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This book provides a timely analysis of the use of cultural narratives and narratives of credibility in rape trials in England and Wales, drawing on court observation methods. It draws on data from rape and sexual assault trials in 2019 which is used to examine the current status of newly emerging issues such as the use of digital evidence and the impacts of increasing policy attention on rape trials. Drawing on the concept of master narratives, the book provides an examination of rape myths and broader cultural narratives focussing on the intersections of gender and class and it also touches on the intersections of age, (dis)ability and mental health. It emphasizes the importance of situating rape myth debates and sexual violence research within a broader cultural context and thus argues for widening the lens with which rape myths in the courtroom, as well as in the wider criminal justice system, are viewed in research and contemporary debates. The findings presented in this book will help further discussion at a critical time by enabling scholars, as well as practitioners and policymakers, to better understand the current mechanisms that serve to undermine and retraumatise victim-survivors in the courtroom. It seeks to inform further research as well as positive changes to policy and practice.
