



The Impossible Craft: Literary Biography (Penn State Series in the History of the Book)

Scott Donaldson

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In *The Impossible Craft*, Scott Donaldson explores the rocky territory of literary biography, the most difficult that biographers try to navigate. Writers are accustomed to controlling the narrative, and notoriously opposed to allowing intruders on their turf. They make bonfires of their papers, encourage others to destroy correspondence, write their own autobiographies, and appoint family or friends to protect their reputations as official biographers. Thomas Hardy went so far as to compose his own life story to be published after his death, while falsely assigning authorship to his widow. After a brief background sketch of the history of biography from Greco-Roman times to the present, Donaldson recounts his experiences in writing biographies of a broad range of twentieth-century American writers: Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Cheever, Archibald MacLeish, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Winfield Townley Scott, and Charlie Fenton.

Donaldson provides readers with a highly readable insiders' introduction to literary biography. He suggests how to conduct interviews, and what not to do during the process. He offers sound advice about how closely biographers should identify with their subjects. He examines the ethical obligations of the biographer, who must aim for the truth without unduly or unnecessarily causing discomfort or worse to survivors. He shows us why and how misinformation comes into existence and tends to persist over time. He describes "the mythical ideal biographer," an imaginary creature of universal intelligence and myriad talents beyond the reach of any single human being. And he suggests how its very impossibility makes the goal of writing a biography that captures the personality of an author a challenge well worth pursuing.

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Ronald Jackson:

Spent a free time for you to be fun activity to try and do! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or all their friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book is usually option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of publication that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the guide untitled The Impossible Craft: Literary Biography (Penn State Series in the History of the Book) can be fine book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

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Cheri Adamo:

This The Impossible Craft: Literary Biography (Penn State Series in the History of the Book) is great guide for you because the content that is full of information for you who always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. This kind of book reveal it facts accurately using great arrange word or we can say no rambling sentences within it. So if you are read this hurriedly you can have whole facts in it. Doesn't mean it only provides you with straight forward sentences but challenging core information with wonderful delivering sentences. Having The Impossible Craft: Literary Biography (Penn State Series in the History of the Book) in your hand like keeping the world in your arm, details in it is not ridiculous one particular. We can say that no publication that offer you world inside ten or fifteen tiny right but this book already do that. So , this can be good reading book. Hey there Mr. and Mrs. busy do you still doubt this?

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