



Rupert Murdoch: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Media Wizard

By Neil Chenoweth

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If you want to understand how modern media has changed the world, this is the one book you must read.

Rupert Murdoch is the man everyone talks about but no one knows. He's everywhere, a larger-than-life media titan who has spent a lifetime building his company, News Corporation, from a small, struggling newspaper business in Australia into an international media powerhouse. Rupert Murdoch charts the real story behind the rise of News Corp and the Fox network: the secret debt crises and family deals, the huge cash flows through the offshore archipelagos, the New York party that saved his empire, the covert government inquiries, the tax investigations, and the bewildering duels with Bill Gates, Ted Turner, Gerry Levin, Ron Perelman, Newt Gingrich, cable king John Malone, Michael Eisner, Tony Blair, and televangelist-turned-diamond-miner Pat Robertson.

Murdoch's story, however, is more than just how one man built a global business. Rupert Murdoch is both a biography of Murdoch the man (including the divorce from his wife, Anna; his remarriage to a woman young enough to be his granddaughter; and the struggle between his two sons for eventual control of the family holdings) and a "follow the money" investigation that reveals how he has managed to have such a huge impact on the communications revolution that promises to utterly transform life in the twenty-first century.

The investigation concentrates on Murdoch's three great campaigns: in the 1980s, when his determination to launch an American television network overturned the media industries of three countries; in 1997, when Murdoch took on every broadcasting group in America; and the process of reinventing himself since then, culminating in his bid to win DirecTV from General Motors.

This is the saga of the man who has stalked, infuriated, cajoled, threatened, and spooked the media industry for three decades, whose titanic gambles have shaped and reshaped the media landscape. Win or lose, Murdoch is the man who has changed everything. And Neil Chenoweth is the right person to tell the story: In 1990 he wrote a magazine article that prompted a secret Australian government

inquiry into Rupert Murdoch's family companies, and he's been on the Murdoch case since then. Chenoweth reveals what no person ever has about the man (and the company) who is probably the most significant media player of them all.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Veteran Aussie journalist Chenoweth impressively surveys Murdoch's decades-long business career, rendering in great detail the many bidding wars for acquisitions that have resulted in the behemoth News Corp and other Murdoch holdings. Yet this is hardly an "untold story," judging by the lengthy citations in the book's end notes, not to mention the author's previous investigative reporting on the Murdoch empire. However, Chenoweth's business-writing experience (he is a senior writer for the Australian Financial Review) makes him an ideal candidate to explain the tricky deals and slick legal maneuvers that are commonplace for Murdoch's global business. Murdoch has tremendous access to and influence on a variety of people and topics, and many readers are already familiar with Murdoch's deep pockets and insatiable interest in growth that have made him one of the world's great business legends. They will learn more about his business doings, among them the 1996 launch of Fox News and his interest in purchasing the Los Angeles Dodgers baseball team, despite having "hated sports as a boy" (alas, he "realized that sports stories sold newspapers"). But sadly, the subject does not come alive here, and the reader begs for details that might have illuminated him and his decisions. Chenoweth purports that an "anti-Murdoch factor" exists, but any animosity seems very distant in this account. And the tycoon's personal life, including his late-life divorce and second marriage, is glossed over, only getting some attention in the second-to-last chapter. The decision to limit discussion of his private life is a weakness, since Murdoch the man might have shed light on Murdoch the businessman.

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From [Booklist](#)

The author, an Australian newspaperman, tells us, "In a society marked by impermanence, where the form of things is more significant than the substance, Murdoch is a shape-shifter, a conjurer of realities." In his research the author found his subject to be a creature of the cash trails that wind through the tax havens of the world. Following those trails, Chenoweth recounts what he considers a devastating series of consequences resulting from Murdoch's global manipulation. The book takes us through Murdoch's three great campaigns: his launch in the 1980s of an American television network that overturned the media industries of three countries, his takeover in 1997 of every broadcasting group in the U.S., and his frantic efforts to set up a global satellite network based on DirecTV. This book is a fascinating look at a man the author concludes is the most significant media player on the scene today. *Mary Whaley*

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From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Michael Campbell:

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