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the image and the witness

TRAUMA, MEMORY AND VISUAL CULTURE

Edited by Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas

WALLFLOWER PRESS LONDON & NEW YORK

First published in Great Britain in 2007 by
Wallflower Press
6 Market Place, London W1W 8AF
www.wallflowerpress.co.uk

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-905674-19-0 (pbk)
ISBN 978-1-905674-20-6 (hbk)

Book design by Elsa Mathern

Printed and bound in Poland; produced by Polskabook

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Introduction

Frances Guerin and Roger Hallas

> Images are not just a particular kind of sign, but something like an actor on the historical stage, a presence or character endowed with legendary status, a history that parallels and participates in the stories we tell ourselves about our own evolution from creatures 'made in the image' of a creator, to creatures who make themselves and their world in their own image.
>
> W. J. T. MITCHELL

> The art of witness ... bids us to consider how a remembered image might gain new hold on our lives and actions.
>
> KYO MACLEAR

Cultural studies abound with declarations and denunciations of our image-saturated contemporary world. Computer screens, video monitors and electronic billboards fill the social spaces of work, leisure and education. Television has become almost as fixed in public spaces as it has in our living rooms. Billboards and hoardings, magazines and advertisements tutor us in our consumer desire. The World Wide Web has taken over as our primary source of information. And where we find words – in newspapers and books or on the Internet – our eye is instantly drawn to the images to verify, convince or titillate us. However, what cultural studies often fail to acknowledge in their critique of the hegemony of the visual is that hand in hand with this popular attachment to the currency of images, we also treat them with an equally popular scepticism. For all our reliance on images, we never quite believe in their revelations. Despite the privilege given to the authority and presence of the image, it is, after all, just an image, a picture. It might be manipulated, biased in perspective: it

does not fully reveal the truth of what it claims to represent. This scepticism has become even more pronounced in an age of greater technological sophistication when images can be generated without an original referent. How can we ever be confident that the image tells the truth when we live in a world where, however transparent images may appear, they are, in reality, 'opaque, distorting, arbitrary [mechanisms] of representation ... [processes] of ideological mystification'?[1]

It is not only the production and proliferation of images that generate doubt about their veracity. Their modes of exhibition and circulation do little to build our confidence in their truth value. Images flicker past our eyes in a moment too ephemeral to allow us to test their substantiality: when we drive past them on the highway, as they fill our evenings in front of the television, as they punctuate the written text of a magazine or newspaper, and as we surf from site to site on the Internet. So many of the public images which make up our sensory environment are not trusted to be on display for more than a second or two. Their producers imagine that we will find them monotonous and superfluous, or that time might enable the kind of unsanctioned thinking that leads to unwanted questions and criticisms. There is usually no time to build a relationship with the image; if we are not in motion, then the image is designed to pass us by in an instant. Each image thus appears to ensure its own built-in obsolescence. As Susan Sontag notes, 'Image-glut keeps attention light, mobile, relatively indifferent to content. Image-flow precludes a privileged image.'[2] In keeping with the demands of capital, there is no time to discover, to reflect, to learn or to imagine in the presence of the image. Rather, the image is at its most stable when it is functional, goal oriented, silently reinforcing a textual discourse.

This iconoclasm that pervades the production, dissemination and philosophy of the image in the twenty-first century is nowhere more pronounced than it is in relation to images of traumatic historical events. In spite of the ubiquity of public images that witness such events, there is a persistent scepticism expressed toward their capacity to remember or redeem the experience of the traumatised victim. Similarly, images have been repeatedly deemed inadequate in the face of events understood to be too heinous to be represented. This is because, hitherto, images have been embraced for their mimetic promise, for their perceived ability to produce a representation which addresses the demand for evidence triggered by historical trauma. As Kyo Maclear asserts in her study of 'testimonial art' about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the visual art of witnessing has long been 'tethered to criteria of accuracy and authenticity' that insist on an 'evidentiary necessity' as the principal function of such art.[3] And if, as trauma studies maintained in the last decades of the twentieth century, no representation can even begin to communicate the truth of the traumatic experience, then the mimetic image claims to represent what is, in fact, unrepresentable.

Consider, for example, the criticism levelled at the documentary photographs taken by Allied cameramen and photographers on liberation of the Nazi concentration camps in 1945.[4] These criticisms were founded on a resentment toward the image for its erasure of the humanity and integrity of both the survivors and the dead. These films and photographs may have shown the devastating physical consequences of the camp system on the bodies of its victims, but they did not even begin to approximate either the existential or metaphysical reality of the prisoners'

debasement. Therefore the image fell short of what it claimed. And yet, the same images have subsequently found widespread circulation as documentary evidence of Nazi atrocity and evil in the concentration camps. Even though they were taken on liberation, when the Germans had abandoned the camps, the images are often held up as windows onto the horror of life *during* incarceration.[5]

Alternatively, the home-video images of Rodney King as he was beaten again and again by four white Los Angeles policemen in 1991 were elevated to an iconic status: they gave birth to a riot that arguably changed the face of race relations in the United States. And yet, the graphic depictions of police brutality were deemed not sufficiently authentic to hold the perpetrators responsible in the criminal court case. Despite the prosecutors' claims for the video's evidential status, the defence attorneys successfully argued that there was more to the event, more that the image did not, or chose not to see.[6] By stressing the limitations of the image, the defence was able to reframe the meaning of what the image actually captured. Thus, the brutal beating of King came to be seen by the jury as the necessary subjugation of a violent felon. In a widely discussed example from the Iraq War, the provocative digital pictures taken in 2004 of tortured Iraqis in the Abu Ghraib prison continue to be disseminated as evidence of US violence toward Iraqi prisoners.[7] While the proliferation of discourses on their subject testify to the many lessons of these images, the debate regarding their status continues with animation: Do they in fact constitute evidence of systematic torture by US forces? Are the images a form of propaganda that asserts cultural dominance or a despised strategy of added intimidation and humiliation to provoke the Arab prisoners to disclose information? Are they simple documents of the interrogation process? Or are they the perverse souvenirs of aberrant US military personnel, as the Pentagon claims?[8] On the one hand, all of these images are disseminated in abundance, and they carry political conviction way beyond their status as representation. On the other, like many public images of trauma, they also continue to be denigrated, dismissed, questioned and cast in doubt.

