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On Writing with Photography

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On Writing with Photography

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From James Agee to W. G. Sebald, there has been an explosion of modern documentary narratives and fiction combining text and photography in complex and fascinating ways. However, these contemporary experiments are part of a tradition that stretches back to the early years of photography. Writers have been integrating photographs into their work for as long as photographs have existed, producing rich, multilayered creations; and photographers have always made images that incorporate, respond to, or function as writing. *On Writing with Photography* explores what happens to texts—and images—when they are brought together.

From the mid-nineteenth century to the present, this collection addresses a wide range of genres and media, including graphic novels, children's books, photo-essays, films, diaries, newspapers, and art installations. Examining the works of Herman Melville, Don DeLillo, Claude McKay, Man Ray, Dare Wright, Guy Debord, Zhang Ailing, and Roland Barthes, among others, the essays trace the relationship between photographs and "reality" and describe the imaginary worlds constructed by both, discussing how this production can turn into testimony of personal and collective history, memory and trauma, gender and sexuality, and ethnicity.

Together, these essays help explain how writers and photographers—past and present—have served as powerful creative resources for each other.

Contributors: Stuart Burrows, Brown U; Roderick Coover, Temple U; Adrian Daub, Stanford U; Marcy J. Dinius, DePaul U; Marianne Hirsch, Columbia U; Daniel H. Magilow, U of Tennessee, Knoxville; Janine Mileaf; Tyrus Miller, U of California, Santa Cruz; Leah Rosenberg, U of Florida; Xiaojue Wang, U of Pennsylvania.

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