



Dave Griffith

Wrecking the Disimagination Machine

The Abu Ghraib photos do not show torture or death or even physical harm. They show “fooling around,” “letting off steam,” “abuse” rather than “torture.” They are merely “humiliating” the prisoners, nothing more.

These were some of the first words that I wrote when drafting my book of essays *A Good War is Hard to Find: The Art of Violence in America* (Soft Skull Press, 2006). Many will remember Abu Ghraib as an Iraqi prison that was used by the American military to detain hundreds of suspected Al Qaeda operatives during the early days of the War on Terror, a prison that would become infamous when digital photos taken by Army reservist Charles Graner were leaked to the press. The images depict inmates of the prison, mostly Iraqi men, being subjected to grotesque acts of abuse and humiliation: Prisoners being stacked in human pyramids; a man with a sandbag over his head, forced to balance atop a box, his fingers connected to electrical wires and told that he would be electrocuted if he stepped off it; two prisoners forced to pantomime oral sex; a prisoner cowering before a snarling, snapping attack dog; and last, arguably the most damning of all, a photo of Charles Graner’s girlfriend, then-18 year old reservist Lynndie England, holding what appears to be a dog leash, the other end of which is around the neck of a naked prisoner lying on the cellblock floor.

These photos became the first pieces of evidence that the United States’ War on Terror had led the country into legally, morally, and ethically indefensible territory, and they stirred in me a deep disgust that seemed connected to something far beyond the photos into my own adolescence, watching *Faces of Death* at a middle-school make-out party, reading *Hiroshima*, John Hersey’s landmark work of narrative journalism, or, later, in high school, watching David Lynch’s *Blue Velvet* in the basement of my best friend’s

house what I would come to refer to as my visual education in violence. The photos also reminded me of a passage from Flannery O'Connor's 1960 essay "Some Aspects of the Grotesque in Southern Fiction": "[P]rophesy," she writes, "is a matter of seeing near things with their extensions of meaning and thus of seeing far things close up. The prophet is a realist of distances, and it is this kind of realism that you find in the best modern instances of the grotesque" (817). Truly, the photos of torture were grotesque in the usual sense, but they were also grotesque in the literary sense that O'Connor masterfully wielded. The repulsive acts on the surface of these photos were connected to some deeper truth of human depravity and spiritual deformity; a need to dominate and humiliate the Other.

In my attempt to trace these attitudes toward torture and abuse back to their origins, I looked to Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others*, and her *New York Times Magazine* follow-up "Regarding the Torture of Others," in which she wonders if pornography might be to blame. I read every single book I could get my hands on dealing with torture from a historical and medical perspective. I even audited a law school course titled International Law and the Use of Force. It was my hope that if I narrated my search in an artful enough way that the reader would feel invited to engage in their own search and reflection on the sources of their attitudes toward violence. Further, my hope was that by speaking frankly not just about the Abu Ghraib photos, but those first images of violence that I felt had shaped my conscience—the bombing of Baghdad in the first Gulf War, the beating of Rodney King by LAPD officers, the rape of Marcellus Wallace in *Pulp Fiction*—that I would be able to draw attention to the culture of fascination and celebration around representations of violence in media and entertainment and its connection to who *we* feel is deserving of pain, punishment, and destruction.

I had felt this darkness before in other photos. The ones that came most readily to mind were those of piles of dead bodies in Nazis concentration camps. The one in particular that came to mind I had never actually seen. It had only been described to me. In Flannery O'Connor's "The Displaced Person," a story about a refugee family from Poland, fleeing the violence of World War II that come to live on a farm

in rural Georgia, Mrs. Shortley, the bigoted wife of the farm's handyman, recalls a disturbing newsreel image from a Nazis prison camp:

Mrs. Shortley recalled a newsreel she had seen once of a small room piled high with bodies of dead naked people all in a heap, their arms and legs tangled together, a head thrust in here, a head there, a foot, a knee, a part that should have been covered up sticking out, a hand raised clutching nothing. Before you could realize that it was real and take it into your head, the picture changed and a hollow-sounding voice was saying "Time marches on!" (287).

This passage would eventually become the epigraph for my book. It established a strong visual analog for the pyramid of bodies in the Abu Ghraib photos, and, in its last sentence, provides an example of how mediated images, even documentary images, like those in the newsreel, participate in the building and support of "regimes of reality."

The concept of "regimes of reality" is a derivation of Michel Foucault's concept "regimes of truth." In a 1977 interview titled "The Political Function of Intellectual," Foucault remarks:

Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse it harbours and causes to function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the way in which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures which are valorised for obtaining truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (13).

