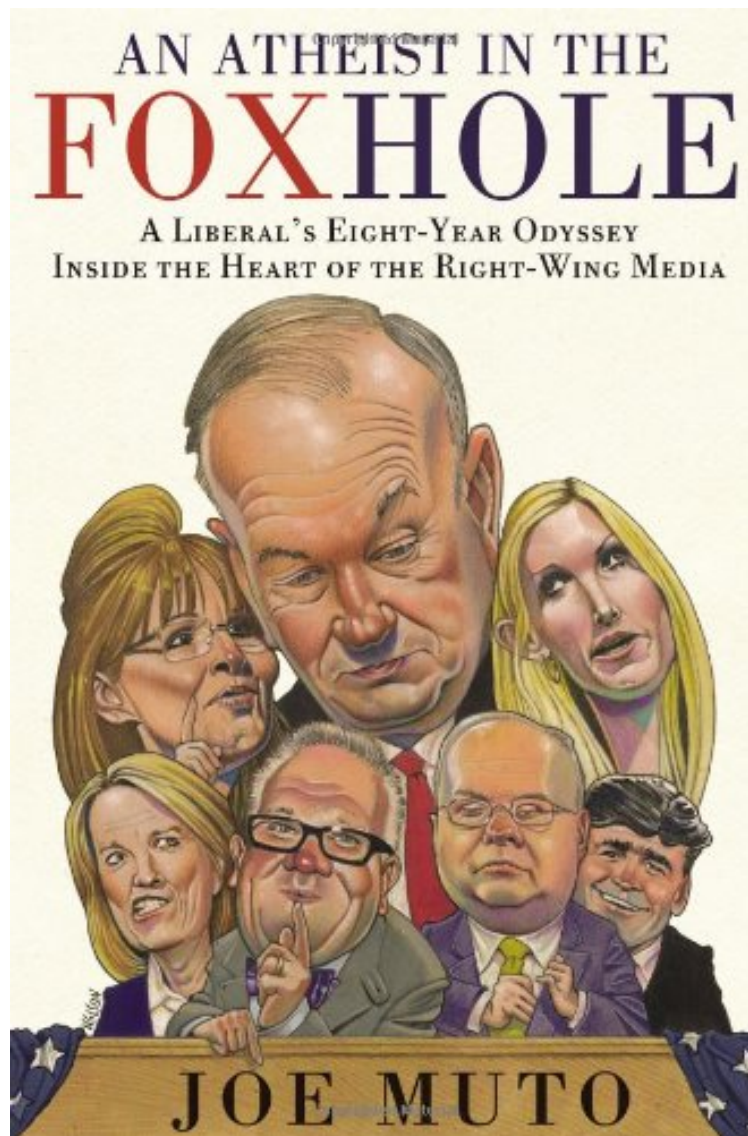


(Get free) An Atheist in the FOXhole: A Liberal's Eight-Year Odyssey Inside the Heart of the Right-Wing Media

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Joe Muto

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Joe Muto : An Atheist in the FOXhole: A Liberal's Eight-Year Odyssey Inside the Heart of the Right-Wing Media before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised An Atheist in the FOXhole: A Liberal's Eight-Year Odyssey Inside the Heart of the Right-Wing Media:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Behind enemy linesBy D. RobertsJoe Muto is a midwestern guy

who grew up with dreams of moving to the Big Apple establishing a career. Unfortunately, his only "shot" of getting his proverbial foot in the door is to become an employee of FOX News. As a Liberal, this is quite a complex and convoluted direction to take. Such is the story told within these pages. Muto finds himself getting by on a meager salary whilst working for the "evil empire" that is Rupert Murdoch's prized network. He ends up rubbing shoulders with the likes of Sean Hannity, Bill O'Reilly, Ann Coulter and Karl Rove. Not exactly "natural surroundings" for someone of the leftist mindset! Muto gives short intermittent chapters that take us through his last day @ FOX News; the day he was identified as the (gasp!) mole who leaked unauthorized footage of Newt Gingrich getting his hair done Mitt Romney discussing horses with Sean Hannity. {Gosh, those FOX News buggers sure are touchy, eh?} The chapters in between are flashbacks to his first days on the job detail his meteoric rise to becoming an assistant for the bombastic Bill O'Reilly's radio show. The book is told with a sense of humor unbecoming a Notre Dame grad, and that was refreshing. Not surprisingly, Muto describes his fiery Irish boss as being every bit as bellicose in person as he appears to be on TV. Somewhat surprisingly, he describes Ann Coulter as being very friendly so long as she's not in "attack dog" mode. Least surprisingly of all, he characterizes Sarah Palin as being even more(!) clueless than people give her credit for. Of course, this should not come as a shock to anyone who has watched Game Change. For myself, the most curious part of the book is the revelation that there are actual human beings(!) with personalities(!) who work in the control rooms behind the scenes @ FOX. I never gave the matter much thought, but I always pictured the FOX building as being full of stodgy, overdressed humorless Right Wing drones who cared for nothing save the company line. Interesting. The title of the book is a bit of a misnomer as Joe doesn't really delve into atheism. That he is an atheist is nothing more than a sidenote as he doesn't compare this aspect of his outlook with the hardcore Religious Right. For those who are expecting a book of this type (as I was), that's not the case. I get it: A LIBERAL IN THE FOXHOLE doesn't have quite the same ring to it ~ for obvious reasons. If you're a Left Wing type who relishes anything that pokes fun at the pompous pundits on the Right, then you're sure to enjoy this book. Much of it, in fact, reminded me of *The Newsroom: The Complete First Season* as it peeks into what goes on behind-the-scenes in the making of news shows. As for Joe, here's to hoping that you find a career where you can feel good about yourself!

