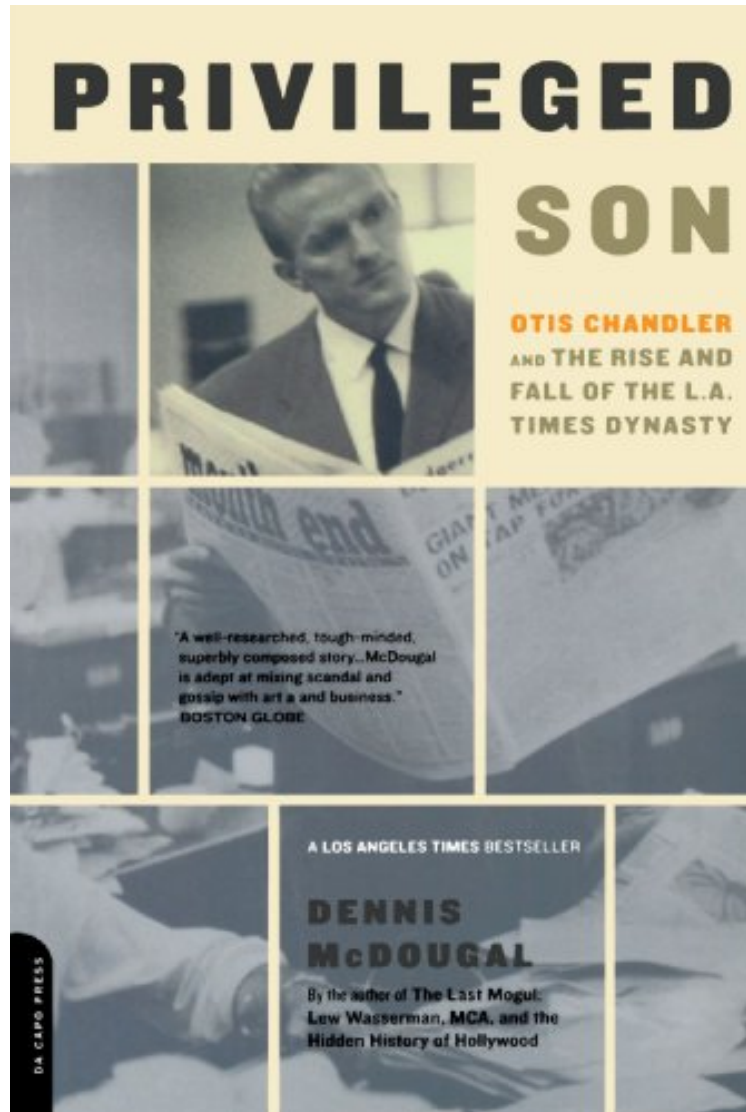


[Read now] Privileged Son: Otis Chandler And The Rise And Fall Of The L.a. Times Dynasty

Privileged Son: Otis Chandler And The Rise And Fall Of The L.a. Times Dynasty

Dennis McDougal

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Dennis McDougal : Privileged Son: Otis Chandler And The Rise And Fall Of The L.a. Times Dynasty before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Privileged Son: Otis Chandler And The Rise And Fall Of The L.a. Times Dynasty:

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful. That Rarest of Things-- a really readable business biographyBy frumiousb_Priveleged Son_ manages to hit that sweet spot that so many biographies of business figures fail to capture-- it manages to be a very good look at a business and industry and at the same time be readable and enjoyable on the level of a novel. While ostensibly a biography of Otis Chandler, it gives a fascinating look at the rise of a newspaper as local empire and the same newspaper's (largely unsuccessful) efforts to translate that into a truly national business. Without any industry focus, the story of the Chandlers and their relationship to LA is the stuff of novels (pulp fiction and true romance)-- LA grows up with its paper in this book. I was particularly fascinated to read what happened at the paper under the direction of Mark "Cereal Killer" Willes. His ill-starred management is a cautionary tale for would-be media moguls who fail to understand the core values that make up the news industry. A great read for people interested in the media industry. A just-as-great read for people who like a good story. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy James R. HareOne of the best books I have ever read. Helps understand how Los Angeles was developed. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Adonis with issuesBy CalochortusThe first few pages are written in a glitzy, sophomoric style that is grating. Fortunately the book straightens out into a well-researched and well-written history of LA, the LAT and the Chandler/Otis families. Otis Chandler is the most interesting person in the book, a driven, hollow man. The book misses some opportunities to delve deeper into Otis. For example, in the sections on deer hunting it comes as close as anywhere to approaching the mind of Otis, the way it was tormented by killing, and yet driven to kill. Couldn't the author have worked with this more throughout the biography?