This popular scepticism towards the visual representation of historical trauma finds its intellectual correlate in the shared assumptions of two interdisciplinary formations that have profoundly influenced the contemporary course of the humanities: visual studies and trauma studies. Both formations developed partially in response to the poststructuralist critique of representation that understood the categories of truth and the real as effects of discourse, and therefore, as historical constructs.[9] Visual studies have taken up the task of historicising the role of the image and visual representation in modern regimes of truth and knowledge. Trauma studies have sought to redeem the category of the real by connecting it to the traumatic historical event, which presents itself precisely as a representational limit, and even a challenge to imagination itself.[10] Trauma studies thus offer poststructuralist theory a means to reintroduce a political and ethical stake in the representation of the real without regressing to the very notions of mimetic transparency that it has striven to overturn.[11] Trauma studies consistently return to an iconoclastic notion of the traumatic event as that which simultaneously demands urgent representation but shatters all potential frames of comprehension and reference. Likewise, in their elucidation of the power dynamics instantiated by the historical development of specific discursively constituted gazes, visual studies demonstrate an iconoclastic impulse to uncover and undo

the power of the visual. Even redemptive accounts of the image and visual representation rely on the deconstruction, appropriation or resignification of existing historical modes of seeing. Such redemptive critical work can be found in a wide range of knowledge formations and aesthetic practices. For example, it can be located in the disciplinary crisis in anthropology, the playful postmodernism of New Queer Cinema, art history's institutional critique and the culture-jamming of Adbusters.[12]

While acknowledging the wider limitations and contradictions of bearing witness to historical trauma through visual media, the new scholarship collected in this volume resists the iconoclastic urge within both trauma studies and visual studies. The contributions move beyond a focus on the radical limitations and aporia of visual representation in the face of historical trauma. The individual chapters seek to locate the specific ways that the material image enables particular forms of agency in relation to various historical traumas across the globe. We do not see this agency as some kind of transcendental or essential power held by images, whether redemptive or pernicious, as though they were active agents outside their historical contexts of human production and reception. This type of essentialism of the image is pervasive in the moral panics swirling around media-effects discourses that treat images as monocausal agents of violent and destructive social behaviour.[13] Faith in an essential power of the image, such as we see in these moral panics, is likely to lead to an iconoclastic agenda similar to popular scepticism toward the image. As we discuss more extensively below, the agency of the material image upon which this collection focuses, is grounded in the performative (rather than constative) function of the act of bearing witness. Within the context of bearing witness, material images do not merely depict the historical world, they participate in its transformation.

The broad array of visual forms analysed in this book, including film, photography, painting, sculpture and digital interfaces, attests to the diverse possibilities to bear witness through the use of the material image. It thus contests the longstanding denigration of the image within trauma studies.[14] Collectively, the chapters of the book intervene in theoretical conceptions of the image and of the witness within visual studies, trauma studies and documentary studies. Accordingly, the scholarship brought together here offers an opportunity to connect theories, practices and contexts previously kept separate, and simultaneously, to diversify the conceptual frameworks for analysing practices of witnessing within visual culture. This introduction thus offers a conceptual orientation through the theoretical premises that ground the scholarship of the chapters.

The chapters that follow each illuminate how the image actually facilitates specific possibilities to bear witness to historical trauma rather than foreclose or compromise them. Thus, of critical importance to our conceptualisation of the role of the image in bearing witness are the uses to which it is put, and the contexts in which it is placed. The material image is relieved of the singular burden of veracity when it is seen within the much broader context of its reception and use. Moreover, the concept of the image as performative moves our understanding of it away from the all-too-common tendency toward iconoclasm. This shift away from an evaluation of the mimetic achievements (and failures) of the documentary image to produce evidence toward an interrogation of the language, processes and broader concerns of visual documentation extends the interest of documentary studies, most influentially

in the work of Bill Nichols and Michael Renov, in the analysis of rhetoric and poetics.[15] In the early 1990s documentary film studies shifted from a narrow focus on questions of truth and referentiality in documentary film to a theoretical and historical concern with its complex discursive construction. This shift has helped to propel the intellectual expansion of documentary studies into a dynamic interdisciplinary field that brings together film studies, performance studies, communication, rhetoric, philosophy, anthropology, history and art history. Of particular importance to documentary studies has been the field's commitment to historicise the development of the documentary film in relation to other forms of non-fiction film. For example, documentary film is understood in its relation to actualities, amateur film, travelogues and ethnographic film, as well as documentary practices in other media, such as radio, television, photography, video art and digital media. Documentary practices are thus increasingly understood and analysed in cross-media contexts.[16] As editors, we understand this book to be an important opportunity to further cross-pollinate critical discourses on the documentary image.

In spite of the proliferation of discourses which continue to distrust the image, artists, filmmakers, photojournalists and amateurs continue to produce a vast body of images as a means to bear witness to historical trauma. It is not only images themselves, but also exciting curatorial and publicity initiatives such as exhibitions, public installations, film festivals, the World Wide Web, media activism and visual archives of past traumatic events which are now at the forefront of efforts to memorialise, interrogate and at times create the individual and collective experiences of these events. Despite the ambivalence shown toward the image in the public sphere and scholarly discourse, photographic, filmic, electronic and digital images play an increasingly important role in the formation of contemporary cultural imaginaries. This volume emphatically acknowledges the centrality of images where they have otherwise been eclipsed by various forms of scepticism. The representation of traumatic historical events thus becomes an extreme test case for ever-present questions about the ethical and political status of the image in the twenty-first century.

More than any other recent event, the 11 September terrorist attacks provoked a revival in the urgent need to bring traumatic historical events into the collective imaginary. Images of all genres took up the responsibility to guide the shape of cultural memory.[17] As an event that took place at the heart of the First World, an event that was not distanced by the gulf of political, geographical, religious or social otherness, the compulsion to bear witness to 11 September in and through images has become ever-present in this first decade of the new millennium. Without privileging the 11 September terrorist attacks, they are nevertheless a prime example of a traumatic historical event that was and continues to be witnessed through the image in all its many forms. The repeated return within televisual representation of the event to the video footage of the planes' initial impact and the collapse of the World Trade Center embodied a form of traumatic repetition-compulsion as the medium struggled to master and make sense of the event. Still photography subsequently played an even greater role: through the personal photographs in missing persons' posters turned ad hoc memorials on the streets of New York City; in the democratisation of the medium's witnessing function in the *Here is New York* project that anonymously mixed professional and amateur photographs of the event; and in the production of

several emblematic photographs, such as the raising of the flag by New York City fire-fighters. In turn, this image, like its precedent, Jack Rosenthal's famous Iwo Jima photograph, has subsequently provided the foundation for further images produced in other media, particularly murals and public statuary.

Even where language played a significant role in shaping the comprehension and experience of the event, such as the reference to 'Ground Zero' and '9/11', images often provided the necessary representational foundation for such terms to make sense or take hold. The photographic images of the World Trade Center site after the attack not only resonated with the images of total destruction from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings (when the military slang term 'ground zero' first achieved popular usage), they also invoked a similar horrific absence of so many victims from the image, who were known in both cases to have been literally vaporised or turned to dust by the attack. The historical caesura implied by '9/11', the notion that the world was no longer the same after 11 September 2001, has consistently been underlined by recourse to the now highly fetishised images of the downtown skyline of New York City, both with and without the towers of the World Trade Center.

