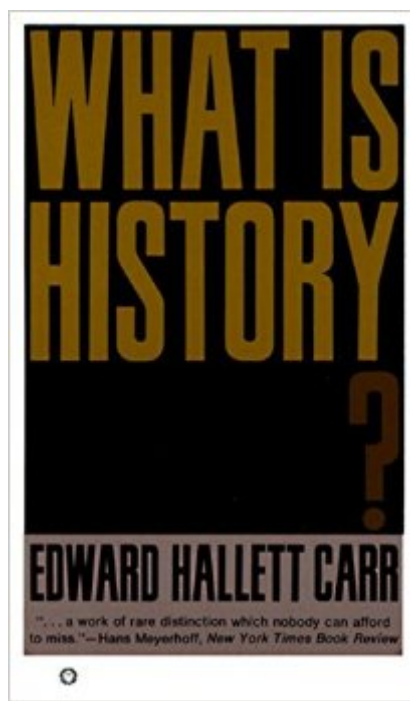


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# What Is History?



## Synopsis

The George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures delivered at the University of Cambridge January - March 1961. New York Times Book Review: "... a work of rare distinction which nobody can afford to miss."

## Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

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## Customer Reviews

I bought this book on impulse because it seemed relevant to my quest to make sense of the world during the global financial crisis and great recession that began in 2007. I'm glad to say I enjoyed the book and have been rewarded by study and reflection on the ideas presented. What is History is based on a series of six lectures given at Cambridge University in 1960 and includes notes on the author's later thoughts through to his death in 1982. Born in 1892, Edward Hallett Carr was an English historian educated at Cambridge who served in the Foreign Office, worked as assistant editor of The Times during World War II, and held academic positions at Cambridge and Oxford. Carr sees history as a process of perceiving, selecting and interpreting; weighing the roles of individuals and society; asking why things happened and assessing where they are going; accumulating knowledge of the past to increase our mastery of ourselves and our environment now and in the future. Chapter One deals with the "facts" of history - how they are perceived, selected, arranged and interpreted by successive historians, and finally interpreted by the reader "through eyes of the present." Chapter Two explores the relative significance of the roles of the individual and the society in which they live. Carr argues that individuals are the products of the conditions in which they live and their interactions with others. Carr notes 'Man's capacity to rise above his social and historical situation seems to be conditioned by the sensitivity with which he recognizes the extent of

his involvement in society. Chapter Three discusses the claims and counter-claims about whether history is a science.

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