



Trauma and Media: Theories, Histories, and Images (Routledge Research in Cultural and Media Studies)

Allen Meek

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This book provides the first comprehensive account of trauma as a critical concept in the study of modern visual media, from Freud to the present day, explaining how contemporary trauma studies emerged from research on Holocaust representation in which the audiovisual testimony of survivors was posed as an authentic alternative to popular television and film dramatizations. It argues that the media coverage of 9/11 and the subsequent 'war on terror,' however, has revealed how the formation of communities of witness and commemoration around 'traumatic events' can perpetuate violence and inequality.

The book explains how Benjamin, Adorno and Barthes, drawing from psychoanalysis, analyzed the roles of fantasy, ideology and collective identification in mass media, and began to understand trauma as an authentic experience of modernity. It proposes that the insights of these earlier theorists, along with more recent arguments by Derrida, Agamben and Zizek, continue to provide important perspectives on today's politics of mediated shock and terror.

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