



The Face and the Number: Memorial and Statistical Narratives in Auschwitz-Birkenau's Central Sauna Portrait Exhibit

Danielle Taschereau Mamers

To cite this article: Danielle Taschereau Mamers (2017): The Face and the Number: Memorial and Statistical Narratives in Auschwitz-Birkenau's Central Sauna Portrait Exhibit, *Photography and Culture*, DOI: [10.1080/17514517.2017.1387086](https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2017.1387086)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17514517.2017.1387086>



Published online: 27 Nov 2017.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 24



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

The Face and the Number: Memorial and Statistical Narratives in Auschwitz-Birkenau's Central Sauna Portrait Exhibit

Danielle Taschereau Mamers

Abstract

Statistical data and photographic portraits are two techniques of explanation frequently used to narrate both the magnitude and the specificity of mass death. Numbers offer a census of the dead while photographic portraits promise an intimate glimpse into the specificity of lives lost. This paper analyzes the use of photographic portraits in an installation in the so-called Central Camp Sauna building at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (ABSM). I analyze the portraits as objects whose meaning and uses have been structured by their history of material transformations, including their material condition in the ABSM installation. I argue that the material relations between the portraits and the other aesthetic elements of the installation tether the evidentiary function of the photographs to the symbolic task of representing absent – and thus abstract – others. This tethering of faces and narratives makes visible a tension between the one and the many, documenting the specificity of individual victims as well as symbolizing both the broader losses of community and the collectivizing character of mass violence.

Keywords: photography, portraiture, memory, remediation, Holocaust, museums

In the northeast corner of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum (ABSM), the so-called Central Camp Sauna building houses a memorial installation featuring nearly 1000 photographic portraits, titled *Before They Perished: Photographs Found in Auschwitz*. Situated beyond the International Monument to the Victims of Fascism in Auschwitz-Birkenau and the ruins of Gas Chambers and Crematoria I and II, the Central Camp Sauna building is an infrequently visited part of the ABSM.¹ The installation is unique within the broader museum, as it displays portraits of victims taken prior to their forced transfer to and imprisonment at Birkenau.² Unlike

the enlarged photographs that appear on signs installed throughout the grounds or the bureaucratic portraits of prisoners that line the halls of Auschwitz I's Block Six, these portraits do not directly bear traces of the violence perpetrated at the site of the former concentration camp. Panels filled with figures, categories, and maps are used throughout the museum to articulate both the human and geographic scope of these crimes, but this collection of portraits does not appear to be burdened with the task of teaching the history of the Holocaust nor furnishing material proofs of the crimes. Instead, these photos offer a glimpse into the faces of individual victims prior to their violent displacements, imprisonments, and deaths. Further, in using the aesthetics of the pages of a family album, the installation also makes visible the familial relations and Jewish communities destroyed in the violence of the Holocaust. Visually and narratively distinct from the ABSM's other permanent exhibits, the installation creates a reflective space in which visitors can connect the museum's broader historical narrative to the faces of individual victims. The story of crimes committed at Auschwitz-Birkenau told throughout the museum makes frequent use of the explanatory techniques of number and statistics, but the portraits in the *Before They Perished* installation creates a space where abstraction and specificity converge.

In this paper, I investigate the material transformations of a collection of found portraits into the memorial installation and identify the aesthetic structure of the installation as a key element in the interpretation of the portraits. The portraits are presented as a memorial and reflective opportunity for encountering specific victims – an opportunity that hinges on social investments in the power of the face and photograph as evidence of individual subjectivities. The installation deploys portraits to create a unique memorial space within the museum, a poetic reconstruction of some of the Jewish world destroyed at Auschwitz-Birkenau. The aesthetics and affective force of the installation rests in the tension between the specificity of the portraits and

their collectivity. The specificity of individual faces and the potential for a sublime encounter with multitude of Jewish victims are both present in the installation

My analysis of these portraits draws on Elizabeth Edwards's (2012) discussion of placing and remediation as practices that materially transform photographic objects as well as their social uses. By addressing the transformations of the portraits that appear in the Sauna installation, I examine the multiple social uses with which the photographs have become invested and pay particular attention to their memorial use, which is rooted in the specific cultural function of the photographs as portraits. My analysis of these portraits and the material conditions of the installation does not contest the openness of photography to interpretation – what Ulrich Baer refers to as the “ungovernability” of images (2002). Nor do I reject the possibility that photography can inaugurate “a certain form of human being-with-others” (Azoulay 2012: 18) or serve as impetus for political action taken in response to the conditions they depict.³ Rather, I assess how the non-photographic elements of the *Before They Perished* installation influence the use and meaning of the portraits. While photographs may indeed be theoretically open to multiple interpretations, the material conditions in which they appear emphasize particular interpretations and set the stage of specific forms of encounter.

The capacity for the exhibited portraits to create a space of reflection and memorial encounter with the specificity of victims is premised on two theoretical investments in portraiture: (1) the face as a link to the subject; and, (2) the photograph as evidence of the individual it depicts. By establishing a connection to individual victims, the installation attempts to introduce specificity into a museum space in which unthinkably large numbers play a structuring role. The specificity of individual portraits departs from the abstract surface of the number and introduces a texture into which the imagination might settle. The installation also visually references both the

many more victims who are not included on the wall of photographs, as well as the techniques and mechanics of genocide. As a result, the installation also presents the portraits as both documents of individual victims, but also as symbolic of the many more individuals, families, and communities violently dislocated by the Holocaust. The material and social relations that frame the portraits expand this symbolic meaning, tethering the portrait, indexing an individual life to the broader collectivity of victims. In taking on additional symbolic functions, the portrait's force of specificity and the political power invested in the photographic encounter lie in tension with the massifying, dehumanizing, and depersonalizing nature of genocide. The exhibited portraits thus provide an opportunity for considering the immense magnitude of loss, as well as the irreducible the *person-as-such* (Edkins 2011).

To situate my analysis, I begin the paper with a critical narration of the installation and the way it has been contextualized in publications featuring the same collection of photographs. I then identify key social and political investments in the genre of portrait photography and outline the ways they explicitly and implicitly circulate in the exhibited collection. Finally, I articulate the various material transformations these portraits have undergone and argue that the aesthetic structure of the installation plays a crucial role in the shaping the meaning of the photographs.

