

Miles Away... Worlds Apart

Alan Sakowitz , Alan Sakotwitz

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Alan Sakowitz, a whistleblower of a Madoff-like Ponzi scheme masterminded by Scott Rothstein, fraudster extraordinaire, tells of the story of his decision to turn in Rothstein regardless of the possible dangerous ramifications of such a decision. The saga of Rothstein's rise and fall which included a Warren Yacht, two Bugattis, Governor Crist, the former Versace mansion, The Eagles, and even the murder of a law partner, is the stuff that Hollywood movies are made from.

Miles Away... Worlds Apart Details

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From Reader Review Miles Away... Worlds Apart for online ebook

Efox says

I received this book as a goodreads giveaway winner.

This book was actually quite different from what I expected. I guess I was expecting more of an insider perspective to the whistle-blower part of the story, rather than an outside potential investor who realizes that what he's being presented with is simply too good to be true and actually does something about it. Nevertheless, it was an interesting book that had a lot of really inspiring stories.

The book kind of jumps back and forth a lot between what was going on in the world of Scott Rothstein, high powered lawyer who is using fake settlement agreements to create a giant Ponzi scheme and maintaining an air of legitimacy by using the Ponzi dollars to support everyone in the community from backwardly bribing the police, to politicians, banks, and dozens of charities, and what was happening in Sakowitz's Jewish community in North Miami. Sakowitz's stories about his neighbors (most of whom are so not interested in public attention that they didn't even allow him to use their real names) are actually some of the more interesting parts of the book.

I think the books message, living faithfully, putting others ahead of yourself, showing deep concern about the dignity of other people, letting God take the credit for the things he uses you for, and placing yourself in situations where making the right choice is easier, is fairly universal. Thanks goodreads and Alan for choosing me to receive this book!

Georgiann Hennelly says

Miles Away Worlds Apart is a truly riveting story about people good and evil This is a true account of a ruthless con man that didn't care about anything or anyone but himself and what he could get. The whistle blower who finally put an end to the ruthlessness of businessman Scott Rothstein and the business Rothstein invited Sarkowitz to join was nothing but a gigantic Ponzi scheme. This story was told with a compassionate voice, and caring for others and doing the right thing will prevail. He also points out how others may have seen the devious side of Mr Rothstein, yet chose to ignore it and do nothing. He risked his career, safety and life to bring justice to his community. It was a really enlightening and refreshing to read of the goodness and selflessness that the people in this community had for one another. I believe that personal responsibility, leadership, faith in community and caring for others is the message of this book. I also believe we should do unto others as we would want done unto us. I truly enjoyed this book it sends a beautiful message, Thank you for sharing Alan.

Susan (aka Just My Op) says

You know that old adage, "if it seems too good to be true, it probably is"? This book both reinforces and undermines the adage.

It is very true that the investment scheme introduced to author and attorney Alan Sakowitz seemed too good

to be true – and it was. The other side of the coin is that the stories he told of people and kindnesses in his community seemed too good to be true but were not – just good people taking care of other people to the best of their ability.

Mr. Sakowitz was introduced to an investment plan run by attorney Scott Rothstein. The dollar amounts involved had a whole lot more zeros on the right than I will ever know – we're talking big bucks here, where figures of several million dollars were discussed as casually as if they were deciding to buy today's Starbucks coffee.

I had to re-read part of the first few pages where the investment plan was first explained. The details are important but so far out of my comfort zone and knowledge base that I struggled a bit.

While deciding whether to invest, Sakowitz kept running into red flags, things that just didn't seem very legitimate to him. He shifted from the viewpoint of deciding whether this was a good investment to how to find if it was truly as illegal as it seemed to becoming a whistleblower. That whole story was fascinating. It was sometimes hard to tell the good guys from the bad guys, and people who had the knowledge to make a proper good decision jumped on the bandwagon anyway. “The Steipler said that once a person makes up his mind, he will not allow the facts to change his decision. A person will simply ignore any facts that disprove or draw into question his decision.” There was a lot of that going on. There was also a lot of buying a “good” reputation.

