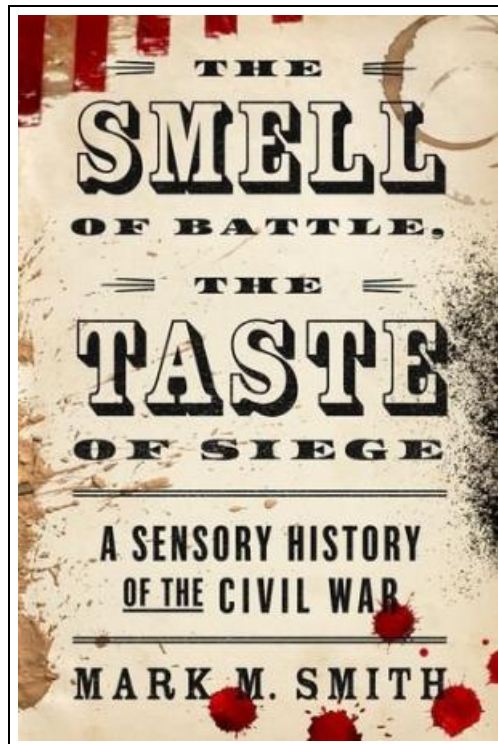


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Oxford University Press, USA, United States, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book. Historical accounts of major events have almost always relied upon what those who were there witnessed. Nowhere is this truer than in the nerve-shattering chaos of warfare, where sight seems to confer objective truth and acts as the basis of reconstruction. In *The Smell of Battle, the Taste of Siege*, historian Mark M. Smith considers how all five senses, including sight, shaped the experience of the Civil War and thus its memory, exploring its full sensory impact on everyone from the soldiers on the field to the civilians waiting at home. From the eardrum-shattering barrage of shells announcing the outbreak of war at Fort Sumter; to the stench produced by the corpses lying in the mid-summer sun at Gettysburg; to the siege of Vicksburg, once a center of Southern culinary aesthetics and starved into submission, Smith recreates how Civil War was felt and lived. Relying on first-hand accounts, Smith focuses on specific senses, one for each event, offering a wholly new perspective. At Bull Run, the similarities between the colors of the Union and Confederate uniforms created concern over what later would be called friendly fire and helped decide the outcome of the first major battle, simply because no one was quite sure they could believe their eyes. He evokes what it might have felt like to be in the HL Hunley submarine, in which eight men worked cheek by jowl in near-total darkness in a space 48 inches high, 42 inches wide. Often argued to be the first total war, the Civil War overwhelmed the senses because of its unprecedented nature and scope, rendering sight less reliable and, Smith shows, forcefully engaging the nonvisual senses. Sherman's March was little less than...

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