The installation

In 2001 a new permanent exhibit opened to the public in the so-called Central Sauna building, the largest object on the grounds of the former Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp. From 1943 to 1945, the building was the space where victims transported to Birkenau were registered, shaved, disinfected, and had belongings confiscated prior to being imprisoned in crowded barracks and exploited as slave labor before being killed. Visitors to the contemporary building follow a pathway of sea green glass tiles, moving through the building's rooms in the same order that victims were subjected to processing, and learn about the process

hundreds of thousands endured through the narration of text panels, enlarged archival images, and artifacts. Archival images operate as evidence of not only what the so-called Central Sauna building looked like in the past, but also of the crimes that unfolded in these spaces.

By explaining the different processes by which prisoners were violated, the Central Sauna exhibit narrates the specific ways in which victims were further stripped of individuality, rendered into resources for, and ultimately killed by, Auschwitz-Birkenau's machinery of genocidal destruction. Aside from few descriptive text and photo panels, the rooms are unembellished. In one room, showerheads extend from concrete ceilings. In another, machines for disinfecting clothing that would be confiscated are embedded in the walls. The rooms are uniformly light grey concrete, primarily illuminated by natural light from large windows. A long bench, behind glass, displays examples of victims' belongings, demonstrating how items were confiscated and sorted: suitcases, baskets, boots, thermoses, umbrellas, shaving supplies, soap, combs, brushes, scissors, hand mirrors, coins, keys, watches, jewelry, and photographs (Figure 1).⁴ The final object at the end of the bench is a small pile of portraits, which offer a contrasting image to the stripped down nature of the bodies that would exit the building and enter enslavement. The inclusion of these photographs – and the particularity of lives they reference – shifts the tone for reading the other objects on the bench. In addition to serving as material proofs of the crimes committed, like the masses of luggage, glasses, hair, and other personal effects presented in Auschwitz I, the photographs contextualize the items displayed on the bench as also the belongings of discrete, individual victims.

The glass pathway terminates in a dark room with polished black floors and a wall of tinted windows. Through windows to the right of the room's entrance, a large cart sits in an empty room. Opposite the windows, visitors meet a sea of some 400 unnamed photographs mounted on a wall that extends from the floor almost to the



Figure 1. Bench displaying confiscated belongings of Jewish deportees, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Courtesy of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

ceiling on the far side of the room, doubling itself in the reflective floor and windows. This room and its walls of portraits form the *Before They Perished* installation. The collection of portraits is not narrated by any explicit textual description, aside from a quotation inscribed on a black stone near the entryway. Written successively in Polish, English, and Hebrew, the stone reads:

...And they were carried off, killed,
exterminated,

Not a trace remained of my precious ones!
Woe unto me, woe.

– Icchak Kacnelson

The quotation suggests that these portraits are a small sample of the hundreds of thousands of victims processed in the Central Sauna building, the majority of whom would be killed in Birkenau's

gas chambers, their remains burned in the camp's crematoria. Rather than bureaucratic identity photographs of victims as they would have appeared after being "processed" in the mode described in the preceding rooms (shaved, starved, stripped, terrorized),⁵ visitors are met with a wall of portraits of victims taken some time before their deportations to Auschwitz-Birkenau (Figure 2).

A combination of professional-looking portraits and family snapshots, victims appear in their own clothes, in the company of others, often in domestic settings. While these images provide little explicit information, they offer intimate depictions of every day life: we see young sisters age from girls playing in the family yard into women getting married, brothers transitioning from boys to working men, faces accumulating lines and heads losing hair.



Figure 2. *Before They Perished* portrait installation, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum. Courtesy of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

Two additional walls extend behind the first one, forming a triangle. The exterior sides of these walls are filled with more than 550 additional unidentified photographs (Figure 3). The interior sides of the three walls display selections of repeat portraits, featuring identified individuals, grouped by family and accompanied by text panels that introduce the family members, their occupations, and their fates – often stories of death, but also several of survival.⁶ Though removed from album pages and reproduced on the installation's walls, these images retain the intimacy of the family album and hint at the narratives of familial love and celebration that tend to run through family photo collections.

Contextualizing the installation

The so-called Central Camp Sauna installation does not explicitly contextualize the portraits

on display. However, the installation's location within the building and ABSM establishes a broad interpretive frame. Visitors to ABSM generally visit Auschwitz I first, learning about how Auschwitz-Birkenau operated and its relationship to the broader Nazi military operations and "Final Solution". Once at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, visitors walk past the site where hundreds of barracks once stood, eventually passing two collapsed gas chambers and crematoria before reaching the Central Sauna building. By the time visitors reach the portrait installation, the broader memorial museum has prepared to read the faces they see as Jewish and as most likely those of murder victims.

Two texts published to coincide with opening of the permanent exhibition provide additional context for both the photographs on display and for the curatorial desires at work in the portrait



Figure 3. *Before They Perished* portrait installation, interior walls featuring identified portraits grouped by family, Auschwitz Birkenau State Museum. Courtesy of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

installation. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum published a collection of 2,400 photographs, also titled *Before They Perished: Photographs Found in Auschwitz*, which contains the full collection of photographs recovered in a suitcase on 6 March 1951. Upon their discovery, the photographs were glued into albums and exhibited in Poland and abroad and were later the subject of a conservation and identification process, which culminated in the publication of a two-volume set (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 4). The two volumes were published under the same title, the first containing numbered images and the second containing brief introductory essays and any identifying information about the subjects of the portraits. Together, the two volumes were part of the design process for the permanent exhibit inside the former Sauna building (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 3). A second publication, Ann

Weiss's *The Last Album: Eyes From the Auschwitz-Birkenau* (2001), features 400 of the same 2,400 photographs and three essays.

The photographs published in both books provide an intimate visual account of middle-class Jewish life in an industrial Polish town in the 1920s and 1930s. The majority of the photographs are the collections belonging to a few families from Będzin, a town 40 km northwest of Oświęcim, but there are also photographs taken in Warsaw, Łódź, Germany, and elsewhere by relatives and friends of these families (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 4). The earliest photo in the collection is dated 1888, but the majority of the dated images are from the 1930s. Most of the photographs were taken in professional photo studios – some of which were Jewish-owned – or by amateur family photographers prior to the Nazi occupation of Poland. These portraits provide an intimate view

of daily life and contextual evidence of one Jewish community prior to the radical intrusion of the Holocaust. The collection also includes several photos taken after the imposition of the ghetto in Będzin, including six images of weddings that took place in the ghetto, which provide some illustration of the lives of Polish Jews under Nazi rule (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 57).