Interspersed with this story were stories about the good deeds done by people in his Orthodox Jewish community, a community only miles away but worlds apart. Initially, I didn't care for these stories; they seemed a bit like proselytizing to me but I think that is because the author's faith is so much of who he is. There were quotes and examples from his rabbi, several parables. However, as I got used to the author's writing style, I appreciated them. It was as if all the bad things happening in Rothstein's world would remind the author of something good in a saner world. To me, it was like he was telling his Rothstein story and then segueing to a “hey, did I ever tell you about...” story. This book is a good read for anyone who wants to read about some of the kind and generous things people do. And it is a must-read for any investors who want to do the right thing as well as avoid scams.

I received a copy of this book from the author. It was an unsolicited gift, and much appreciated.

My linda says

Miles Away...Worlds Apart by Alan Sakowitz is a true novel about an every day person who bumps into what he considers an intolerable situation. I found it interesting enough to keep reading it on and off for three days.

The novel successfully presents the reader with lessons and insight about life and people. From the many varied ways that Rothstein tried to draw Sakowitz into the fold, to the ever changing answers to the author's questions, the insights give the reader a guide to use in their own lives.

Lessons about what the author went through included his thought and feelings at the time. In addition the author shows us insight he has gained through his faith and community. Using these lessons and applying them to corruption is one of the best parts of the book. At the same time all of this is done within the confines of what at times is a frightening story.

The reader is led through the maze of corruption to show how people can choose to use what they know to be the type of person they want to be. Sakowitz thrills us through looking at the people who just do not care and are deeply involved. These people go from the governor to police to athletes to leaders of local non-profits. He resists involving his friends in this web with thoughtfulness and grace.

The choice of being the best person we can be is illustrated by the fact he does not just walk away. We all choose the person we want to be when we decide what the next step is with information we have.

Some people choose to protect the people they may or may not know as well. From the beginning the author had suspicions about what he was told. The reader starts learning terminology from the beginning. The concept of conflict of interest is introduced early in the story.

The reader is introduced to the concept of kindness and real caring with descriptions about all of the freely respectfully given services available to people in the author's community. Descriptions and little vignettes tell about the extensive efforts made to meet members of the communities needs. Meeting needs while preserving dignity is important in this story. The corrupt community and the author's community were even adjacent.

This belief in community is what led the author to become a whistle blower.

The danger an everyday person puts himself into, for his community and people he does and does not know, is breathtaking to this reader. I literally could not leave this book alone.

Rick F. says

In his stunning book MILES AWAY....WORLDS APART, Alan Sakowitz has achieved an even great feat then his already impressive act as the whistleblower of the S. Florida Ponzi Scheme fraudster, Scott Rothstein. Mr. Sakowitz has written what is an amazingly uplifting as well as cautionary tale that everyone from 13 to 113 years old should make haste to read. As the books discription reads, "The answer, Sakowitz says, lies in thinking first of others, and how one's actions should benefit the lives of friends, not one's short-term gratifications.", Mr. Sakowitz shows how the very basic act of kindness to our friends and even those we don't know- enriches us far more then a swindler, with millions of ill-gotten gains. Mr. Sakowitz' stories of the "regular" folks around him who have taken that extra step to help others are in turns touching, facinating and ultimately unforgettable as well as a expertly painted written picture of the indominatable spirit of true human goodness and nature.

Mr. Sakowitz's account of his role in the takedown of Rothstein makes for very high drama- and the style of writing keeps the reader turning the page in eager anticipation of what will happen next. The inclusion of stories of those who represent the very opposite of the Scott Rothsteins of the world make what could have been a very sad account on the state of our financial nation into a VERY highly readable, educational and most important, heart-affirming treasure of a book.

Rick

Creator/Moderator- THE JAMES MASON COMMUNITY BOOK CLUB

Deborah says

Review of "Miles Apart ... Worlds Apart"

Alan Sakowitz's book,

"Miles Apart ... Worlds Apart", gives an unexpected look of two parallel views that are so vastly different that they give a definite stark black and white view of each world. A book of good versus evil and the freedom of man's choice are self evident.

Scott Rothstein uses his right of freedom of choice to cheat his fellow man and Alan Sakowitz chooses to fight the evil being done. Sakowitz's description of his Jewish community left this reader with a memory of a time when communities met on their front porches and church or synagogue was the place not only for worship; but to hear news of a neighbor's fortune or misfortune and the action taken to help or congratulate by all. A reminder of how much more important the community built on solid ground is today especially since in these times we tend to be self absorbed.

