



Death Makes a Holiday: A Cultural History of Halloween

David J. Skal

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From acclaimed cultural critic David J. Skal, an in-depth look at one of the most popular-and perplexing-holidays in America.

Using a mix of personal anecdotes and brilliant social analysis, Skal examines the amazing phenomenon of Halloween, exploring its dark Celtic history and illuminating why it has evolved-in the course of a few short generations-from a quaint, small-scale celebration into the largest seasonal marketing event outside of Christmas.

Traveling the country, Skal profiles a wide cross-section of America-hard-nosed business men who see Halloween in terms of money; fundamentalists who think it is blasphemous; practicing witches who view it as sacred; and more ordinary men and women who go to extraordinary lengths, on this one night only, to transform themselves and their surroundings into elaborate fantasies. Firmly rooted in a deeper cultural and historical analysis, these interviews seek to understand what the various rituals and traditions associated with the holiday have to say about our national psyche.

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