I am very conscious how much more visible the techniques and procedures for manipulating and distorting the truth have become, and how much the mechanisms to distinguish truth from falsity have been eroded. As a result, I believe the personal essay is uniquely suited as a form to giving voice to those whose voices were silenced or snuffed out, as well as uniquely suited to shattering the mesmerizing artifice created by sentimental and prosaically ultra-violent depictions of violence.

My argument is that the personal essay that bears witness to violence is one of the most effective redresses of ideologically motivated distortions of reality, especially those attempts to normalize violence. This is not so much because nonfiction (like photography) has ontological claims on the truth—though that is part of it—but because of the ways that the personal essay resists the plotting (and plodding) mode of cause and effect narration Erich Auerbach calls the “uninterrogated procession of phenomena” (7) in favor of a style that is less chronological, more “polyphonic” and interested in the mercurial “inner movements” of the author (289).

The personal essay has the capacity to disrupt and talk back to regimes of reality because while regimes seek to create narratives that are univocal and authoritative, the essay embraces the contradictions found in a single human life, as well as across the lives of those living in the same country, city, community, or block. Singular, stable, accounts, such as government and corporate press releases, and political propaganda, claim to promote truth and unity but are distortions of reality. Their purpose is to seize and control the terms of the narrative and quash any of the ambiguity, reflectiveness, and intimacy of the individual’s lived experience. This is why the essay is so dangerous to regimes intent on controlling people and their opinions. The personal essay isolates moments, events, and feelings that are personally revelatory, describe experiences that are difficult and traumatic, but also that speak of private joys that are not often publicly shared.

The essay’s power, then, comes from the awe-inspiring resiliency, mutability, and desire for connection in each person; how a single event or series of events came to shape and change the author’s perception and feeling of being in the world, and in some circumstances the very physical, brick and mortar nature of their reality. Regimes of reality carefully choose and police whose whose experiences and revelations get shared in service of maintaining power and control. The result is a carefully pruned and edited version of reality, one that erases the stories and experiences of those whose narratives are unruly.

Ander Monson has suggested in his essay “Essay as Hack,” the personal essay is “flexible technology” (17). It is a tool for processing profound and traumatic events. Part seismograph and part regression calculator, the essay becomes a way of noticing, analyzing, recording, and making sense of patterns in our lives and in the world; drawing them close for inspection so others may witness their power, as well as potentially see them as part of the patterns in their own life, or the lives of others.

The concept of the Real and Realism has its roots in the early Greek philosophy’s concerns with defining truth and falsity. Theologian Thomas Aquinas, informed by Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* would write: “Veritas est adaequatio rei et intellectus” (“Truth is the adequation of things and intellect.”). Eight hundred or so years later, Spanish poet, novelist, and philosopher Miguel de Unamuno writes in *The Tragic Sense of Life in Men and Nations*: “Language is that which gives us reality, and not as a mere vehicle of reality, but as its true flesh, of which all the rest, dumb or inarticulate representation, is merely the skeleton” (311). If we follow this tradition, and believe that language is the wellspring of reality, then nonfiction, especially the personal essay and memoir, should provide us with a kind of unadulterated access to the Real.

According to most commentators on Aquinas, in his definition “adequation” mean “conformity.” In other words, truth is the conformity of things to intellect. As Aquinas writes in his *Summa Theologica*, Question 16, the truth is relational: “The thing is the ‘cause’ of the truth that is in the intellect.” It is this definition of the truth that makes personal narrative such a powerful tool for self-discovery and social change. The *things* that the author puts before us cause an intellectual reckoning in which we must reject or acknowledge the truth of what we are encountering. This approach might seem overly-didactic, but actually it is the very process of building knowledge that personal narrative at its most poignant is engaged in: describing things as they appear while simultaneously subjecting those observations to scrutiny of the intellect. In other words, the essay is a pedagogical technology, which, it must be said, is not the ethos of every piece of technology.

