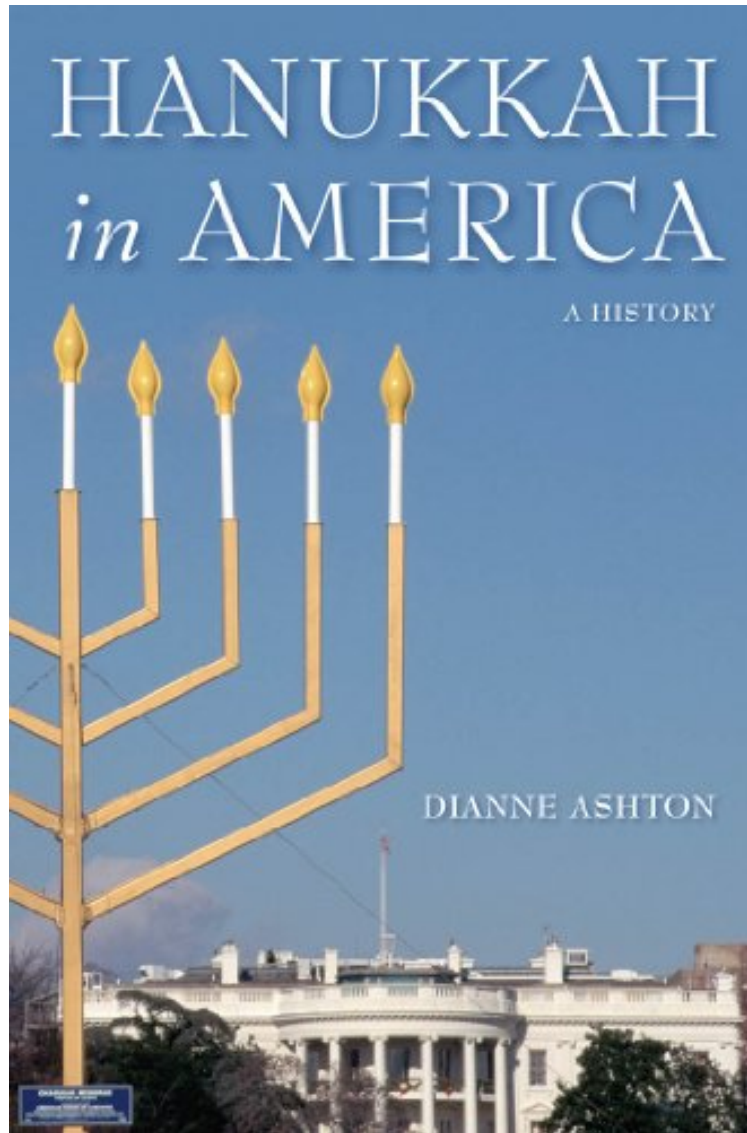


[Free pdf] Hanukkah in America: A History (Goldstein-Goren Series in American Jewish History)

Hanukkah in America: A History (Goldstein-Goren Series in American Jewish History)

Dianne Ashton

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#1431195 in Books Dianne Ashton 2013-10-14 2013-10-14 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.02 x .94 x 5.981, 1.54 #File Name: 0814707394350 pages Hanukkah in America | File size: 75.Mb

Dianne Ashton : Hanukkah in America: A History (Goldstein-Goren Series in American Jewish History) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hanukkah in America: A History (Goldstein-Goren Series in American Jewish History):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Scholarly and readable By Linda from Mill River An excellent investigation of Hanukkah, why and how the holiday has changed from obscure to one of the big three Jewish holidays

in American. Ashton's book is accessible to non-scholars, but contains all the underpinnings that will appeal to academics. For everyone who has ever thought that Hanukkah is just a response to Christmas, this book will give you a deeper and richer understanding of the American Jewish celebration practices. Ashton has a clear and readable style. Suitable for home and temple libraries!