As Marianne Hirsch has pointed out, this widespread impulse to produce images as a means to bear witness to the event did not go unquestioned, even in the initial aftermath of the attacks.[18] Backed up by a public request from Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, policemen at the World Trade Center site initially urged visitors to refrain from taking photographs, citing both national security and the need to respect the victims. In this double rationale for such iconoclastic policies, we find the very paradox at the heart of our contemporary understanding of the image: it potentially offers invaluable knowledge of the event and, at the same time, it fails to do justice to the human magnitude of the traumatic event.[19]

SUSPICIOUS IMAGES

Contemporary suspicion toward the veracity of the image can in part be pinned to the ability of technology to reproduce images without an original referent. However, the mistrust of the image as witness to traumatic historical events is more complicated and more deep-rooted than the ontological status of photographic reproduction. It also has everything to do with the way images are interpreted and used. In turn, the dissemination and interpretation of images are inextricably linked to the philosophical and ethical issues at stake in the context of reception. To return to the Rodney King trial as an example, the 'failure' of the video images as evidence in the trial was built on a slow and insidious expropriation of the images from their narrative context as home video footage shot by George Holliday. They were slowed-down, stopped, reversed and re-narrativised to such an extent by the defence that the apparent mimeticism of image and event was eroded.

The ambivalence towards the truth status of images is also linked to the ever-changing definition of 'appropriate' and 'responsible' representation. When the Allied forces went into the camps and filmed the survivors as they walked around like skeletons, unable to speak for themselves, the resultant images were offensive, disrespectful and transgressed the integrity of the human subject. Ever since, doubt has been cast over the ability of the image to capture ethically the magnitude of the

suffering of trauma victims. As John Durham Peters argues, since the end of the Second World War, the survivor-witness has been encouraged to take an active role in the narration of his or her own story.[20] The image has not been given precedence in this struggle to 'give voice', and according to Peters this is because seeing is a passive activity whereas saying is active. While Peters' distinction must be left open to debate – particularly given the control and dominance afforded to the one who looks within the psychoanalytic and poststructuralist discourses on which dominant concepts of witnessing are dependent – it is true that words are more frequently considered closer to the communication of feeling and experience. Words, particularly those of oral testimony, are still connected to the body of the sufferer while the material image implies a separation (spatial, temporal or both) from that which it captures. As we shall argue, however, this distinction does not cast an inauthenticity over the process of witnessing in which the material image engages. On the contrary, a number of the chapters in this volume illuminate how the physical materiality of the image is often the very basis of its capacity for involvement in bearing witness to past events.

The iconoclastic tendencies of literature on trauma, memory and the representation of traumatic historical events are often more salient than they are in the analysis of everyday images. To date, scholars have paid more attention to the written and spoken word as the most appropriate communicative forms for bearing witness to and remembering the suffering of the traumatised subject. The privilege given to both textual and oral testimony as witness to traumatic historical events can ultimately be traced back to the iconoclasm that pervades the history of Western philosophy.[21] But this iconoclasm among intellectuals is, perhaps most importantly, and more immediately, the legacy of some of the earliest circulated images of the Nazi Holocaust, namely those already mentioned, which were taken by Allied cameras on the liberation of the concentration camps. Much of the early scholarship on the documentation, representation and memorialisation of traumatic historical events has focused specifically on the genocide of the Nazi Holocaust.

The specifically visceral nature of the first published Holocaust images prompted a subsequent shift away from visual depictions of the suffering. Indeed, in the late 1950s and early 1960s when filmmakers, writers, scholars and theologians began to reflect on this dark moment of their recent past, the focus was on the implication of the Holocaust for human nature and destiny, religious and moral life.[22] It was not until the 1980s and 1990s that historians turned to the issue of representation, and in particular, the role of language, art and literature in the memorialisation of the Holocaust.[23] In the interests of minimising distortions which might lead to the erasure of the event, literary and textual representation was repeatedly deemed more honest, more responsible because it did not claim absolute, mimetic truth.[24] The autobiographical account was considered most authentic because it spoke or wrote from an individual and deeply personal experience that did not claim to represent the experience of all those who suffered.[25] Survivor testimony locates its truth value precisely in its subjectivity, in its production of embodied knowledge. Similarly, the victims of the Nazi Holocaust did not have the privilege of access to image production – what cameras and other image-producing materials they once had were typically confiscated by their captors. Thus, unlike the immediacy and first-hand nature of the oral

and written accounts of the transportations, ghettos and death camps, the images were often taken by someone else, most commonly, perpetrators, collaborators and bystanders. Since 1945, it has repeatedly been the case that victims of genocide do not have access to the production of their own images.[26] Understandably, their journals and other writings, often hastily written on scrap paper which adds to their authenticity, have been annexed as the most profound evidence of their suffering.[27] For these reasons, images of traumatic events have been considered the viewpoint of those who speak on behalf of the silenced. In written and oral histories, as well as in psychoanalytical exchange, the survivor is understood to gain agency on several levels. The therapeutic aspect of bearing witness allows the traumatised victim to work through the experience of the trauma and hopefully be released, if only partially, from the compulsion which forces him or her to involuntarily and repeatedly relive the trauma. As a social act, testimony also permits the survivor to speak to a public, whether to condemn or accuse the perpetrator, to memorialise the suffering, or to teach as a warning against repetition. These circumstances and beliefs that spawned the birth of trauma studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s have had, we would argue, a lasting hold over the still burgeoning field.[28]

The iconoclastic impulse of trauma studies can only partly be explained by the scepticism towards the massively influential images taken at the liberation of the concentration camps in 1945. It is also deeply rooted in the history of iconoclasm in the philosophy of Western art. The attitude of distrust is born of a history of aesthetics which expects too much from the image. As cultural critics and philosophers have argued, the truth for which the nineteenth- and twentieth-century aesthetician looks is nowhere found in the image itself, but commonly determined in advance. As Michael Kelly has carefully detailed with regard to the work of philosophers from Hegel through Arthur Danto, philosophers repeatedly look to art as a blackboard for truth, expecting their independently conceived-in-advance notion of truth to be discovered by the viewer when face to face with the image.[29] And when the image disappoints, it quickly becomes shrouded in doubt, delegitimised in the interests of moving closer to aesthetic truth. While art continues the struggle to find meaning in the possibility of representation, philosophers continue to be disappointed with these efforts, bemoaning art's inability to locate the truth that philosophers claim to be its responsibility. In an extension of Kelly's argument, the perpetuation of the philosophical project of nineteenth- and twentieth-century aesthetics can thus be understood as dependent on a failure of the image. If the truth could be located in the image, the work of the aesthetician would become redundant.