The transcendent quality of the personal narrative that challenges and disrupts violent and oppressive regimes of reality comes from a precarious and charged tension between what lies on the surface and what lies beneath: an astute attention to the discrepancies between what seems to be and what is, or what a dominant majority has agreed is reality and what is. In the American literary tradition we see this acutely in personal essays about bearing witness to racism. James Baldwin's now-canonical essay "Notes of Native Son" immediately comes to mind, as does Richard Wright's "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow." In the last two decades, we see this tension in the Claudia Rankine's *Citizen and* Eula Biss' *Notes from No Man's Land*. In fact, "bearing witness" is perhaps the most accurate description what successful works of nonfiction do. In his 2002 *Remnants of Auschwitz*, Giorgio Agamben is concerned with what he calls "true" or "complete witnesses," those who, paradoxically, "did not bear witness and could not bear witness" because they either perished in the camps or because they "drowned" and "touched bottom" (34). They were so traumatized by the violence and privation of the camps that they literally lost the ability to speak. Agamben theorizes that survivors of the camps, like Levi, "speak in their stead, by proxy, as pseudo-witnesses; they bear witness to a missing testimony" (34). This is not to undermine the importance of such testimony, but rather to elevate the role of testimony. He writes, "Whoever assumes the charge of bearing witness in their name knows that he or she must bear witness in the name of the impossibility of bearing witness. But this alters the value of testimony in a definitive way; it makes it necessary to look for its meaning in an unexpected area." This "unexpected area" is what Agamben refers to as the realm of "non-language." Literally, he examines the case of a three year old boy known only as Hurbinek who Levi encounters in Auschwitz who either had become mute due to trauma or because he had grown up in the camps and was never taught to speak, as well as those who were so close to death that the only sounds they made were unintelligible babbling. Figuratively, he means those who were silenced by death.

While Agamben's exploration of witnessing might seem apt for an extreme, limit-case event like the Holocaust, it is actually deeply helpful in an examination of personal narrative and its potential to speak back to oppressive social structures and regimes because in defining the limits of bearing witness and testimony he more sharply defines the importance of bearing witness for others. He drives home his point by returning to Levi's encounter with the three year old boy:

During the night we listened carefully...[F]rom Hurbinek's corner there occasionally came a sound, a word. It was not, admittedly, always exactly the same word, but it was certainly an articulated word; or better, several slightly different articulated words" (38). Levi spells the word phonetically "mass-klo" or "matisklo," which the others laying in the dark listening take turns trying to translate. One of the men believes he is speaking Bohemian, saying something akin "to eat," or "bread" or "meat." Some days or weeks later Hurbinek dies, on the occasion of which Levi writes: "Nothing remains of him: he bears witness through these words of mine" (39).

For Agamben, this passage is a lesson in the importance of bearing witness despite the fact that is always an imperfect record, at a remove from the actual experience. "Perhaps every word, every writing is born, in this sense, as testimony," he writes. "This is why what is borne witness to cannot already be language or writing. It can only be something to which no one has borne witness" (39).

This relationship between subject matter—the ostensible reason for writing an essay—and commentary on that subject, and the life experiences of the author that brought them to approach the subject, is a fraught and sometimes uneasy one. I would argue that this embracing of the personal is where the literary essay derives its power to resist and/or disrupt oppressive regimes of reality that seek to eradicate the voices of the suffering and the language of dissent. This might seem like a recent development in the study of the essay, but it has actually been present since the advent of the essay, beginning with the work of Montaigne. Erich Auerbach devotes an entire chapter in his ground-breaking

work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* to a close textual, even syntactical, analysis of the kind of reality that Montaigne builds through the “peculiar form” of his essays.

According to Auerbach, Montaigne’s work is peculiar because it deviates from the dominant popular literature of his time, which tended toward collections of aphorisms and quotations accompanied by *some* commentary. However, with Montaigne “commentary predominated over text, subject matter or the point of departure was not only things read but also things lived—now his own experiences, now what he heard from others or what took place around him” (295). This quote basically describes the way the personal essay style taught in the Academy today. Furthermore, Montaigne’s essays announce “I depict no specialized body of knowledge, no special skill, which I have acquired; I present myself, Montaigne, in my entire person, and I am the first to do so” (296). Montaigne was, in part, able and empowered to be so singular in his focus and passion, and eschew the specialization found in the Academy, because he was independently wealthy. Despite this, Auerbach writes, Montaigne’s solipsism helps him resist the scholarly need to write systematically about “a large number of individuals in accordance with a plan...” an approach through which “reality is lost” (298). Montaigne, then, seems to be a kind of patron saint of those who, much like essayists today, lack a disciplinary home, and who instead roam freely over a whole host of topics, issues, and systems; who sample without accreditation from the sciences, social sciences, and humanities as needed to treat the subjects and personal experiences they encounter. To essay, then, is to not just be post-disciplinary, but to believe that witnessing requires freedom from such allegiances.

