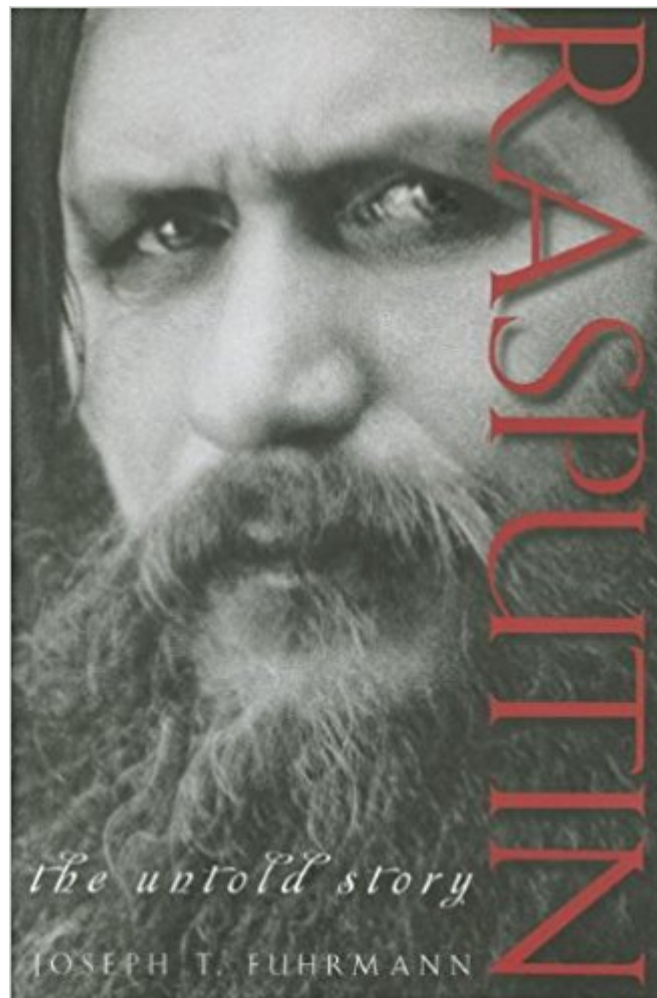


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Rasputin: The Untold Story



Synopsis

Based on new sourcesâthe definitive biography of Rasputin, with revelations about his life, death, and involvement with the RomanovsA century after his death, Grigory Rasputin remains fascinating: the Russian peasant with hypnotic eyes who befriended Tsar Nicholas II and helped destroy the Russian Empire, but the truth about his strange life has never fully been told. Written by the world's leading authority on Rasputin, this new biography draws on previously closed Soviet archives to offer new information on Rasputin's relationship with Empress Alexandra, sensational revelations about his sexual conquests, a re-examination of his murder, and more. Based on long-closed Soviet archives and the author's decades of research, encompassing sources ranging from baptismal records and forgotten police reports to notes written by Rasputin and personal letters Reveals new information on Rasputin's family history and strange early life, religious beliefs, and multitudinous sexual adventures as well as his relationship with Empress Alexandra, ability to heal the haemophiliac tsarevich, and more Includes many previously unpublished photos, including contemporary studio photographs of Rasputin and samples of his handwriting Written by historian Joesph T. Fuhrmann, a Rasputin expert whose 1990 biography *Rasputin: A Life* was widely praised as the best on the subject Synthesizing archival sources with published documents, memoirs, and other studies of Rasputin into a single, comprehensive work, *Rasputin: The Untold Story* will correct a century's worth of misconception and error about the life and death of the famous Siberian mystic and healer and the decline and fall of Imperial Russia.

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Customer Reviews

Having read many books about Rasputin, I am not sure that this book really uncovers too much that has not been speculated on or discussed before. However, the author certainly does write a very readable account of Rasputin's life and had access to documents and archives previously closed to researchers. This does mean that he can answer questions, such as the actual date of Rasputin's birth and there are many letters he can quote from which give a flavour of the kind of man Rasputin was. This is really fascinating, for there are few figures in history which have evoked such a passionate response from people - positive and negative - both during their lifetime and after their death. Rasputin, "the mad monk", the lover of the Tsarina, the man who ruled the Tsar, the miracle worker, the healer, the charlatan, the hypnotist, the drunk, the lecher and the fraud. He was called many things in his time and this is a good and balanced account of his life, which tries to uncover what he was really like. Rasputin was, of course, born a peasant and remained proud of that fact all his life. He was virtually illiterate, learning only the basics of reading and writing in adulthood and expected to spend his life in the small village he was born and raised in. Instead, as the author vividly writes, when (admittedly not totally from choice) he went on a pilgrimage he was "leaving the confines of a small Siberian village and stepping onto the pages of history." It was in the Siberian monastery of Saint Nicholas where he was converted and the monks gave him a crash course in reading and writing. He claimed to have a vision on his return to the village and left for another pilgrimage, although his father scoffed that he, "became a pilgrim out of laziness.

This book draws upon government archives in Moscow and Siberia including police records, some church records and author Joseph Fuhrmann's own work on the wartime letters of Nicholas and Alexandra which he had translated and published in the 1990's. While Massie's "Nicholas and Alexandra" emphasizes Rasputin's alleged healing powers, Fuhrmann documents his rise to power. Despite his semi-literacy, questionable past, heavy drinking and many sexual encounters he rose from a Siberian peasant to the highest ranks in society by courting and protecting access to the Tsarina. Alexandra's letters to Nicholas illustrate the extent of Rasputin's influence. She continually writes her husband of "Our Friend's" recommendations on government policy and high level appointments. Nicholas sometimes hesitated, but he usually deferred. While there are a few periods when Rasputin was out of favor (he was once sent back to Siberia) he knew how to manipulate the Tsarina. To defend her "staret" healer, Alexandra commissioned the book: "Russian Saints who were Holy Fools". The Romanov's are clearly out on a limb with Rasputin's appointees. Those who care about Russia, the monarchy and their work as well as traditional bureaucrats are stunned. Many of these appointees led libertine lives, for instance, the Archbishop of Tobolsk was a known

cross dresser (who had himself photographed in a coffin, no less) who held wild parties at his monastery. Another was rewarded for clearing Rasputin of charges in one of the investigations into his past. Rasputin saw that those who crossed him such as Bishop Hermogen and the monk Ilidor met bad ends. With the Tsar at his back, he stacked the church and parts of the government with those who would be loyal to him.

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