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Behind the Secret Screen at (FNC) Fox News Channel By Bob Baker Having been in the television business for 35 years, I've been fascinated with FNC since the day it went on the air. Just by watching, anybody could tell that Roger Ailes broke all the rules to create something brand-new in cable news coverage! But I wanted to know more than what I saw on television. I wanted to know about the personalities and how they interacted with the "little people" and each other. I wanted to know the behind-the-scenes stuff that nobody talked about. How was news content gathered? How much did the "suits" control the content and/or the POV (Point of View) of the network? And how much was Roger Ailes personally involved in the newsroom on a day-to-day basis? What is Bill O'Reilly like to work with? This book answers all those questions and much more. For anyone who's ever been in television, for anyone interested in why cable news covers some stories and ignores others, for Republicans and for Democrats, and for those who are FOX News viewers or FOX News haters, this is a must read book! I promise you that you won't be able to put this down...and I further promise you that you'll never view FOX or CNN or MSNBC the same way again!

61 of 66 people found the following review helpful. Good, but Not Quite What You Think It's Going to Be By Timothy P. Young Joe Muto was the now infamous 'Fox Mole,' who posted a couple of semi-scandalous items about the inner workings of Fox News on Gawker back in 2012. He's now written a book about his experiences there. When the reader looks at the cover, and even the title, what we expect is a scathing take-down of Fox News and especially Bill O'Reilly, since his head looms large over the rest in the artwork. That's not what we get at all. Instead, what we get is a very personal account of Muto's time at Fox. It's a memoir. And a pretty good one. The reader will learn tons about the inner workings of a cable news network (and that stuff is fascinating), and tons about Muto's love life (not as much). While the book is at Fox (80-85 percent of the time), it's a fairly good read. When it strays into his personal life, via the copious footnotes and anecdotes liberally sprinkled throughout, it loses steam. I did enjoy the book. It's a quick, breezy read, well-written, often funny. A lot of people who liberals like to cast as villains come off better than you'd expect. I like O'Reilly more than I did before now that I've seen him up close and personal. Ditto for Shep Smith and Megyn Kelly. I appreciated getting a closer look at the inner workings of cable news. I just wish Muto would have stayed there, and with his coworkers, throughout the book. Still, with that minor caveat, more than worth your time.

The "Fox Mole"—whose dispatches for Gawker made headlines in *Businessweek*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, and even on *The New York Times* website—delivers a funny, opinionated memoir of his eight years at the unfair, unbalanced Fox News Channel working as an associate producer for Bill O'Reilly. Imagine needing to hide your true beliefs just to keep a job you hated. Now imagine your job was producing the biggest show on the biggest cable news channel in America, and you'll get a sense of what life was like for Joe Muto. As a self-professed bleeding-heart, godless liberal, Joe's viewpoints clearly didn't mesh with his employer—especially his direct supervisor, Bill O'Reilly. So he did what any ambitious, career-driven person would do. He destroyed his career, spectacularly. He became Gawker's so-called Fox Mole. Joe's posts on Gawker garnered more than 2.5 million hits in one week. He released footage and

information that Fox News never wanted exposed, including some extremely unflattering footage of Mitt Romney. The dragnet closed around him quickly—he was fired within thirty-six hours—so his best material never made it online. Unfortunate for his career as the Fox Mole, but a treasure trove for book readers. An Atheist in the FOXhole has everything that liberals and Fox haters could desire: details about how Fox's right-wing ideology is promoted throughout the channel; why specific angles and personalities are the only ones broadcasted; the bizarre stories Fox anchors actually believed (and passed on to the public); and tales of behind-the-scenes mayhem and mistakes, all part of reporting Fox's version of the news.

