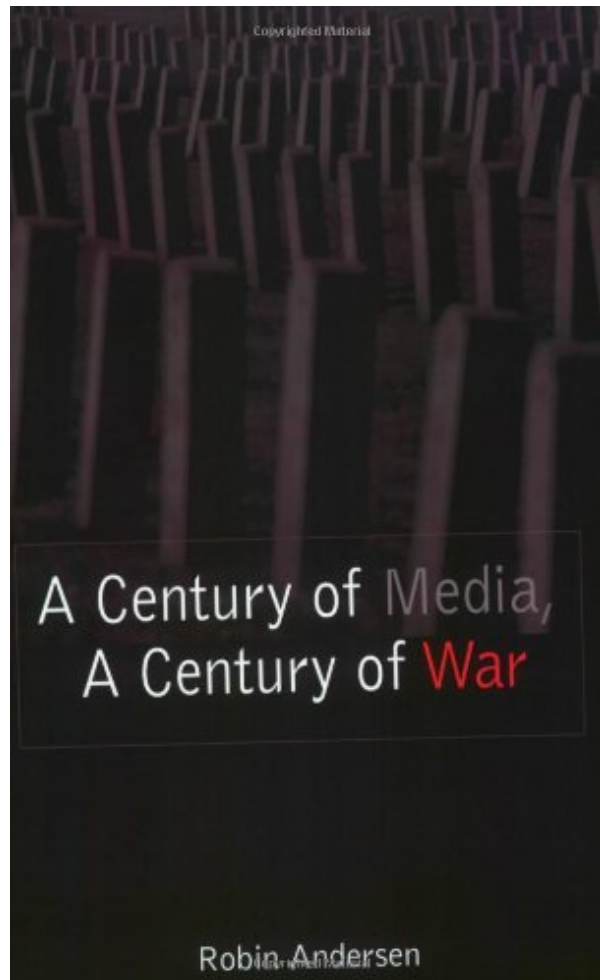


A CENTURY OF MEDIA, A CENTURY OF WAR BY ROBIN ANDERSEN



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A Century of Media, A Century of **War**

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Review

«Robin Andersen has long been an incisive media critic with great scope and depth. In ‘A Century of Media, A Century of War’, she provides a sharp overview of a grisly media landscape. This book is a fierce light that removes the shadowy evasions of our easy reveries for war. The result is a chilling panorama of what we routinely hide from ourselves - bitter truths about media systems that deceive men and women into avidly or passively supporting the latest war. Readers can take little comfort from this well-documented story, but they can learn crucial lessons about real-life consequences when media outlets serve the warfare state.» (Norman Solomon, Author, ‘War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death’)

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

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A CENTURY OF MEDIA, A CENTURY OF WAR BY ROBIN ANDERSEN PDF

Forged over the course of a century, the connections between war and media run long and deep. As this book reveals, the history of war and its telling has been a battle over public perception. The selection of which stories are told and which are ignored helps justify past battles and ensure future wars. Narratives of protest and pain, defeat and suffering, guilt and abuse struggle to be heard amid the empowering myths of war and heroism.

As Robin Andersen argues, the history of struggle between war and its representation has changed the way war is fought and the way we tell the stories of war. Information management, once called censorship and propaganda, has developed in tandem with new media technologies. Now, digital imaging creates virtual battlefields as computer-based technologies transform the weapons of war. Along the way, images on the nightly news, on movie screens, and in video games have turned war into entertainment. In the grip of virtual war, it is difficult to realize the loss of compassion or the consequences for democracy.

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Most helpful customer reviews

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful.

A Must Read to Better Understand the War in Iraq

By Word Warrior

Media critic Robin Andersen's timely work, *A Century of Media, A Century of War*, is a must read for those seeking to understand how we were drawn into the war in Iraq.

Just how did the Bush Administration and its corporate media allies sell us on successive lies to get us into this war? Director of the Peace and Justice Studies Program at Fordham University, Professor Andersen investigates the collaborative relationship of the media with the current and past administrations to promote the wars of the last 100 years.

The chapter, "The Military Entertainment Complex: Permanent War and the Digital Spectacular," is the most cogent look yet at the nexus of the media industry and the Pentagon as Andersen examines the Department of Defense's (DOD) funding of corporate research and development of "militainment" for the recruitment, training and selling of current and future wars.

In her conclusion, "War, Humanism and Democracy," Andersen clearly elucidates the threat the media/DOD collusion is to democracy, writing, "Militainment does not fulfill the media's democratic mandate, any more than does the simple dissemination of government proclamations."

This seminal work provides the reader with a better understanding of how we are being manipulated and gives us the tools to cut through the media fog surrounding wars and maybe, just maybe, help prevent future armed conflicts that are not in the nation's interest.

