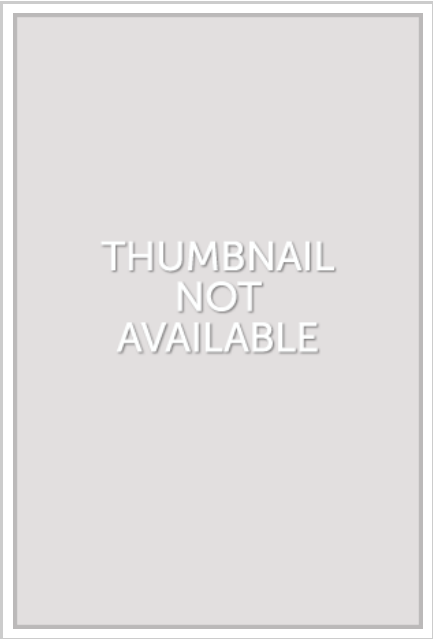

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Unmentionables: From Family Jewels to Friendly Fire - What We Say Instead of What We Mean

By Ralph Keyes

John Murray General Publishing Division. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Unmentionables: From Family Jewels to Friendly Fire - What We Say Instead of What We Mean, Ralph Keyes, We say a lot about ourselves by what we don't say. Words and phrases like 'collateral damage', 'wardrobe malfunction', 'vertically challenged', and old favourites like 'unmentionables' (trousers, apparently) or 'lady of the night' - all are ways of not using particular words. UNMENTIONABLES is a rollicking exploration of the history of euphemistic usage, looking at how taboos connected to sex, death, religion, war, politics, business and matters of status have produced an extraordinary linguistic creativity, and how euphemistic speech has changed over the centuries. It looks at how euphemisms are born, and how they die (or 'experience a negative outcome') and it explores why it is that we create euphemisms, and the different purposes - from the benign to the sinister - that they serve. (Is 'euphemism' a euphemism for lying?) Lively, entertaining, and crammed with fascinating nuggets of information, UNMENTIONABLES is a celebration of the richness of language. Why have just one word for something when you can have ten other words instead?.

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