This conception of an aesthetic pursuit of truth brings us necessarily back to the development of Western art, a development rooted in the religious function of the image as icon. The social and political role of the image as icon dates back to early Christian times when the image was bestowed with metaphysical power as not simply in the likeness of God and the Saints. Rather, people behaved to certain images as to the very abode of God. In the conventional use of religious icons, some of the earliest uses of images 'were kissed and venerated with bended knee ... they were treated like personages who were being approached with personal supplications'.[30] The making visible of an invisible God, that is, the making visible and present of what is otherwise unrepresentable, has powerful ramifications for the conception of repre-

senting traumatic historical events. Like the absent God who is given human form in the figuration of medieval icons, images of cataclysmic historical events have come to imply the appearance and presence of the event itself.[31] It has become commonplace to accept that the ontology of the image claims an immediacy and presence at events, such that the image is remarkable for its likeness to the lived experience. Images are considered not simply to evoke the violence and trauma of the event, but to re-present it, to make it present again (and in some cases, consciously make it present for the very first time). An identical behaviour toward the image, founded on beliefs about the ontological status of the medieval icon, maintains that God is present in the image itself. At the same time, however, we must recognise that the image is only a likeness of God, that is, it has a spiritual similarity, but ultimately, the material image itself is not authentic. The truth exists in its likeness.

Across his work, W. J. T. Mitchell has convincingly demonstrated that, despite our avowed modernity, our fundamental relationship to the image and its pictorial manifestations has not changed from the Biblical era to the present. In his discussion of the Judeo-Christian tradition of taboos against graven images and idolatry, he writes: 'The true, literal image is the mental or spiritual one; the improper, derivative, figurative image is the material shape perceived by our senses, especially the eye.'[32] For the material image, the picture, is understood to be the copy, that which is bought and sold, rented and stolen, it is 'the image plus the support; it is the appearance of the immaterial image in a material medium'.[33] This contradictory impulse of, at one and the same time, a reverence toward the material image for its mimicry and a suspicion towards its status as mere formal presentation of an idea, resonates with our contemporary treatment of images when we see and understand them to lay claim to the 'real'. In an era of commodity culture dominated by the mass media, Mitchell offers countless examples of how the image is constantly being evaluated on the basis of its semblance or otherwise of the 'true form'. By extension, as Martin Jay points out, the task of the critic is inherently iconoclastic: it is to police and expose the false images.[34] This is nowhere more the case than with those images that speak the experience of a personal encounter with a traumatic past, a past that belongs to a now absent history.

In spite of these historical and cultural contradictions toward the image, as Hans Belting argues, history has also proven that the image is potentially the most convincing witness. Since medieval times, the image has been held, in the words of Belting, as 'representative or symbol of something that could be experienced only indirectly in the present, namely, the former and future presence of God in the life of humankind'.[35] Belting continues: 'the image reached into the immediate experience of God in past history and likewise ahead to a promised time to come'.[36] Echoing Walter Benjamin's comments about the auratic quality of the photographic image, Belting connects the function of the early Christian icon to more contemporary images: 'The authenticity inherent in a photo supports the claims of authentic appearance always raised by icons; the image was to give an impression of the person and to provide the experience of a personal encounter.'[37] Thus, in theoretical and practical terms, the image makes present that which is absent. But Belting is careful to argue that images do not merely *return* that which has become absent. He deploys the term 'iconic presence' to contend that images replace absence with a different kind

of presence: '*Iconic presence* still maintains a body's absence and turns it into what must be called *visible absence*. Images live from the paradox that they perform *the presence of an absence* or vice versa.'[38] To reiterate, the image offers the experience of a personal encounter through such iconic presence and this experience is understood to be its most authentic moment. Far more so than words, images are still perceived to have a power and an agency to bring to life – to bring into a particular kind of presence.

BEARING WITNESS

The encounter with an other is central to any conception of bearing witness. For a witness to perform an act of bearing witness, she must address an other, a listener who consequently functions as a witness to the original witness. The act of bearing witness thus constitutes a specific form of address to an other. It occurs only in a framework of relationality, in which the testimonial act is itself witnessed by an other. This relationality between the survivor-witness and the listener-witness frames the act of bearing witness as a performative speech act. It is not a constative act, which would merely depict or report an event that takes place in the historical world. In its address to an other, whether a therapist, a jury or an audience, the performative act of bearing witness affirms the reality of the event witnessed. Moreover, it produces its 'truth' in the moment of testimonial enunciation. The nature of the truth produced by the testimonial act depends on the discursive and institutional context in which it functions. The act of bearing witness, of giving testimony, is most commonly performed within the juridical institution of the trial where the witness does not merely express or report an a priori truth to the jury; the legal truth of an event can only be produced in the moment of the witness's enunciation before the judge and jury. In being addressed by witnesses testifying to the truth of an event, the jury is given the responsibility, via the authoritative guidance of the judge and the rhetorical interpretation of attorneys, of coming to a verdict, of coming to a judgement in the face of the legal truth claims produced on the witness stand. Within certain religious traditions as well, the believer may bear witness to the truth of his faith, to the theological truth of an Absolute or of a specific divine order.[39] In such cases, the process of bearing witness is, of course, dependent on the presence of God, or rather, a god.

The most influential discursive context for shaping the kind of truth produced in the act of bearing witness to historical trauma is the psychoanalytic one. This body of knowledge has played a foundational role in the development of the interdisciplinary fields of both Holocaust studies and trauma studies. Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's book *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, published in 1992, is one of the earliest and most influential attempts to develop a comprehensive psychoanalytic model of bearing witness to historical trauma.[40] Drawing on his practice as a psychoanalyst who has worked with numerous Holocaust survivors, Laub explains how massive trauma precludes its initial psychic registration at the moment it occurs. As a defence mechanism for self-preservation, the mind literally blocks the traumatised subject from actually experiencing the event at the time it occurs. The repressed trauma thus repeatedly returns to the survivor in the form of an involuntary acting out and living through the event that denies the

survivor any control over her traumatic past. The therapeutic process thus provides the survivor-witness with a space in which she may begin the difficult process of narrativising the event. This process of bearing witness externalises the traumatic event as an experience that may be both told by survivor and heard by the listener *for the very first time*: 'The emergence of the narrative which is being listened to – and heard – is, therefore, the process and place wherein the cognizance, the "knowing" of the event is given birth to. The listener, therefore, is a party to the creation of knowledge de novo.'[41] Thus the act of bearing witness is not the communication of a truth that is already known, but its actual production through this performative act. In this process, the listener becomes a witness to the witness, not only facilitating the very possibility of testimony, but also subsequently, sharing its burden. That is to say, the listener assumes responsibility to perpetuate the imperative to bear witness to the historical trauma for the sake of collective memory.

