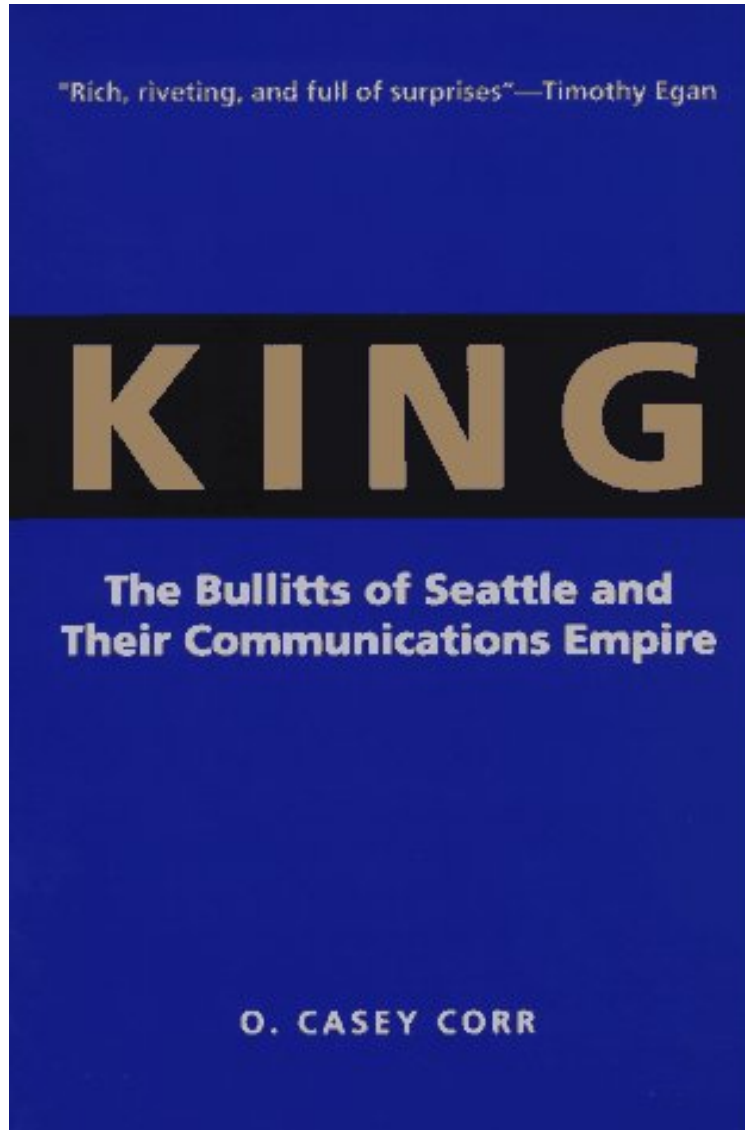


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# King: The Bullitts of Seattle and Their Communications Empire

*O. Casey Corr*

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**O. Casey Corr : King: The Bullitts of Seattle and Their Communications Empire** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised King: The Bullitts of Seattle and Their Communications Empire:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Once Proud King By A Customer Corr's book is more valuable than the narrow title suggests. More than a history of a powerful Seattle family and its TV-Radio empire, Corr's larger theme is the post-war growth of Seattle, the price of its progress and the universal tension between idealism and

commerce. This story is interesting because Dorothy Bullitt did not set out to make money in the new medium of TV. Rather, she and her son, Stimson, created a new media force that shook up the sleepy newspaper-dominated local media. Well into the 70's KING-TV scooped many big stories. Corr does a masterful job of tracing the early deviations from the "King ideal"--Dorothy's dumping of her son in favor of Ancil Payne, the shift from hard news to TV celebrities, and the ultimate cash out by Payne and Dorothy's daughters. Along the way Corr paints many colorful portraits--the Machiavellian Payne, Dorothy's hopelessly dysfunctional grandchildren, the bright and attractive Jean Enersen--the lone remaining link to the glory days, the irascible Don McGaffin--a throwback to the hard drinking, hard working, macho muckrakers of the turn of the century, and the glib, shallow Jim Foreman--the self-described "ratings machine" and low water mark for KING's television journalism. There is much to savor in this well written and colorful book. One hopes that Corr will soon devote his considerable talent to a subject with broader appeal. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I found this book fascinating having grown up in Seattle ...By Dianne Olsen I found this book fascinating having grown up in Seattle from the 40's and knowing so many of the names of the pioneers and politicians as well as the streets and areas mentioned. In high school history class I had written a term paper on the early history of Seattle so knew already of some of what was written in the KING book. I also had previously read the book on Harriet Bullet Stimson, founder of KING radio and T.V. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A fascinating tale interesting to anyone interested in radio By A Customer Corr has done lovers of radio, and television, specifically those of us in the Pacific Northwest a tremendous favor, capturing the drama of the Bullitt family. His writing is lively and the story is compelling in its narrative detail. You'll learn of the struggles, gambles and tremendous paybacks the Bullets made as they began and grew their broadcasting kingdom. If I had any criticism, it would be that the book is a little short of details concerning KING-AM and KGW-AM's heydays as Top 40 Rock N Roll outlets. The author completely fails to include, KINK-FM, one of the most interesting and hybrid FM radio stations in the country. If you are at all interested in radio, television or Northwest business history, this is definitely a book worthy of purchasing.

