



Scribble, Scribble: Notes on the Media

Nora Ephron

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almost as new except remainder mark lower edge

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Author : Nora Ephron

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Martin says

A compilation of writing about various issues in the media, which Ephron admits was designed partly to return her writing to the front of 'Esquire'. She writes about contemporary issues such as the journalistic failure of the New York Post or the new, dumb magazine, People. She examines a number of journalistic issues but they are of her moment in the mid-1970s, so while her outrage is as pertinent as ever, I cannot fully appreciate her point when the examples used are unknown to me.

I did appreciate her fandom of "Upstairs, Downstairs", which could just as easily be about today's "Downton Abbey", especially since the latter uses many elements, both general and specific, of the former, and has a number of cast changes whose reportage becomes spoilers, although since Ephron does not have access to that word yet, she must write "a crucial turn of the plot" which she would rather die than know in advance. She also writes about Gourmet magazine, which gives her something to talk about and occasionally aspire to, but which has never inspired actual cooking. And I appreciated her wide concept of media/writing, which includes her clever criticism of her apartment building's newsletter.

Pat says

So dated as to be almost unintelligible if you didn't live in Manhattan in the 1970s, yet larded with several prescient observations on celebrity culture, the ever-shifting line between advertising and editorial, and the scruples of restaurant reviewers.

Ramon says

Collects Ephron's column on the media from Esquire, including one piece they rejected (it was about them). Not as in-depth as the articles in her first two books, I think owing more to what space she had than anything else. Two articles are stylistically extra-interesting; she couches one profile in a fictional manner, in the other, she affects the style of the writer she is profiling.

Joanna V says

As usual Nora is a great writer. This was a collection of columns, most of which were published in Esquire magazine, about journalism and the media. My biggest problem with the book was that 1) it was pretty insiderish (okay I think I made that word up) about the media industry and 2) it was pretty dated, the columns were from the mid 1970's and I barely remember some of the people mentioned and did not know others at all. However, I still enjoy her writing and her sense of humor, and she obviously knew what she was writing about. I particularly enjoyed her columns on People and Gourmet magazines and the New Porn (which I think is still around today even if not so new, i.e. ridiculous consumerism). Some of the political insights of the times were also good. Would give it 3 and 1/2 stars if I could.

Patricia Farrell says

What a loss. I'm still bemoaning the fact that I didn't get to appreciate what a talent she was and the quality of her writing voice before she left us. Ephron has a way of saying things you'd like to hear from a wonderful, close friend. She's outspoken, unapologetic and anyone is fair game. What can I say? If you haven't read her stuff, don't wait any longer.

Margie says

I had to reread this before sending it to the library book sale. I cannot, of course, get rid of it without rereading it first. Clearing some space on my shelves is going to take awhile.

I enjoy Ephron's writing, though I'll probably (reread and then) get rid of Heartburn, too.

The columns collected in this book were written in the mid-70s. I don't know if it's the time distance from that period or the New York/D.C.-centrism of the pieces that confused me - there were many references to people or events that I just didn't recognize. I was certainly able to read and enjoy the pieces without knowledge of these references, but they caught me up. It works well as a window into the era of the 70s, and also into the world of journalism.

Diane Shipley says

If anyone else had written this, I'd probably be giving it three stars. Some of the pieces are so out-of-date (understandably, given the book is even older than I am) as to be almost incomprehensible. But this is Nora, and I love her writing so much that I can overlook the odd essay that bored or confused me. The ones that sparkle are brilliant and funny and thoughtful, and they far outweigh the duds. TL;DR? The whole book is a must for fans, and some of it is a must for fans of classic journalism.

Nicholas says

My mother insisted I try to read some books by this hilarious new author she and her friends had found. I found the humor to be too old for myself and had no idea what the events she was speaking about were. I found it difficult to read and unrewarding.

I suggest that you do a little research into the time period into which it was written to truly understand what is going on.

Simone says

These essays are a collection of newspaper columns written by Ephron in the 1970s, and as one reviewer put it, they are a tough read if you don't happen to be living in New York in the 1970s. It's an unfair critique, but because she is so often commenting on small (or large) scandals that occurred at the essays are dates. But they are also funny. There's some over-lap with the essays in Crazy Salad: Some Things About Women.

Guy says

This book was okay. Ephron writes well, but like with most collections of newspaper columns, I find that reading them in a sitting is boring. Better read in the paper, I think.

James Thomas says

A fantastically cutting read. Such a clever narrative tone with a real voice to back it up! Hilariously honest, Nora Ephron held no prisoners.

Kathy says

The book contained many references to things of the 70s which have little relevance now. However the writing kept me interested in reading about things that I won't have thought I cared about. It is fascinating to see what remains the same and what has changed. And Nora's writing is a joy to read.

Katie Marquette says

The perfect rating for this book would be about 3 and 1/2 stars. I really enjoyed these essays - as I have enjoyed all of Ephron's essays that I've read. The only reason for the slightly lower rating is that so many of the essays were so topical and unique to life in the 1970s that I simply didn't understand them. I found myself wishing a similar collection could have been written by Ephron in 2016. What she could have said about the media today! When she writes about celebrities and TV hosts (many of whom, I admit, I have never heard of) I wished she could have written something similar about modern news and modern celebrities. I know those essays would have been biting, funny, and truthful. Her essay on "Upstairs, Downstairs" convinced me she would have definitely been a "Downton Abbey" fan (like me) and would have written an equally hilarious essay on that show. Her final essay - in which she questions the narcissism of modern journalism - is incredibly important (perhaps especially today).

Lauren says

Just downright great writing. The insights about journalism and Watergate and/or journalism and celebrity, seen through today's filters are fascinating too.

Elena Potek says

A good amount of this book felt over my head, given that much of what was discussed was from the '70's and '80's. However I still appreciated it for what it was and enjoyed getting a window into what was of importance to Ephron and many others during that time.