"Well-written and structured in surprising ways" - Tampa Bay Times — Joe Muto
About the Author JOE MUTO graduated from Notre Dame with a degree in Film and TV, then landed a job at Fox News as a freelance production assistant. He remained at Fox for eight years. He was an associate producer for The O'Reilly Factor when he was fired after being outed as Gawker's "Fox Mole." Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.
Prologue The Beginning of the End for a Middling Cable News Career My entire life, I'd always thought the phrase "my blood ran cold" was a cliché. Until Tim opened his mouth, that is. "Oh, look, they caught him. They caught the Fox Mole." Boom. Just like that. Cold blood as I felt the world start to cave in around my ears. Suppressing a shiver, I swiveled in my chair to face Tim Wolfe sitting at the desk three feet away from mine. Both of us were tucked away into a corner of the seventeenth floor of the News Corporation building in midtown Manhattan. Like me, Tim was an associate producer for The O'Reilly Factor at Fox News Channel in New York City. Unlike me, he hadn't spent the past two days leaking video clips, pictures, and stories from inside Fox to the media and gossip blog Gawker. "They caught him." The sentence lingered in my brain, bounced off the walls of my skull a bit, dropped into my stomach like a sandbag, sending it lurching toward my ankles. They caught him. They caught him? They caught me? So why was I still sitting at my desk, like it was a normal Wednesday? Why hadn't a corporate SWAT team at the disposal of my secrecy-obsessed, paranoid company president Roger Ailes thrown a bag over my head and dragged me to a gulag in the basement? I must have heard him wrong. "What's that?" I asked, trying my best to keep my voice calm and casual. "Check out Mediaite," Tim said, pointing to the website he had up on his screen. "Fox says they've got him." I typed the address into my browser. Mediaite.com was a popular site for industry news, and it had been all over the Mole story since my first post had gone up on Gawker the day before. The site loaded and there it was in a screamingly large font: the headline fox news spokesperson tells mediaite: we found the mole. I clicked through to find a short, disturbingly ominous statement from a network spokesman: "We found the person and we're exploring legal options at this time." Shit. "Wow, I guess they got him," I said to Tim, chuckling, all innocence. "Ha ha. That was quick." I fake laughed. Tim laughed, too. "I'd hate to be that guy right now." "Oh, yeah," I said. "That guy is fucked." Thirty seconds later, I was in the bathroom. I noticed that my hands were shaking as I turned on the faucet. I looked in the mirror and saw that my face had gone totally white, while my neck was flushing a deep red. I felt light headed. At some point during the brief walk between my desk and the commode, I'd apparently morphed into a heroine from a Victorian novel. Did I have the vapors? Would Keira Knightley play me in the movie version? If I fainted in the bathroom, would it gain me any sympathy from the company goons who were no doubt on their way to apprehend me? I splashed water on my face. Pull it together, Joe. They're bluffing. They don't know it's you. You were very careful. You took every precaution. There's nothing they have tying you to Gawker. They can search your work computer, your phone, even your personal e mail, and there's absolutely nothing. No proof. They're just saying they caught you to buy themselves time, or to make you panic and expose your identity. If they really knew it was you, do you think you'd still be in the building right now? Of course not. You'd have ten security guards at your desk, waiting to haul you away. Don't do anything stupid. Just act normal. My little mental pep talk had the desired effect. After a minute or two more of water splashing and deep breathing, my color returned to more or less normal and my hands stopped shaking. Leaving the bathroom, I passed Tim, who was conferring with another producer at her desk. He looked at me with narrowed eyes as I walked by, a concerned look on his face. Maybe I haven't recovered as much as I thought. Maybe he's on to me. I shot him a reassuring smile. All is well, I hoped my grin said. I'm mere minutes away from having a total nervous breakdown is what it probably broadcast, in retrospect. Back at my desk I tried to concentrate on my duties. If, as I hoped, management was bluffing about having found me, I needed to act normal and do my job. Shirking my duties in panic was a surefire way to draw attention to myself. Calm and casual, I told myself, and leaned back in my chair, my foot kicking the duffel bag under my desk, which had slipped my mind until that very moment. I had spent the previous night at my girlfriend Jenny's apartment and headed straight into the office from her place, carrying my soiled clothes with me to the office. That brought two things to mind immediately. One: I hadn't told Jenny a thing about any of this. She'd flown to Pittsburgh that morning to visit her family, and arguably would not react well to an over-the-phone revelation that I'd decided to make a career transition from cable news producer to potentially criminal corporate espionage agent without consulting her first. (You know how women are. They hate when you do that.) Two: More pressing, I had something else in the bag, something nestled up against my dirty undies—an iPad filled with the Gawker posts I'd written and copies of the behind the scenes videos I'd leaked. I'd been so busy congratulating myself for my cloak and dagger tactics that I'd completely forgotten I had brought into