Following Elie Wiesel's claim that testimony has become the literary mode par excellence of the post-Holocaust era, Felman parallels Laub's discussion of the witness's address to the listener in the psychoanalytic context with that of the writer's address to his reader in the mediated context of literature.[42] Like the psychoanalytic encounter of witness and listener, the one between writer and reader is an encounter that actually produces, in itself, a profound truth: 'a performative engagement between consciousness and history, a struggling act of readjustment between the integrative scope of words and the unintegrated impact of events'.[43] Drawing on her experience of teaching a graduate seminar on testimony in 1984, Felman comes to argue that testimonial literature thus provides a cultural space in which individual processes of working through historical trauma are mediated into collective ones. In the final weeks of the seminar, Felman showed her class two video testimonies from the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University. After the screenings, her usually loquacious and eloquent students were speechless or inarticulate. In the days and weeks that followed, the students felt compelled to share with everyone around them the experience that they had undergone; at the same time they insisted on its unrepresentability and alienating uniqueness, for it had broken all frames of reference for them. Felman's subsequent challenge as a teacher was how to reintegrate the crisis, without foreclosing it, how to recontextualise the crisis within a transformed frame of reference. Although this crisis in her seminar was triggered by the introduction of images, Felman is wholly reticent to discuss the agency of the image in this crisis. Rather, she emphasises the shift from literary texts to 'raw document' of a historical and autobiographical nature: 'It seemed to me that added dimension of *the real* was, at this point, both relevant and necessary to the insight we were gaining into testimony.'[44] Felman thus treats the video image as a transparent document of the testimonial event, rather than a medium with its own potential dynamics of witnessing.[45] In this book, we take Felman's oversight of the image's role in the crisis experienced by her students as our cue to annex the specificity, and ultimate agency, of the image in the performative act of bearing witness to historical trauma.

Given that the scholarship on bearing witness is intricately interwoven with textual or oral representation, how then do we conceive of an image-based process of bearing witness? While the imaging technologies embedded in processes of sur-

veillance, science and industrial production increasingly generate automatic images without a human agent, such images are not considered to bear witness to any specific event they happen to record. Rather, they are understood to provide evidentiary proof of the event. Jacques Derrida reminds us that bearing witness is not proving:

> Whoever bears witness does not bring a proof; he is someone whose experience, in principle singular and irreplaceable (even if it can be cross-checked with others to become proof, to become conclusive in a process of verification) comes to attest, precisely, that some 'thing' has been present to him.[46]

In the moment of testimony, the witness bears witness to the event by re-presenting it – in the sense of bringing it into presence – before his addressee. In the context of historical trauma, it is not only the addressee who experiences this re-presentation of the event for the very first time (having not been originally present to it). The act of bearing witness, more importantly, also allows the witness to bring into presence, to externalise, for the very first time, the event that has persistently haunted him.

As we have discussed earlier, the image has long been considered particularly apt in bringing into a form of presence that which is absent. As in the biblical and medieval context given to religious icons, the power of the image to bring into presence relies on the shared faith of its producer and its viewer. As Derrida insists, the act of bearing witness similarly occurs within the space of sworn faith: 'With this attestation, there is no other choice but to believe it or not believe it. Verification or transformation into proof, contesting in the name of "knowledge", belong to a foreign space.'[47] Thus, the image's role in the process of bearing witness can be seen to rely not upon a faith in the image's technological ability to furnish empirical evidence of the event, but upon a faith in the image's phenomenological capacity to bring the event into iconic presence and to mediate the intersubjective relations that ground the act of bearing witness. Since this understanding of the 'life' of the image in witnessing detaches the image from a singular imperative to produce documentary proof, it pertains to a wide range of images, not only photographically-based ones. In addition, the intersubjective relations generated by the presence of the image opens up a space for a witness who did not directly observe or participate in the traumatic historical event. This form of what might otherwise be thought of as 'secondary' or 'retrospective' witnessing is in fact primary to the collective cultural memory of traumatic historical events as it is conceived by a number of the contributors to this book.[48]

The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, an image of which we chose for the cover of this book, exemplifies the compelling use of images within such practices of secondary or retrospective witnessing. Established in 1980, the year after the fall of Pol Pot's regime, the museum inhabits the site of S-21, the Khmer Rouge's notorious secret prison where over 14,000 people suspected of treason were systematically interrogated, tortured and killed between 1975 and 1979.[49] Since no prisoner was ever released by the Khmer Rouge (and only seven survived), the identification photographs taken of each prisoner immediately on arrival at S-21 bear witness to the atrocity on several levels. As David Chandler indicates: 'Frozen by the lens, the prisoners stare out at their captors. Nearly twenty years later they

are also regarding us. Their expressions ask their captors: "Who are you? Why am I here?" – and ask us: "Why did this happen? Why have we been killed?"'[50] Installed in the museum as individualised enlargements and grid-like mass portraits, these photographs not only stand as historical documents of the Khmer Rouge's genocidal machine, but they also, and more importantly, open up an intersubjective space in which museum visitor encounters the iconic presence of the ultimate witness – the one who has not survived.[51]

IMAGES THAT WITNESS

Each of the chapters in the book demonstrates an awareness of the complex and often fraught search to locate or produce an image that may adequately, appropriately and authentically bear witness in the here and now to historical trauma. Similarly, the authors interrogate the problems and contradictions raised by the use of the image in the representations on which they focus. However, they do not do this as their ultimate goal, but rather, as the critical move that allows the images' specific forms of agency to come into view. Moreover, the contributions cohere around the understanding that individual and collective trauma are historically and culturally determined. While obviously indebted to the foundational scholarship of Holocaust studies in theorising the representation of historical trauma, this volume widens and diversifies that conceptual framework.

The individual chapters of the book focus particularly on largely overlooked or under-examined images from around the world. They address historical situations in Britain, Colombia, Japan, Vietnam, South Africa, Ukraine, Armenia, Spain, Germany, Poland, Switzerland and the United States in an effort to demonstrate that local, cultural and historical differences necessitate variable theoretical models for understanding the dynamics of collective trauma. The book's range of historical contexts is complemented by its attention to an equally broad array of material images: documentary films, experimental cinema, amateur film and photography, aerial photography, photojournalism, painting, sculpture, electronic art and internet sites. The intersection of these two indices of difference – the historical and the formal – constitutes the book's organising ethos. By bringing together a diverse range of visual media and historical contexts, this volume conceptualises the agency of the image in relation to historical trauma without reifying any single model of witnessing dynamics. We have organised the chapters of the book into conceptual clusters to allow for salient issues running through all the contributions to come to the fore. The sections are neither exclusive nor definitive frameworks for considering the scholarship in the book, but rather, heuristic aids to identify the cross-pollination of its concerns. For example, the fourth section highlights a concern with time and space in the narrativisation of trauma which can also be found in other chapters of the book. Nevertheless, temporal and spatial dynamics are writ large in the analyses of section four.

