



# **Merchants of Truth: The Business of Facts and The Future of News**

*Jill Abramson*

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The definitive report on the disruption of the news media over the last decade. With the expert guidance of former Executive Editor of *The New York Times* Jill Abramson, we follow two legacy (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*) and two upstart (*BuzzFeed* and *VICE*) companies as they plow through a revolution in technology, economics, standards, commitment, and endurance that pits old vs. new media.

*Merchants of Truth* is the groundbreaking and gripping story of the precarious state of the news business told by one of our most eminent journalists.

Jill Abramson follows four companies: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *BuzzFeed*, and *VICE* Media over a decade of disruption and radical adjustment. The new digital reality nearly kills two venerable newspapers with an aging readership while creating two media behemoths with a ballooning and fickle audience of millennials. We get to know the defenders of the legacy presses as well as the outsized characters who are creating the new speed-driven media competitors. The players include Jeff Bezos and Marty Baron (*The Washington Post*), Arthur Sulzberger and Dean Baquet (*The New York Times*), Jonah Peretti (*BuzzFeed*), and Shane Smith (*VICE*) as well as their reporters and anxious readers.

*Merchants of Truth* raises crucial questions that concern the well-being of our society. We are facing a crisis in trust that threatens the free press. Abramson's book points us to the future.

## Merchants of Truth: The Business of Facts and The Future of News Details

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# From Reader Review Merchants of Truth: The Business of Facts and The Future of News for online ebook

## Victoria says

Thanks to Simon and Schuster and Netgalley for the advanced copy of this nonfiction book. This is a wonderful work of research addressing the digital revolution in media and its specific impacts on BuzzFeed, Vice, The Washington Post, and The New York Times. Thank you to Jill Abramson for writing a meaningful and important book. It was fascinating to go behind the scenes at the start of the newer companies (and shocking) and somewhat heartbreaking to watch the struggles of the mainstream papers. I am a print and digital Washington Post subscriber and consider it my local paper and feel very grateful to read the paper every morning (and thanks Jeff Bezos for that). I feel like it makes me smarter. I am also a newly returned print and digital subscriber to The Capital Gazette in Annapolis, which I signed up for after a lapse, after the murder of the Capital staff last summer. I think reading this will make me more aware of the tactics that all these companies now use to grab your eyes and hopefully be a little smarter about my own engagement. Also, it gave me some sympathy for The Washington Post who I had seen "lowering" their standards (for example, clickbait-y type things online, sponsoring speaker events with advertisers) to compete in this new world; I understand better that they really have no choice. I highly recommend this book, although it can be a bit dry in parts, it's very thorough and all important.

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## Nancy says

**Finished:** 07.02.2019

**Genre:** non-fiction

**Rating:** NO SCORE

**Conclusion:**

I'm being brutally honest  
..I wanted to love this book because I am a news-junkie.  
I thought I would enjoy knowing more about  
Buzzfeed and Vice...but the selections were bland.  
Techies are bringing entertainment not news.  
Buzz staying within boundaries but Vice pushing the limits of 'edgy'.  
Even the chapters about NYT and  
Washington Post in part one could not  
'hook' me into reading any further.  
Old school established customs/conservatism  
in boardrooms of the icons in the 1980s publishing  
world is not a great springboard into a interesting book.  
Scandals that brought down Peter Arnett and Dan Rather  
....some millennials would say "Who?"

I used to force myself to finish everything I started,  
which I think is quite good discipline when you're young,  
but once you've established your taste,  
and the penny drops that there are only a

certain number of books you'll get to read before you die  
So I'm closing this book and ....moving on.

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## **Suzanne says**

I have been a New York Times subscriber, in Arizona, for over 25 years. I have been an on-and-off Washington Post subscriber during that time, mostly for work, now for personal interest. When I first began, the ability to learn what was happening outside of AZ, in any depth, was exciting beyond belief. With the advent of internet connectivity, these sources offer curated views of the wider world that I deeply value. So, my interest in how they got from the early 1990's to here is both personal and pragmatic; in a time when "fake news" is a hotly over-used term, I treasure my long-term sources. Author Jill Abramson provides an insider's view of a fascinating, disrupting process. Yes, I was there as customer and co-disruptor. But the backstory is vividly told and worth knowing. Would I behave differently now, knowing how precarious the free press really is, in our democracy? I now maintain my subscriptions with purpose because I realize my role in their continued health. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the transition of the press from paper to digital in the last 25 years. I received my copy from the publisher through Netgalley.

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