

# GANNETT

## The Right Alternative: Will Koch brothers save, or pervert, struggling newspapers?

By: Beth Murphy - April 24, 2013

---

Those conservative billionaires, promoters of the free market and libertarian causes, the Koch brothers, are reported to be in the hunt to buy newspapers from Tribune Co., including The Chicago Tribune and the Los Angeles Times. Of course, this has critics on the left worried.

They fear the Koch brothers would buy ink by the barrels to promote their far-out free-market ideas.

The alternate view, according to the Chicago Business Journal, is that the brothers are merely interested in the business side and already have enough political influence with their “financial backing for the Cato Institute and Americans for Prosperity, a libertarian think tank and conservative political action group.”

Walter Russell Mead’s blog post on American Interest, “Why the Koch Brothers’ Move into Newspaper is good for America” reminds us that it’s good for people of all perspectives to own media, which has always been a profit-making venture:

“According to the New York Times, two groups are jostling for the Tribune company’s newspapers: the Koch brothers, conservative billionaires and longtime supporters of libertarian causes; and a varied group of wealthy, mostly liberal Los Angeles residents. From our point of view it’s an excellent thing that two groups of differing political persuasions are eying major newspaper acquisitions. We need diversity in journalism; the left and the right see society from different positions and both sides can offer useful and helpful insights.”

A free-market advocate in the free marketplace of ideas? Sounds like a fair deal in a democracy.

### Women's choices

This morning as I was scrubbing out grass and dirt stains from my daughter’s softball pants (in her defense, she does her own laundry but left the tough stains case to me), I was thinking two things:

1. Man, I wish I could pay someone to do laundry for me.
2. How much fun is it to watch those girls play softball?

It's because of so many before us that the young women on my daughter's high school team will have so many choices for their lives. But with the release of Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg's book, "Lean In," which encourages women to reach for the highest levels of corporate hierarchy, we're having that same old argument called, yes, "The Mommy Wars."

- Elsa Walsh, in "What Sheryl Sandberg doesn't understand; women should embrace a good enough life," wonders how many of us have the devotion, energy and ambition of Sandberg, who seems to work 24/7. How many of us -- men or women -- want to do that grueling work, if it comes with a negative impact on our families?

"That is not how I want my daughter to live, and it is not how I want to live," Walsh writes.

I agree. I want my daughter -- as well as my sons -- to be able to opt out of a corporate-driven career track to find the right balance for family, friends and life -- if they choose to.

- In "What About the children?" Caitlin Flanagan, writing for Time, also challenges Sandberg's high regard for the corporate, workaholic culture.
- Liz Peek, in The Fiscal Times, looks at why women are leaving the workplace in record numbers.

Bush back up in the polls

That's right. George W. Bush is reaching new heights in his post-presidency era, just as his presidential library is about to open in Texas. Esteem for the ex-president has risen since he's left office. Conservatives certainly had their issues with the former president. How bad, or good, of a president was he?

- A former aide, Ed Gillespie, outlines the positives of Bush's presidency, including how he worked to keep America safe after 9/11, and that President Obama has had to follow many of the same policies to prevent terror attacks: "To President Barack Obama's credit, he abandoned much of his campaign rhetoric on terror issues — he criticized his predecessor over Guantanamo Bay and electronic surveillance, but largely maintained those policies once in office," Gillespie writes on National Review Online.
- Ron Fournier of National Journal remembers Bush's decency in "Go ahead, admit it: George W. Bush is a good man."

Back to Boston

- How stupid mistakes led authorities to the suspects in the Boston bombings.
- Conservative comedian Adam Carolla Monday night dissed his hometown of L.A. while praising the people of Boston for their bravery and hard work: "I heard the story about a woman (in Boston) who ran the marathon and then went into surgery as a surgeon and worked her 40-hour shift. That just doesn't happen in Los Angeles, and the fact that everyone ran into sort of what was going to be danger, I mean, there was a second bomb and there could have been a third bomb. It just says a lot about the people of Boston and the people that live in it."

- In case you were busy at 2:50 p.m. Monday when Boston stopped for a moment of silence to remember the bombing victims, you can read about it and watch it on video [here](#).