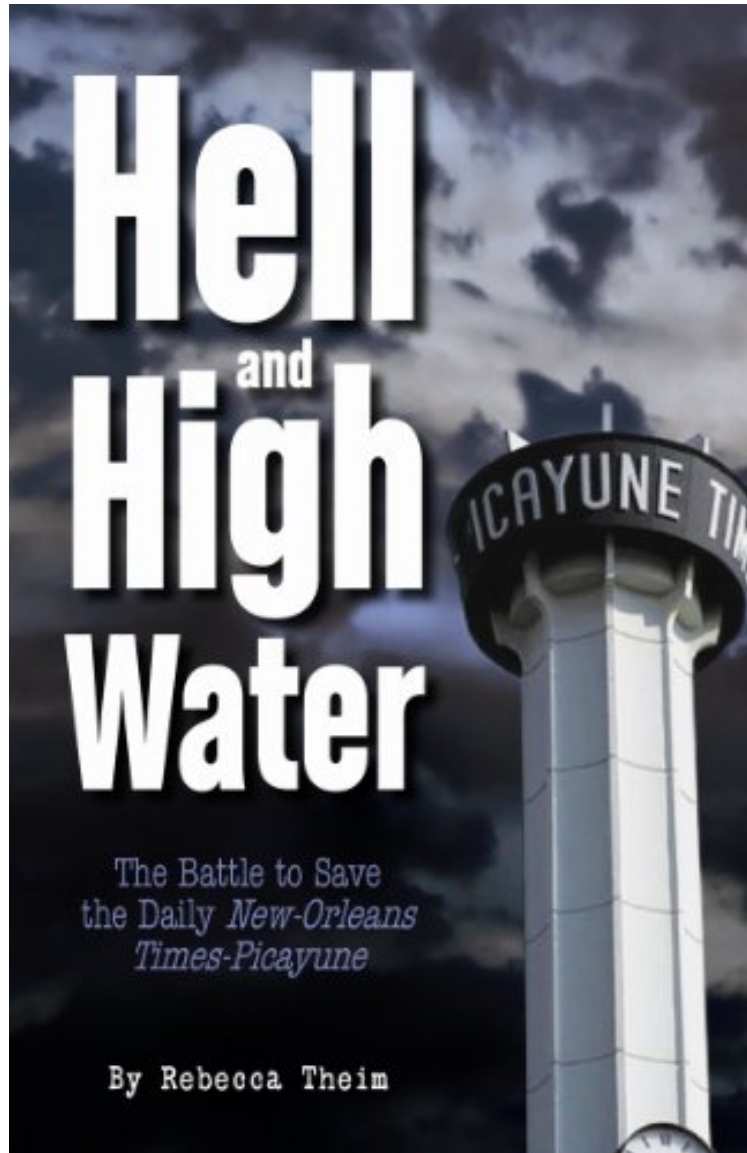


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Hell and High Water

Rebecca Theim

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Rebecca Theim : Hell and High Water before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hell and High Water:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Whoa! A Must Read.By Charles TunaThis is a passionate, but level-headed account that establishes why the loss of the daily newspaper was so devastating for New Orleans and the lengths to which the community went to preserve it. While the story chronicles the battle there (along with the city's charm and idiosyncrasies), it also provides a primer and brief history of the difficulties facing the newspaper industry overall, and what has occurred in cities from Portland, Oregon, to Mobile, Alabama, that also have been "Newhoused."

Required reading for anyone who follows the newspaper industry and/or loves New Orleans. Can't wait for her next book. Fascinating insider view of what's happening in the media everywhere. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Amazing book!

By MarionBoyLoved the book! Before reading your book, I knew little about the saga at the Times-Picayune and even less about New Orleans.....but I was captivated by the storytelling, the characters involved, and the advocacy for good journalism, truth and the American Way! Anyone who cares about the future of journalism should read this books!!! 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. How The Beloved New Orleans Time Picayune Became Enemy #1

By R. DangermondI remember the day Facebook came alive with the news that the Times-Picayune would move to three days a week. I had been covering big media as an investigative journalist for 17 years and had reported on a few newspapers that had consolidated and cut back, and so I responded to my FB friends by saying this was a trend happening around the country. A friend wrote, BULL***, in response. And so began the passionate and infuriating denouement of what was once a centrifugal force in this city, The Times Picayune. When I heard Rebecca Them was writing about the Battle Royale that ensued, I was intrigued but thought if no one really cared that New Orleans was under water what would they care about one of our institutions unraveling. That was until I read the book: Them frames the story of the Times-Picayune as a narrative about the dissidence between the corporate C-suite and the average Joe/Jane, about the unraveling of the nation's 4th estate, about how capitalism causes us to glorify the individual over the community, but mainly she makes the Time- Picayune a story for everyone, not just for those of us who live in New Orleans. I know plenty of newspaper people that will see this as a page turner, but I think it is a story for every citizen who wonders about how news will be disseminated, about the motives of the gatekeepers, and about what, if not a newspaper, will hold accountable local, state, and federal governments? We are truly in the midst of a sea change in media in the way news is made and sold. The story of the Times-Picayune is a story with multiple plot lines - it is told through many personal details about the people who were directly affected by the sweeping changes that Advance introduced as bottom line exercise that so many corporation engage in these days - but none of the anecdotes moved me as much as the penultimate one in Them's book about Sensebe Gritter, who "struggles with psychological scars of losing a job she loved. "You know those plastic dividers that separate your items at the grocery store conveyor belt from the person behind you," she [Gritter] asked. "Some of the dividers at my local grocery say 'The Times-Picayune' on them. I was in the check-out line, and I saw one of them, and I broke down. The tears started coming, and I couldn't stop. The cashier came around and gave me a hug and the man behind me said he was going to go home and cancel his subscription.""

The tale of the fierce grassroots battle to save New Orleans' beloved 175-year-old, Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper, and then changes that continue to roil it and other Advance Publications properties from Portland to Mobile.-----The genesis and aftermath of the print edition's death knell. In May 2012, the New York Times broke a story that the internationally acclaimed, locally beloved, Pulitzer Prize-winning New Orleans Times-Picayune would become a three-day-a-week publication. The profitable newspaper slashed its veteran newsroom, antagonized the city, state, and nation, and jeopardized its vaunted reputation-all in an effort to create a new blueprint for American newspapers in the increasingly digital world. Here is the insider's account of the outrage, betrayal, and aftermath of the death of the daily edition of the Times-Picayune.

"One day when media historians study what the Newhouses did to journalism, Them will be an important source, perhaps the most important. Now we are seeing the results of her work ...The publication is an excellent, at times riveting, bit of reporting put together in an amazingly short time."- Errol Laborde, MyNewOrleans.com, the blog of New Orleans Magazine

From the Author From the book's Preface"... From that May 2012 evening during which I first read the New York Times's blog post that the venerable Times-Picayune--chronicler of deadly yellow fever epidemics, the rise and fall of politicians from Huey Long to David Duke, and the devastation of hurricanes Betsy and Katrina--would be diminished, I saw this issue as so much more than a daily newspaper moving into the digital age. I saw it as a fierce and remarkable grassroots battle that America's most unique city would wage against a multinational media company and its billionaire controlling family-in-transition, and a romantic, yet battered, industry struggling to pull itself out of free fall."