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

An amazing study of the US state's wars and the media

By William Podmore

This is an amazing book. Robin Andersen, Associate Professor of Communication and Media Studies at Fordham University, studies the US media's role in times of war. Her book is full of the most dreadful facts about the USA's wars. From print in World War One to video games in the Gulf War, the media have used the most up-to-date advertising and marketing techniques to whip up public support for those wars.

War video games promote war as a fun, empowering game. They are also used for military training. The video game *America's Army* became the army's most important recruitment tool. At one time it had three million players, making it the number one free online action game.

Digital spectacles like *Top Gun*, *Rambo*, *Saving Private Ryan*, and *Black Hawk Down* all promote war as heroic and humane. Who needs reasons for war when there are such striking images of war?

The military becomes part of entertainment, especially sports events. Propaganda is silent about deaths, especially civilian deaths, about the use of vile anti-personnel weapons like phosphorus bombs and cluster bombs, about international law, and about opposition to the war.

General MacArthur admitted that the US forces' scorched earth policy had created 'a wasteland' in North Korea. One of the Korean War's main activists, Dean Rusk, said, the USAF bombed 'everything that moved, every brick standing on top of another brick'. An official communiqué said, "It's hard to find good targets, for we have burned out almost everything." In the 1950 No Gun Ri massacre, in South Korea, "Roughly three hundred civilians, many of them women and children, were bombed and strafed from the air by U.S. gunner pilots under direct military command to do so."

The best historian of the Korean War, Bruce Cumings, wrote of "three years of genocidal bombing by the U.S. Air Force which killed perhaps two million civilians (one-quarter of the population), dropped oceans of napalm, left barely a modern building standing, opened large dams to flood nearby rice valleys and kill thousands of peasants by denying them food, and went far beyond anything done in Vietnam in a conscious program of using air power to destroy a society ..."

"El Salvador's new government today made its first get-tough reply to protesting leftists ..." CBS, 28 October 1979. The media always assume that the government in allied states is democratic, whatever the facts, and they always present its acts as self-defence, reactive and necessary. The media always assume that the opposition in enemy states is democratic, whatever the facts, and they always present its acts as self-defence, reactive and necessary.

The US invasion of Grenada was a 'violation of international law', as the UN Security Council decided on 2 November 1983. In 1986 the International Court of Justice found the US state guilty of terrorism against Nicaragua. Former contra leader Edgar Chamorro wrote in his book *Packaging the contras: a case of CIA disinformation*, "During my four years as contra director, it was premeditated policy to terrorize civilian non-combatants to prevent them from cooperating with the Government. Hundreds of civilian murders, tortures and rapes were committed in pursuit of this policy, of which the 'contra' leaders and their CIA superiors were well aware."

Chamorro also wrote, "It is a gross fabrication to claim that the contras are composed of democratic groups.... This is how murder and torture were justified, how the destruction of property and the sabotage of the economy and the social fabric of a nation were excused, all in the name of patriotism and anticommunism."

In 1990, a Kuwaiti girl lied to the US Congress that Iraqi soldiers had stormed Kuwaiti hospitals and thrown premature babies out of their incubators and left them on the floor to die. Amnesty International fell for this and stated in its report to Congress that 312 babies were killed. The girl who told this lie was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the USA. The girl had been coached by the PR firm Hill and Knowlton. She later admitted her story was not true.

During the Gulf War of 1990-91, a study found that the more television that people watched, the less they knew and the more they backed the war.

The Downing Street memo of July 2002 said that war on Iraq was 'inevitable' and that "facts were being fixed around the policy". Yet for months afterwards Bush and Blair lied that war would only be 'a last resort'.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Totally Unbiased Reporting

By Carioca56

This book is mostly fact, intertwined with the author's interpretation of the latter.

On page 315 author Robin Andersen writes about Abe Lincoln who said: "I am a firm believer in people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet the national crisis."

Unfortunately, the people are NOT given the facts, as Ms. Andersen shows for more than 300 pages.

This book documents how America's imperial tendencies have not simply been ignored, but promoted by the mass media.

Some quotes are as follows.....

The author Robin Andersen refers to suffering and death as "an acceptable practice in contemporary democratic society." Is she referring to contemporary American democratic society, or contemporary world democratic society? One can only imagine.

On the Iraq War Andersen quotes a Dr. Jabbar who said: "I saw the cluster bombs with my own eyes. Not less than 60% of the dead were women and children."

Probably, most telling, she points out that the operation to rescue an elite group of American soldiers, documented in the film "Black Hawk Down," left more than one thousand Somalis dead, in order to rescue a dozen odd American soldiers.

A horribly accurate tale of government and media collaboration to present war to the public as something that we can't live without.

Four stars. One star missing for the staccato style of reporting. But this woman is a scholar, not a writer.

Thank you Ms. Andersen.

P.S. I am still upset with Amazon.com for their denial of internet services to Wikileaks.

See all 4 customer reviews...

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