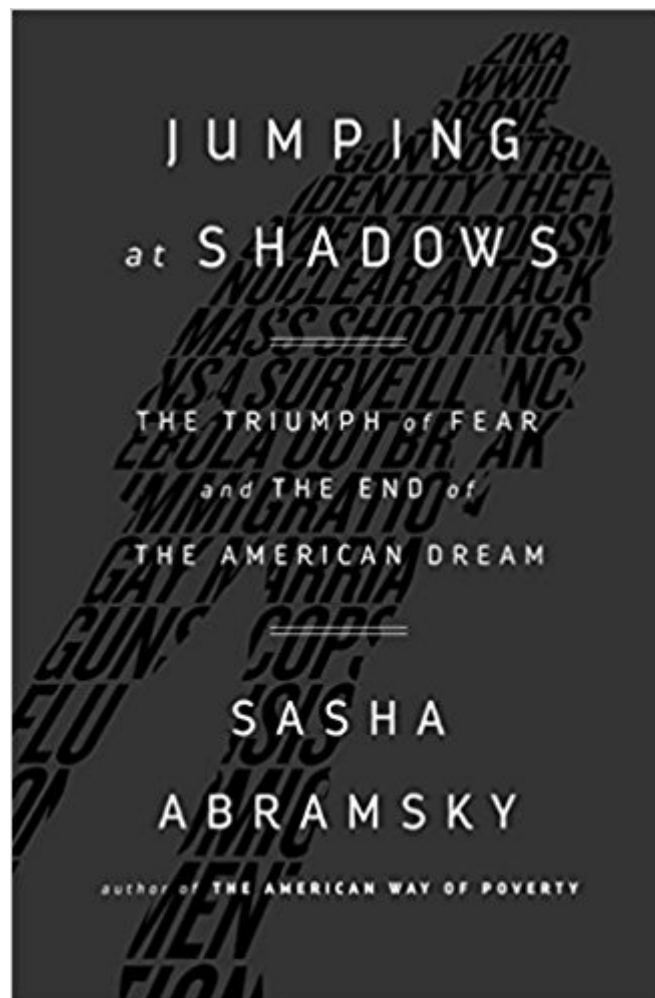




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# Jumping At Shadows: The Triumph Of Fear And The End Of The American Dream



## Synopsis

Why is an unarmed young black woman who knocks on a stranger's front door to ask for help after her car breaks down perceived to be so threatening that he shoots her dead? Why do we fear infrequent acts of terrorism more than more common acts of violence? Why does a disease like Ebola, which killed only a handful of Americans, provoke panic, whereas the flu--which kills tens of thousands each year--is dismissed with a yawn? *Jumping at Shadows* is Sasha Abramsky's searing account of America's most dangerous epidemic: irrational fear. Taking readers on a dramatic journey through a divided nation, where everything from immigration to disease, gun control to health care has become fodder for fearmongers and conspiracists, he delivers an eye-popping analysis of our misconceptions about risk and threats. What emerges is a shocking portrait of a political and cultural landscape that is, increasingly, defined by our worst fears and rampant anxieties. Ultimately, Abramsky shows that how we calculate risk and deal with fear can teach us a great deal about ourselves, exposing deeply ingrained strains of racism, classism, and xenophobia within our culture, as well as our growing susceptibility to the toxic messages of demagogues.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

Publisher: Nation Books; 1 edition (September 5, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1568585195

ISBN-13: 978-1568585192

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.2 x 9.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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## Customer Reviews

"A provocative look at the science and psychology behind fear-based politics.... Abramsky presents a clearly written synthesis of science and sociology. A thoughtful progressive feint against the vulgar fearmongering of the moment." —Kirkus Reviews  
In this fascinating examination of fear, journalist Abramsky (*The American Way of Poverty*) reveals how it has infected the collective American

psyche, influencing everything from child rearing to government. ...Readers interested in groupthink, sociology, or seeking insight into the current state of American politics will devour this book."â •Library Journal

Sasha Abramsky is an author, freelance journalist, lecturer at the University of California, and a senior fellow at Demos. His work has appeared in the Nation, Atlantic Monthly, New York magazine, American Prospect, Salon, Slate, NewYorker.com, LA Weekly, Village Voice, Daily Beast, and Rolling Stone. His 2013 book, *The American Way of Poverty*, was listed as a New York Times Notable Book of the Year, and his 2015 volume, *The House of Twenty Thousand Books*, was selected by Kirkus as one of the best nonfiction books of the year. Abramsky lives in Sacramento, California, with his wife and their two children.

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