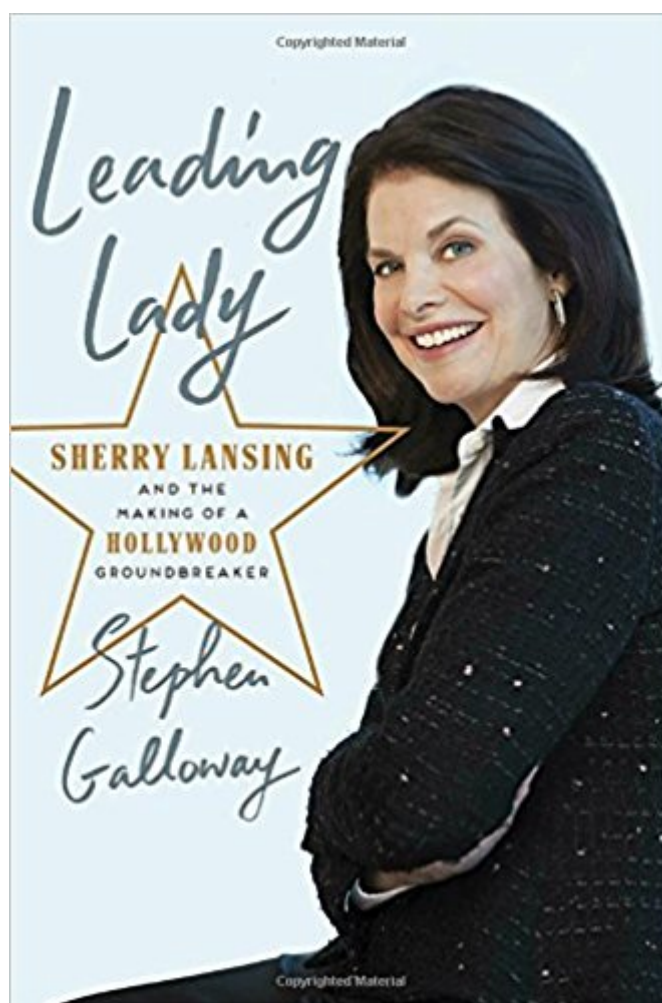


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Leading Lady: Sherry Lansing And The Making Of A Hollywood Groundbreaker



Synopsis

The definitive biography of movie executive and philanthropist Sherry Lansing traces her groundbreaking journey to become the first female head of a major motion picture studio, sharing behind-the-scenes tales from movie sets and Hollywood boardrooms. When Sherry Lansing became the first woman ever to be named president of a major studio, the news ricocheted around the world. That was just the beginning of an extraordinary run that saw her head two studios, make hundreds of films, produce classic pictures such as *Fatal Attraction* and rule for twenty-five years as the most powerful woman Hollywood has ever known. Award-winning writer Stephen Galloway takes us behind the scenes of Lansing's epic journey—inside the battles; up close with the stars; and into the heart of a creative world populated by the likes of Meryl Streep, Steven Spielberg, Jane Fonda, Angelina Jolie and Tom Cruise. He shows us the velvet touch that masked the iron hand, and the roller-coaster drama behind such movies as *Titanic*, *Forrest Gump*, *Braveheart* and *Saving Private Ryan*. Above all, he takes us into the mind of Lansing, creating a revealing portrait of a dynamic, driven woman who overcame unimaginable odds, pushed boundaries and left Hollywood at the peak of her power to achieve the life she wanted.

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Customer Reviews

“With great insight and exceptional research, this biography shows just what made [Sherry] so special, what allowed her to break every glass ceiling and become one of the most brilliant and talented producers and executives Hollywood has ever known.”—Michael Douglas

“This book, drawing on hundreds of interviews with Sherry and the people who know her best, takes us inside her thinking, into the heart of Hollywood, and on to her groundbreaking work in health and education.”

• President Jimmy Carter “This is a must-read for movie lovers. Sherry Lansing, the first woman to run a film studio, divulges a trove of insider stories about the making of *Titanic*, *Braveheart*, *Forrest Gump* and many other modern classics. The bio also looks at how much Hollywood has and has not changed since 1970, when Lansing appeared in *Rio Lobo* with John Wayne.”

