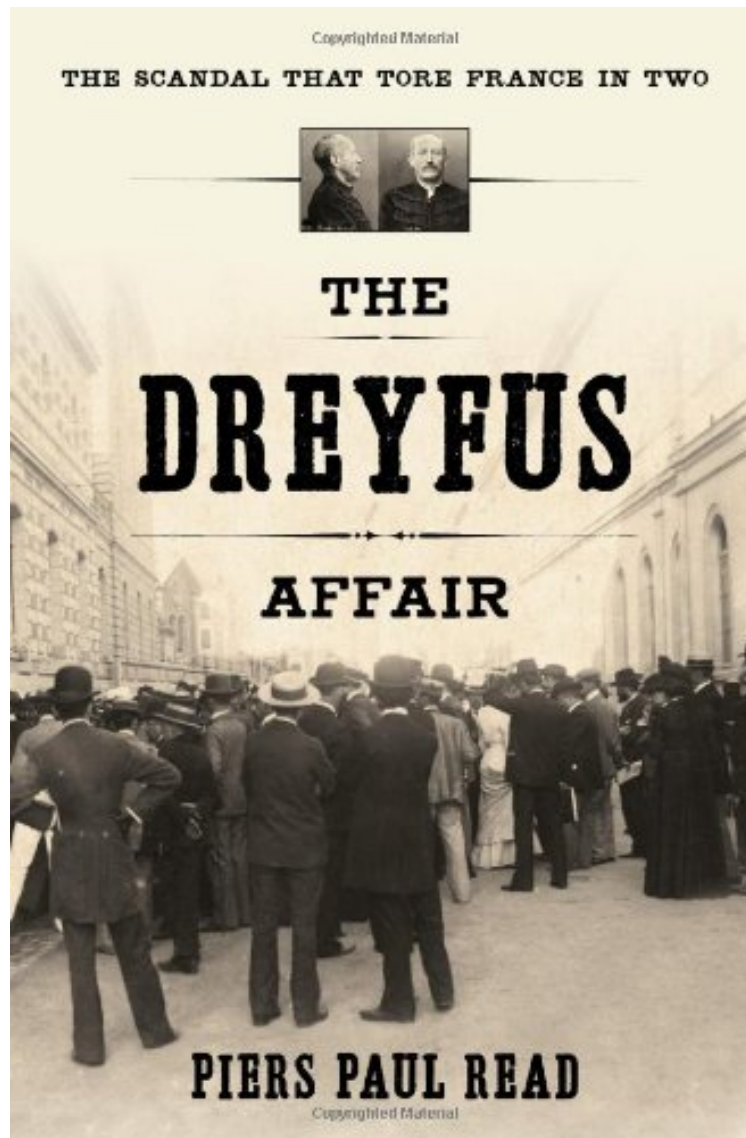


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The Dreyfus Affair: The Scandal That Tore France in Two

Piers Paul Read

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Piers Paul Read : The Dreyfus Affair: The Scandal That Tore France in Two before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dreyfus Affair: The Scandal That Tore France in Two:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent review of an iconic affair, not just in France, but for the worldBy David H. EisenbergI have always heard of the Dreyfus Affair. I knew in general that a Jewish French military officer was falsely convicted, languished in a penal colony, and was eventually resuscitated, but in which I

was in no manner well versed in it. The book was an eye opener and very informative. I had no idea of the depth of the intrigue, the immoral behavior of those involved in convicting and perpetuating the fraud, of how long it went on, his suffering, of the involvement of his family, especially his rock-like loyalty of his brother Mathieu and his Dreyfus' wife, Dreyfus's own awkward and somewhat self-destructive behavior and his relatively stoic suffering while imprisoned, the whole of the mile Zola J'accuse letter and brave stands by others, the related prosecutions and law suits, the class and religious divisions in French society, the many related adulteries, talk of war and diplomatic aspects and of course, the real perpetrator of the crimes and how he got away with them. I know now. More than anything it shows how distorted honor and peer pressure can bend even good people. I save five stars for the greatest history books (e.g., the Durants' *The Story of Civilization*), but don't mistake that as criticism - this is an excellent work of history without any flaws of which I'm aware. It was very readable and stopped where it needed to, provided color without irrelevant details. A well told story. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is ALL the facts...and nothing but the facts....By J BookThe author is an easy read. No master's thesis words used to impress. The over-all book is truly professionally done. The photos are perfect for what they represent and even a few more might be even better. The wording flows right along in an understandable fashion that progresses the thought process from start to finish. And if you wish to know what Dreyfus had for breakfast just after he was released from his prison...well, there is so much detail provided, you'd think the menu might be provided. (I jest...). I do wish I knew more French and especially better pronunciations as I believe that might let me understand some situations better. Over-all, a mighty fine book on this over-worked subject. The author has done a great job in making this book seem like it provides all new info the "Affair" that so many have already gone over.....I gave this book a 4 as I don't believe there is a need for so much national history prior to the actual goings of this subject. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great read, places this notorious episode in French history ...By GraemeA great read, places this notorious episode in French history into the social and political context of the prevailing anti-Semitism prevailing in France at the time. It shows how the French military and the population hadn't recovered from the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, and how this contributed to the prevailing attitude that France took into WWI with disastrous consequences.