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. No good for me. By Luann Chandler I did not manage to finish this book. I thought I would like it a lot, but it became nothing but names I can't pronounce and harking back and forth between ages and eras, so I found it more confusing than enlightening. Sorry. I really was looking forward to this, so I was disappointed. I may try again to read it. Maybe a different time will work for me.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Scholarly Work By Customer. If you enjoy reading a text book you will find this book interesting. I found it surprising that Americans have tried to make Chanukah a Jewish Christmas celebration for so many years; thinking it was a modern phenomenon. . .

From Booklist *Starred* Religiously, Hanukkah is considered a minor Jewish festival. Ashton's wonderfully readable, fact-packed history demonstrates, however, that in the U.S., Hanukkah isn't minor at all. From at least the middle of the nineteenth century, it has been a vehicle for asserting solidarity among a never-large American minority and establishing that minority's credentials as faithful Americans as well as faithful Jews. Further, Ashton asserts, Hanukkah has always played a role in response to the successive challenges American Jews have faced over the course of the last century and a half, as their numbers and varieties of religious practice varied with changes in immigration (wide open, then severely restricted), assimilation (increasingly tolerated), and family structures (as affected, especially, by better contraception and easier divorce). Fueling Hanukkah's success in both functions is its longtime association with bolstering the family, especially through the games, songs, school pageants, plays, and gift giving deliberately developed to popularize it. The scholarship base of Ashton's account is, judging from the enormous number of reference notes, massive; the illustrations scattered throughout the text are always pertinent; and Ashton's evenhandedness most admirable.

--Ray Olson "Ashton's study reveals that the interactions between Jews and their American neighbors held the potential for inspiring Jews to reexamine their religious culture and redirect it toward bringing greater joy to American Jewish life. This 'Christmas effect' also demonstrates the complicated question of whether an innovation constitutes assimilation or 'Jewish renewal.' When was borrowing from the majority culture an act of 'selling out,' and when was it a means to finding a more meaningful solution? Jews in America have always wrestled with that dilemma and, perhaps, never more than during Hanukkah." -Rachel Gordan, *The Marginalia of Books*

"The book's strength lies in both the comfortable familiarity of its broad theme and in its delightful details, many of which will be unfamiliar to specialists and more casual readers." -H-Net.com

"Hanukkah, traditionally a minor Jewish festival, grew like a beanstalk in America, becoming one of Judaism's most widely celebrated holidays. In this definitive history, Dianne Ashton explains how this happened, and what it teaches us about America, about religion, and about Jews." -Jonathan D. Sarna, author of *American Judaism: A History*

The tale Ashton tells, thankfully, is not simply of the holiday but also of the growth of the Jewish community in all its aspects from its earliest days on this continent. Hanukkah in America is a cultural history worth reading. As any book on Hanukkah should be, this one is wonderfully enlightening.

-Congregational Libraries Today "[T]his work shows how Jewish communities used 'an element within Judaism that corresponded to an element of Christianity in order to resist Christianity.' A fact-filled, mostly interesting account of Hanukkah's development in the United States." -Kirkus

Hanukkah in America is a unique work of scholarship and analysis.

-Jewish Woman

"Again and again . . . American Jews wove Hanukkah's story into their own contemporary lives in ways that reflected their changing circumstances. Those retellings kept Hanukkah's meaning alive and relevant. They turned the simple holiday rite into an event which, like other well-loved Jewish festivals, drew families together in their own homes where they could tailor the celebration to fit their own tastes in food and decor, and to reflect their own ideas about the holiday's significance." -Jewish Book Council

Ashton has succeeded in putting together a fascinating account of Hanukkah in America; students of modern festive culture, and not only of American Jewish holiday culture, will undoubtedly find the book to be instructive.

