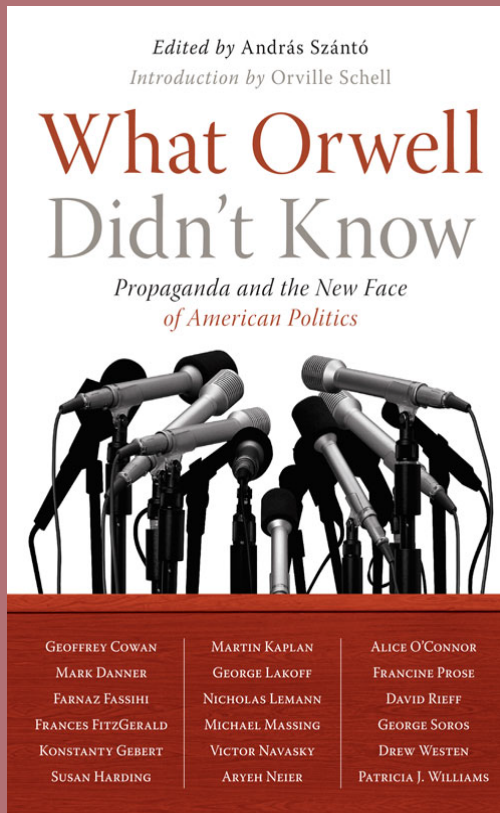


## An excerpt from the chapter “Welcome to the Infotainment Freak Show,” by Martin Kaplan



“Orwell famously worried about the divorce of public discourse, including journalism, from truth, but he did not anticipate its remarriage to entertainment. Journalism, whose practitioners in high-end newspapers and early broadcast outlets once saw their task as recording the truth, now largely functions to hold up a mirror for us to see our fun-house reflection. The old journalistic paradigm posited a search for accuracy, objectivity, and fairness. The new pomo paradigm declares those goals misbegotten; they are inherently unachievable. Because everyone possesses and advocates for his or her own truth, the job of the reporter is not to adjudicate among competing assertions, but to assemble them into a de facto collage. The fairness of contemporary journalism resembles not the fairness of a judge and jury weighing evidence within a framework of rules, but rather the fairground of the carnival midway, where barkers call out on behalf of their wares.”