In contrast he tells the story of how Scott Rothstein represents the embodiment of self absorption and the evil of his behavior that is destructive to others with no concern as to what harm may be inflicted. A world built on shifting sands. Although Rothstein's evil is at the level of High Corporation. This same greed and evil can be seen every day at a far more common level of the lives of the common man.

A true philosophical view of good versus evil and the freedom of choice is wonderfully presented in Alan Sakowitz's book, Miles Apart ... Worlds Apart.

Shannon says

I just finished reading *Miles Away... Worlds Apart* by Alan Sakowitz. I guess I can say that this is first reads book, even though technically I wasn't selected as a winner in the drawing. But because I had entered, the author contacted me to see if I'd still be interested in receiving a free copy. This was definitely unexpected. It's not unusual to be contacted with information about ordering a copy of an author's book or provided with a discount code, but offering to give away a copy for free? And I'm sure Mr. Sakowitz didn't send this offer to just me, either. So, I was a bit surprised, but I took him up on his offer. After reading the book, and gaining insight as to the type of person the author is, I'm not surprised at all.

This book tells the story of Scott Rothstein, an attorney in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, who was involved in very large-scale fraudulent investor scheme (Ponzi scheme). Basically, he would find investors and pay them with money from future investors and so on. Eventually, the money would run out. It wasn't this simple though. So many people were involved in this, from those who were tracking down investors to the banks that turned a blind eye to suspicious activity.

Alan Sakowitz, also an attorney, was contacted to be a potential investor. After learning a bit more about this investment, (or lack of learning, as Rothstein refused to disclose information, hiding behind the excuse of confidentiality), Mr. Sakowitz concluded that it must be a scam. All clues pointed towards a Ponzi scheme, money laundering, or a combination. He couldn't just do nothing and allow others to be hurt or affected by this scam. The problem was that Rothstein had "low friends in high places," and seemed to be well-connected. Mr. Sakowitz was very cautious about who he needed to go to because it would potentially put

his life, and the lives of his wife and children, at risk. He decided to go to the FBI. To sum up, Rothstein was busted and is in jail.

I usually don't read a lot of non-fiction, preferring instead to read for mostly entertainment. However, I really enjoyed this book. My favorite parts were the stories the author incorporated about his own home community in Miami Beach. His neighbors and community took care of each other and genuinely showed concern and love for each other. This was such a contrast between Rothstein's world, which was only "miles away, but worlds apart." There were definitely lessons to be learned from this book, but I'll allow the inscription from Mr. Sakowitz to sum up. The inscription in the copy of the book I received says, "Enjoy the read. Then spread the messages of the book. That is leadership, community, family and other people are important. Together we will make a difference."

Sheri says

Miles Away...Worlds Apart (Alan Sakowitz)

A true story of a courageous man who uncovered the biggest financial fraud in Southern Florida. Alan Sakowitz tells how (he) uncovers the scheme of noted Florida Attorney Scott Rothstein. Told with a compassionate voice Mr. Sakowitz shows how family, faith, compassion, caring for others and doing the right thing will prevail. He also points how others may have seen the devious side of Scott Rothstein, yet chose to ignore and do nothing. He risks his career, safety and life to bring justice to his community. In the end Rothstein's Greed and lack of concern for others is his downfall.

I really enjoyed the stories from Alan's community. It was enlightening and refreshing to read of the good deeds and selflessness that the people in this community have for one another. Personal responsibility, leadership, faith in community and caring for others is the message of this book. I was left feeling satisfied. I intend to visit www.EmpoweringLessons.com for updates on this. Thanks for sharing this web Alan!

Giovanni Gelati says

We have an ambitious tripleheader today, three novels each different, each has a decidedly different flavor, and each is the type of novel that one can take and use for different reasons. Our first novel this morning has its roots in a Ponzi scheme, but that isn't what I want to focus on, instead I want to focus on the main message Alan Sakowitz is trying to deliver, or at least, I think he is. Here is the synopsis of the novel and I think you may possibly see where I am going with this:

"Alan Sakowitz, a whistleblower of a Madoff-like Ponzi scheme masterminded by Scott Rothstein, fraudster extraordinaire, tells the story of his decision to turn in Rothstein regardless of the possible dangerous ramifications of such a decision. The saga of Rothstein's rise and fall which included a Warren Yacht, two Bugattis, Governor Crist, the former Versace mansion, The Eagles, and even the murder of a law partner, is the stuff that Hollywood movies are made from.