Crucially, the portrait collection is presented as evidence of life and its loss. The collection's dual evidentiary function grounds the Central Sauna installation: the portraits refer to both their individual subjects and to the violence with which their lives were interrupted. Kersten Brandt notes that the portraits are the property of individual victims, but "are also documents of the crime that has been committed against their owners" (2006: 8). The claim that these portraits assert a connection between the individuals they depict and of the violation that interrupted the life of those individuals speaks to an investment in photography's evidentiary function.

Starting from this investment in the portraits as evidence of individual lives and of the crimes committed against them, both texts then connect the evidentiary function of the photographs to memorial and pedagogical projects. The memorial project turns on a theory of connection between photographed individual and viewer: by engaging with the portraits and what is known of their context, viewers are able to imagine the lives of depicted individuals. The historical work of identifying victims in the portraits, combined with the connections drawn by visitors, is articulated in terms of redress that seeks to retrieve some of the individuality stripped from Holocaust victims, and in doing so, "try to make them fluid, to breathe movement and life into them, to overcome death" (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 13). In framing the portraits in terms of memorialization and redress, both texts rely on theories of the portrait's evidentiary status and of the potential for a connection between portraits and viewers. Further, the inclusion of names and any details about the particular individuals in these

texts and the installation attempts to mitigate the potential of specific faces being stripped of their identities and made to represent the collective. As Brandt and Loewy have argued elsewhere, the exhibition of unnamed photographs risks repeating the depersonalizing violence of perpetrators by rendering individuals solely visible as instances of the Jewish community (2003: 41).

These publications present the portraits as a counterpoint to the abstract numbers that circulate through the other spaces of the ABSM. Often wrapped up in claims to rational, disinterested knowledge, numbers and claims to their objectivity tend toward simplifying the complex details of the phenomena they represent. In the context of the ABSM, statistical narratives are an important feature of the museum and are central to the educating visitors on the extent of the crimes perpetrated. In one of the first exhibit spaces visitors to ABSM enter (Block 4 of Auschwitz I), they encounter text panels with statistics about how many people were killed at the camp, disaggregated by nationality and transposed onto maps. Such numerical accounts offer a kind of knowledge: body counts and other numerical representations necessarily abstract from the specificity of individual lives and their violation. The size of the numbers themselves – 1.1 million, six million – are sublime, generating a gulf between their enormity and the limits of the imagination. However, this numerical sublime is palliative in the face of the unknowable, expansive horror at the center of the crime (Friedländer 1989; Ray 2009). In the face of the unimaginable scope of the Holocaust, the number becomes a placeholder for knowledge.⁷ Similar to the illusion of control that numbers promise in engagements with political alterity, the figures generated about Auschwitz-Birkenau and the Holocaust offer a feeling of knowing – and thus control – in the face of such horror.⁸

However necessary to the ABSM's pedagogical goals, statistics about the number of individuals murdered risk flattening the magnitude of the hundreds of thousands of individual victims and

the destruction of Jewish communities across Europe. The portraits that make up the installation and these publications create an opportunity for animating and complicating statistical narratives with speculative stories of lives and deaths. Viewers have the opportunity to more fully grasp the context of victims' lives and attach a more intimate sense of loss to death counts. Articulating this potential, Leon Wieseltier writes:

By summoning the dreadful knowledge that we possess about what was done to the Jews in Auschwitz, and taking it back from the statistics and the methodologies and the generalizations, and attaching it to these faces, to these hearts. (Weiss 2001, 15)

Here, the portraits both provide visual evidence of specific lives and punctuate the generality of statistics with that particularity. The curatorial desire for the installation to provide an intimate and specific connection to victims is a departure from the dispassionate, statistical narratives that circulate in other spaces of the ABSM. The collection of individual and family portraits displayed in the *Before They Perished* installation offers affective and imaginative encounters with the faces of individuals and the relational context from which they were violently torn.

Faces, portraits, and the space of encounter

The *Before They Perished* installation and its accompanying texts mobilize social and theoretical investments in the communicative capacity of the face and the evidentiary nature of photography. These investments hinge on three key conceptions about portrait photography. First, that the face provides a transparent surface upon which human emotion and experience can be read. Second, that portraits establish evidence of the specific individuals they depict. Third, that portraits open up the possibility for an ethico-political encounter between photographed subject and spectator. The portrait not only depicts what was, but *who* was. Investment in the *who* of the portrait plays a crucial role in

situating the Sauna installation as a departure from the mathematical sublime and the abstracting numbers that flow through much of the museum's permanent exhibit spaces.

Art historical literature frequently presents the portrait as a reflection of the face and, by extension, legible through the same learned social and cultural codes as face-to-face communication (Ewing 2006; Kozloff 2007; Maddow 1977). In capturing the expressive face, the portrait emerges as a readable surface, upon which a subject's interiority might be inscribed through the visual traces of posture, gesture, or gaze. Investments in the face as the exterior expression of an interior self also carry traces of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century physiognomic sensibilities. The concept of the portrait as a surface upon which the soul or characteristics of a personality may be legible has roots in the historical practice of social surveillance and classification (Hamilton 2001; Sekula 1986; Smith 1999). While such pseudo-sciences have long been discredited, William Ewing argues, "the idea that a 'good' portrait could and should reveal the character and soul proved remarkably resilient in the popular imagination throughout the [twentieth] century" (Ewing 2006: 24). This physiognomic legacy animates Alan Sekula's (1986) argument that even honorific portraits seeking to announce emergent bourgeois subjectivities – much like the those in the Będzin collection – contain traces of repressive portraits gathered in archives intent on knowing and controlling "deviant types".⁹ The portrait captures faces for future reading – and misreading – in different times and places.

Photographic portraits are socially invested with the ability to provide evidence of the individual subjects whose faces they depict. A portrait certifies the existence of a person, who once sat before a camera, but also the existence of the historical and material conditions that may have brought that individual and camera together, in the displayed condition at a given time or place. In this way, the photograph provides a visual connection back to the photographed subject, serving as

what Roland Barthes has called "an emanation of the referent" (1982: 80). The mimetic, visual trace of the photographed subject may not contain details of the subject's biography or psychology; however, social investments in the face as a source of knowledge attribute the portrait with the ability to tell us something about its subject. In response to the visual evidence of a face and the absence of contextualizing detail, the portrait can fill its spectators with what Walter Benjamin describes as "an unruly desire to know", to contextualize the photographed subject (2008: 266). Such unruly desire is a product of the photograph's ability to testify to a *then*, to prompt reflection between its past, the present of spectatorship, and the future. Reflecting on the *Before They Perished* installation, Weiss attributes the portraits with the capacity to testify to the existence of individual lives: "When there is no one left who still remembers, these photos remain a silent sentinel of who once lived, and what once existed" (2001: 39). A glimpse of mortal individuals, the portrait both certifies persons as they once were and provides a vantage point from which they might be reflected upon.

