Bodies in Conflict:
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Curated by Laura Bergin '17

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Foreword and Acknowledgments

The exhibition *Bodies in Conflict: From Gettysburg to Iraq* not only conveys an ambitious geographic and historical range, but also reflects the sensitivity, ambition, and thoughtfulness of its curator, Laura Bergin '17. In examining how the human figure is represented in prints and photographs of modern war and political conflict, Laura considers how journalistic photographs, artistic interpretations, and other visual documentation of conflict and its aftermath compare between wars and across historical periods. Specific objects include a print and photographs from the Civil War, propaganda posters from World Wars I and II, photographs and a protest poster from the Vietnam War, and a large-scale photograph of a reconstructed journalistic image of Saddam Hussein's palace by Iraqi-born contemporary artist Wafaa Bilal. Taken together, the works in the exhibition make a profound political and humanitarian statement about suffering, heroism, death, compassion, and appeals to nationalism throughout wars over the last 150 years. She does not simply lead the viewer from one historical period to the next, but challenges the viewer to make more complicated connections across countries and conflicts to consider issues of gendered and nationalistic identities, as well as concerns about memorialization and historical memory. Laura pays close attention to differences in visual representation; specifically, she is careful to acknowledge and question the seemingly objective medium of photography in contrast to more abstract or expressionist prints on display in the exhibition. In every instance, Laura analyzes the compositional details of each work to understand both its intent and impact. Her introductory essay outlines her broader theoretical interests and methodological approach, while the individual catalogue essays that follow consider the ethical and political factors that motivated each artist in the making and meaning of the works. The exhibition and this catalogue reflect Laura's keen awareness of the historical, socio-political issues as well as an insight into the aesthetic concerns of each artist.

It has been a pleasure to serve as Laura's mentor in The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Scholar Program, a highly competitive and generously funded opportunity for select Gettysburg College students to complete innovative research projects incorporating the digital humanities. Laura has benefited greatly from the guidance and support of the entire Mellon Summer Scholar Program community. First, many thanks are due to Maureen Forrestal, Assistant Provost for Student Scholarly Engagement and Dean of Fellowships, Scholarships and Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity, for her incredible support of the project and for overseeing all of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Summer Scholars. Additional thanks are given to Paula Baer, the Provost's Office at Gettysburg College, and the other students and mentors who participated in this program.

Laura's academic career at Gettysburg College has been ambitious and thoroughly interdisciplinary. As Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies from 2012 through 2015, I oversaw the approval of Laura's self-designed major titled *Images of Conflict*. The IDS Committee was incredibly impressed with her

organization and self-motivation as well as with both the interdisciplinarity and the academic focus of her topic. She is taking classes in Anthropology, Globalization Studies, Journalism, and Latin American Studies to complete her major, and each of these courses provides Laura with diverse perspectives and a thorough understanding of how conflict affects and is represented in various cultures. Special thanks are due to the current Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies, Professor Kevin Wilson; Laura's advisor for the major, Professor Amy Evrard; and the entire Interdisciplinary Studies Program committee for continuing to shepherd Laura's major as she nears graduation from Gettysburg College. I am especially grateful for Professor Evrard's support of this project and careful editing of this catalogue.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the tireless work of and continued collaboration with Carolyn Sautter, Director of Special Collections and College Archives, and Molly Reynolds, Preparator and Digital Scholarship Assistant for Schmucker Art Gallery and Special Collections. Laura has worked determinedly on creating two digital platforms for experiencing the content of this exhibition, and the digital project benefited tremendously from the assistance of R.C. Miessler, Systems Librarian, and Catherine Perry, Digital Projects Coordinator and Collections Manager. Additional thanks are due to Mary Wootton, Conservator, for her perfect book cradles, and to Amy Lucadamo, College Archivist. I am always appreciative of the logistical and organizational support of Leslie Casteel, Administrative Academic Assistant for Schmucker Art Gallery. We are incredibly grateful for Jim Pierce's expert framing of the works in the exhibition and the gorgeous graphic design of Ayumi Yasuda. Special gratitude is given to Robin Wagner, Dean of Musselman Library, for her endless support and early encouragement of Laura's application to the Mellon Summer Scholars Program. I also thank artist Wafaa Bilal for his lecture on his profound career and first-hand experiences with the conflict in the Middle East in conjunction with this exhibition.