Instead of the mere accounting of such a scandal, Sakowitz uses the Rothstein scheme as a cautionary tale in stark contrast to the stories of humble, ethical individuals living within Sakowitz's neighborhood in North

Miami Beach, Florida. Sakowitz's neighbors are people who have spent their lives trying to assist others, not line their pockets, and through these stories Sakowitz creates a sharp dichotomy between the greed, of a Rothstein and its mainstream culture of consumption and the charity, kindness and selflessness of a principle-oriented community. Indeed, Sakowitz speaks to the symptoms of a culture that could create a Scott Rothstein, and, though acknowledging that the easy way out is not simple to dismiss, offers remedies to the growing ills of our entitlement society. The answer, Sakowitz says, lies in thinking first of others, and how one's actions should benefit the lives of friends, not one's short-term gratifications. “

I have featured other novels that involved Ponzi schemes, even one novel that was named Ponzied, so I would prefer to stay away from that aspect of the story here. It is that time of year that we are, or at least hope that some of are, thinking of our fellow man and how fortunate we are and possibly looking back on all the positive things that have happened to us this year. I took this book and the other two I am posting today chapter by chapter. I did not consume this all at one time. Is the book that boring? No, I needed at times to reflect on what Alan Sakowitz has done and what he is proposing. He is making an attempt to enrich lives, to help us possibly focus on things in our lives we may at times overlook and think too small to matter, to see life as it could be, the simplicity and joy of it. That, my friends, was something I just didn't wanted to blow by.

No one is ever going to accuse me of being a deep thinker. Miles Away..Worlds Apart has many levels to it and I was taken in by it, and plan to do just what Alan Sakowitz suggests, share the book with people. I already have a list at home of those family members that want to read it, and are willing to wait their turn, good stuff. Don't pass on this because it appears to be just another Ponzi scheme, lawyer book, bad news, people get burned type thing. Alan Sakowitz has a real message he is trying to impart that has worth and value, give it a shot. Here are a couple of links the author has set up :

www.EmpoweringLessons.com

If you have an inspiring story, send it to him: stories@EmpoweringLessons.com

What are you reading today? Check us out and become our friend on Shelfari & Linkedin. Go to Goodreads and become our friend there and suggest books for us to read and post on. You can also follow us on Twitter, Wattpad and the Gelati's Scoop Facebook Fan Page. Did you know you can shop directly on Amazon by clicking the Amazon Banner on our blog? Thanks for stopping by today; We will see you tomorrow. Have a great day. <http://www.gelatisscoop.blogspot.com>

Darcia Helle says

This story has all the makings of a crime fiction novel but it's completely real. Alan Sakowitz blew the whistle on a well-connected, prominent South Florida lawyer who was running a huge Ponzi scheme. For those unfamiliar with a Ponzi scheme, it's an investment scam that, in the end, cheats people out of millions or even billions of dollars.

With Miles Away... Worlds Apart, Sakowitz tells us how he was introduced to this Ponzi scheme and how he immediately spotted the red flags. But this book is about so much more than a lawyer and a scam. Sakowitz weaves in stories of his neighborhood and his friends, giving examples of what it's like to live life on the opposite spectrum of someone running a scam. Sakowitz's deep faith and his desire to help those around him is a true inspiration.

Regardless of your own religious/spiritual beliefs, I think it's impossible to walk away from this book without being touched by the beauty that drives Alan Sakowitz's faith.

Terry says

“Miles Away... Worlds Apart” by Alan Sarkowitz is a riveting story about people evil people and good people. The true account of a ruthless con man that didn’t care about anything but himself and what he could get, the whistle blower that finally puts an end to the ruthlessness of “businessman” Scott Rothstein. The business that Rothstein invites Sarkowitz to join is actually a gigantic Ponzi scheme and some of the people involved include may be surprising, including police and the governor. The attraction of big money, yachts and expensive cars was appealing to everyone and acted as a smoke screen to the truth.