Portraits have the potential to evoke spectators' own unruly desires to know and to prompt imaginative speculation. Several contemporary photography theorists have centered photographic encounters in their accounts of politics of spectatorship (Azoulay 2008, 2012; Linfield 2011; Möller 2013). In these theorizations, the portrait initiates an imaginative process within the spectator, which has the potential to open questions about the political and historical dynamics that mutually enmesh both photographed subject and spectator. In this potential experience of encounter, connections between spectators and photographed subjects can form outside of and in opposition to the meanings that those producing and circulating images may have intended. Theorists engaging with the visual traces of the Holocaust also articulate photography as a source of spectator connection to victims, identifying in photographs the capacity to transmit memories.¹⁰ These accounts invest

photographs with the power to generate connections to past suffering through cultivating imagination and generating a relationship to the memories of Holocaust victims. In both of these strains of thought, the spectator's imagining can develop connective tissue with the photographed subject.

Recent critiques by Jenny Edkins (2013a, 2013b, 2015) and Andreja Zevnik (2015) contest the naturalness of a connection between the portrait and the interior life of the photographed subject. However, Edkins affirms the political potential for a meaningful exchange of gazes between the portrait and the observer, grounded in the portrait's affective force and capable of causing upheavals at the micro-level of the individual gazing subject. According to Edkins, it is not what the portrait makes us understand about the interiority of the photographed subject that matters; rather, "how it disturbs the distribution of the sensible, how it makes us react, and how it repositions us is what counts" (Edkins 2013a: 426). The political moment in engaging with portraiture comes through both a reflection on mutual vulnerability and, more directly, through the affective force of encounter. Such an encounter is premised on the face-to-face encounter between the spectator and photographed individual. These approaches carry a shared investment in the portrait as evidence, but also connect the potential for affective, ethical, or political encounter to the portrait as a point of access to the photographed subject as an instance of irreducible particularity, or in Edkins's words, a "person-as-such" (2011: vii).

The *Before We Perished* installation approaches the Będzin portraits in search of the individual lives lost in the Holocaust, not unlike Barthes's search for his mother in the Winter Garden photograph.¹¹ The installation seems to offer an opportunity for museum visitors to come in contact with "the impossible science of the unique being" (Barthes 1982: 71). The potential for delayed face-to-face encounters between visitors and the irreducibly particular individuals in the portraits also hinges on interpretive investments in the communicative

capacities of photographic portraits. In an earlier critique of the material proofs of Nazi crimes displayed in the barracks of the permanent exhibits at Auschwitz I, James E. Young argues that, through piles of artifacts, "victims are known only by their absence, by the moment of their destruction" (1993: 132). Unlike shorn hair, amassed shoes, or other artifacts that have been used to represent the massive scale of the murders perpetrated at Auschwitz-Birkenau, these portraits suggest the possibility of remembering victims as specific individuals, but also as interconnected, relational beings.

Unlike other artifacts, documentary images depicting direct violence, or identity photographs, these portraits are not the product of the Auschwitz-Birkenau machine of exploitation and death. In this way, the installation's portraits perform the pedagogical function of reflecting a mode of Jewish life beyond the obscene violence of the Holocaust.¹² Affirming the specificity of individual lives in the present, the installation attempts to provide a degree of redress for the dehumanizing crimes of the past.¹³ In gazing back at the portraits, visitors can both reflect on the specificity of lives that were and situate these lives within the broader narrative of the Holocaust imparted by the ABSM's other exhibits. The publications that contextualize the installation each suggest that the specificity of the portraits bring the deceased subjects into the present moment through visitors' reanimation of their faces with stories and memories. However, these texts address the portraits *as photographs* rather than in their material transformation into a memorial exhibit. This transformation changes the social uses of the collection and the character of the potential encounter between portrait and viewer.

Material transformations and relations

The ABSM and Weiss commentaries on *Before They Perished* each approach the collection as *photographs* – as printed images held in the hand, adhered to album pages, or reproduced in books.

However, museum visitors encounter the collection as an installation within a broader exhibit. As an installation, the photographs are transformed from individual prints to a collection that is arranged on a series of wall surfaces and is entwined with the non-photographic elements of the exhibit, altering the meaning and social use of the portraits. The material transformation of the Będzin portraits into the *Before They Perished* installation, I argue, creates an encounter with the portraits as evidence of specific, individual victims as well as symbolic both of the multitude of Jewish victims and the destruction of the Jewish communities of Europe. The affective relations between the portraits and the other aesthetic elements of the installation tether the evidentiary function of the photographs to the symbolic task of representing absent – and thus abstract – others. The material transformations of the photographs into the installation structure the encounter with the portraits by engaging a tension inherent to the memory of mass violence. Given the nature of violence against individuals committed with the intent to destroy a community, memorializing genocide requires marking specificities of individual victims alongside the collectivizing character of such violence. This tethering of face and number makes visible a tension between the one and the many, documenting both the specificity of individual victims and symbolizing the broader losses of communities.

Elizabeth Edwards (2012) contends that photographs are not exclusively visual objects, but are also social. Their meanings and uses are shaped by their material and social conditions of existence. A photograph's image content provides a basis for understanding photographs – one structured by investments in photographic meaning discussed in the previous section. However, Edwards explains, image content is only one half of a "double helix of photographic meaning", which also includes a photograph's material formats and relations (224). Analyzing photographs in terms of both image content and material relations identifies not only what photographs visually depict but also how they matter to the people who use them. The material

relations of images operate on two registers: "placing" and "remediation" (226). Placing refers to the environment in which photographs appear and is frequently articulated in relation to notions of appropriateness, indicating the status of both the depicted individual and the portrait as an object of value (226). Remediation is the changing formats of the photograph and the material changes the image undergoes to serve different purposes (227). Where a photograph is placed and its format both indicate how that particular image matters and the range of uses for which it is available: a small portrait in a wallet matters and is used differently than a portrait enlarged, framed, and hung on a wall. These changes in the material relations of the photograph will not matter universally, nor will the different uses of a photograph be available to or of consequence to all viewers.¹⁴

The *Before They Perished* installation's portraits are multiply transformed objects. Placing and remediation practice shape how the photographs have been used and have mattered. The installation's structure and aesthetic introduce a tension by coupling the specificity of documentary portraits with their use as symbols of the many hundreds of thousands more unseen victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The tension between specificity and abstraction, I argue, introduces a space for contemplating the magnitude of Jewish lives and communities lost in the Holocaust.