This freedom is effective in resisting regimes of reality because disciplines, and their accompanying methodologies, are more easily policed, dismissed, and discredited by political forces intent on defining “the real” in terms of what a powerful elite defines it to be. The essay, on the other hand, privileges “a method of self-auscultation . . . the observation of one’s own inner-movements . . .” (302) empowering the reader and the writer to test what they are seeing and hearing against their own experiences and feelings. Such writing, if widely practiced, read, and celebrated, creates a citizenry that is not as easily led and

manipulated into accepting the status quo; a citizenry that when it encounters a single narrative or a call for unity around a narrative for the sake of unity or patriotism, is skeptical and responds not with cynicism or despair but with a flurry of social media postings and commentary, the creation of public fora for discussion, and, of course, art.

Elaine Scarry's *The Body in Pain* is useful here for understanding how making is an antidote to the unmaking wrought by violence, and is actually "the most morally resonant of acts . . . and the most extensive" (222). Scarry writes that making does not stop "at the doorway of the house, the gateway of the city, the edge of the shore, not at the seas of the earth itself but out through the stars and galaxies (so that the Voyager spacecraft, hurtling out of the solar system with its recorder message, "Hello from the children of the earth," only makes concrete the *reach* of inventiveness that was first assumed in the opening lines of Genesis" (222). Such a grandiose vision of human making might seem ridiculous until you consider that the urge to make and build, and the biblical command to lord dominion over creation is no fairy tale. It is present in the very worst of American initiatives, from the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, to Manifest Destiny, to the Manhattan Project, to the torture perpetrated during the early days of the Global War on Terror, all were enabled and assimilated into the virtues of American democratic values by linguistically shaping reality, and then testing public tolerance for that reality through media representations and polling. Given this reality, questions about the efficacy of art in response to war, atrocity, and injustices of all kinds looms.

Henry Giroux's 2014 book *The Violence of Organized Forgetting: Thinking Beyond America's Disimagination Machine* takes aim at the kind of separation and distortion O'Connor, Foucault, and Scarry speak of through an analysis of the "elitist forces in the American society [that] are distracting, miseducating, and deterring the public from acting in its own interests." Instead of regimes of reality, he calls it the "disimagination machine." He argues that post-9/11 America has "become amnesiac" (25). The

disimagination machine is driven by authoritarianism and political extremism, but is further enabled by progressive thinkers “stuck in a discourse of foreclosure and disaster” who have fallen prey to “the relentless ambient influences of manufactured fear and commercial entertainment . . .” (23). The only solution Giroux argues, is to find ways of fostering all citizens to create counter-narratives. He writes:

It is not enough for people of conscience only to expose the falseness of the stories we are told. Educators, artists, intellectuals, workers, young people, and other concerned citizens need to create alternative narratives about what the promise of democracy might be for our communities and ourselves. This demands a break from established political parties, the creation of alternative public spheres in which to produce democratic narratives and visions, and a notion of politics that is educative, one that takes seriously how people interpret and mediate the world, how they see themselves in relation to others, and what it might mean *to imagine* otherwise in order *to act* otherwise (21).

Giroux’s call to action figures the personal essay as perhaps one of the most democratic and disruptive art forms there is, one that requires first and foremost, as Montaigne demonstrates, a curiosity about oneself. Though he does not specifically single out the personal essay as one of the ways concerned citizens can create alternate narratives that bear witness to injustice and violence, he does evoke James Baldwin, whose work is deeply concerned with the violence of forgetting and of the forces that work against bearing witness:

I argue that a politics of disimagination has emerged, in which stories, images, institutions, discourses, and other modes of representation are undermining our capacity to bear witness to a different and critical sense of remembering, agency, ethics, and collective resistance. The “disimagination machine” is both a set of cultural apparatuses—extending from schools and mainstream media to the new sites of screen culture—and a public pedagogy that functions primarily to short-circuit the ability of individuals to think critically, imagine the unimaginable, and

engage in thoughtful and critical dialogue, or, put simply, to become critically engaged citizens of the world (27-27).

The disimagination machine is most effective in places where public memory is thin or nonexistent, and where, as a result, a sense of community is lacking, a spirit that binds the residents together through an unspoken contract of looking out for one another. These places, and the people who live there, are most vulnerable to the kind of willful “forgetting” Giroux is talking about. They are places whose histories can be more easily re-written and distorted to serve exploitative political ends. As a result, Giroux calls for more activities—artistic or otherwise—where public memory is being celebrated and conserved.

