



Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture

Alison Landsberg

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Instead of compartmentalizing American experience, the technologies of mass culture make it possible for anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender to share collective memories?to assimilate as personal experience historical events through which they themselves did not live. That's the provocative argument of this book, which examines the formation and potential of privately felt public memories. Alison Landsberg argues that mass cultural forms such as cinema and television in fact contain the still-unrealized potential for a progressive politics based on empathy for the historical experiences of others. The result is a new form of public cultural memory?"prosthetic" memory?that awakens the potential in American society for increased social responsibility and political alliances that transcend the essentialism and ethnic particularism of contemporary identity politics.

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