• AARP “Sexism is just one interesting facet of the life and career that biographer Stephen Galloway explores in *Leading Lady*. He presents a fully realized portrait of a professional woman breaking glass ceilings. But more important, *The Hollywood Reporter* journalist shows us the person who endures failure as often as she savors triumph. Her strength of spirit, personally and professionally, is what underlies Galloway’s title.”

• *The Washington Post* “Galloway has created a colorful page-turner chronicling Lansing’s legacy as both a filmmaker and a philanthropist.”

• *Publishers Weekly* “An energetic and entertaining story, filled with divas, tantrums, and abundant Hollywood gossip [Leading Lady] is a brisk, breezy look at the turbulent world of moviemaking.”

• *Kirkus Reviews* “Galloway has crafted a sharp-eyed, captivating look at a brilliant pioneer who broke through the glass ceiling.”

• *Booklist*

STEPHEN GALLOWAY is a critically acclaimed entertainment reporter and winner of the Entertainment Journalist of the Year Award in 2013. He is the executive features editor for *The Hollywood Reporter*, and was the moderator for the 2014 season of *The Hollywood Masters*, a TV series featuring interviews with major Hollywood directors, such as David O. Russell and Judd Apatow.

I am very interested in Hollywood history, but only vaguely knowledgeable about Sherry Lansing. Therefore, for me, I needed to be sold from the first chapters that Ms. Lansing was someone I should want to read about. The book does not really succeed in its first three chapters, and the writing style is less than compelling: somewhat breezy and prone to relying on clichés or stale images. For example: “The freeway whisked them through an avenue of skyscrapers and along a collection of urban arteries before spitting them into the streets of the city, where Lansing still believed unknowns such as Lana Turner had been spotted at a soda fountain, and where Schwab’s Pharmacy was a real place, not just a metaphor for every hopeful

wanting to be made a star."So the first few chapters, which are standard biography stuff, are a bit of a slog. The book becomes much more compelling starting at Chapter 4, where Lansing begins working with Howard Hawks. Beginning at that point, the author's style works much better with the subject matter and level of detail available, and Ms. Lansing's story and personality become much more real and compelling. The author, in particular, does a great job of mixing interesting quotes from other people with little details to make a scene memorable. For example, here is the author's description of Lansing's interactions with David Begelman, the president of Columbia Pictures, who was eventually fired for embezzling from the company: "[Begelman] carried himself like a gentleman," [Lansing] said. "He dressed in tailored suits and drove a Rolls-Royce and lived by appearances. One day Danny Melnick and I went to a party and sat next to him. Danny said, 'God, aren't you lucky? You have the best person to sit next to,' because everybody loved him. But I said, 'He has strange eyes.' There was something about him that made me nervous, something off." Lansing's second career as a philanthropist is naturally not as compelling, but the author keeps that part of the story brief and focuses on some very interesting incidents. For the most part, the book succeeds in delivering amazing and interesting stories about the business of making movies, and in painting a memorable picture of Sherry Lansing as an ethical and driven businesswoman succeeding in a sexist environment.

Interesting bio of the first woman movie studio head. Lansing left the author to find her colleagues, friends and learn about her from them as well as herself to tell the unvarnished story of her life and career. I briefly saw Lansing and husband William Friedkin at baggage pickup in Paris airport. As Sherry smiled at me I got the same sense of her personality in those few seconds that Galloway reveals in his book.

While the Lansing life story is interesting enough, it's the background studio tales which are fascinating. There's more drama in this one book than in all of Shakespeare's plays. It's a saga of profligacy, double dealing, dishonesty, crass behaviour, emasculation, egos, tantrums...you name it!! Most of these people are surely still alive, and in positions of power. Have they no shame? For any movie buff, it's a real page turner.

NOT TERRIBLY INTERESTING. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BUT REALLY IT COULD HAVE

BEEN HALF AS LONG. LOVE HER STORY THOUGH.

I was interested in learning about the movie industry but was pleasantly surprised to learn more about Ms. Lansing and what an extraordinarily woman she is.

What An amazing woman! How to succeed in business and truly navigate others emotions compassionately and do your job well - a business art form. Chapters are seamless and a heroine to truly root for.

Interesting and dishy. Great behind the scenes stories.

great lady. very inspiring to never give up your dreams

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