The book opens with a section on 'The Body of the Witness'. The body has a dual role in acts of bearing witness to traumatic historical events. First, historical trauma inflicts such physical devastation on human bodies that visualising these consequences of enormous violence has become a principal and necessary component of witnessing practices. However, as we have already discussed, the task

of visualising the corporeal consequences of trauma is forever fraught with the risk of dehumanisation, especially in the context of bearing witness to death. Second, the act of bearing witness demands a certain *habeas corpus*. The testimony of the survivor-witness is dependent on her embodied presence at the moment of enunciation. No one can bear witness in her place. Thus, when acts of bearing witness to historical trauma are mediated through the material image, corporeal inscription of the witness often provides the foundation for both bringing the event into presence and establishing the intersubjective relations between the survivor-witness and the listener/viewer-witness. The three chapters in this section engage with both aspects of the body's significance.

Camila Loew's chapter on Catalan collective memory and the Holocaust examines *Memòria de l'infern* (2002), a book and exhibition project by the photographer-journalist team of Jordi Ribó and David Bassa, as well as the recent biography and documentary about the leftist photographer and concentration camp survivor, Francesc Boix. In her analysis of *Memòria de l'infern*, Loew illuminates how the carefully posed portraits of Catalan concentration camp survivors – whose testimony is also published in the book – produce a tension between the singularity of their experience and the articulation of their collectivity. Boix worked in the darkrooms of the *Erkennungsdienst* (Identification Service) at Mauthausen concentration camp and secretly copied thousands of identification photographs taken by the SS. Loew understands Boix as 'a witness to the witnesses' who recycled this archive of visual evidence and inverted the Nazi's use of the 'camera as weapon.' Roger Hallas's chapter approaches the question of embodiment by analysing Derek Jarman's final film, *Blue* (1993). Hallas elucidates how Jarman's experimental film about AIDS opens up the potential for a radical reconfiguration of the relation between witness and film spectator. Through its intertwining of what Michel Chion calls an *acousmêtre* (acousmatic voice) and Laura Marks's notion of experimental film's haptic visuality, *Blue* produces an intersubjective encounter for the spectator, grounded in the sensory experience of proximity and what Hallas calls 'corporeal implication'. In the visual absence of Jarman's ailing, dying body, the spectator's body becomes implicated in the process of bearing witness. Matthias Christen's chapter continues this concern with the sick and diseased body as it examines *Case History* (1999), Boris Mikhailov's book of photographs documenting the destitution and physical degradation of the homeless in Kharkov, Ukraine. *Case History* provides an almost encyclopaedic collection of physical disfigurations suffered by the homeless in post-Soviet society: smashed skulls, rotten teeth, infected genitals, scarred limbs and all manner of skin conditions. Christen argues that Mikhailov presents the exposed sick bodies of the contemporary homeless as the site where the memory of a traumatic history materialises. The body here serves as an allegory of social and economic malaise in post-Soviet Ukraine.

Turning to the other side of the intersubjective relation of witnessing, the second section of the book, 'Testimonial Interactivity', focuses on the active role of the spectator of visual culture in the dynamics of witnessing. All three chapters in this section address the concern with interactive forms of visual media in which the functions of the user and the player are redefining the concept of the spectator within certain areas of visual culture. In her analysis of *Truth Games* (1998) and *Can't For-*

get, Can't Remember (1999), Sue Williamson's interactive installations about South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Stephanie Marlin-Curiel investigates what happens when individual and collective memory is translated as information and then recirculated through the sensory channels of digital media. As Marlin-Curiel explains, Williamson chooses the interactive medium of the CD-ROM as a means to illuminate how the Commission functioned as a mediatised live event to produce what she calls the 'collected' rather than fully 'collective' memory of apartheid. Through an interaction between spectator and digital image where the viewer selects decontextualised images and fragments of testimony from highly codified options, the installations self-consciously simulate the highly managed processes by which South African television and the press mediated the Commission as a national experience. The process of managing the collective memory of a national trauma through the possibilities of new media is also explored in Leshu Torchin's analysis of archival websites devoted to 'screen memories' of the Armenian genocide. According to Torchin, the visitor to these archival sites interacts literally and affectively with the representation of genocide in the interests of legal clarification, historical documentation and collective memory of a genocide that has hitherto been systematically denied. In the final chapter of the section, Karen Hall analyses the function of what she calls 'citizen training' within forms of US combat entertainment, such as the war film, video games and action figures. Hall locates an active spectator/player who is involved in the kind of pathological process of 'false witnessing' that Robert Jay Lifton identified in the wake of the Vietnam War. She argues that images such as the US combat film use vengeful violence to produce a displaced externalisation of the grief and pain suffered in the face of the traumatic experience of modern warfare. This process of false witness prepares viewers to understand history as a justification for the perpetration of future atrocity.

The third section on 'Second-hand Visions' examines acts of witnessing based on appropriation and re-use of found and archival images. Images which appropriate and expropriate existing visual representations of public trauma respond to the immense ethical responsibility which burdens the image. As discussed above, ethical responsibility to the integrity of the victim is one of the defining criteria of authentic witnessing to trauma. This is especially urgent when the sufferer is no longer able to speak. Thus, the one who carries the continued memory of suffering also carries the responsibility to do so in a manner that empathises with, rather than violates, the silent victim. In keeping with James Young's call for continued memory, the chapters in this section explicitly represent the experience of the act of remembering.[52] Frances Guerin attends to Gerhard Richter's recycling of German press images of the arrest, imprisonment and death of the leaders of the Baader-Meinhof group in his 1988 cycle of paintings, *18. Oktober 1977*. Guerin argues that, through strategies of re-presentation of photographs through the medium of painting, Richter blurs a number of boundaries – such as those between West German state institutions and the Baader-Meinhof revolutionaries – to effect an emotional, intellectual and physical confrontation with the gallery visitor. The confrontation leads, in turn, to the viewer's responsibility to remember and reconsider his memory of the civil unrest of the 'German Autumn'. In his analysis of Chris Marker's *Level 5* (1996), Jonathan Kear examines the tendency for experimental or avant-garde works to appropriate images

with the goal of critically interrogating or challenging the meaning of the image in its original context. In returning to his avowed interest in the battle of Okinawa as one of the most significant, but historically neglected, events of the Second World War, Marker constructs what he calls a 'free replay' of Alain Resnais' *Hiroshima mon amour* (1959). Kear elucidates how *Level 5* uses the organising structure of gameplay to recuperate the memory of the battle of Okinawa from historical oblivion, while simultaneously foregrounding the limits to any such historical recuperation. Guy Westwell's chapter investigates the ideological contexts in which home movies taken by US soldiers during the Vietnam War have been reframed as authentic and privileged acts of public witnessing within contemporary US popular culture. Westwell contends that, at the time of their production, these amateur films facilitated a consistent disavowal of death and traumatic violence by imposing the ideological frame of the family and domestic space on the visual representation of the military experience of the war. This ideological framework was subsequently amplified when these amateur films were transferred to video and commercially released under the series title *Vietnam Home Movies* in the mid-1980s.

