

Robert W. McChesney. *The Political Economy of Media: Enduring Issues, Emerging Dilemmas*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2008. Pp. 589. \$19.95 (paper). ISBN 978-1583671610

Reviewer: David Weiss¹

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“There is an opportunity before us to reinvigorate journalism and, with that, democratic governance in the United States. But we need to correctly understand the source of the problem to prescribe the solutions ... [W]ithout viable journalism we not only make democracy unthinkable, we open the door to a tyranny beyond most of our imaginations. I argue herein that the political economy of media is uniquely positioned to provide the insights necessary for constructive action.”

Robert McChesney, *The Political Economy of Media*, 118.

Robert McChesney opens his 589-page tome by acknowledging that “whereas some readers may devour the book from beginning to end...many readers will be as likely to read only a handful of chapters, or read the chapters out of order” (8). For better or worse, and despite having separately read and taught sections of this book, I chose to read *The Political Economy of Media* (henceforth, *TPEOM*) from front to back.

Doing so revealed the book’s flaws as a collection (as I detail below), yet also its strengths—or, more accurately, the strengths of its author’s ideas, the depth of his copious research, his profound and broad knowledge of media and economic history and theory, his personal and professional devotion to education in all the best senses of that word, and his commitment to bringing the fruits of his academic labor to bear on the process of social, political, and policy change. For Robert McChesney is

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