the building all the proof they'd ever need to nail me, sitting in a bag under my desk, marinating in my day old crotch sweat. Okay, maybe now is the proper time to shirk my duties in panic. I grabbed the duffel and popped out of my chair. I knew I needed to get the evidence out of the building. The prospect of getting fired was scary enough, and something that I (wrongly, as it turns out) thought I had mentally prepared myself for, but it occurred to me that my company did not fuck around. While I didn't actually believe Fox News had a hidden subterranean dungeon that they'd stash me in while a crack anti-espionage team went through all of my personal possessions, I didn't completely dismiss it as a possibility, either. Tim and I were a little bit separated from the other members of the O'Reilly staff, a seating arrangement left over from the days when O'Reilly was still doing a radio show, on which I had originally been a staffer before transitioning to the TV side. We had the unique experience of having desks immediately outside O'Reilly's office, yielding hours of fascination and entertainment; but the separation from my peers could feel a bit isolating at times. That day, however, I was thankful that the dozen or so other producers were located fifty feet down the hall and couldn't see me indecisively pacing holding a duffel bag. My floor was arranged into three concentric rings. Anchors, reporters, and a few high powered producers occupied the coveted window offices on the outer ring. The middle ring, where I was, consisted of lower level producers scattered among desks separated by chest high cubicle walls. The inner ring was a few windowless offices, video editing suites, break rooms, janitor closets . . . and the elevator bank. It was that elevator bank I needed to get to, walking along the middle ring straight past the other O'Reilly producers—a potentially risky move, since, with the realization that I was in possession of the incriminating iPad, I was guessing that my briefly absent Victorian lady complexion had returned; and if my appearance didn't give me away, the fact that I was leaving the building with a bag a good seven hours before quitting time was bound to raise a few eyebrows. There was another way, though. If I followed the ring in the opposite direction, I wouldn't have to pass my colleagues; I wouldn't even have to use the seventeenth floor elevators. It's true that was a longer route, weaving through the base camps of several of the other shows that were stationed on the seventeenth floor; but it also led to a little used, virtually unknown stairway that would allow me to climb to the much less populated eighteenth floor, where I could use the elevators to escape to the ground floor. The longer route would potentially bring me in contact with more people, but, hopefully, they wouldn't think a sweaty, pale faced O'Reilly producer making a beeline for the exits was anything out of the ordinary. As I started down the long way out, I passed O'Reilly's office. The door was open, but he wasn't inside; in fact, he wouldn't be there for a few more hours. Though the man was intimately involved in every aspect of his show's production and started his workday at seven a.m., he spent roughly four hours a day actually present in the office. It's good to be the boss. And for the time being, it was good to be me. Or lucky to be me, anyway. Because my path was blessedly devoid of people. It was early lunchtime, and most of the desks along my route were empty. A few bored staffers munched salads at their desks, heads dipped as they grazed; others inhaled sandwiches, eyes glued to their screens, checking Facebook or Twitter or, alarmingly, Mediaite. I breezed past them one by one with no incident, calmly walking down the nearly abandoned hallways, past desks and cubicles and offices, until finally I was so close I could see the source of my freedom: the door that would bring me to the out of the way staircase that led to the floor above. Twenty feet to the doorway. Ten feet. Five feet. Then a voice from behind. "Hey, Muto!" So close. I turned to face the speaker. It was Nick De Angelo, a producer I'd worked with on another show a few years back. "Where you goin' in such a rush?" he asked, peering at me over the top of his computer monitor. "Oh, just to get some lunch," I lied, uncomfortably shifting on my shoulder the duffel bag that suddenly felt like it weighed seventy five pounds. "I have something to ask you," Nick said, a deadly serious look on his face. He took a deep breath, then said: "Are you the Mole?" My heart flip flopped. How did he know? And then I saw that he was laughing, his shoulders shaking, a goofy smile plastered on his face. He was just giving me shit. "Yup!" I replied, matching his laughter, pretending to enjoy the ball busting. "You got me!" But I must not have gotten the tone right. Or my frantic, nervous eyes gave me away. Or maybe he already suspected, and was testing me to see how I reacted. Either way, the laughter faded from his face, replaced with a wry, curious look. He studied me. When he spoke again, his voice was quieter, more tentative. "No, seriously, though. Is it you?" he asked. I kept up my fake dumb grin. "I told you, man. You got me!" As he furrowed his brow, watching me thoughtfully, I turned on my heel and walked as calmly as I could through the doorway. And it was only at this moment—long past the point when the thought could have done me any good—that the little voice in my head stated what should have been obvious to anyone who wasn't a moron. This might have been a terrible idea.