Material transformations: the photographs

The photographs reproduced on the walls of the *Before They Perished* installation are a selection of a collection of 2,400 photographs, which have undergone multiple material transformations from their creation in pre-war Poland to their installation as part of the Central Camp Sauna permanent exhibit in 2001. The photographs were discovered in a suitcase in the so-called Kanada sector of Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1951. The suitcase was an amalgamation of photographic collections, the majority belonging to several families from the town of Będzin and the surrounding

Zagłębie region. Many of the photographs were made in professional photo studios, while a significant number were taken by amateur family photographers. The original prints would have been likely collected in albums and displayed in frames around family homes, illustrating familial bonds and serving as *aides-mémoire* accompanying stories about distant or departed relations.¹⁵ In family albums, the portraits matter because of their familial significance and illustration of relationships with near and distant relations. The use of the photographs as *aides-mémoire* took on a new urgency with the imposition of the Będzin ghetto in July 1940.¹⁶ As Jewish families were subject to increasingly confined spaces and to escalating persecution, the decisions to save photographs reflect their value as the archive of a community and the collectors' desire to preserve an account of their ways of life and familial relations, each violently disrupted.

This removal of photographs from albums and other conditions of display was a curatorial act instigated by the violence of the Holocaust, undertaken with scarce resources and at great risk.¹⁷ Attempts to salvage photographs, Loewy observes, were attempts to preserve family bonds and to maintain the hope of reunification after the war (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 11). Upon or before the August 1943 liquidation of the Będzin ghetto, the suitcase archive travelled to Auschwitz-Birkenau with the ghetto prisoners. Along with all other confiscated Jewish possessions, the suitcase would have been reduced to its use-value to the Nazi war machine – its placement in the Kanada sector warehouse signals the way the photographs were made to *not* matter. Indeed, had the contents of the suitcase been discovered prior to the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the photographs would most likely have been destroyed along with any other documentary evidence of the lives of victims.

Following the discovery of the suitcase in 1951 by museum employees, the transformations of the photographs into makeshift albums and a film made the collection matter as commemorative and pedagogical objects.¹⁸ Not only did these

photographs provide evidence of a small number of the Jewish victims of Auschwitz-Birkenau, they were placed within spaces of memorialization and eventually became objects of research. In 1994, historians at the ABSM and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum collaborated on a project seeking to identify the faces in the photographs – a task that saw the photographs removed from the makeshift albums, copied, archived, and published.¹⁹ This identification project sought to provide a degree of redress to victims and to restore the sense of appropriateness transgressed by the confiscation of the images. As the ABSM and Weiss publications each narrate, the restoration of an appropriate condition of display was seen as an attempt to restore the identity and dignity stripped from victims of the Holocaust.

Both the specific violations endured by the individuals depicted in these photographs and the broader violence of the Holocaust structures the uses of these photographs and the ways they are made to matter. Kersten Brandt observes: "This collection of photographs came into existence through the murder of their owners. Today the pictures, private memories of the dead, are also documents of the crime that has been committed against their owners" (2006: 8). As documents of crimes committed, the photographs are also documents of the simultaneous targets of these crimes: the specific bodies of individuals and the Jewish communities of which specific victims were part. The material transformations of the Będzin portraits and the multiple webs of material and social relations in which they have been placed affect the ways these photographs have been used, interpreted, and made to matter.

Material relations: the installation

Analyzing photographs as material – and materially transformed – objects attends to the different ways a photograph's mattering is subject to shifting material conditions. The transformation of the Będzin portraits into an installation in the former so-called Central Camp Sauna building inserted the images into

a new material and relational context, further shaping what the photographs mean and how they matter. The photographs in the installation form a collage of sepia-toned images with white borders. Appearing as an extended page of a family album, the wall creates a visual intimacy between the many faces, gesturing towards their connection in life as well as in death. The installation's interior provides specific details about many of the individuals depicted on the exterior walls, performing the belated restorative gesture of creating a new memorial album and, perhaps, returning some of the specificity and humanity stripped away by the processes described in the tour of the so-called Sauna building. Unlike the cramped conditions of the suitcase archive or the hastily prepared post-war albums, the treatment of the photographs in the installation accords with Euro-Western conceptions of appropriateness. The broader relational context – a room in a former building of the Auschwitz II-Birkenau concentration camp, a room that visitors arrive in towards the end of an extended tour – is one of somber reflection.

The placement and remediation of the installation's photographs indicate their significance: they are memorial objects. Their memorial status is entwined with investments in the portraits' ability to provide evidence of and establish a potential encounter with the photographed individual. An image produced in life and now viewed after death creates an opportunity for visitors to reflect on specific individual lives through their portraits, thus offering an intimate way of considering the destruction of the Holocaust. The opportunity to connect with specific victims is premised on the portrait's potential – as a piece of indexical evidence – to bring the photographed individual, her life, and her violent death into the life-world of the visitor; constituting a "documentary space" of encounter (Sobchak 1984: 294). This connection interrupts the abstract knowledge that statistical modes of narration seem to furnish with the concrete texture of individual lives.²⁰

The affective work of the installation as a whole – the space of encounter with the portraits – introduces a tension to the space of encounter between visitor and photographed individual. The portraits may indeed provide evidence of both murdered victims and the gulf between the time of their photographs and the time of contemporary museum visits, but the non-photographic aesthetic features of the installation tether the faces of specific individuals to the more abstract multiplicity of victims. The material and aesthetic elements of the installation introduce symbolic considerations into the connection to individual portraits and their specificity in three ways. First, the size of the wall and its expansive reflections invite connections to lives beyond those included in this collection. Second, the anonymity of the portraits on the exterior walls offers these faces as symbolic of the many more unseen and unknown faces of victims. Third, the presence of a cart used to transport human ashes tethers faces to fate: the photos invite the consideration of life beyond death, but the ash cart punctuates the stories of individuals and the installation as a whole.

