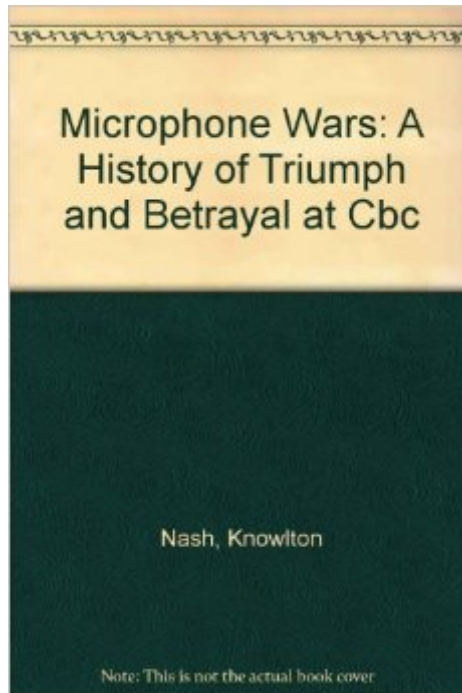


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Microphone Wars : A History Of Triumph And Betrayal At CBC



Synopsis

The Microphone Wars is the astonishing and sometimes hilarious chronicle of the CBC, full of larger-than-life characters, incidents of skulduggery, and moments of both despair and exhilaration, and all underpinned by the good humour and acumen of its author. The CBC is the most intensely scrutinized institution in Canada. Everyone, it seems, has an opinion on it. Yet, oddly, its history has never been fully told before. But now the missing story that reveals all has been written – by the one person with intimate knowledge of the CBC who can be absolutely fair Knowlton Nash, who retired from the corporation in 1992. Nash brings his extensive contacts, his own experiences, his journalist’s objectivity, and his tremendous research and storytelling skills to the Byzantine tale of Canada’s public broadcaster. Ever since the 1920s, when radio took Canada by storm, there has been war between those who want to use the airwaves solely for commercial profit and those who believe in public broadcasting for its role in education and nation-building. There have been battle between management and producers and stars; between the CBC and successive governments, Liberal and Conservative alike; between the CBC board and its executives; between the private broadcasters and the CBC; even between various CBC luminaries and the bottle. Along with his vivid and intimate portraits of these fights, Nash gives us the stories of the CBC’s many triumphs, from Foster Hewitt’s early play-by-play of Saturday Night hockey games and Matthew Halton’s dramatic broadcasts from the frontlines of the Second World War, to the magic of TV in the 1950s, the renaissance of CBC Radio in the 1970s, and CBC TV’s drama and comedy hit programs in the 1980s. There have been betrayals aplenty too, by governments determined to curb the CBC’s independence by one means or another, or to starve it into submission, and by insiders plotting the demise of controversial programs and equally controversial producers and personalities. Based on countless hours of research, on interviews with forty major figure from the CBC’s more recent past, and on as many oral history tapes recorded by earlier CBC leaders, The Microphone Wars is the definitive popular history of Canada’s public broadcaster.

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