



Reporting Back: Notes on Journalism

Lillian Ross

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For half a century, Lillian Ross has been writing remarkable and timeless journalism for The New Yorker. Her spirited, funny, factual short stories in *The Talk of the Town* and her unforgettable profiles and other long pieces have won her a legion of admirers. Many credit The New Yorker for the inventive, reportorial breakthroughs that have come to be called literary journalism, and Ross has been an integral part of its traditions. Her books *Picture and Portrait of Hemingway* were recently listed as two of the Twentieth Century's 100 best works of journalism, and Hemingway himself called *Picture* "much better than most novels."

With panache, wit, and her own inimitable style, Lillian Ross discusses the questions of what makes a good reporter and what constitutes good journalism. Her years of practicing the art have provided her with much to say about these questions and nowhere is this in better evidence than in her own work—the pieces and profiles long recognized and admired for their freshness, originality, sharpness, humor, and truth. Excerpted here, along with her own commentary, are such classics as "Come In, Lassie!" her first, never before republished piece on Hollywood; her profiles of Francis Coppola, Robin Williams, Adlai Stevenson, John Huston, and Tommy Lee Jones; her two portraits of the Miss America contest—the first one published in 1949; the second fifty years later, and many others.

A primer on good writing, a tribute to the art of journalism, *Reporting Back: Notes on Journalism* is not only a casebook for writing, it is the unforgettable record of Lillian Ross's joy in the pursuit of excellence in reporting.

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