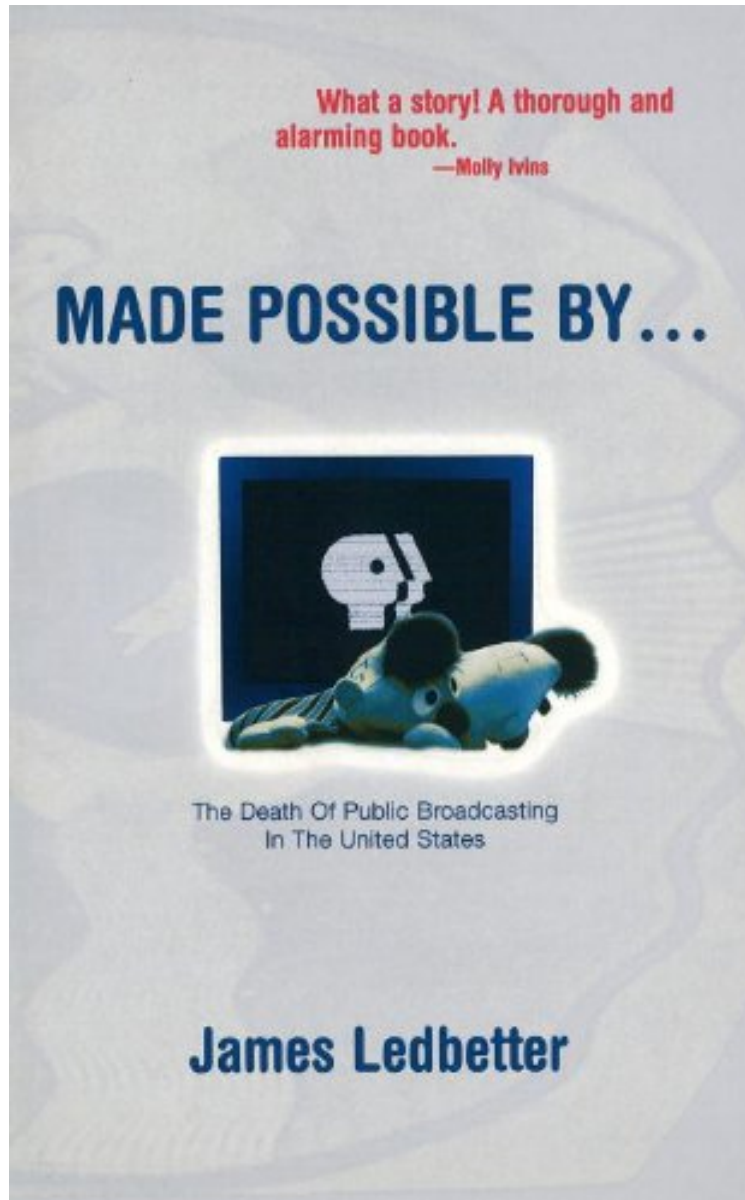


## Made Possible By...: The Death of Public Broadcasting in the United States

*James Ledbetter*

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**James Ledbetter : Made Possible By...: The Death of Public Broadcasting in the United States** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Made Possible By...: The Death of Public Broadcasting in the United States:

21 of 21 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, important PBS critique from a left perspective. By Laurence Jarvik James Ledbetter's concerns are those of a man of the left, and his book reveals a sense of betrayal. He shows how PBS and its insiders used an original left constituency in pursuit of political power and financial gain. Dropped once PBS became an established institution were the unions, performers and artists, educators and other nonconformists to whom the promise of a refuge for individualism and dissidence had been made by what turned out to be -- not surprisingly to libertarian critics -- another self-serving government bureaucracy motivated by the aggrandizement of power and wealth. I.F. Stone said "all governments are liars" and Ledbetter seems to include PBS in that judgement. He reveals why some of those who once believed in PBS no longer are able to offer it unconditional support. While non-leftists may not share his vision of a subsidized agitprop network to replace the present system, many of his criticisms of existing problems within PBS are on the mark. 0 of 33 people found the following review helpful. terrible writer,, terrible book By A Customer I hope this guy has a day job.

Made Possible By... is an engrossing history of public broadcasting, from its initial idealist attempt to reshape the vast wasteland of television, to its current lamentable state safe, consistently mediocre, and as dependent on corporate financing as its commercial counterparts.

.com In Made Possible By..., Village Voice columnist James Ledbetter considers the current state of public broadcasting and finds it decidedly lacking. During its early heyday, NET (National Educational Television, a forerunner of PBS) regularly aired innovative and provocative public-affairs shows; soon, however, public-television managers began toning down controversial content in a desperate--and doomed--attempt to secure government funding. When even these efforts failed, public television increasingly turned to corporate sponsors to fill the gap, resulting in a movement away from adventurous programming in favor of politically inoffensive, "safe" shows such as Sesame Street, Masterpiece Theatre, even Ken Burns's The Civil War. Today, Ledbetter writes, corporate influence rules in public broadcasting, much as it does in commercial television. A savage indictment of corporate underwriting and bureaucratic inefficiency, Made Possible By... is also an eloquent defense of public television's possibilities; Ledbetter envisions public broadcasting as a truly democratic arena--and perhaps the only area of American public life not determined by market forces. A sharp, persuasive analysis of public broadcasting's decline and fall. David Futrelle, Newsday Crammed with newsy incidents and amazing quotes ... a valuable source book for years to come. Richard Buell, Boston Globe Ledbetter's refusal to hide behind Big Bird is refreshing; his recommendations are cogent. Martha Bayles, New York Times Ledbetter's view is balanced, his eye is cold and sharp, and his research is exhaustive. Stephen Stark, Washington Post About the Author James Ledbetter is New York Bureau Chief for The Industry Standard. He previously wrote the Press Clips column at the Village Voice. Publications to which he has contributed to The Nation, The Washington Post, Newsday and The New Republic.