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A Brief History of Biographies: From Plutarch to Celebs (Paperback)

By Andrew Brown

Hesperus Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 196 x 132 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The works of T. S. Eliot, Vladimir Nabokov, Iris Murdoch, George Orwell, Sylvia Plath, and more are considered in this exploration of the historical fascination with life-writing. Meditating on whether the success of celebrity biographies is a mark of today's prurient, voyeuristic times--or rather, if the fascination with the lives and struggles of others is a facet of human nature, reflected in literary tastes through the ages--this investigation into the history of life-writing argues that modern biographies are actually an extension of early religious roots. Modern writing inspires by framing life as a struggle--against drink, drugs, depression, or deprivation--that is eventually won. Yet this trajectory can be found in even the earliest lives of saints and their struggles against the devil. This history considers the ways in which developments such as changing attitudes towards subjectivity and the self, the cult of the artist, and psychoanalysis have brought this most fascinating of forms from its early religious connotations to its present state.



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