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The Lady Upstairs: Dorothy Schiff and the New York Post

Marilyn Nissenson

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"It is a tribute to the judgment, research, intelligence, and elegant prose of Marilyn Nissenson that although I disagree with some of her political assumptions, I find her portrait of Dorothy Schiff accurate, nuanced, compelling, and a pleasure to read. Hello, Dolly!"

—Victor Navasky, publisher emeritus, *The Atlantic*

The Lady Upstairs

DOROTHY SCHIFF AND THE NEW YORK POST



MARILYN NISSENSON

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Marilyn Nissenson : The Lady Upstairs: Dorothy Schiff and the New York Post before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Lady Upstairs: Dorothy Schiff and the New York Post:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Nothing but a disappointment, with the noble aim to describe Dorothy's life ...By DmitriiNothing but a disappointment, with the noble aim to describe Dorothy's life through the sequence of alliances or rather meacute;salliances dearest author went into the certain trap of confusing character's life and career and one can easily grasp the pivotal idea in here: the king is played by his men,so Dorothy would be

nobody but another girl from wealthy and slightly exotic family who could never radiate any shine on her own. Details are blurred, main and side personages are manufactured a la Wikipedia, so the work of Mrs. Nissenson can be hardly credited to be fine bio reading or even entertaining historical narrative. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. An excellent story, beautifully written. By Edumaven Rose I really enjoyed this book. Nissenson tells a fascinating story of the life of one of the most powerful women in American journalism, a woman who had a huge influence on politics in New York City and the nation. Dolly Schiff was a mover and shaker who came from a rarified, super-affluent background but became a champion of mid-century liberalism. In one well-written volume, Nissenson acquaints us with the history of New York City reform politics, the history of the Democratic party, and the history of American journalism, as well as the story of a woman who led an extraordinary life. I highly recommend this book.

The Lady Upstairs is the dramatic story of Dorothy Schiff---liberal activist, society stalwart, and the most dynamic female newspaper publisher of her day. From 1939 until 1976 she owned and guided the New York Post, the oldest continuously published daily newspaper in the United States. Dolly, as she was called, made the Post one of the most dedicated supporters of New Deal liberalism in the country, while simultaneously maintaining its distinct personality as a chatty, parochial, New York tabloid. Unfazed by political or personal controversy, Schiff backed editorial writers like James Wechsler and Max Lerner and reporters like Murray Kempton and Pete Hamill. Under her guidance the Post broke the story of Richard Nixon's slush fund. It helped bring down such icons of the day as Joseph McCarthy, Walter Winchell, and Robert Moses. It supported the civil rights movement and opposed the Vietnam War. Although Dolly seldom appeared in the newsroom, she approved and commented on every major story and every minor column in the paper, until eventually selling it to Rupert Murdoch. Dolly's private life could have been a staple of the Post's society gossip columns. Endlessly flirtatious, she married four times and had extra-marital romances with, among others, Franklin Roosevelt and Max Beaverbrook. She was a friend of national politicians such as Adlai Stevenson, the Kennedys, Lyndon Johnson, and Nelson Rockefeller. Born into a staunchly Republican German-Jewish banking family, she used her inheritance to further causes of the political left. She used her charm and her social connections in the service of her paper, which was the center of her life. The Lady Upstairs is the portrait of a unique life and a crucial era in American history.