The photographic objects in the installation exist alongside and are affected by other material elements. Overhead spotlights and surrounding black granite elements illuminate and reflect the portraits, giving the installation a funerary tone. The exterior walls of the exhibit do not offer explicit information about the faces in the portraits, but the shining granite floors and tablet engraved with an epitaph-like quotation reference the sheen of headstones. The massive principle wall of the installation extends to the ceiling and across the length of the room, leaving a small space on either side for visitors to pass through. Covered in nearly 400 photographs, the wall fills the room with the affective force of hundreds of faces: a room-sized headstone substituting the individual grave markers that none of these faces received.

The expansiveness of the wall of portraits – and its reflection in the room's floor and tinted windows – continues as visitors move beyond the principle walls to the second and third walls

and the interior space of the installation. *There are always more faces.* The affective force of the multiplicity of faces overwhelms, gesturing to the absence of the many hundreds of thousands of faces that are not included in the exhibit. In this referencing, the structure of the exhibit guides imaginations away from encounters with individual victims vis-à-vis their specific portraits. Similarly, these few families from Będzin become visual symbols of the hundreds of other Jewish communities across Poland and throughout Europe that were violently fractured by the violence of the Holocaust. Numbers – and the gap between the sublime terror they articulate and the limits of the imagination – encircle the installation. But the installation works outside of numbers to articulate the magnitude of violence endured by individuals and communities in ways that complicate reductive statistics and spark the emotional responses often numbed by counting alone. The specificity of the faces on the wall supplies much of the installation's affective force. But that force also comes from the multiplicity of portraits and the other unimaginable, abstracting numbers circulating through the broader museum. In exceeding the bounds of the room, the installation's walls visually gesture towards the ways the number of dead exceeds the bounds of the imagination.

The exterior walls of the installation emphasize the memorial function of the photographs, but do not establish the specificity of the individual faces in the portraits. Through their number and anonymity, the portraits on the exterior walls of the installation – and the visual structure of the installation as a whole – encourage visitors to make associations between the specific faces in the exhibited portraits and the hundreds of thousands more who perished, for who we have no photographic traces. A poetic reconstruction of Będzin, the installation invites consideration of the many other Jewish worlds destroyed by genocidal violence. In referencing these many more victims, the installation inhabits the tension created by the way genocide seeks to destroy both individual

bodies and whole communities. The numerical sublime that characterizes much of the ABSM is bracketed in this space. Symbolically referring to a seemingly countless numbers of victims, the exhibit moves between the particular and the general to encircle the tension between – on the one hand, memorializing the specificity of individual victims and the broader losses of community and, on the other, visually reproducing the collectivizing character of mass violence.

The portraits – both named and anonymous – intend to place the victims of the Holocaust in a broader narrative that extends beyond the story of their deaths to include details of their lives. Where other documentary photographs used throughout the museum depict the camp's operation and visually trap victims within the obscenity of the violence they endured, these portraits present individuals in the context of life (Liss 1998). However, the presence of a cart used to transport cremated human remains, which sits opposite the installation's principle wall weighs upon the installation's gesture towards restorative redress. Placed alone in the middle of an adjacent room, the cart is visible through a large window. Visitors see the cart on their right upon entering the room, before turning to face the installation. When viewing this principle wall, visitors are positioned between the portraits and the cart. In this space, any face-to-face encounter between the portraits and spectators also includes a material tool of the genocide within the field of vision.

The cart references the technology used in the mass murder and destruction of hundreds of thousands of bodies. Its location adjacent the principle wall of the installation punctuates the restorative biographies the exhibits intends to provide and connects the specific individual spaces to the broader apparatus of violence. Similar to the ways the size of the walls reference the unimaginable expanse of victims and body counts, the cart recalls a violent machinery of death that challenge the limits of the imagination. The presence of the cart grounds the symbolic

encounter with victims by tethering individual faces to the larger story of the Holocaust and the material functioning of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Coda

The *Before The Perished* installation aims to create a memorial and pedagogical space for visitors, unique within the ABSM. Presented as traces of individual victims with whom museum visitors might affectively connect, the installation's portraits create potential encounters between photographed individuals and spectators. The memorial function of the images turns on social investments in the portraits as evidence of particular lives. Non-photographic elements of the installation further structure the portraits' symbolic meanings. The physical structure of the installation's walls, the absence and presence of names, and the nearby ash cart create a context for interpreting the portraits as documents of specific individuals and as an entry point for considering the magnitude of loss of many more unseen victims and the communities of which they were part.

The aesthetics of the installation expand its photographic meaning outwards, from the documentary towards the symbolic. These portraits are not only a reference point to specific individual lives, but are also abstracted and connected to others through the statistical accounts of their cumulative deaths. In the context of the Holocaust and its memorialization, there is a gap between what happened, what can be known, and what can be grasped by the imagination (Ray 2009). Numbers, with their promise of dispassionate and objective fact, circulate throughout ABSM. The body count and the statistic are a palliative for the vast gap between the apprehension and comprehension of the Holocaust's sublime terror (Shapiro 2016: 161). However, the knowledge the number promises is abstract, untethered from the specificity of life and loss. Within the installation, these two narrative forms – the specific face and the abstract number – bleed into one another, not unlike the conjoined wall and reflection. The documentary function

of the portraits anchors visitors' imaginations in the particularity of individual lives, while the multiplicity of photographs and their display references the expansiveness of the crimes committed at Auschwitz-Birkenau. When moving through the installation's walls of portraits, the magnitude of violence can be felt at the levels of irreducible, individual lives lost, the dislocation of families, and of the destruction of European Jewish communities.

With its shift from artifacts to portraits and from processes to persons, the installation is distinct from the rest of the so-called Sauna building and museum. The installation is a modest reprieve from the number. It offers a brief space of encounter with the specificity of victims and an opportunity for reflection – a connection that is uniquely linked to the portraits and our investments in them. The aesthetic elements of the installation recruit the portraits' connection with photographed individuals to the task of symbolically representing absent others. Rather than attempting to resolve the tension between memorializing the one and the many, the installation dwells within that tension. *There are always more faces.*

Acknowledgments

This paper is informed by research conducted in July 2015 at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, which was generously supported by the Auschwitz Jewish Centre "A Bridge to History" fellowship. The observations and arguments made in this paper, as well as its shortcomings, are my own and do not reflect the opinions of Auschwitz Jewish Centre. I owe many thanks to Sharon Sliwinski, Jenny Edkins, Doris Bergen, Michael Shapiro, and Marta Bashovski for reading earlier drafts of this paper. Their thoughtful comments are very much present in its current form.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Notes