The Boston Globe hailed *Privileged Son* as "a well-researched, tough-minded, superbly composed story" by an author "adept at mixing scandal and gossip with art and business." It's the riveting tale of how a second-rate newspaper rose to greatness only to become a casualty of war a civil war within the family that owned it. The story, never before told in such hard-edged style, spans the American Century, from 1884, when the Chandler family gained control of the just-born daily, through April 2000, when they sold it to the Tribune Company. With a capriciousness that is seldom seen even in the most dysfunctional media dynasties, the Chandlers, who helped make the national careers of Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and other major political figures, controlled Los Angeles and the Times Mirror Corporation and *Privileged Son* captures it all.

From Publishers Weekly Though he tells more about the sometimes shady dynasty than about the newspaper, McDougal (author of *The Last Mogul*, about Lew Wasserman and MCA), an L.A. Times reporter, renders protagonist Otis Chandler, last of the family dynasty to run the Times, overly enigmatic. Dynasty founder Harrison Otis and son-in-law Harry Chandler played crucial roles in transforming L.A. from a remote outpost of 12,500 to a metropolis of millions. The Times's free Mid-Winter Edition began promoting Southern California to Easterners four years before the first Rose Parade; Otis campaigned for L.A.'s harbor and against unions; he and Chandler spearheaded the plundering of Owens Valley's water. Chandler's real estate ventures stretched from the San Fernando Valley to Mexico; he launched business ventures ranging from the Hollywood Bowl, L.A. Coliseum, landmark hotels and the 1932 Olympics to the local oil, auto, aerospace, fashion and movie industries and Cal Tech, which trained people for technological industries. Chandler's son Norman ran the Times while his wife Dorothy's fund-raising built the L.A. Music Center. Both broke ranks with the family's extreme right-wing politics, and Norman's son Otis, who took the paper's reins in 1960, transformed it from a disrespected, business-boosting propaganda rag to one of the most respected papers in the nation. McDougal inadequately explains Otis's ouster and subsequent ambivalence as the Times floundered under leaders portrayed as insular, incompetent and mendacious, as well as his 60-something second adolescence of fast cars and big surf. McDougal paints the family members as larger-than-life personalities, rather than treating them in context as L.A. grew beyond their control. Fascinating stories abound here, but Chandler and family are mythologized rather than analyzed. 16 pages bw photos not seen by PW. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The New York Times has called McDougal (*The Last Mogul*) "LA's number one muckraker," and he successfully defends that title with his latest book. More than a biography of Otis Chandler, the last of the Chandler family to hold the position of publisher for the Times Mirror media conglomerate before it was sold to the Tribune Company, this work is an exhaustive history of the Los Angeles Times, four generations of the Chandler family, and both institutions' influence on the development of Los Angeles and all of Southern California. It is also an account of how the Times changed its editorial philosophy and content over the years. McDougal stuffs this book with details designed to heighten the drama of the story. He doesn't always make clear what his sources are, so the reader has to guess how he knows that Harry Chandler "nodded" when a young aviator informed him that he needed \$15,000 for a business venture. However, readers who enjoy tell-all epic tales of powerful families will not mind such embellishments. Recommended for all journalism collections, especially those in the Los Angeles area; also suitable for business and biography collections. Cheryl Van Til, Kent Dist. Lib., Spencer Branch, Gowen, MI Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist McDougal, a former investigative reporter for the Los Angeles Times, turns his considerable skills to an examination of his former employer. On one level, this is a history

of the newspaper that transformed Southern California from water-starved municipal wanna-be to world-class metropolis; on another level, it's a four-generation family biography. The most outsized of all the outsized characters is Otis Chandler, born in 1927. His great-grandfather, grandfather, father, and mother had turned the Los Angeles Times into a journalisticly awful but highly profitable and influential daily newspaper. Chandler, a motorcycle-riding, surfing, bodybuilding hunk of a man with a serious side, wanted to challenge the New York Times as the nation's preeminent general circulation daily. Although often faltering, he came close to his goal before family fissures led to the dissolution of the parent company during the 1990s. McDougal concludes with coverage of how the Chicago Tribune company took over the Los Angeles Times and its multimedia conglomerate last year. Part business saga, part regional history, part family soap opera, always compellingly readable, McDougal's book seamlessly connects the past and the present. Steve Weinberg Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved