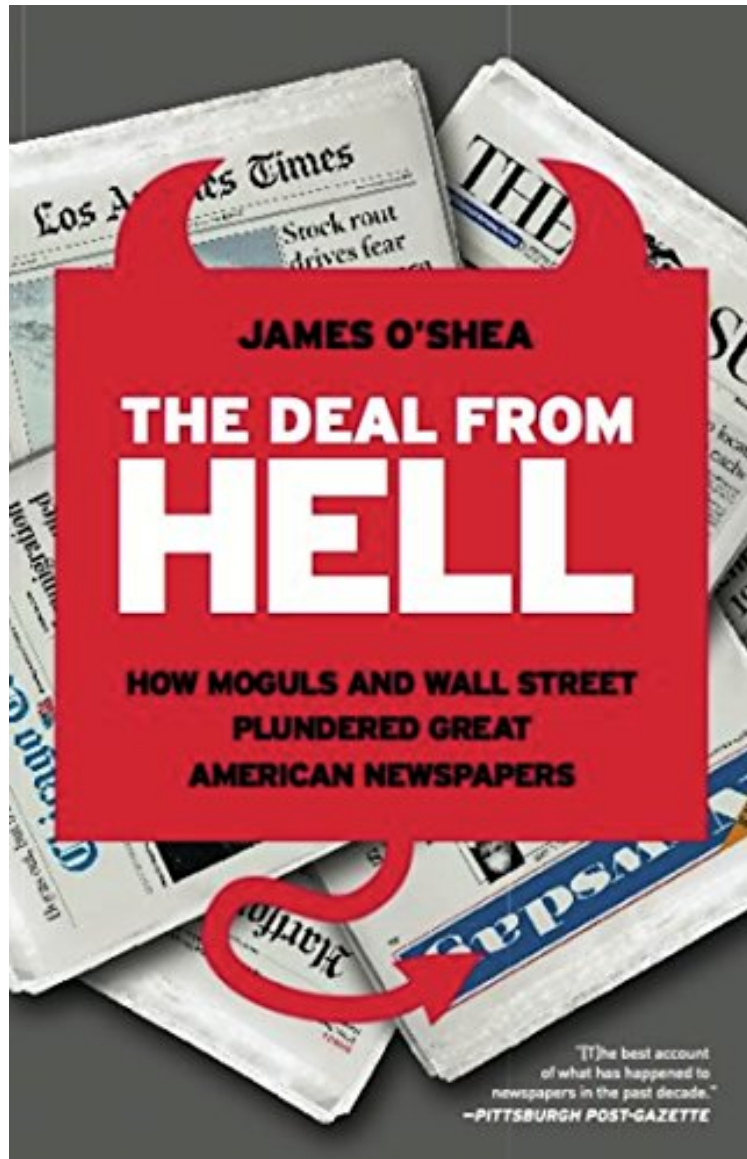


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The Deal from Hell: How Moguls and Wall Street Plundered Great American Newspapers

James O'Shea

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James O'Shea : The Deal from Hell: How Moguls and Wall Street Plundered Great American Newspapers before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Deal from Hell: How Moguls and Wall Street Plundered Great American Newspapers:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. He's right. I was there. By Garnet Reviews James O'Shea has filled in the blanks on what I know to be true. I was a long-time employee of The Times and witnessed many of the

disgraces that Tribune and Zell put us through. Perhaps those who find it difficult to follow have a hard time jumping from one newspaper culture to another but believe me, having a "strange" culture thrust upon yours is also very, very difficult. Yes, the first thing Tribune did was get rid of the people in HR and vow to "change the culture." They did indeed change it, they demoralized, deflated and beat it down. The employees as a group went from being in love with their company to being in mourning for it. The problems for newspapers as O'Shea outlines are true, to which I would add that the American public has lost a great deal of its intelligence and is happy with "headlines." (I would refer you to another book, "Idiot America.") Sam Zell and his clowns were every bit as disgusting as O'Shea claims. I saw them give their rambling and foul-mouthed speeches (to large groups) and I received the many unreadable emails. The Tribune Company got lost along the way with its jealousy. All in all, tragic. You will especially enjoy this book if you witnessed any of the events. Nothing in the book surprised me, just completed some scenes that formerly had "rumor" status.

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Shareholder Greed Management Incompetence: A Deadly Combination By Robert A. Erlandson James O'Shea had a ringside seat at the Chicago Tribune and then the Los Angeles Times as incompetent executives and greedy stockholders -- few of them with any clue how newspaper journalism really works -- sucked the lifeblood out of them in tragic mergers, which affected other newspapers, including the Baltimore Sun where I worked for 43 years. Then came Sam Zell, a real estate mogul who knew even less about newspapers, who bought the Tribune Company, which included the Times-Mirror chain, the Chicago Cubs and a bunch of smaller newspapers and some TV stations for a pile of money he didn't have. Zell appointed the equivalent of journalistic idiots, led by a former shock jock, to run his new newspaper empire. And run it they have, into bankruptcy and damn near into the ground. The incompetence of the Zell management team combined with the loss of advertising to new electronic media, has crippled once-proud and prestigious newspapers and left them empty shells of their former selves. Mr. O'Shea paints a dark portrait of this exercise in mismanagement and he paints it very well. His book is worth reading because not only newspapers but many other companies suffer today from this type of incompetent management.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Story in Need of Editing By Rick Spell I'm a big fan of the LA Times as I am from CA and travel there a lot. I've always enjoyed this newspaper. Although living in the South I daily read the LATimes, NYT, WSJ and the Washington Post. The LA Times may not be what it used to be but I still fondly read it for a local take on the news. This Tribune editor takes over the LA Times after the Tribune purchase and works to harmonize the work environment with partial success. Ultimately, that acquisition was a failure and Sam Zell scoops in the buy the mess which leads to another failure and the firing of the author. Clearly he had an agenda in writing the book. What this book does well is give you a behind the scenes look at the newspaper industry as it is being challenged to its core. Also this book covers a look at what an acquisition deal involves, specifically, the personalities that create and destroy jobs and wealth. What this book does poorly is tell a great story about 30% too long. And he is an editor!! But he had things he wanted to say and he said them. About 40% into the book I started to set it down as it had slowed badly. But, I'm glad I continued as the finale is worth it. NOTE: reading on Kindle this book ends at about 70% due to the large bibliography at the end. Of course that means over half the book is the setup.

In 2000, after the Tribune Company acquired Times Mirror Corporation, it comprised the most powerful collection of newspapers in the world. How then did Tribune nose dive in to bankruptcy and public scandal? The Deal from Hell is the riveting narrative in which veteran editor James O'Shea takes us behind the scenes of the decisions that led to that ongoing disaster.

Kirkus, June 1, 2011 "Numerous books have covered endangered daily newspapers, but few relate the sad saga from the perspective of a top editor with investigative reporting experience; Given O'Shea's level of detail and candor, some journalism icons will almost surely lose respect within their field; A spirited, fascinating insider's account of a troubled realm; New Statesman, January 7, 2011 "This book is a passionate and heavily researched account of the case against the cyber-utopians; The Chicago Reader, Michael Miner, June 17, 2011 "The insider's tale O'Shea tells is that of an epic business disaster, placed in the context of the whole industry driving itself off a cliff; I'm 50 pages in and riveted. I expect to stay that way;