In this framework, the writer of the personal essay is uniquely positioned to not only be the conservator of public memories, but also private ones, while also acting as a historian in an archive, helping to connect the part, the remnant, the fragment, to the larger whole; bringing together and attempting to reconcile the inner-reality and the outer-reality with what might be called the dominant reality, or the reality constructed by the kinds of institutions Giroux lists. In a famous passage from the title essay of Baldwin’s *Notes of a Native Son*, he wrestles with the startling revelation that it is his own hatred and anger that might be his undoing, a revelation that is so far from what he is thinking in the moment he is discriminated against by the white waitress, and so far from what I assume most readers are thinking in that moment, that our entire understanding of the effects of racism and Jim Crow-era laws are upended. Baldwin writes: “I saw nothing very clearly but I did see this: that my life, my *real* life, was in danger, and not from anything other people might do but from the hatred I carried in my own heart” (97-98).

Baldwin’s essays dramatize this separation and dislocation. There is even a “snap” at the base of his neck, as though mind and body are in that moment being severed.

More recently, Claudia Rankine’s *Citizen* (2014) strings together a series of lyrical, yet wrenching, vignettes describing moments in which she witnessed or was the subject of racist aggression and

microaggression. Unlike Baldwin, who has a novelistic penchant for exposition and dramatic descriptions of the physical world, Rankine seems not as interested in describing the brick and mortar, built-environment in which the events take place, as much as the mediated world that surrounds all of us; the world that has, arguably, supplanted, become more real than the physical one. She writes about viral photos and YouTube videos. She dissects slow-motion footage of a World Cup Final, in which one of the world's most decorated players is baited into committing a red-card worthy foul because the opposing player called his mother a racial epithet. She evokes numerous works of contemporary art. This is not to say that Baldwin was disinterested or naive to how representations of race in various media shape perception—he wrote an entire book on race and film (*The Devil Finds Work*)—but it is to say that Rankine's book, down to its design, which features glossy reproductions of photos and works of art, takes media influence as commonplace, as the rule for how bigotry is fueled, how it flourishes, and how it is normalized.

There is a sharpness and clarity to her style that holds us in these brief but devastating moments, a clarity that is a refreshing analog to Montaigne's peripatetic original essays. Her essays do not fret over authority; whether she feels she has the right to bear witness, but the essays do capture the paralysis she often feels in the moment, taking in the racist comment uttered by a friend, or observing the bigotry of others in the media. The subject of her essays is a kind of exasperation and righteous indignation that racism, though it has been thoroughly written about and unmasked in art and literature, still finds its way into the casual daily interactions with even her closest academic colleagues and is present on the largest of public international stages.

Rankine's essays are prophetic in the way O'Connor outlines, bringing the seemingly monolithic issue of racism near to us so that we may examine its sinew and grotesqueness. She depicts racism up close and personal, in all its icky and awkward casualness, ugliness, banality and mysteriousness. Whether the racist comments come from friends and colleagues or hotel clerks and grocery store cashiers, Rankine's depictions cause us to ponder the hidden roots and motives.

The man at the cash register wants to know if you think your card will work. If this is a routine, he didn't use it on your friend who went before you. As she picks up her bag, she looks to see what you will say. She says nothing. You want her to say something--both as witness and as a friend. She is not you; her silence says so. Because you are watching all this take place even as you participate in it, you say nothing as well. . . . The man behind the register returns your card and places the sandwich and Pellegrino in the bag, which you take from the counter. What is wrong with you? This question gets stuck in your dreams (54).

In numerous episodes like this, Rankine captures the shock and confusion of racist aggression; the way it is isolating and creates self-doubt and paranoia. She writes:

Who did what to whom on which day? Who said that? She said what? What did he just do? Did she really just say that? He said what? What did she do? Did I hear what I think I heard? Did that just come out of my mouth, his mouth, your mouth? (9).

Passages such as these dramatize the internal monologue of the victim of racism and make visible and explicit the pangs of conscience many readers (white and black) feel in their daily lives when they are confronted by acts of racism. This is where the essay's focus on the internal thoughts and movements of the author can interrupt cycles of violence. The essay is simply a different mode of truth-telling. It provides access to the actual lived experience of others and the disruptive impact of these experiences in a way that fiction simply cannot.