The chapters of the fourth section, titled 'Temporal and Spatial Displacements', engage with the necessary manipulation of time and space in the narrativisation of trauma. Following Freud, and in particular his insights in *Moses and Monotheism*, bearing witness to trauma is experienced at a distance from the traumatic event, beyond the limits of locatable time and space.[53] It has also been common for images involved in the process of bearing witness to emphasise the importance of returning to the site of original trauma. Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) is exemplary in this regard when, in spite of its insistence on the inability to represent the horror of the Holocaust visually, the film maintains the possibility of the victim's renegotiation of the trauma through a return to the geographical location of genocidal violence. Either the victim or the camera returns to this now othered location. While it is not possible to recapture the temporal parameters of the original trauma, as Lanzmann would have it, the distance between then and now can be simultaneously effaced and maintained through an imaginative and intellectual process facilitated by the image. Through its role in the process of witnessing, the image enables such imaginative excursions between past, present and future, between the site of the original trauma (albeit usually repressed or absent) and the geographical, social and cultural locations of the spectator. While the trafficking between often disparate times, places and spaces is usually marked by ineffability and fluidity, the image functions to ground the process of witnessing, if only through its own formal dimensionality.

In her analysis of the film *Cooperation of Parts* (1987) and the video *History and Memory* (1991), Tina Wasserman follows Daniel Eisenberg and Rea Tajiri's respective searches, at the remove of a generation and a continental divide, for the memory of their parents' traumatic experiences of Nazi concentration camps and Japanese-American internment. Returning to the site of their parents' trauma allows Eisenberg and Tajiri to re-anchor their own 'unhinged memories' of historical trauma in lived experience and recorded images. However, the absence inscribed in such images of the present also reminds these artists precisely of the limits to such recuperative aspirations. Edlie Wong's chapter reflects upon Doris Salcedo's representation of the loss that besets Colombia's recent history of state and paramilitary violence.

Salcedo's sculpture and installations visualise the violent procedures of 'disappearance' by grafting ordinary household objects and furniture into material fetishes of the missing bodies of the disappeared. Wong reads Salcedo's work both as a practice of translation, in which testimony becomes visual object, and a complex process of temporal and spatial displacement, in which the once safe and private space of home that has been ruptured by state violence is resituated in the public space of the international art gallery. Davide Deriu argues that aerial photographs of ruined landscapes in the wake of the Second World War are involved in bearing witness to the trauma of destruction and for the continuation of memory. Deriu inverts the familiar argument – usually associated with the work of Ernst Jünger – that the distance and abstraction of aerial photographs of ruined landscapes underline the coldness and brutality of the eye that sees them.[54] Deriu emphasises their capacity to trigger historical consciousness – to provoke memory and deep empathy in the mind of the viewer.

The collection closes with 'Witnessing the Witness', three chapters on works dedicated to the self-reflective interrogation of the act of witnessing itself. James Polchin exposes the conundrum of the initial incarnations of 'Without Sanctuary', an exhibition of lynching photographs mounted in New York, Pittsburgh and Atlanta. Polchin demonstrates that in their anxiety to remain conscious of *how* we look at images of violence without replicating or underlining that same violence towards the victims, the exhibition increasingly nurtured a displacement of the image. Paradoxically the exhibition became, in the end, an ethical directive not to look, but to read and to listen to the contextual materials supplied by the curators to counter the racist gaze of the photographs. Marcy Goldberg's chapter introduces the work of the important Swiss documentarist, Richard Dindo, who is little known outside his own country. Dindo's primarily biographical films consistently stage performances of witnessing acts in the face of the traumatic event's absence and the camera's belatedness. Like Lanzmann, Dindo uses the image of the present with its simultaneous effect of presence and absence to prompt his viewers to imagine the traumatic event while recognising the incommensurable gap separating them from the event. In the final chapter of the book, Marsha and Devin Orgeron examine the films of Errol Morris for their performance of the process of witnessing the witness. Sometimes, as if in a hall of mirrors, Morris's viewer finds herself before films that witness witnesses to witnesses, where the camera also struggles for legitimacy as a witness to this process of witnessing. Ultimately, however, according to Orgeron and Orgeron, Morris questions the legitimacy of all witnesses and all cameras. In turn, the image is only witnessing when it is involved in the contingent and ephemeral dynamics of the intersubjective relationship between subject, spectator and producer of the image.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all those who generously supplied images and copyright permissions for the book, especially Maciej Dakowicz for the cover photograph. We are grateful to Steven Cohan for his sage advice throughout the editorial process. Along the way, Richard Allen, Matthew Fee, Jane Gaines, Randolph Lewis, Michael Renov, James Williams, Brian Winston and Patricia Zimmermann have also given us

important guidance. We would also like to thank Yoram Allon at Wallflower Press for his strong commitment to the project, and for his congeniality throughout the publication process. And thanks too to Michele Combs for the comprehensive index. For its financial assistance in the publication of the book, we are grateful to the College of Arts and Sciences at Syracuse University. Finally, our sincerest and most important thanks goes to the contributors whose commitment to and enthusiasm for the project has sustained us. We are grateful to them for their inspiration.

Notes

1 On this notion of the inherent deception of images, see W. J. T. Mitchell (ed.), *The Language of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

2 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2003), 106.

3 Kyo Maclear, *Beclouded Visions: Hiroshima-Nagasaki and the Art of Witness* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 23.

4 See the documentaries *A Painful Reminder* (Sidney Bernstein, 1985) and *Memory of the Camps* (Sergei Nolbandov, 1993). The most vehement criticism came with Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1986), but the criticism began with Alain Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard* (*Night and Fog*, 1955).

5 As Barbie Zelizer has argued, the broad symbolic function of these images was established right at their initial public circulation in 1945: 'The transformation of atrocity photos from definitive indices of certain actions to symbolic markers of the atrocity story had to do with a general and urgent need to make sense of what had happened.' *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory Through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 139.

6 On the manipulation of the George Holliday footage of Rodney King's beating, see Bill Nichols, *Blurred Boundaries: Questions of Meaning in Contemporary Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 17–42.

7 On the continued effort to keep these images in circulation, see Seymour M. Hersh, 'Photographs from a Prison', in *Inconvenient Evidence: Iraqi Prison Photographs from Abu Ghraib* (New York: International Center of Photography, 2004), 7–10.

8 Ibid. See also Seymour M. Hersh, *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004); and Susan Brison, 'Torture, or "Good Old American Pornography"?', *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 4 June 2004, B10.

9 See Patrick H. Hutton, 'Michel Foucault: History as Counter-Memory', in *History as an Art of Memory* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1993), 106–23.

10 See, for example, Gertrud Koch, 'The Aesthetic Transformation of the Image of the Unimaginable: Notes on Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah*', *October* 48 (Spring 1989): 15–24.

