



The Rasputin File

By Edvard Radzinsky

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From the bestselling author of **Stalin** and **The Last Tsar** comes **The Rasputin File**, a remarkable biography of the mystical monk and bizarre philanderer whose role in the demise of the Romanovs and the start of the revolution can only now be fully known.

For almost a century, historians could only speculate about the role Grigory Rasputin played in the downfall of tsarist Russia. But in 1995 a lost file from the State Archives turned up, a file that contained the complete interrogations of Rasputin's inner circle. With this extensive and explicit amplification of the historical record, Edvard Radzinsky has written a definitive biography, reconstructing in full the fascinating life of an improbable holy man who changed the course of Russian history.

Translated from the Russian by Judson Rosengrant.

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The Rasputin File By Edvard Radzinsky Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #133621 in Books
- Published on: 2001-12-04
- Released on: 2001-12-04
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.09" h x 1.16" w x 5.68" l, 1.17 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 526 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Ever since the brutal murder of Grigory Rasputin on the eve of the Russian Revolution, morbid fascination has assured the semiliterate peasant a legacy in infamy. Now, armed with a newly discovered trove of testimonies from Rasputin's inner circle of devotees, Radzinsky (*The Last Tsar*) promises to "solve" the mystery of Rasputin's death. A veteran writer of Russian history, Radzinsky writes as if a historian must also be a sleuth and a psychiatrist. It's no wonder, then, that his book, which has the makings of a genuine exposé, goes more than a little off the rails. His latest effort is a muddle of conjecture that reads like a made-for-television docudrama. It is true that the evidentiary file--compiled by a revolutionary commission in 1917 and bought at auction in 1995 by the famous cellist Mstoslav Rostropovich--contains new and often sensational material. However, a transcription of the titillating details of Rasputin's sexual escapades coupled with "who's who" captions for previously printed photographs cannot be equated with, in the author's words, "a unique investigation." More inadequate is Radzinsky's claim to have solved a great mystery when he declares that Rasputin was felled (but not killed) by a bullet from Assassin B (the Grand Duke) and not from Assassin A (a collaborator), as has so long been thought. Even if it is true, one wonders how relevant such a theory is in light of the more miraculous fact that Rasputin died from drowning--after his poisoned, bludgeoned and bullet-ridden body was dumped in the Neva River. Lovers of history and pulp fiction alike should rejoice that this account fails to crack the enigma of Rasputin. (May)

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From Library Journal

The Provisional Government in Russia (1917) formed the Extraordinary Commission of Inquiry to investigate the excesses of the tsarist regime, including those of the "Mad Monk" Grigory Rasputin (1869-1916) and his influence on the imperial family. The commission's file on him soon vanished, finally reappearing a few years ago at auction, where it was bought for Radzinsky, author of *The Last Tsar* and *Stalin*. Based on this newfound evidence, supplemented by published memoirs and by the surveillance file the police kept on Rasputin during the last five years of his life, the author has reconstructed his daily visits and actions during the years 1903-16 in meticulous detail, including the events surrounding his death. He portrays Rasputin as part of a pre-Christian peasant tradition of mysticism and folk wisdom. Statements made to the commission substantiate many of the drunken excesses usually attributed to Rasputin but undermine other charges of sexual exploits. The level of detail in this work makes it appropriate for specialists in the period and for academic libraries. DMarcia L. Sprules, Council on Foreign Relations Lib., New York

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From [Booklist](#)

When a missing file from the inquiry into the murder of Rasputin turned up at auction at Sotheby's, the cellist Mstislav Rostropovich snatched it up and granted best-selling author and playwright Radzinsky exclusive rights to its contents. Radzinsky describes the file in scrupulous detail, and then gives us his take on the mysterious murder of Rasputin, the crazed monk who held a place of unprecedented importance in the court of the last czar and czarina of Russia, Nicholas II and Alexandra. He was eventually killed by relatives of the czar after the Bolshevik revolution, yet the assassination, like much of Rasputin's life, has been shrouded in mystery and rumor. Radzinsky offers a novelesque interpretation of the events as they unfolded, as reported in the secret file--and he clears up many of the mysteries surrounding the life and death of this influential "mad monk." A fascinating look at one of the most enigmatic figures in twentieth-century history. *Michael Spinella*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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