



The KILLING OF HISTORY

Keith Windschuttle

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For 2,500 years, since the time of Herodotus and Thucydides, historians have sought to record the truth about the past. Today, however, the discipline is suffering a potentially lethal attack from the rise to prominence of an array of French-inspired literary and social theories, each of which denies that truth and knowledge about the past are possible. These theories claim the central point on which history was founded no longer holds: there is no fundamental distinction between history and myth or between history and fiction. Historians in classrooms from Berkeley to Paris have embraced these views, and an increasing number of literary critics and social theorists now feel free to define their own work as history and to call themselves historians. The result is revolutionary: historians have not only changed how history is taught, they are also increasingly obscuring the very facts on which the truth must be built. In *The Killing of History*, Keith Windschuttle offers both a devastating expose of the absurdity of these developments and a defense of the integrity of Western intellectual traditions which are now so widely attacked. Windschuttle examines exactly what is being taught about Columbus' discovery of the New World; the history of asylums and prisons in Europe; the fall of Communism in 1989; and the Battle of Quebec in 1759. He offers a much needed defense of traditional history as a properly scientific endeavor and argues that the great works of history should still be regarded as among the finest forms of Western literature.

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