-Journal in Contemporary Jewry

"American Jewish History editor Ashton has written a scholarly but accessible guide to the evolution of the Festival of Lights in America. . . . Most will be familiar with modern efforts to counter the pervasiveness of Christmas by boosting Hanukkah's significance, but Ashton's thorough treatment of her topic is sure to enlighten she discusses everything from the official observances of Hanukkah at the White House to how the rise of the celebration affected mainstream ad campaigns and the number of opportunities available to Jewish women. It all adds up to powerful support for her thesis that Hanukkah now enjoys 'a more significant place in the American Jewish calendar than it had known' since the events it commemorates." -STARRED Publishers Weekly

"In Hanukkah in America, Ashton notes that poverty and scarcity were the experience of most Jews in Europe, but 'abundance, security, and access to new places marked their Americanization. 'Presents' was among the first English words to appear in Yiddish newspapers . . . By 1906 the Forverts (Jewish Daily Forward) advertised Hanukkah gift objects' for sale in Jewish-owned stores. America itself was associated with prosperity and conspicuous consumption. It logically

followed that Hanukkah should reflect this."-PacificStandard.com"[T]his book is certainly a welcome and valuable contribution to the fields of American Jewish history and religious studies."-The American Jewish Archives Journal"A successful and accessible history, Ashton's book will appeal to general readers and specialists with an interest in American Jewish history."-Matt Rice,Library Journal"More than merely the 'Jewish Christmas,' as it is often mistakenly characterized, Hanukkah's story as told through Dianne Ashton's sweeping history is a fascinating window on the evolution of Jewish integration into American society and culture."-Alan M. Kraut,American University"Although Hanukkah in all its various spellings is considered a minor holiday on the Jewish calendar by rabbis and many Jews, Dianne Ashton makes a very persuasive case for its importance and influence in American society."-Western States Jewish HistoryThis is a book that's hard to put down.-Terri Schlichenmeyer,Leader Times"Religiously, Hanukkah is considered a minor Jewish festival. Ashton's wonderfully readable, fact-packed history demonstrates, however, that in the U.S., Hanukkah is not minor at all [T]he illustrations scattered throughout the text are always pertinent; and Ashton's evenhandedness most admirable."-Ray Olson,STARRED Booklist"Children growing up in 21st-century America are encouraged to think that the December holiday season is an inclusive one, and that Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations carry equal import. Historically and liturgically, however, as many Jewish children learn after their bar or bat mitzvah, Hanukkah is a minor holiday, ginned up to compete with Christmas dominance a quandary known as the 'December dilemma.' Hanukkah's history was manipulated: the celebration of an unlikely military victory of the Maccabee-led Judean insurgents against Hellenic rule became a story, spurred on by Talmudic myth, of God's intervention to make one flask of sacred oil burn for eight nights. Ashton offers readers a lively account of the holiday's modern iterations. At various points, Hanukkah was a social enticement to join a Jewish congregation, a counterpoint to arguments that Jews were weak and a celebration to bond children to family. Hanukkah reflects both a general Jewish problem and a distinctly American one. On the one hand, it embodies the 'essential project of the rabbis: With the Temple destroyed, they aimed to make it possible for Jews to extend the spirituality of the Temple into their everyday lives.' On the other, for most of the 19th century, 'American Jewish life struggled along on the distant periphery of the Jewish world, an ocean away from the great centers of Jewish learning' and leadership. Celebrating Hanukkah in the home allowed the creation of an American Jewish tradition."-New York Times"Ashton offers us the most comprehensive history of Hanukkah to date It would be a joy to find this book nestled under one's Hanukkah bush or in front of the menorah."-Lisa Hoelle, Practical Matters "Ashton provides a very thorough cultural history of Chanukah as she traces the holiday's importance to American Jewry."-The Kentucky DemocratAshton offers readers a lively account of the holiday's modern iterations.-Anna AltmanAbout the AuthorDianne Ashton is Professor of Religion Studies and former director of the American Studies program at Rowan University. She is the author of four books, including the first modern biography of the American Jewish education trailblazer, Rebecca Gratz (1997), and, with Ellen M. Umansky, the widely read Four Centuries of Jewish Women's Spirituality: A Sourcebook (revised 2009).She is currently editor of the scholarly journal, American Jewish History.