Monson's "Essay as Hack," helps us to think even more deeply about the ways the essay can not just represent disruption but actually BE an "interruption" or "fermata":

The essay, like a poem, acts as fermata. It processes ideas, images, texts, or objects at its own speed. It rewinds, meditates, circles, returns, sits and spins if it must. And it should. It is, like all good art, an interruption, an intervention between the world and the mind. Its status as a weird sort of hybrid comes from this. Stories have forward motion. They are driven by what happens. The essay

is propelled by what it thinks about what happens, or what it thinks about a subject. It turns the subject in its mind. It gets all self-conscious (16).

Monson's sense of the essay builds nicely upon on Auerbach's assessment of Montaigne and Giroux's understanding of how acts of personal storytelling are vital to resisting regimes of reality. Synthesizing all of their perspectives, it becomes even more clear that what the essay thinks, the sheer internal movement and churn of ideas, surfaces patterns of thought and behavior that would otherwise go undetected, or be explained away and ignored. Seen through this lens, the essays of Baldwin and Rankine, as well as those of numerous other contemporary essayists, are interventions. They interrupt and disrupt moral laziness and complicity by magnifying these otherwise quiet and hidden moments. They intend and mean to be disruptive; intend and mean to interrupt; intend and mean to demand the attention and conscience of the reader.

The climactic scene in Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son" is one that I held close as I wrote about my own complicity in our American culture of violence. I quote it again here for emphasis:

I lived it over and over again, the way one relives an automobile accident after it has happened and one finds oneself alone and safe. I could not get over two facts, both equally difficult for the imagination to grasp, and one was that I could have been murdered. But the other was that I had been ready to commit murder. I saw nothing very clearly but I did see this: that my life, my *real* life, was in danger, and not from anything other people might do but from the hatred I carried in my own heart (97-98).

The effect of this paragraph from Baldwin is profound not just for the surprising irony but for its startling honesty and reality. It has been lived, and perceived, and endured by a living person, then recalled and rendered into language. This is not an accounting of a fictional character's experiences who is, variously, a proxy for the author, or an agent deployed to stand in for an idea or issue. This is not to say that fiction is a lesser art, but it is to say that nonfiction exists as an art that contributes to and helps piece together the

historical record in a way that fiction cannot, especially for those peoples who, historically, have been oppressed.

But Baldwins essay, and, in general, the essay at its most compelling, depicts human experience in a way that renders the revelations and epiphanies that emerge from dramatic and traumatic moments, in a way that goes beyond Giroux's call to defend the erosion and recovery of cultural memory, but that causes us to actually countenance and confront all the stories, all the experiences, all the people whose lives are regularly ignored and erased.

In this way, I now understand the way that my subtitle, the "art of violence," can also be understood as the art of confronting violence, speaking back to it and resisting it, by dragging in into the light.

Works Cited

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Remnants of Auschwitz : The Witness and the Archive*. New York : Zone Books, 2000.
- Biss, Eula. *Notes from no Man's Land : American Essays*. Saint Paul, Minn. : Graywolf Press, 2009.
- Foucault, Michel. "The Political Function of the Intellectual." *Radical Philosophy*, vol. 17, no. 13, 1977, pp. 126-133.
- Giroux, Henry A. *The Violence of Organized Forgetting : Thinking Beyond America's Disimagination Machine*. City Lights Books, San Francisco, 2014. *WorldCat.org*, <https://goshen.on.worldcat.org/oclc/880960007>.
- Griffith, David. *A Good War is Hard to Find : The Art of Violence in America*. Brooklyn, NY : Soft Skull Press, 2006.
- MacMahon, John H., and Aristotle. *The Metaphysics of Aristotle*. London, H.G. Bohn, 1857.
- Monson, Ander. "Essay as Hack." *The Far Edges of the Fourth Genre: An Anthology of Explorations in Creative Nonfiction*. Edited by Sean Prentiss and Joe Wilkins. Michigan State University Press, East Lansing, MI, 2014.
- O'Connor, Flannery. *Collected Works*. New York, NY : Library of America : Distributed to the trade in the U.S. and Canada by Viking Press, 1988.
- Rankine, Claudia. *Citizen : An American Lyric*. Minneapolis, Minnesota : Graywolf Press, 2014.
- Scarry, Elaine. *The Body in Pain : The Making and Unmaking of the World*. New York; Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Thomas, Aquinas, Saint. *Summa Theologica*. New York : Benziger Bros, 1947.
- Trask, Willard R., and Erich Auerbach. *Mimesis : The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Princeton, New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Unamuno, Miguel d. *Tragic Sense of Life*. New York Dover Publications, 1954.
- Wright, Richard. *Uncle Tom's Children*. New York : HarperPerennial, 1993.

