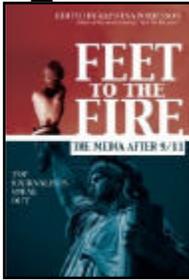
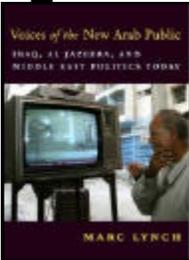


MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY

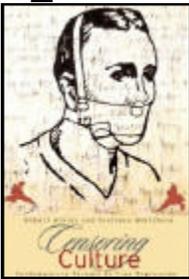
summer reading list 2006



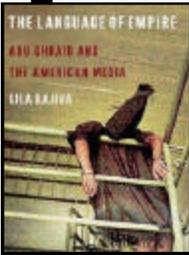
Feet to the Fire ed. by Kristina Borjesson
The Media After 9/11. Kristina Borjesson's impressively vast volume of interviews with journalists has already taken its place as an indispensable source, probing how government sources were able to use the disaster and its aftermath of fear to minimize journalists' watchdog role while encouraging them to adopt pro-administration frames and perspectives, and to value access above independence. An excellent and compelling read for aspiring journalists, media critics or anyone interested in the current state of American democracy. [*Prometheus*]



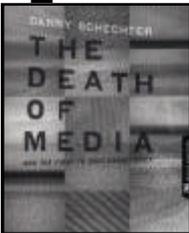
Voices of the New Arab Republic by Marc Lynch
Iraq, Al-Jazeera, and Middle East Politics today. How are electronic communications and populist satellite networks like Al-Jazeera changing political participation in the Arab world? Lynch examines in critical detail the various factors contributing to the contemporary Arab public sphere, including pro-democracy elements, pan-Arab nationalism, and the enduring power of Saudi elites. Lynch's central focus on Jazeera and the Iraq war provides the best-yet analysis of the channel's significance. [*Columbia*]



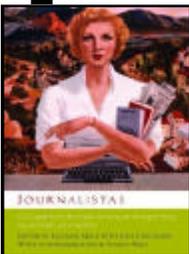
Censoring Culture ed. by Svetlana Mintcheva and Robert Atkins
Contemporary Threats to Free Expression. Arts censorship comes in many forms: government interference, economic pressure, media policy structures. With engaging essays divided into sections on economics, the Internet, protecting children, hate speech and self-censorship, this volume takes an impressively broad view, providing a tour de force critical examination of the topic. Highly recommended for activists, artists and anyone concerned with culture and freedom of information. [*New Press*]



The Language of Empire by Lila Rajiva
Abu Ghraib and the American Media. A detailed, systematic attempt to understand how establishment media coverage of the Iraq war has dulled, rather than sharpened, American public conscience. The book is a model of in-depth, citizen media analysis, not only skewering craven propagandists like Hannity and Limbaugh, but also revealing the shameful and often racist double standards which have undergirded mainstream war coverage. [*Monthly Review*]

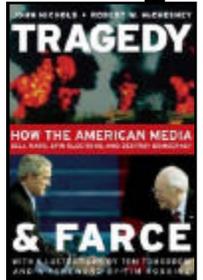


The Death of Media by Danny Schechter
and the Fight to Save Democracy. A worthy, brief introduction to problems with mainstream media and opportunities for media activism. Schechter helpfully situates his own observations within an ongoing history of citizen media critics, and within a diverse contemporary network of creative activists, from the Media Justice movement to experiments in new journalism, such as political blogs and South Korea's OhMyNews. [*Melville House*]

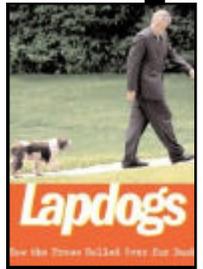


Journalistas by Eleanor Mills, Kira Cochrane, and Naomi Wolf
100 Years of the Best Writing and Reporting by Women Journalists. Provides highlights of the often-overlooked history of 20th century women advocacy journalists and essayists, from Emma Goldman to Erica Jong to Alice Walker. The field of writers included is somewhat canonical, however. Excerpts are regrettably short, and numerous major figures (Ida B. Wells) and contemporaries (Naomi Klein, Arundhati Roy, Irshad Manji, Jill Nelson, etc.) are overlooked. [*Carroll & Graf*]

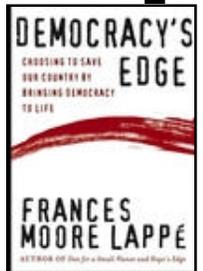
Tragedy and Farce by John Nichols and Robert McChesney
How the American Media Sell Wars, Spin Elections, and Destroy Democracy. This satisfying contribution from media reformers McChesney and Nichols recounts the US mainstream media's dismal performance during the buildup to the Iraq War and the 2004 election season. The book offers an informative critique of the national media's apparent bias towards powerful interests, its magnetic attraction towards often-misleading consensus frames for debate, and its general disinterest in encouraging actual debate on significant issues. A great read; includes an interesting examination of Dean campaign coverage. [*New Press*]



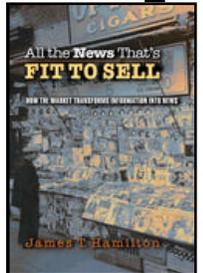
Lapdogs by Eric Boehlert
How the Press Rolled Over for Bush. Boehlert's coverage of national journalism and politics has been one of the best things about *Salon.com* for years. His first book, a characteristically articulate indictment of the DC press corp's soft-glove treatment of the Bush administration, does not disappoint. In addition to cataloging press failures which will be familiar to many readers, *Lapdogs* attempts to fathom the administration's contempt for press access and the national media's willingness to be cowed and marginalized. It also explores the connection between press failures and right-wing attacks on the "liberal media." [*Free Press*]



Democracy's Edge by Frances Moore Lappé
Choosing to Save Our Country by Bringing Democracy to Life. Lappé's latest book contains grassroots recipes for a functioning participatory democracy, what she calls a "revolution of hope." The book's snapshots of effective activism and simple ways to get involved are intended for a broad audience (buy it for your parents), but also are guided by an uncompromising vision for social and economic justice. Lappé's chapter on media activism contains one of the best summary accounts of the 2002-2003 US fight against media consolidation. [*Jossey-Bass*]



All the News that's Fit to Sell by J.T. Hamilton
How the Market Transforms Information into News. It's a truism for media activists that business factors influence news coverage on TV, radio and newspapers alike. But how does this happen, and what are structural solutions for the media mainstream? Hamilton attempts to develop an "economic theory of news" based on voluminous research and candid assessments about what people want to read and watch, as well as a principled view of the importance of a critical press for democracy. Useful and thought-provoking. [*Princeton*]



Tell Me No Lies ed. by John Pilger
Investigative Journalism that Changed the World. A deeply inspiring compendium of the most effective investigative reporting from 1945 to the present. Long excerpts from many journalistic and commentarial heroes: Edward R. Murrow, Jessica Mitford, Eduardo Galeano, Sy Hersh, Edward Said, Robert Fisk and many lesser-known but highly significant practitioners of an honorable and necessary craft. [*Thunders Mouth*]

Radical Mass Media Criticism ed. by David Berry
A Cultural Genealogy. An informative, if incomplete, critical scholarly look at a century of philosophically-based media criticism in Europe, North America and - in one essay - Latin America. Essays introduce the media-critical activity of Jurgen Habermas, Karl Kraus, the 'Frankfurt School' and Marshall McLuhan, among others. McChesney and Ben Scott's review of 20th century US mass media criticism is a highlight, as is an essay on bell hooks' work. [*Black Rose*]

