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The Journalist and the Murderer

By Janet Malcolm

Vintage. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 176 pages. Dimensions: 7.8in. x 4.7in. x 0.5in. In two previous books, Janet Malcolm explored the hidden sides of, respectively, institutional psychoanalysis and Freudian biography. In this book, she examines the psychopathology of journalism. Using a strange and unprecedented lawsuit as her larger-than-life example -- the lawsuit of Jeffrey MacDonald, a convicted murderer, against Joe McGinniss, the author of *Fatal Vision*, a book about the crime -- she delves into the always uneasy, sometimes tragic relationship that exists between journalist and subject. In Malcolm's view, neither journalist nor subject can avoid the moral impasse that is built into the journalistic situation. When the text first appeared, as a two-part article in *The New Yorker*, its thesis seemed so radical and its irony so pitiless that journalists across the country reacted as if stung. Her book is a work of journalism as well as an essay on journalism: it at once exemplifies and dissects its subject. In her interviews with the leading and subsidiary characters in the MacDonald-McGinniss case -- the principals, their lawyers, the members of the jury, and the various persons who testified as expert witnesses at the trial -- Malcolm is always aware...



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Reviews







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