King tells the dramatic story of how Dorothy Bullitt built a great company and used it to influence the largest city of the Pacific Northwest. Far from the media capital of New York City, Bullitt and the employees of her King Broadcasting Company were free to invent local television and use its command of a vast audience to define and shape public issues during Seattle's staggering growth and transformation after World War II. Starting in 1951 with a clumsy 15-minute news program, KING-TV soon added passionately committed journalists and gave them extraordinary freedom. KING's journalists attacked Seattle's powerful politicians, prodded its inept public agencies, and chided its provincial attitudes, winning a host of national awards in the process. Their activist agenda and confident, aggressive style created controversy, both within the community and within the company. In this independent account, author Casey Corr traces the origins and growth of the company's public spirit and follows KING's coverage of many fascinating stories of postwar Seattle, including McCarthyism in Seattle politics; Bullitt family friendships with Senators Henry Jackson and Warren Magnuson; the rise and fall of Republican Party leader Charles O. Carroll; the assassination of civil rights leader Edwin Pratt; the mayoral campaign of KING commentator Charles Royer; and the secret struggle within the Seattle news media to expose a corrupt judge.

From Library Journal When you think of Seattle, what come to mind may be airplanes (Boeing), coffee (Starbucks), or software (Microsoft). Now you can add broadcasting with this family saga of the Bullitts and the King Broadcasting Company. Corr, a reporter for the Seattle Times with a knack for turning a phrase, tells how Dorothy Bullitt, a woman born to privilege, became a broadcasting pioneer after the death of her husband, living to 97. He weaves together three stories: the family, the company's operations, and how both related to the civic life of Seattle. Sometimes, especially when detailing the inner workings of the news division of anchor TV station KING, there is an overload of detail. Still, Corr's book belongs in serious broadcasting and history of the Pacific Northwest collections and may also appeal to readers of another family media saga, Marie Brenner's *House of Dreams: The Bingham Family of Louisville* (Random, 1988). -? Bruce D. Rosenstein, USA Today Lib., Arlington, Va. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Though she regularly wore prim pearls and a hat and gloves, Dorothy Stimson Bullitt was far from a typical elderly lady. When she died at age 97, Bullitt, a friend of FDR, had turned the American broadcast industry into a powerhouse. As the owner of six TV stations, she had parlayed KING broadcasting into a \$400 million operation; her personal income exceeded \$200 million. Corr, a reporter for the Seattle Times, traces the history of the Bullitt empire from Dorothy's purchase of its first station in 1947 to 1992, when her daughters sold off the entire company. The intervening years were filled with the turbulent machinations of big business as Dorothy (followed by her son Stimson and, later, Ancil Payne) tried to serve the public interest by providing high-quality children's programming, public affairs broadcasts, documentaries, cutting-edge editorials, and investigative reports. The company evolved into the hallmark of aggressive, award-winning journalism. This is impressive, required reading for anyone with a passion for broadcast journalism history. Patricia Hassler From the Back Cover KING tells the dramatic story of how Dorothy Bullitt built a great company, King Broadcasting, and used it to influence the largest city of the Pacific Northwest.

Starting in 1951 with a clumsy 15-minute news program, KING-TV soon added passionately committed journalists and gave them extraordinary freedom. KING's journalists attacked Seattle's powerful politicians, prodded its inept public agencies, and chided its provincial attitudes, winning a host of national awards in the process.