1. Standard tours of Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum end at the International Monument; however, extended study tours of the site include the Central Camp Sauna building, the sites of Gas Chambers and Crematoria IV and V, and ponds where ashes were deposited.
2. The memorial use of portraits is not unique to Birkenau, but is a memorial trope that appears in many museums around the world, including the Tower of Faces at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) (Washington DC, USA), the Klarsfeld Pillars at the Museum of Jewish Heritage (New York, USA), Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum (Vilnius, Lithuania), Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum (Phnom Penh, Cambodia), and Kigali Genocide Memorial Centre (Kigali, Rwanda). Research on the ABSM and other Holocaust memorial museums has yet to address this specific installation in detail or to analyze the social uses of portraiture within the space. For analyses of the Tower of Faces installation at the USHMM, see Liss (1998); Crownshaw (2010). Notable engagements with the role of photographs at the ABSM include Didi-Huberman (2008); Stone (2001); Young (1993); Gutman and Guterman (2002).
3. Theoretical articulations of the political potential of photography typically invoke a theoretical trajectory that connects looking at images of suffering to actions undertaken in response to what is seen, culminating in a broader political change. These theories tend to involve a model of spectators' deep imaginative engagement with the content, context, and circulation of photographs. For examples, see Azoulay (2008, 2012); Linfield (2011); Möller (2013); Reinhardt (2012).
4. Once separated, these objects would join others in the so-called Kanada storage area, where they would be repurposed or redistributed to German soldiers and citizens. The photographs, useless to the war effort, would be burned in a crematorium specifically used for the destruction of documents taken from prisoners, a process bent on destroying memory and evidence of victims' lives along with their bodies.
5. The hallways of Block 6 are lined with hundreds of images of "prisoners", taken upon their registration at the concentration camp. The practice of photographing prisoners upon arrival at the camp ended in the spring of 1943. For more on these images and

- their function as evidence of both victims and of the bureaucratic apparatus of violence, see chapter four of Struk (2004) and Dobrowolski (2005).
6. Upon their discovery in a suitcase in 1951, ABSM researchers have used a combination of Polish archives, archives held at Yad Vashem, and interviews with Holocaust survivors to identify many of the faces captured in these photographs (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006; Weiss 2001).
 7. The Enlightenment logics that invested numbers with the seeming ability to furnish impartial pre-interpretive or non-interpretive knowledge free from theorization continue in contemporary struggles for understanding invests numerical representation as objective, value-free, dispassionate knowledge (Merry 2016; Poovey 1998).
 8. In creating distance between the material world and its observation, abstracting representations create a feeling of superiority and control in the viewer. For example, Susan Buck-Morss explains Kant's turn to aesthetic representation in response to the sublime terror posed by a threatening nature. Establishing a distanced view of nature – such as through a painting, photograph, or an image conjured by one's own imagination – creates a vantage point from which "nature is small and our superiority immense" and men can judge themselves as independent of and superior to nature (Buck-Morss 1992: 8–9).
 9. Sekula contends "every proper portrait has its lurking, objectifying inverse in the files of the police" (1986: 7). Similarly, Galton's composites lurk within the family snapshots of Będzin. When spectators approach the Central Sauna portrait installation in the decades since the destruction of Europe's Jewish communities, they may indeed attempt to "read history in a pair of eyes" (Weiss 2001: 21), but they may also carry vestiges of racial composites with them. The composites of Galton and other eugenicists, Smith observes, "crystallizes a racial 'type', equating a multitude of people with a single, imaginary face, a face that apparently will haunt and circumscribe one's future conceptions of diverse individuals" (1999: 49). The effects of eugenicists endure, not necessarily in racially motivated violence but in the very imaginative capacities of spectators that the exhibit seeks to awaken.
 10. Hirsch's conception of "postmemory" is central to this strain of theory. See Hirsch (2001, 2012) and Apel (2002).
 11. As Liss notes, observers of these photographs have the benefit of multiple images or the memories of a fully lived life in their search for an image of Holocaust victims (1998: 6).
 12. Holtschneider observes that Jewish family photographs are frequently included in Holocaust museums to illustrate "Jewishness", to create a connection between visitors and the lives of Jewish individuals prior to their victimization, and to "help visitors grasp the individuality of victims of the Holocaust" (2001: 58).
 13. Liss characterizes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's *Tower of Faces* installation displaying Ya'fa Eliah's collection of photographs from the shtetl of Eishyshok, Lithuania as a work that intends to restore the identity of individual victims through a modest work of mourning that implicitly references the Holocaust in a way that allows the photographed subjects to exist beyond the violence they endured.
 14. Working from an anthropological perspective, Edwards notes that sensibilities about the "appropriate" uses and placing of photographs varies widely across social and cultural contexts. Anthropologies of photography have contributed to photography theory through a "decentering of the normative assumption about the nature of photographs and has challenged and complicated the dominant categories of Western photographic analysis" (2012: 225). In the particular context of the *Before They Perished* installation, I understand the investment in the meaning of these portraits and their display to be generally consistent with broadly European (or Western) sensibilities about photography and subjectivity.
 15. Both Langford (2001) and Hirsch (1997) note the constitutive incompleteness of the family album: they are partial reflections of family lives, intended to be accompanied by stories and other forms of narration. Similarly, the photographs in these collections reflect the partiality of an album, capturing many varieties of notable moments without offering explanatory narratives.
 16. In July 1940, after months of escalating persecution and violence, the Jewish families from across the Zagłębie Dąbrowskie region were forcibly moved to Będzin and formation of an official "Jewish Quarter" or ghetto was announced. The ghetto existed until its final liquidation on 1–3 August 1943, when all remaining ghetto prisoners were transferred to KL

Auschwitz-Birkenau. For a detailed history of the Jewish community of Będzin and their persecution and destruction in the Holocaust, see Fulbrook (2012).

