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Trauma: Explorations in Memory

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Because traumatic events are unbearable in their horror and intensity, they often exist as memories that are not immediately recognizable as truth. Such experiences are best understood not only through the straightforward acquisition of facts but through a process of discovering where and why conscious understanding and memory fail. Literature, according to Cathy Caruth and others, opens a window on traumatic experience because it teaches readers to listen to what can be told only in indirect and surprising ways. Sociology, film, and political activism can also provide new ways of thinking about and responding to the experience of trauma.

In *Trauma and Memory*, a distinguished group of analysts and critics offer a compelling look at what literature and the new approaches of a variety of clinical and theoretical disciplines bring to the understanding of traumatic experience. Combining two highly-acclaimed special issues of *American Imago* edited by Caruth, this interdisciplinary collection of essays and interviews will be of interest to analysts and critics concerned with the notion of trauma and the problem of interpretation and, more generally, to those interested in current discussions of subjects such as child abuse, AIDS, and the effects of historical atrocities such as the Holocaust.

Contributions by: Georges Bataille, Harold Bloom, Laura Brown, Cathy Caruth, Kai Erikson, Shoshana Felman, Henry Krystal, Claude Lanzmann, Dori Laub, Kevin Newmark, Onno van der Hart, and Bessel van der Kolk. **Interviews with:** Robert Jay Lifton, Gregg Bordowitz, Douglas Crimp, and Laura Pinsky



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Editorial Review

Review

An unusually informative, as well as sensitive, series of essays with important ramifications for interdisciplinary theory and both social and literary thought. Caruth and her contributors work at the very intersection of contemporary life and scholarship.

(Geoffrey Hartman, Yale University)

These essays offer fresh approaches on the subject of trauma from both a psychoanalytic and contemporary theoretical point of view. The combination of theoretical articles about trauma with interviews about its ongoing effects is a particular strength and a particularly appropriate approach when the topic itself is silence or testimony about trauma. The book will be of great interest to those in the psychoanalytic community interested in this kind of interdisciplinary work.

(Alan Bass, Ph.D., Psychoanalyst)

Review

"An unusually informative, as well as sensitive, series of essays with important ramifications for interdisciplinary theory and both social and literary thought. Caruth and her contributors work at the very intersection of contemporary life and scholarship." -- Geoffrey Hartman, Yale University

About the Author

Cathy Caruth is associate professor of English at Yale University. She is the author of *Empirical Truths and Critical Fictions*, also available from Johns Hopkins.

Users Review

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