11 Ana Douglass and Thomas A. Vogler make this important connection in the introduction to their collection, *Witness and Memory: The Discourse of Trauma* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 5.

12 See respectively, Lucien Taylor (ed.), *Visualizing Theory: Selected Essays from V.A.R. 1990–1994* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Michele Aaron (ed.), *New Queer Cinema* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2004); Douglas Crimp, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1995); Naomi Klein, *No Logo* (New York: Picador, 2002).

13 A cycle of moral panics around the alleged 'media effects' of represented violence in popular cinema and video games have gripped industrialised societies for the past quarter century. See Martin Barker and Julian Petley (eds), *Ill Effects: The Media/Violence Debate* (London: Routledge, 2001).

14 As such, this volume contributes to an emergent body of scholarship that is beginning to investigate seriously the potential agency of the image in bearing witness to historical

trauma. See Kyo Maclear's *Beclouded Visions* and the essays collected by Barbie Zelizer in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

15 See Bill Nichols, *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); and Michael Renov, 'Towards a Poetics of Documentary', in *Theorizing Documentary*, ed. Michael Renov (New York: Routledge, 1993), 12–36.

16 Visible Evidence, the annual international conference and book series published by University of Minnesota Press, is one of the salient indicators of this diversification of documentary studies. It brings together scholars from diverse disciplines working on a wide range of media.

17 See Marita Sturken, 'Memorializing Absence', in *Understanding September 11*, ed. Craig Calhoun (New York: New Press, 2002), 374–84.

18 Marianne Hirsch, 'I Took Pictures: September 2001 and Beyond', in *Trauma at Home: After 9/11*, ed. Judith Greenberg (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 69–86.

19 Bill Nichols argues that documentary images' engagement with the issue of magnitude necessarily extends beyond the mere communication of an event's human scale or importance. Magnitude, for Nichols, involves our ethical relationship to the victims of historical trauma. It thus requires a 'politics of phenomenology, a recognition of the priority of experience not as a structure to bracket and describe but as the social ground or foundation for actual praxis'. *Representing Reality*, 232.

20 John Durham Peters, 'Witnessing', *Media, Culture and Society* 23 (2001): 707–11.

21 Scholars such as W. J. T. Mitchell and Martin Jay have written with conviction on the ubiquity of the privilege given to word over image throughout the history of Western thought. See W. J. T. Mitchell, *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); and Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

22 One of the first works to take these steps toward representation of these momentous events was Elie Wiesel's *Night* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1960).

23 Central to this effort was the landmark Holocaust conference at the University of California, Los Angeles in 1990, the proceedings of which are collected in Saul Friedländer (ed.), *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the 'Final Solution'* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

24 It is interesting to note that fictional films and art works did not come under the same criticism as documentary. See, for example, Anton Kaes, *From Hitler to Heimat: The Return of History as Film* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989).

25 It is not only the work of autobiographical writers, such as Primo Levi and Charlotte Delbo, which has been the subject of searching appraisal of Holocaust testimony. The work of poets, such as Paul Celan and Dan Pagis, has played an equally significant role.

26 The contemporary significance of providing cameras to victims of human rights abuses is highlighted in Katerina Cizek and Peter Wintonick's documentary *Seeing is Believing: Handicams, Human Rights and the News* (2002). The documentary highlights how the value of images captured by activists are simultaneously under- and overestimated by a cynical and exploitive global news media.

27 There are many poignant examples of such writings. See, for example, Alan Adelson and Robert Lapides (eds), *Lodz Ghetto: A Community History told in Diaries, Journals and Documents* (New York: Penguin, 1989).

28 The work of Cathy Caruth, Linda Belau and Peter Ramadanovic offers striking examples of the scholarship being done in the field. Their anthologies and single-authored works build on that of Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub. See Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); and Linda Belau and Peter Ramadanovic (eds), *Topologies of Trauma: Essays on the Limit of Knowledge and Memory* (New York: Other Press, 2002).

29 Michael Kelly, *Iconoclasm in Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

30 Hans Belting, 'Introduction', in *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the*

Era of Art, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 6.

31 Cornelia Brink discusses the use of a handful of photographs as being elevated to the status of icons that are always quoted to speak of the Nazi Holocaust. See Cornelia Brink, 'Secular Icons: Looking at Photographs from Nazi Concentration Camps', *History and Memory* 12, no. 1 (Spring–Summer 2000): 135–50.

32 Mitchell, *Iconology*, 32.

33 W. J. T. Mitchell, 'The Surplus Value of Images', in *What Do Pictures Want?*, 85.

34 Martin Jay as cited in Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?*, 81.

35 Belting, 10.

36 Ibid., 11.

37 Ibid., 11.

38 Hans Belting, 'Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology', *Critical Inquiry* 31 (Winter 2005), 312.

39 Many early Christians bore witness to the truth of their new faith through their very martyrdom. In fact, the etymological source of our modern word 'martyr' was a Greek term for witness, *martis*.

40 Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

41 Ibid., 57.

42 Eli Wiesel, 'The Holocaust as a Literary Inspiration', in *Dimensions of the Holocaust* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1977), 9–13.

43 Felman and Laub, *Testimony*, 114.

44 Ibid., 42 (emphasis in original).

45 This reticence to address the function and impact of the moving image is similarly apparent in her chapter on *Shoah*, which she analyses principally in terms of the testimonies filmed, rather than for its significance as a cinematic mode of witnessing.

46 Jacques Derrida, '"A Self-Unsealing Poetic Text": Poetics and Politics of Witnessing', in *Revenge of the Aesthetic: The Place of Literature in Theory Today*, ed. Michael Clark (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 190.

47 Ibid., 194.

48 For elaboration of these concepts, see Dora Apel, *Memory Effects: The Holocaust and the Art of Secondary Witnessing* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Andrea Liss, *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography and the Holocaust* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998); and Marianne Hirsch, 'Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory', in *Visual Culture and the Holocaust*, ed. Barbie Zelizer, 215–46.

49 David Chandler provides a comprehensive history of the prison in his book *Voices from S-21: Terror and History in Pol Pot's Secret Prison* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

50 David Chandler, "The Pathology of Terror in Pol Pot's Cambodia," in *The Killing Fields*, ed. Chris Riley and Douglas Niven (Santa Fe: Twin Palms Press, 1996), 102.

51 Rithy Panh's documentary *S-21: The Khmer Rouge Killing Machine* (2002) makes significant use of these photographs as well as prison survivor Vann Nath's paintings to stage a testimonial encounter between survivors, perpetrators and the executed within the very space of the former prison.

52 James Young, *At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 7.

53 Cathy Caruth's *Unclaimed Experience* develops an extensive reading of Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* as the basis for her conception of trauma studies.

54 Ernst Jünger, 'War and Photography', *New German Critique* 59 (1993): 24–6.