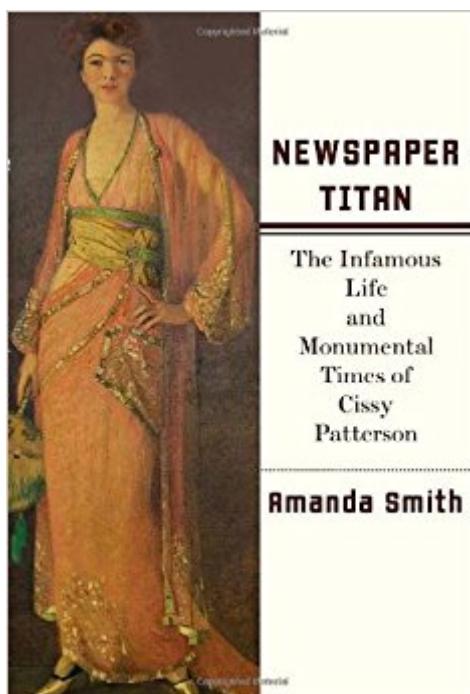


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# Newspaper Titan: The Infamous Life And Monumental Times Of Cissy Patterson



## **Synopsis**

From the author of *Hostage to Fortune*; *The Letters of Joseph P. Kennedy ("Superb" --Michael Beschloss; "Remarkable" --Arthur Schlesinger)*, the galvanizing story of Eleanor Medill (Cissy) Patterson, celebrated debutante and socialite, scion of the Chicago Tribune empire, and the twentieth century's first woman editor in chief and publisher of a major metropolitan daily newspaper, the *Washington Times-Herald*. She was called the most powerful woman in America, surpassing Eleanor Roosevelt, Bess Truman, Clare Boothe Luce, and Dorothy Schiff. Cissy Patterson was from old Republican stock. Her grandfather was Joseph Medill, firebrand abolitionist, mayor of Chicago, editor in chief and principal owner of the *Chicago Tribune*, and one of the founders of the Republican Party who delivered the crucial Ohio delegation to Abraham Lincoln at the convention of 1860. Cissy Patterson's brother, Joe Medill Patterson, started the *New York Daily News*. Her pedigree notwithstanding, Cissy Patterson came to publishing shortly before her forty-ninth birthday, in 1930, with almost no practical journalistic or editorial experience and a life out of the pages of *Edith Wharton* (or more likely the other way around: shades of Cissy are everywhere in the *Countess Olenska*). Amanda Smith writes that in the summer of 1930, Cissy Patterson, educated at the turn of the century at Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut, for a vocation of marriage and motherhood and a place in society, took over William Randolph Hearst's foundering *Washington Herald* and began to learn what others believed she could never grasp--how to run and build up a newspaper. She vividly lived out the Medill family's editorial motto (at least in spirit): "When you grandmother gets raped, put it on the front page." Patterson soon bought from Hearst the Herald's evening sister paper, the *Washington Times*, merged the two, and became editor, publisher, and sole proprietor of a big-city newspaper, a position almost unprecedented in American history. The effect of the merger was "electric"...By 1945, the *Washington Times-Herald*, with ten daily editions, was clearing an annual profit of more than \$1 million. Amanda Smith, in this huge, fascinating biography gives us the (infamous) life and monumental times of Cissy Patterson, scourge of liberals, advocate of appeasing Hitler, lover of poodles, and hater of FDR. Here is her twentieth-century Washington: its politics and society, scandals and feuds, and at the center--the fierce newspaper wars that consumed and drove the country's press titans, as Patterson took the *Washington Times-Herald* from a chronic tail-ender in circulation and advertising, ranked fifth in the town, and made it into the most widely read round-the-clock daily in the national's capital, deemed by many to be "the damndest newspaper to ever hit the streets."

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

"HUGELY READABLE...a model of its kind. Combining her subject's vitality with an accuracy and restraint wholly absent in the mercurial publisher, Smith gives us the fullest, fairest portrait we are ever likely to have of Cissy Patterson, her family, and their contentious approach to the news."