July 20, 1894. The German military attaché in Paris receives a visit from a seedy-looking man who claims to be a French army officer in desperate need of money, offering to sell them military secrets. Captain Alfred Dreyfus was a rising star in the French artillery command. Reserved yet intelligent and ambitious, Dreyfus had everything: a family, money, and a clear path to a prestigious post on the General Staff. However, Dreyfus had enemies as a result of his ambition. Many of them came from the impoverished Catholic aristocracy and disliked Dreyfus because he was rich, bourgeois, and, above all, a Jew. On the basis of flimsy evidence, Dreyfus was placed under arrest for the crime of high treason. Not long afterward, he was sentenced to spend the rest of his life on the legendary, lethal Devil's Island. The saga of Dreyfus's many trials—he was not exonerated until 1906, twelve years after first being arrested—the fight to free him, and the intrigues on both sides, is a fast-moving mystery story rife with heroes and villains, loose women, loyal wives, bisexual men, tricksters, and charlatans. But this was no mere sideshow. The anti-Semitism and deceit on display in the Dreyfus case was an ominous prelude to the Holocaust and the long, bloody twentieth century to come. In an era when religious conflict, fierce patriotism, and charged debates over national identity pervade the public sphere, the scandal of Captain Dreyfus still has much to teach us. In the hands of prizewinning novelist, biographer, and narrative historian Piers Paul Read, this real-life morality tale comes alive for a new generation. Using his storytelling skills and a nuanced, deep knowledge of French history, Read rediscovers *l'affaire Dreyfus* as a rich, riveting tale.

From Booklist*Starred * It began as a minor case of espionage when French intelligence was tipped off that an officer was peddling (mostly useless) information to the German Embassy in 1894. Before the Dreyfus Affair ended a decade later, an innocent man was sent to rot in a tropical hellhole, and France was torn apart over his case as wounds in the body politic, old and new, were exposed. Read, award-winning journalist and historian, has done a masterful job of explaining both what happened and why it happened. Contrary to popular misconceptions, the ordeals of Dreyfus, his family, and France were not triggered or sustained simply by anti-Semitism, although hatred of Jews was certainly a terrible factor. The affair also pitted secularists against Catholics, staunch supporters of republican governments against conservatives and monarchists, and literary figures on both sides of a cultural divide. Read offers wonderful portraits of the key figures in the unfolding tragedy, and he strives successfully to explain the motivations, fears, and hatred of both sides. This is a great re-examination of one of the most dramatic and consequential episodes in French history. --Jay Freeman "Read has done a masterful job of explaining both what happened and why it happened. [He] offers wonderful portraits of the key figures in the unfolding tragedy, and he strives successfully to explain the motivations, fears, and hatred of both sides. This is a great re-examination of one of the most dramatic and consequential episodes in French history."--"Booklist" (starred) "Enriched by glimpses into the captain's personal life as well as by descriptions of his ordeal in the French penal colony at Devil's Island, this book is highly recommended

to general readers or undergraduates interested in French history, anti-Semitism, or church-state tensions in the modern period."--Library Journal ""Absorbing and perceptive"--Publishers Weekly""Piers Paul Read's fresh and comprehensive take on the scandal sheds new light on Dreyfus's personal life, looks closely at the poor man's unjust exile, and tries to assess just what endowed this incident with its long-lasting fascination."--BN " "Read has done a masterful job of explaining both what happened and why it happened. [He] offers wonderful portraits of the key figures in the unfolding tragedy, and he strives successfully to explain the motivations, fears, and hatred of both sides. This is a great re-examination of one of the most dramatic and consequential episodes in French history."--"Booklist" (starred) "Enriched by glimpses into the captain's personal life as well as by descriptions of his ordeal in the French penal colony at Devil's Island, this book is highly recommended to general readers or undergraduates interested in French history, anti-Semitism, or church-state tensions in the modern period."--Library Journal ""Absorbing and perceptive"--Publishers Weekly"About the AuthorPiers Paul Read is best known for his book *Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors*, which documented the story of the 1972 crash of Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571. The book was adapted into the 1993 film *Alive: The Miracle of the Andes*. The novelist and historian has won the Hawthornden Prize, a Somerset Maugham Award, and a James Tait Black Memorial Prize. In 2003 his authorized biography of the actor Alec Guinness was published to great acclaim.