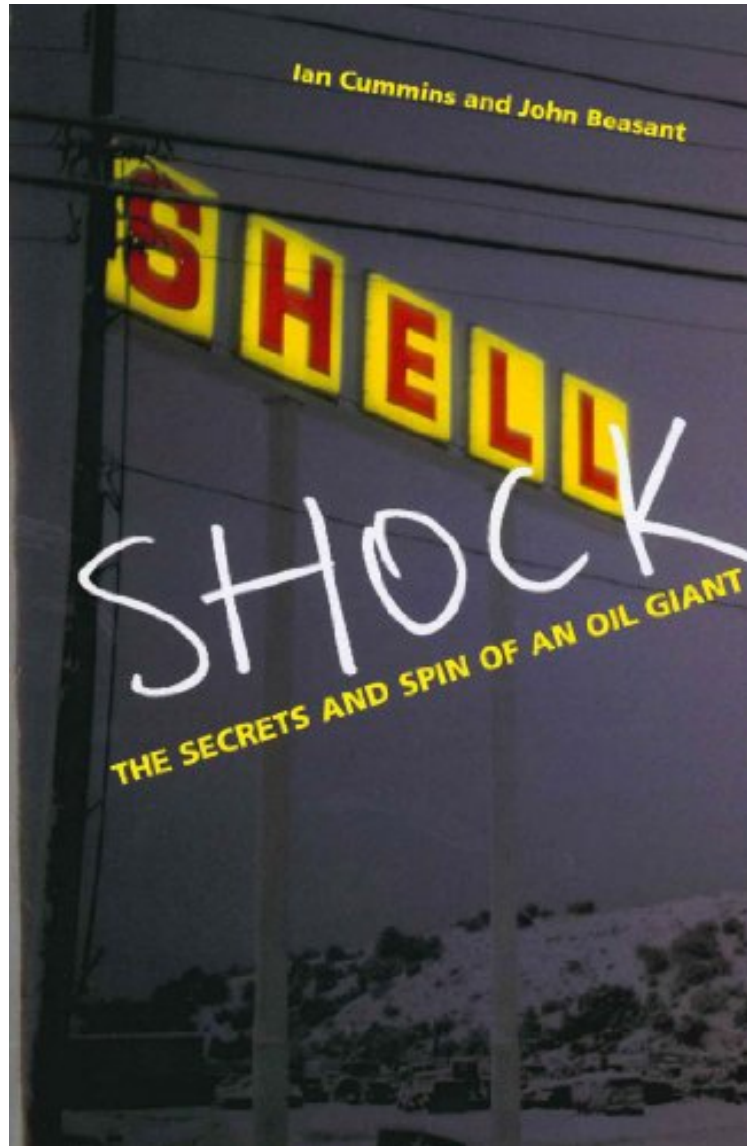


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Shell Shock: The Secrets And Spin Of An Oil Giant

Ian Cummins, John Beasant

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Ian Cummins, John Beasant : Shell Shock: The Secrets And Spin Of An Oil Giant before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shell Shock: The Secrets And Spin Of An Oil Giant:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. An empty shell?By G. DeinumShell Shock is a very readable book. However, there is something missing to make it a great book. Ian Cummins clearly has a lot of inside information about the oil company that is Shell, but a lot of that was also available in the public domain.The book starts with the oil reserves crisis in 2004, but is quickly followed by a long and detailed history of the Shell company. The last part of the book deals with Shell's manipulation of governments and its neglect for the environment.Cummins may have a lot

of facts right, but the interpretation in terms of 'evilness' is not very well proved. In general, Shell is considered a relatively responsible company. Are its spin doctors just so clever to give us this impression? Further, what is not clear from the book is Shell's motive. Why would Shell do all of this? Especially in the present times, with even the major oil companies relatively powerless against governments of oil-rich countries, it seems hard to imagine that a company like Shell has a stranglehold over some of these governments.

Royal Dutch/Shell is a multinational behemoth. Every four seconds of every day, 1,200 cars fill their tanks with petrol on Shell forecourts, while at airports around the world civil airliners are refuelled with Shell aviation spirit every ten seconds. The company has long been regarded as a world leader and a model for other corporations. That is, until January 2004. In a truly dramatic statement, the company told an incredulous world that estimates of Shell's reserves had been inflated by a staggering 3.9 billion barrels. It was the first of a series of admissions that brought into question Shell's reputation for rectitude and sent its share price tumbling. Shell Shock is an engrossing account which reveals details that have never been included in any company accounts. Prominent amongst these is the confirmation that one of the corporation's two 'founding fathers', Henri Deterding, was a passionate supporter of fascist dictators such as Gmez in Venezuela, Franco in Spain, Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany. Shell Shock then exposes the company's appalling environmental record, notably in Nigeria and the United States, and reveals the possible ecological consequences of current plans to extract oil from Sakhalin Island, off Russia's Pacific coast. As the company - threatened with multi-billion-dollar legal action in America and West Africa - struggles to recover from what amounts to self-immolation, this timely account of its history shows how an internal cultural revolution and an obsession with spin besmirched the company's good name, the quality that mattered most to Shell's founders.

About the Author Ian Cummins is a veteran journalist who has written for the Sunday Telegraph, The Observer and the Financial Times. He also previously worked for Petroleum Development Oman, the state-owned company founded and operated by Shell. John Beasant has been press secretary to two prime ministers, an Islamic head of state and a prince. His other books include Stalin's Silver, Oman and (as co-author) Sultan in Arabia.