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REVIEW: From a Suva gossip column to Fleet Street

Reviewed book by Phillip Cass

Philip Cass

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Abstract

Review of *A Hack's Progress*, by Phillip Knightley. London: Vintage.

Knightley's book is self critical, especially about the value of his writing on the intelligence service during the Cold War and he refers to himself as "the world's worst war correspondent" for assuring his editor at the *Sunday Times* that there would be no war in the Middle East — on the eve of the Six Day War. For a journalist who has achieved so much prominence for his work as an investigative journalist for the quality British press and his subsequent books, Knightley appears to have been singularly uncertain about what he wanted to do for a living.

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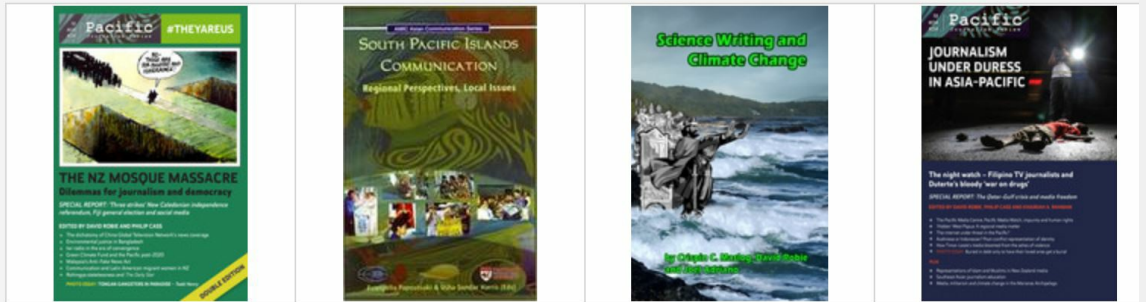


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Fleet Street is the synonym of the British press. A lot of editorial offices of newspapers can be found there. Covent Garden was a big fruit and vegetable market previously, and now it is a shopping centre with shops, cinemas and a famous Opera House. Oxford Street is considered the most famous place for shopping. The Tower of London is the oldest palace, fortress and prison in Europe. It is one of the most popular museums nowadays. It evolved from a town house that was owned from the beginning of the eighteenth century by the Dukes of Buckingham. Today it is The Queen's official residence, with 775 rooms. Trafalgar Square. London's most famous square was laid out in 1829 to 1841 to commemorate Nelson's victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Gossip and the glitterati celebrity celeb Newspapers, especially tabloid newspapers, are often accused of taking an excessive interest in the private lives of famous people such as film stars: celebrities, or, very informally, celebs. glitterati beautiful people jet set Celebrities are sometimes referred to slightly humorously, and perhaps critically, as glitterati. It is bad enough to spy on her during a private early morning swim, but then to criticise her choice of swimwear for the occasion is the worst invasion of privacy imaginable. They call on the government to consider the introduction of a privacy law to protect people from unjustly intrusive newspaper reporting. Fleet Street is a major street mostly in the City of London. It runs west to east from Temple Bar at the boundary with the City of Westminster to Ludgate Circus at the site of the London Wall and the River Fleet from which the street was named. Having been an important through route since Roman times, businesses were established along the road during the Middle Ages. Senior clergy lived in Fleet Street during this period where there are several churches including Temple Church and St Bride's. Fleet Because Fleet Street was one of London's main arteries transporting people and mail between Westminster and the City, these became lightning rods for political, financial, and overseas news. Journalists capitalised upon this and would mingle and eavesdrop in local establishments, returning to their offices with fresh gossip. Here, editors sifted through what their reporters had gathered looking for good copy for their four to six pages, each containing two columns of tightly packed news with no headlines or illustrations. Stories were carefully selected not just to sell papers but to ensure pe