17. In his analysis of the four so-called Sonderkommando Photographs, Georges Didi-Huberman describes the Holocaust as an “infinitely large, complex, ramified, multiform historical phenomenon”, arguing that these four photographs are valuable depictions of the violence of the Holocaust despite the fact that there can be no singular iconic image of the Holocaust (2008: 58). Following Didi-Huberman, I interpret these photographs as images depicting violence because of the structural role of the Holocaust in their transformation from family photographs to an archive.
18. The ABSM founders pasted the photographs into four makeshift albums fashioned from account books with carpenters glue, arranging them according to image size (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 4). The photographs certified the existence of Jewish victims in ways that were not distinguished from the other forms of evidence being preserved to document the violence of the camp. In 1974, Jerzy Ziarnik reproduced the photographs in a short film, “Patrzę na twoją fotografię” (“I am looking at your photograph”), a remediation that circulated the collection beyond the camp and made visible the faces of some of the victims of the Holocaust within Polish cinema. The film marked a shift in treatments of the Holocaust in Polish cinema from a period of “organized forgetting” and private memory to a framing of the genocide as part of a broader public memory. For more on the film and its place in the history of Polish cinema and the Holocaust, see Haltof 2012: 216–7.
19. The identification project made use of another photographic archive: a collection of 4,700 passport photographs of the Jewish community of Będzin, which had been confiscated by German authorities. This collection is located in the Yad Vashem archives and is part of a larger collection of 27,000 passport photographs (Brandt, Loewy, and Oleksy 2006: 14; Pollin 1999: 350).
20. The potential for such connection is key to the goal of redress, which is shared by similar exhibits in other Holocaust memorial museums, such as the Tower of Faces at the USHMM (Liss 1998).

Danielle Taschereau Mamers is an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Humanities at the University of Toronto. Her work has appeared in *Visual Studies* and *Reflections: Auschwitz Jewish Centre Alumni Journal*.

References

- Apel, Dora. 2002. *Memory Effects: The Holocaust and the Art of Secondary Witnessing*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Azoulay, Ariella. 2008. *The Civil Contract of Photography*. New York: Zone Books.
- Azoulay, Ariella. 2012. *Civil Imagination: A Political Ontology of Photography*. London: Verso.
- Baer, Ulrich. 2002. *Spectral Evidence: The Photography of Trauma*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Barthes, Roland. 1982. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York, NY: Hill and Wang.
- Benjamin, Walter. 2008. *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*. Edited by Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin. Translated by Edmund Jephcott et al. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brandt, Kersten, and Hanno Loewy. 2003. “Hinter den Bildern. Ausgelöschte Geschichten und die Suche nach ihren Spuren. Recherchen zu den Bildern der Deportierten im Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau.” [Behind the Images: Researching Pictures of Deportees in the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum]. *Fotogeschichte* 87: 29–41.
- Brandt, Kersten, Hanno Loewy, and Krystyna Oleksy. 2006. *Before They Perished: Photographs Found in Auschwitz*. Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.
- Buck-Morss, Susan. 1992. “Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin’s Artwork Essay Reconsidered.” *October* 62: 3–41.
- Crownshaw, Richard. 2010. *The Afterlife of Holocaust Memory in Contemporary Literature and Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Didi-Huberman, Georges. 2008. *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs from Auschwitz*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

- Dobrowolski, Ireneusz, Dir. 2005. *Portrecista*. TVPI, Poland. Aired 01 January 2006. Television Film.
- Edkins, Jenny. 2011. *Missing: Persons and Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Edkins, Jenny. 2013a. "Still Face, Moving Face." *Journal for Cultural Research* 17 (4): 414–429.
- Edkins, Jenny. 2013b. "Politics and Personhood: Reflections on the Portrait Photograph." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 38 (2): 139–154.
- Edkins, Jenny. 2015. *Face Politics*. London: Routledge.
- Edwards, Elizabeth. 2012. "Objects of Affect: Photography beyond the Image." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 41: 221–234.
- Ewing, William A. 2006. *Face: The New Photographic Portrait*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Friedländer, Saul. 1989. "The 'Final Solution': Unease in Interpretation." *History and Memory* 1 (2): 61–76.
- Fulbrook, Mary. 2012. *A Small Town near Auschwitz: Ordinary Nazis and the Holocaust*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gutman, Israel, and Belah Güterman, eds. 2002. *The Auschwitz Album: The Story of a Transport*. Jerusalem: Yad Vashem Publications.
- Haltof, Marek. 2012. *Polish Film and the Holocaust: Politics and Memory*. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Hamilton, Peter. 2001. *The Beautiful and the Damned: The Creation of Identity in Nineteenth Century Photography*. London: National Portrait Gallery.
- Hirsch, Marianne. 1997. *Family Frames: Photography, Narrative, and Postmemory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hirsch, Marianne. 2001. "Surviving Images: Holocaust Photographs and the Work of Postmemory." *The Yale Journal of Criticism* 14 (1): 5–37.
- Hirsch, Marianne. 2012. *The Generation of Postmemory: Writing and Visual Culture after the Holocaust*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Holtschneider, Hannah K. 2001. *The Holocaust and Representation of Jews: History and Identity in the Museum*. London: Routledge.
- Kozloff, Max. 2007. *The Theatre of the Face: Portrait Photography since 1900*. London: Phaidon.
- Langford, Martha. 2001. *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Linfield, Susie. 2011. *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Liss, Andrea. 1998. *Trespassing through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Maddow, Ben. 1977. *Faces: A Narrative History of the Portrait in Photography*. Boston: New York Graphics Society.
- Merry, Sally Engle. 2016. *The Seductions of Quantification*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Möller, Frank. 2013. *Visual Peace: Images, Spectatorship, and the Politics of Violence*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pollin, Teresa Amiel. 1999. "Photographs from Auschwitz." *History of Photography* 25 (4): 350–355.
- Poovey, Mary. 1998. *A History of the Modern Fact*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ray, Gene. 2009. "From Trauma and the Sublime to Radical Critique." *Third Text* 23 (2): 135–149.
- Reinhardt, Mark. 2012. "Painful Photographs: From the Ethics of Spectatorship to Visual Politics." In *Ethics and Images of Pain*, edited by Asbjørn Grønstad and Henrik Gustafsson. New York: Routledge, 33–56.
- Sekula, Allen. 1986. "The Body and the Archive." *October* 39: 3–64.
- Shapiro, Michael J. 2016. *Politics and Time: Documenting the Event*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Smith, Shawn Michelle. 1999. *American Archives: Gender, Race, and Class in Visual Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Sobchak, Vivian. 1984. "Inscribing Ethical Space: Ten Propositions on Death, Representation, and Documentary." *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 9: 283–300.
- Stone, Dan. 2001. "The Sonderkommando Photographs." *Jewish Social Studies* 7 (3): 132–148.
- Struk, Janina. 2004. *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence*. London: IB Tauris.
- Weiss, Ann. 2001. *The Last Album: Eyes from the Ashes of Auschwitz-Birkenau*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

Young, James. 1993. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Zevnik, Andreja. 2015. "The Politics of the Face: The Scopic Regime and the (Un-) Masking of the Political Subject." *Journal for Cultural Research* 20 (2): 1–15.