

Lies the Media Tell Us



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James Winter



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The mainstream media's usual agenda, with a few worthy exceptions, is limited to the issues that the propaganda system wants us to hear, giving the viewer a narrow and biased view of what's going on in the world. Appalled by the duplicity and misinformation churned out by the corporate media, James Winter records example after example, from major newspapers and television programs, of the use, misuse and abuse of information. Included is a scathing analysis of actions by the U.S. administration since 9/11, in a global agenda which stretches from Iraq and Afghanistan to Venezuela; a look at how the corporate media have demonized youthful protesters, portraying them as irrational and violent thugs; how they have fought the Kyoto Accord; and how they push pharmaceutical drugs, not just in ads but in news stories and programs, omitting the downside of so-called "modern medicine." Understanding how media shape our thinking about social issues, Disney's animated feature films—which inundate our children, promote hierarchy and are loaded with stereotypes, presenting negative images of women, visible minorities, gays and lesbians—are scrutinized. As are a number of video games from which children as young as 8 are learning violence, sexism and racism, through innocent-sounding games such as, "Grand Theft Auto," "Waste the Wife" and "Kill All Haitians." In their rave reviews of these films and games, the corporate media are oblivious to these damaging representations. If real power is exercised today not by governments, but by private interests, then the corporate media deserve our attention. James Winter is a professor of communication studies at the University of Windsor, in Ontario, Canada. He has taught media literacy to thousands of students, for the past quarter century. He is the founding editor of the "Electronic Journal of Communication," and the muckraking alternative webzine, "Flipside." His recent books include: "MediaThink," and "Democracy's Oxygen: How Corporations Control the News."

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