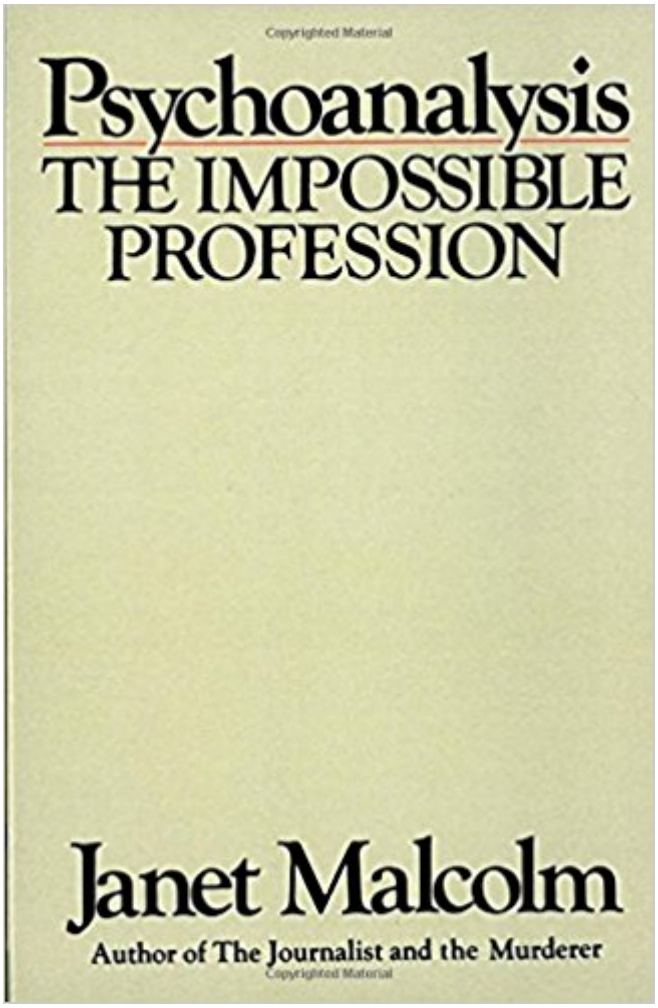
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Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession



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Synopsis

From the author of In the Freud Archives and The Journalist and the Murderer comes an intensive look at the practice of psychoanalysis through interviews with Ã¢â ¬Å“Aaron Green,Ã¢â ¬Â• a Freudian analyst in New York City. Ã Â Malcolm is accessible and lucid in describing the history of psychoanalysis and its development in the United States. It provides rare insight into the contradictory world of psychoanalytic training and treatment and a foundation for our understanding of psychiatry and mental health.Ã Â "Janet Malcom has managed somehow to peer into the reticent, reclusive world of psychoanalysis and to report to us, with remarkable fidelity, what she has seen. When I began reading I thought condescendingly, 'She will get the facts right, and everything else wrong.' She does get the facts right, but far more pressive, she has been able to capture and convey the claustral atmosphere of the profession. Her book is journalism become art."
Ã Â Ã¢â ¬â •Joseph Andelson, The New York Times Book Review

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hopeless...More momentous still, Miss Malcolm’s questions get answers." -- Christopher Lehmann-Haupt, The New York Times"Malcolm provides an elegant, precise summary of the history and development of Freud’s ideas...She has drawn a provocative portrait of one physician in Freud’s impossible profession." -- Jean Strouse, Newsweek"Her treatment of the subject is original, rich and will reward anyone interested in the science or business of changing minds." -- E. James Lieberman, The Washington Post Book World

Through an intensive study of "Aaron Green," a Freudian analyst in New York City, New Yorker writer Janet Malcolm reveals the inner workings of psychoanalysis.

As a psychiatrist, I found this to be a page turner. It provides a rare look inside the clannish, often contradictory world of psychoanalytic training and treatment. Analysis is a highly obtuse and boutique type of treatment that has largely been supplanted by evidenced-based and biological treatments. That being said, it provides the foundation for our current understanding of psychiatry as a way to think about mental health. For those in the mental health world, I highly recommend it. Laypersons may need to consult a secondary source for some of the terms and concepts, but is illuminating nonetheless.

I found this a fascinating description of how traditional psychoanalysts view and practice their profession. I could see why the author called this profession impossible. One would expect that analysts might be better adjusted personally, have a clear idea of what they do and how to do it, and have less hangups than the rest of us. Rather comforting, I guess, to learn that this is not at all true. Worth the price of the book to find this out.

Though Janet Malcolm is not a psychoanalyst (she was a very good journalist) she has probably written the best book (for the layman) about what psychoanalysis is about and the experience of psychoanalysis. A shorter version of this book was initially published in the New Yorker and the book is a very good expanded version of that article. AB

Janet Malcolm is one of my favorite writers. Her essays and nonfiction analysis are brilliant! If you are drawn to smart, critical and insightful observation you’ll love her other books - and most especially the most recent, Forty-one First Starts.

I went into this book only knowing about Psychoanalysis what Janet Malcolm had told me in her excellent book, "In the Freud Archives." This book is extremely dense and had the habit of making me very sleepy, but for the length of my read I felt like something undefinable was happening; that I was gleaning some type of insight from the book subconsciously, which, if you've read the book, will seem like either incredible coincidence, or literary genius on Malcolm's part. This is top notch journalism.

As a psychologist and psychoanalyst I found Malcolm's book an accurate picture of the landscape of psychoanalytic theorizing and a telling account of the political and interpersonal complexities of the institutional framework for analytic training.

I actually read this book twice... I'm really into psychoanalysis and theoretical work.. Janet Malcolm is definitely an analyst I'd recommend reading from. Very interesting.

nowhere have the tools of journalism and psychoanalysis been put to such fruitful use as in the work of this unique writer.

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