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Hard News: Twenty-one Brutal Months at The New York Times and How They Changed the American Media

Seth Mnookin

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Seth Mnookin : **Hard News: Twenty-one Brutal Months at The New York Times and How They Changed the American Media** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hard News: Twenty-one Brutal Months at The New York Times and How They Changed the American Media:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Well-written, quick paced and very informative
By Kriselda Gray
"Hard News" is an excellent book and very well written. While the focus of the book is the Jayson Blair scandal (Blair was the reporter who fabricated and plagiarized stories,) it also looks at the history of the NYT and how the culture of the paper allowed the scandal to happen. Mnookin has a very crisp writing style that moves the story along quickly while still delivering a tremendous amount of detail. This is a book I would highly recommend, especially to anyone interested in journalism or the media.
5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. A Journalism Junkie's Must Read!
By MAPjr
Read it. It's a great book. Five stars.
Hard News has three parts (Before, Spring 2003, and After), and provides a good overview of the history of The Times, the workings of the newsroom, Blair's quick rise as a reporter, details of the Blair fiasco, and how the Times dealt with it.
Mnookin concludes the book with a thoughtful Note on Sources, more than 250 source notes, and a good bibliography.
If this is a topic you followed, or you are a journalism junkie or a Times-ophile, this book is a must read.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars
By Ben B.
Good read.

On May 11, 2003, The New York Times devoted four pages of its Sunday paper to the deceptions of Jayson Blair, a mediocre former Times reporter who had made up stories, faked datelines, and plagiarized on a massive scale. The fallout from the Blair scandal rocked the Times to its core and revealed fault lines in a fractious newsroom that was already close to open revolt. Staffers were furious about the perception that management had given Blair more leeway because he was black, about the special treatment of favored correspondents, and most of all about the shoddy reporting that was infecting the most revered newspaper in the world. Within a month, Howell Raines, the imperious executive editor who had taken office less than a week before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and helped lead the paper to a record six Pulitzer Prizes for its coverage of the attacks had been forced out of his job. Having gained unprecedented access to the reporters who conducted the Times's internal investigation, top newsroom executives, and dozens of Times editors, former Newsweek senior writer Seth Mnookin lets us read all about the story behind the biggest journalistic scam of our era and the profound implications of the scandal for the rapidly changing world of American journalism. It's a true tale that reads like Greek drama, with the most revered of American institutions attempting to overcome the crippling effects of a leader's blinding narcissism and a low-level reporter's sociopathic deceptions. Hard News will shape how we understand and judge the media for years to come.
From the Hardcover edition.

Seth Mnookin is one of the best and brightest journalists of this ominous post-American century. And here he's written the book that's the answer to the question I've been wondering about for a long time: How could something like this happen at The New York Times, a paper the country desperately needs to survive.
HUNTER S. THOMPSON
I read Hard News in a single sitting, long into the night. Seth Mnookin has written a gripping narrative, a thoughtful media study, and a fascinating portrait of some very strange characters. This book is undoubtedly the last word on a low moment in the history of a great institution. --JEFFREY TOOBIN
This is two terrific books in one: a riveting thriller, starring a heroic Dirty Dozen team of reporters risking their careers to unearth dangerous truths, and a Shakespearean tragedy about hubris and race and good intentions and self-destruction featuring a pathetic, half-mad villain and a noble, deluded king. Seth Mnookin has written the definitive chronicle of this extraordinary upheaval at the most important newspaper on earth. But Hard News is also a heartening reminder that some powerful institutions take virtue seriously, and can right themselves quickly when things go awry.
KURT ANDERSEN
In Hard News, a con man is the center of attention, but the ideal of getting it right is the book's true heart. This is a juicy morality tale for the information age.
SARAH VOWELL
From the Hardcover edition.
From the Inside Flap
On May 11, 2003, "The New York Times devoted four pages of its Sunday paper to the deceptions of Jayson Blair, a mediocre former Times reporter who had made up stories, faked datelines, and plagiarized on a massive scale. The fallout from the Blair scandal rocked the Times to its core and revealed fault lines in a fractious newsroom that was already close to open revolt. Staffers were furious about the perception that management had given Blair more leeway because he was black, about the special treatment of favored correspondents, and most of all about the shoddy reporting that was infecting the most revered newspaper in the world. Within a month, Howell Raines, the imperious executive editor who had taken office less than a week before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and helped lead the paper to a record six Pulitzer Prizes for its coverage of the attacks had been forced out of his job. Having gained unprecedented access to the reporters who conducted the Times's internal investigation, top newsroom executives, and dozens of Times editors, former Newsweek senior writer Seth Mnookin lets us read all about the story behind the biggest journalistic scam of our era and the profound implications of the scandal for the rapidly changing world of American journalism. It's a true tale that reads like Greek drama, with the most revered of American institutions attempting to overcome the crippling effects of a leader's blinding narcissism and a low-level reporter's sociopathic deceptions. Hard News will shape how we understand and judge the media for years to come." From the Hardcover edition.
About the Author
Seth Mnookin is a former media columnist for Newsweek, where he also covered politics, crime, and popular culture. His writing has appeared in The New Yorker, The New York Times Book Review, Slate, Spin, and

elsewhere. A 2004 Joan Shorenstein Fellow at Harvards Kennedy School, he lives in New York City. From the Hardcover edition.