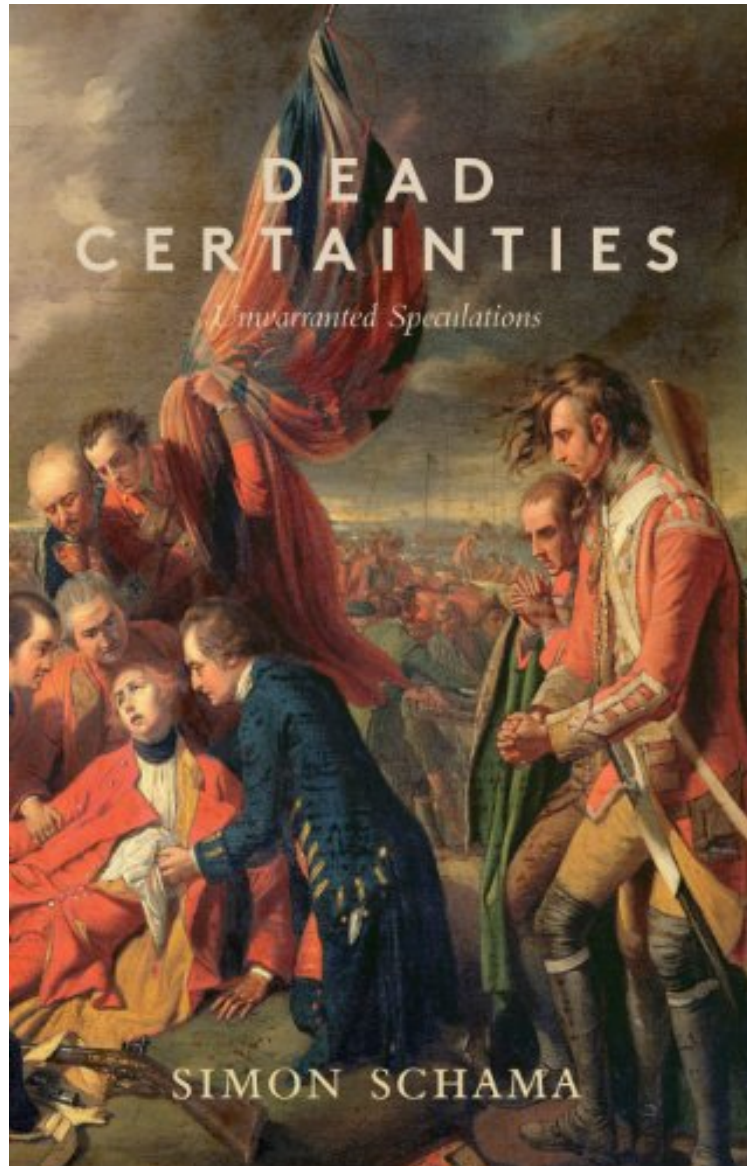


[Free] Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations

Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations

Von Simon Schama

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Von Simon Schama : Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Dead Certainties: Unwarranted Speculations:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A powerful story about how we come to believe historyVon Ein KundeSimon Schama is a historian who is not afraid to acknowledge that history has a literary dimension. In "Dead Certainties", he tells a fascinating story in a style more

familiar from historical novels, especially historical mysteries like "The Plague Tales" and "An Instance of the Fingerpost". But while you can read the book strictly for enjoyment, as if it were a novel, Schama has a serious point to make by writing in this accessible style. That point is that historical events are often highly ambiguous; that the records of the past that survive are often contradictory, and that writing history requires historians to provide the continuity by interpreting the past. It helps that the stories he uses for this demonstration are grisly: the deaths of General James Wolfe at the battle of Quebec in 1759, and the murder in 1849 of George Parkman, a very unusual member of Boston society, by a Harvard professor at the end of his financial and professional rope. Dramatic deaths beg to be explained, to be made to make sense, even though they may not be evidence of great causes, but simply the results of strings of chance. Ultimately, Schama wants readers to remember even when they are reading the most prosaic and authoritative histories that someone had to decide which facts counted, what they meant, and which sets of facts go together to explain the past. Once you read this book, you should never look at histories in the same way again. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Is it really history? Von Ein Kunde If you are interested in the ongoing discourse of historians regarding a knowable or true past, Schama's work will certainly inspire lively discussions. What you will not find here is "history" by any standard definition of the subject. Schama uses two historical events -- the battle of Quebec and the murder trial of Dr. John Webster-- as case studies for an exploration of the boundaries between truth and fiction in historiography. Essentially, a great example of how NOT to write history.

Kurzbeschreibung On 13 September 1759, General James Wolfe, having led the British troops up the St Lawrence to victory in the Battle of Quebec, died on the Heights of Abraham. Schama examines this death, and how Wolfe was made to die again - through the spectacular painting by Benjamin West, and through the writings of the 19th-century historian Francis Parkman. Schama's second death concerns Parkman's uncle, George Parkman of Harvard Medical College, who disappeared in 1849 in mysterious circumstances and who was rumoured to have been murdered by a colleague. Through these incidents, Schama sheds light on the writing of history, the history of history, and the relationship of "story" to "history". Pressestimmen "An infinitely beguiling book...a mind-teasing delight...Schama brings to bear an immense array of narrative elements."-- The New York Times Book "Intriguing and provocative... Dead Certainties inspires us throughout to examine our own assumptions about history and fiction"-- Newsday "A virtuoso performance... in Schama's hands the past loses its remoteness and takes on the noise and clutter of experience.... He has become one of the few contemporary historians who are read as much for themselves as for their subjects."-- Andrew Delbanco, New Republic Kurzbeschreibung On 13 September 1759, General James Wolfe, having led the British troops up the St Lawrence to victory in the Battle of Quebec, died on the Heights of Abraham. Schama examines this death, and how Wolfe was made to die again - through the spectacular painting by Benjamin West, and through the writings of the 19th-century historian Francis Parkman. Schama's second death concerns Parkman's uncle, George Parkman of Harvard Medical College, who disappeared in 1849 in mysterious circumstances and who was rumoured to have been murdered by a colleague. Through these incidents, Schama sheds light on the writing of history, the history of history, and the relationship of "story" to "history".