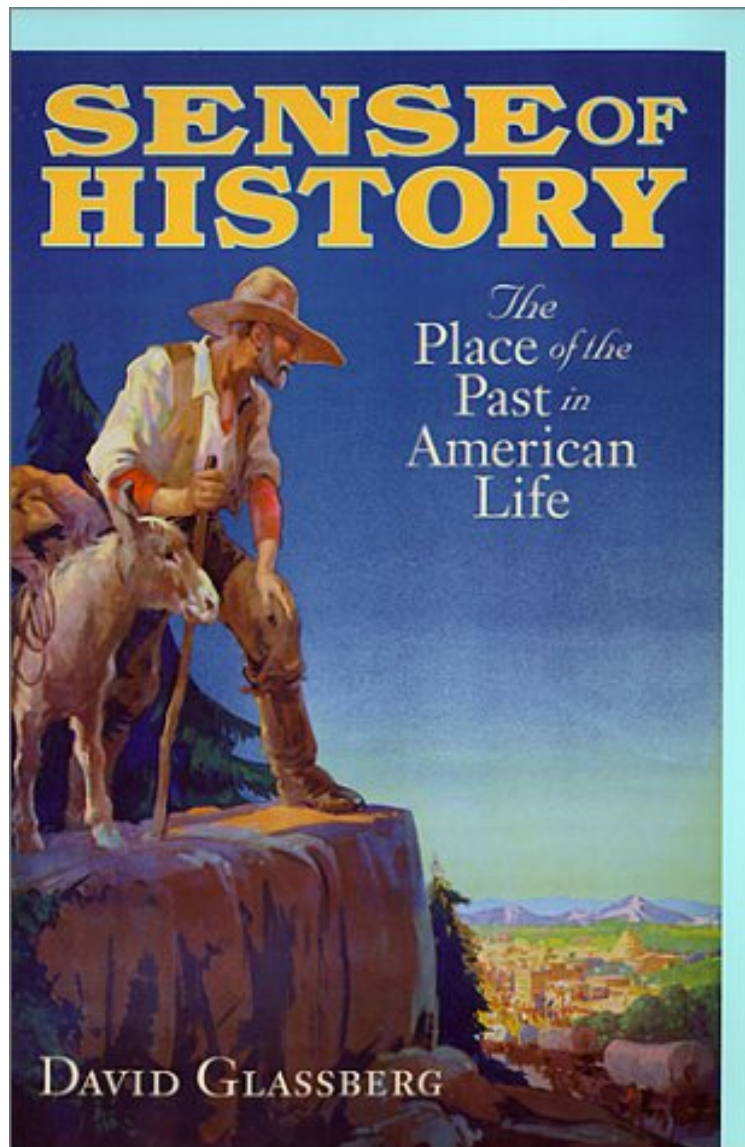


[Free read ebook] Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life

Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life

David Glassberg

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David Glassberg : Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. It's academicBy Carl E. Johnson Jr.I review as a layman, not as a college professor or other history scholar. Glassberg is a public history professor at the University of Massachusetts. Although I've owned the book for years, probably since it was first published, I just got around to plowing through it. Why did I read it now? For my own amusement in retirement I'm writing a family history, and it struck me that

Glassberg's book might help my perspective, and it did that. No doubt about it. It provided useful ways of thinking about the past that will help me in my little project. In fact, Glassberg expressly acknowledges the importance (if I read him correctly) of the peoples' histories, including folks like me thinking and writing about family histories. That having been said, the book has clearly been written for the academic market. Glassberg seems to have taken a series of unrelated public history case studies, and linked them into a book with an opening, closing and middle chapter explaining the broader contexts. For me, these chapters were somewhat more interesting than the case studies. An example of the author's prose from the middle chapter, "Place and Placelessness in American History": "To understand the ideological aspects of place-making, we must supplement psychological and folklore studies of the subjective experience of place with a critical geographical analysis of the social production of space--how the environments in which we live have been molded by larger social, economic and political forces." It goes on pretty much like this. Get the picture? I vacillated between three and four star ratings. Three point five would have been perfect if available.³ of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great work on the meaning of history for the public and public historians By J. C. Edens Glassberg's essays are thought-provoking and extremely readable, especially compared to some other works on public history and history and the public. He manages to take a variety of situations where the past meets its current keepers, and investigates them with insight and clarity. Standout chapter is "Place and Placelessness in American History." Read it for a graduate course and was truly impressed, even alongside the other related titles.⁰ of 2 people found the following review helpful. Confusing By PSReviews This book has some interesting stories in it, but overall it was rather confusing. I think the author could have written more clearly. I've read similar ideas that made more sense. If I hadn't, I probably would have been even more confused.

As Americans enter the new century, their interest in the past has never been greater. In record numbers they visit museums and historic sites, attend commemorative ceremonies and festivals, watch historically based films, and reconstruct family genealogies. The question is, Why? What are Americans looking for when they engage with the past? And how is it different from what scholars call "history"? In this book, David Glassberg surveys the shifting boundaries between the personal, public, and professional uses of the past and explores their place in the broader cultural landscape. Each chapter investigates a specific encounter between Americans and their history: the building of a pacifist war memorial in a rural Massachusetts town; the politics behind the creation of a new historical festival in San Francisco; the letters Ken Burns received in response to his film series on the Civil War; the differing perceptions among black and white residents as to what makes an urban neighborhood historic; and the efforts to identify certain places in California as worthy of commemoration. Along the way, Glassberg reflects not only on how Americans understand and use the past, but on the role of professional historians in that enterprise. Combining the latest research on American memory with insights gained from Glassberg's more than twenty years of personal experience in a variety of public history projects, *Sense of History* offers stimulating reading for all who care about the future of history in America.

"Glassberg uses a series of loosely related essays on small, sometimes seemingly insignificant, topics as a way of meditating on a large, complex, and important matter: the differences and interrelationships between the 'sense of history' among academic historians and the American people. Both public and academic historians ought to find this readable work thought-provoking and rewarding." Choice "David Glassberg has a very substantial scholarly reputation as one who has investigated and thoughtfully reflected on the meanings history has held for a broad range of people and communities in our society, over time. . . . This is a unique, engaging, and refreshing book, at once profound and modestan important scholar's contribution to debates of considerable significance." Michael H. Frisch, author of *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* "Glassberg is an enormously well read guide to the literature on public history and historical consciousness, and this volume brings together the fruits of his many years of reading and practice in the field." Roy Rosenzweig, coauthor of *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* From the Back Cover AS AMERICANS enter the new century, their interest in the past has never been greater. In record numbers they visit museums and historic sites, attend commemorative ceremonies and festivals, watch historically based films, and reconstruct family genealogies. The question is, why? What are Americans looking for when they engage with the past? And how is it different from what scholars call "history"? In this book, David Glassberg surveys the shifting boundaries between the personal, public, and professional uses of the past and explores their place in the broader cultural landscape. Each chapter investigates a specific encounter between Americans and their history: the building of a pacifist war memorial in a rural Massachusetts town; the politics behind the creation of a new historical festival in San Francisco; the letters Ken Burns received in response to his film series on the Civil War; the differing perceptions among black and white residents as to what makes an urban neighborhood historic; and the efforts to identify certain places in California as worthy of commemoration. Along the way, Glassberg reflects not only on how Americans understand and use the past, but also on the role of professional historians in that enterprise. Combining the latest research on American memory with insights gained from Glassberg's more than twenty years of personal experience in a variety of public history projects, *Sense of History* offers

stimulating reading for all who care about the future of history in America. About the Author David Glassberg is professor of history at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and author of *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century*