-Richard Norton Smith in THE WEEKLY STANDARD "This book has it all: power, glamour, sex, war, and scandal. A Cissy Patterson was a formidable figure in the American Century, and Amanda Smith has done a splendid job bringing the great newspaper publisher back to vivid life." -Jon Meacham "Newspaper Titan is exemplary." -COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW "Filled with more backstabbing, social climbing, and decadence than a season of Dynasty, Newspaper Titan is the story of canny Medill heiress Cissy Patterson, the 20th century's first major female editor in chief, whose personal life was a Whartonian saga of American entitlement colliding with dubious European aristocracy." -VOGUE.com Called "perhaps the most powerful" and the "most hated" woman in America in the 1940s, Cissy's fascinating and curious life is examined here in detail. But this lengthy book is never boring, because its subject is such an outrageously flamboyant and historically significant figure. -SHELF-AWARENESS.COM

Amanda Smith was born and raised in New York City. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard College. She is the editor of Hostage to Fortune: The Letters of Joseph P. Kennedy. Smith lives in Washington, D.C., with her husband and two children.

Amanda Smith is now on my short list of literary heroes. Her work is an amazing compilation and organization of valuable historic information. Ms. Smith is a brilliant researcher. She searched through dusty files in St. Petersburg, Russia, to find information on the kidnapping of Cissy Patterson's daughter Felicia who was hidden away in an Austrian convent and eventually released through the intervention of President Taft and Czar Nicholas. The cast of characters include: Cowboys, colorful residents of early Jackson Hole, Wyoming, Czar Nicholas, several American Presidents, Aviator Lindberg, AA's Bill W., Counts, Countesses, Newspaper dynasties, mysterious deaths, a kidnapping and runaway of Cissy's only child, alcoholism and drug addiction, wonderful animal stories, wealth, powerful women, loneliness, recovery, passion. Beautifully written with compassion and honesty.

Great vacation read-long novel. It is a bit heavy on the newspaper industry in general so be prepared.

What a fantastic woman! This is someone of whom the feminists should be proud. This was the era in journalism in which it seems it was still worth reading newspapers and Cissy came from a long line of Chicago-born newspaper owners with "ink in their blood". Any one around the world, especially Chicagoans will find this interesting reading as the two families involved owned major newspapers in Chicago, New York, and Washington D.C. that greatly influenced their readers at that time. It's important to know that Cissy took over a Washington paper from Hearst that was an under-performer and doubled its circulation when the old timers at the paper expected for her to fail. Want to know how she did it and which influential unfortunates became her prey? Buy this book and find out, you won't be disappointed. For those of you who can't read too well, it's an easy read and it has pictures!

I highly recommend *Newspaper Titan: The Infamous Life and Monumental Times of Cissy Patterson*. Amanda Smith's book does a captivating job of placing Cissy Patterson on the level of other great newspaper barons of the last century - and brings to life a very powerful woman whose story is not well known. Every once in a while someone surfaces a story of a charismatic individual from another era that helps expand the story of the time. If you are interested in Washington, and the 1930s and 40s, this is a must read!!

She was Betty Mahmoody, before Betty. She was Rupert Murdoch, before Rupert. First she fights

and wins an international custody battle for her daughter, then she revives and runs two failing Hearst newspapers. The story of Cissy Patterson is a fascinating and meticulously researched biography, as well as an interesting look at the newspaper industry. Kudos to Amanda Smith for bringing to the fore such an interesting and important person.

Received book and when finished with current read will be reading this one. Love biographies and this one looks very interesting. The book is in very good condition for being used.

Fascinating topic covering a time in history I knew little about. Great details provide the "feel" of the era. I am recommending this to friends and family!

love history in Washington dc, the story of her raising the times herald was good. shame she and her family got the story of the century so F---- up!!! that of course F. D. R.

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