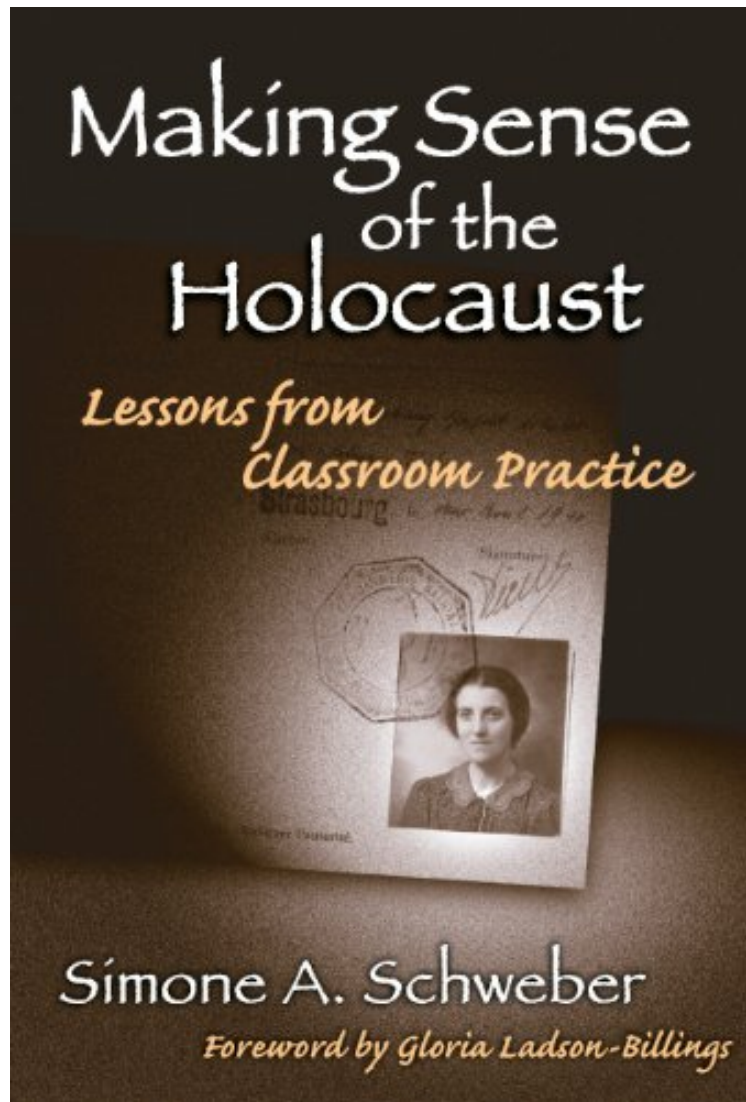


[Download] Making Sense of the Holocaust: Lessons From Classroom Practice

Making Sense of the Holocaust: Lessons From Classroom Practice

Simone Schweber

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Simone Schweber : Making Sense of the Holocaust: Lessons From Classroom Practice before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Making Sense of the Holocaust: Lessons From Classroom Practice:

12 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Finally a study of what happens in classroomsBy Harold MarcuseI've been teaching college courses on Nazi Germany and the Holocaust for over 10 years, and I've been studying how we teach about Nazi atrocities for much longer than that. During the past 20 years the amount of teaching material about the Holocaust has risen exponentially, and there was already a fair amount available before

that. What Simone Schweber offers in this book are in-depth case studies of how master teachers use such teaching materials in their classrooms, and what results they achieve with their students. Schweber, now an education professor in Wisconsin, started out as an outreach coordinator who accompanied Holocaust survivors to classroom speaking engagements in California. For her Stanford dissertation she picked four popular or acclaimed high school teachers and sat through their entire courses or units about the Holocaust. She administered pre- and post-surveys to all students in those classes, and selected four students in each class for in-depth interviews. And she interviewed the teachers, who also read her analyses of their courses. We end up with detailed descriptions of (the names are self-chosen pseudonyms): "Mr. Jefferson's fact race," a well-delivered information-only unit; Mr. Zee's touchy-feely never-mind-the-facts adaptation of the "Facing History and Ourselves" curriculum; Ms. Bess's adaptation of the 1976 simulation game "Gestapo" to achieve surprisingly powerful results; and Mr. Dennis's use of highly participatory dramatic staging (of the story of Anne Frank, among other things) to achieve similarly deep learning among his students. Although the book contains a remnant of a dissertation's worry about its broad use of the term "morality," it contributes more to our understanding of the moral implications of teaching about the Holocaust (now mandated in many of the US states) than the platitudes about "never again" or "tolerance" that fill the many, many curricular materials I've studied. I rate this a "must read" for any history teacher who takes teaching about the Holocaust or other genocides seriously.

Starting with the assumption that all teaching carries with it moral orientations, this book examines which lessons are conveyed implicitly and explicitly in teaching and learning about the Holocaust. Through three, very readable case studies, the author reflects on what lessons the Holocaust ought to be used to express, illuminating important implications for the teaching of other historical episodes.