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Although independent, Al-Jazeera was started in November 1996 with a handsome grant from the emir of Qatar, who still covers its annual deficits. Since then, it has become the most widely watched television network in the Arab world and has revolutionized Arab news coverage, with in-depth reporting (gaining access to the Osama bin Laden tapes and "embedding" among the Afghan and Iraqi people instead of only with U.S. forces), talk shows that offer real debate, and more. It has also been denounced or had its reporters banned by the Saudis (whose pressures on potential advertisers have reportedly prevented the network from achieving profitability), the Palestinian Authority, various other Arab governments, and the United States. Miles, who has interviewed most of Al-Jazeera's staff and monitored their news and talk programs over the last two years, offers a positive appraisal of the organization's journalistic competence while introducing as a counterpoint what he describes, convincingly, as the inefficacy of official U.S. public relations. Because of Al-Jazeera, he concludes, the Arab media will never be the same: official Arab channels must go beyond "the president met today with ..." programs or lose their audience to Al-Jazeera or its emerging rivals, such as Al-Arabiya. But before reading too much into this media revolution, look at Miles' penultimate chapter, "Free Speech and the Domino Effect."