When the author first decided to walk away from the Rothstein’s invitation to join the business – it seemed like that was enough to do. But good won over evil as Sakowitz made the decision to turn in the criminal Rothstein.

“Miles Away... Worlds Apart” also tells the story of the people that live in Sakowitz’s Florida neighborhood. Good, caring people that try to help others. This is a sharp contrast to the evil, uncaring, greedy Rothstein.

I would defiantly recommend this book to everyone since anyone can fall victim to the Rothsteins of this world.

Ann Keller says

Outstanding read! By the time I reached page seven, the paralegal in me was screaming in outrage. This tale continues to spin in a whirl of deception and intrigue, fraud, politics, power - and perhaps, even murder. Miles Away ... Worlds Apart is the story of one of the largest financial frauds in South Florida’s history, perpetrated by Scott Rothstein, the author of a Ponzi scheme that drew hundreds of investors into a massive vortex in his search for an unending source of money and power.

As Rothstein’s foul deeds begin to unravel around him, Mr. Sakowitz provides the reader with the splendid contrasting conduct of people who live according to moral standards. Where Rothstein wallows in greed and deception, Alan Sakowitz shows us the importance of family, community, good leadership, personal responsibility and integrity.

I close the final page feeling a little better for having read this book. I have examined my own life and resolved to live more for others than for myself, to delight in my family and in my community, and to show by example that a life filled with kindness, goodness, and generosity can be a life offered with joy and purpose. For this message, Alan Sakowitz, I humbly thank you.

Kelsey says

This book's title is perfect. Alan describes how his life and the lives of his neighbors are vastly different from the life of Scott Rothstein. To show this Alan has used stories from his neighborhood and from his own family. This isn't just a book about how he brought Rothstein down. Alan wanted to convey a message in

hopes that at least one person can be persuaded to choose a better and more meaningful way to live. Alan does this job incredibly. This book is well written. For me it was hard to understand how someone could fall for Rothstein's scam but I guess some people only see what they want to see. I think because of Alan's faith, family, and friends he was able to see through the scam and find the strength to turn him in.

My favorite story was A Welcome Call on page 52. David Barman lived in Alan's community and is an attorney also. One afternoon Alan received a phone call from him. Not because he wanted anything but to just see how he was doing. This is what David did every Friday afternoon. He makes a point to call two friends that he doesn't normally run into during the week. This is priceless and made me think when was the last time I called someone just to see how they were doing.

One thing that I didn't like about this book or maybe I just didn't understand it. Whenever Alan mentions God he spells it G-d. I don't understand why he does this and it annoyed me. Why couldn't you just add the "o"?

Kate says

"There's the law and then there's doing what right."

Alan Sakowitz did what was right by bringing Scott Rothstein and his fraudulent practices down.

This part of the book, the financial drama, is told from a more outsider perspective, since Alan only had a few meetings with Scott Rothstein before the red flags became known to him. Then Alan spends time throughout the rest of the narrative contrasting Rothstein's corrupt world with his own community and showing through specific examples how the people of his community help each other out of kindness and dignity for the human spirit.

To be perfectly honest, I'm not a big fan of organized religion of any kind, but the philosophy behind the teachings Alan presents are really wonderful and uplifting and prove that if each and every one of us shows deep concern about others and choose the good side of our nature, we could kill the greed and self absorbed behaviors that are destructive.

Thank you Alan for reaching out and allowing me this opportunity to read and review your book.

Jim says

This book is based on morals and ethics. Who has them and who doesn't is the interesting part of this fast action financial thriller. Would you be able to tell a story being told as it was being told? There are many they can't and believe every word out of someone's mouth to be true. This is who they look for and that is the person that wants to pull the lever to the one arm bandit. I guess once you start reading this book "Miles Away ...Worlds Apart" by Alan Sakowitz and figuring out what is going, the scams and deception, then you want to see where they mess up to get caught. They are very good at what they do.

A lawyer no less crooked from the start and why is that such a surprise. This story will have you turning the pages if anything to see when they get caught. You know no scam is perfect and you may earn what to look

out for if you have never encountered a person who lives by scamming people. You will enjoy this one. This would be a good discussion for your book club or for the lawyer in your family.