We would also like to thank special donors for making the acquisition and display of the works possible. For the donation of Stephen H. Warner Collection and their continued relationship with Gettysburg College, we express our gratitude to Warner's family. Wafaa Bilal's *Chair* from *The Ashes Series* was acquired through the generosity of the Michael Birkner '72 and Robin Wagner Art and Acquisitions Fund, with additional support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the Middle East and Islamic Studies program at Gettysburg College.

> — Shannon Egan, Ph.D.
> Director, Schmucker Art Gallery
> Mentor, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
> Summer Scholars Program

Bodies in Conflict: From Gettysburg to Iraq

Laura Bergin '17

With photographs, prints, and posters from the American Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War, and the War in Iraq, this exhibition examines eleven representations of the body in conflict. All of these works reflect American influence, whether they were made by Americans, depict American bodies, or were created in opposition to American influence. This exhibition, however, is by no means encyclopedic in nature, nor is this essay a detailed account of the history of each war.[1] Although propagandistic posters and objects with clear political allegiances are on display, the exhibition, taken as a whole, is not nationalistic in its intent, nor does it propose that the United States has been "correct" or "incorrect" in its participation, or lack of participation, in these conflicts. Instead, I aim to provide the viewer with an adequate understanding of how the human form is depicted as the body endures the far-reaching and detrimental effects of warfare. Specifically, this exhibition addresses the fraught relationship between the notions of "art" and "document," the effectiveness of representations of the body for the purpose of social change, and the ethical considerations imbued in the making, selling, and distributing of these images. The works on display represent a broad historical and geographic range in order to remind the viewer of modern warfare's reliance on representational imagery and that visual language is conveyed and understood differently from textual documentation.[2] Furthermore, these materials illustrate how the body is used to persuade, to elicit sympathy, to commemorate, and to report. When taken together, the objects pose important questions about the intents of the various artists, photographers, and illustrators, whether these objectives are motivated by a government, an antiwar protest group, a journalist, or a sympathetic photographer, and their effects on the audience.

Each of the objects in the exhibition encourages the viewer to question the multifaceted and ethically dubious task of creating representations of the body in conflict. In examining the works, one must identify biases and how they affect the construction of an image, the propensity toward sensationalism, and finally, how the medium alters the effectiveness of the materials. Furthermore, every work employs a carefully constructed visual vocabulary that prompts the viewer to make unconscious connections, creating a more powerful image. This vocabulary often evokes visual relationships between the body and the surrounding environment to engender an empathetic, embodied connection between the viewer and the depicted subject. American writer and activist Susan Sontag explains, "A cityscape is not made of flesh. Still, sheared off buildings are almost as eloquent as bodies in the street."[3] For example, one of the works in the exhibition, a lithograph titled *Gallant Attack*, encourages the viewer to make connections between the bare and arched trees and the contorted bodies of the soldiers as they fall valiantly to their deaths during the American Civil War. Similarly, there is no physical body in Wafaa Bilal's photograph *Chair*, yet the large chair and the real human ash scattered about the scale room evoke a narrative about the hostility of warfare.[4][5]

Given the shared subject of historical conflict, the works in the exhibition expose the tumultuous relationship between how "art" and "document" are defined. While some of the works can be defined unambiguously as works of art and others as reportage or as documentary, all of the objects challenge the viewer's assumptions about the veracity of visual media and the politics of the intended audience. It is imperative to remember that each print, photograph, and poster has been carefully arranged and edited. For example, the scrapbook of Lt. Francis M. Tompkins's experiences in World War I was composed, as he shot each photograph and decided where it should be placed within the pages. Again, Sontag states, "Even the most transparent of documentary images is framed, and framed for a purpose, carrying that purpose within its frame and implementing it through the frame."[6] Today it is well known that accomplished Civil War photographer Alexander Gardner moved the bodies of soldiers on the battlefields of Gettysburg to create more visually compelling photographs, proving that manipulation can occur at any stage of the documentation process.[7] Gardner, dispatched by photographer Mathew Brady, captured some of the most well-known and pivotal events of the war, including battles in Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and Antietam, and the siege of Petersburg.[8] These photographs began to shape the public's understanding of the war, and have become instrumental in the development of the discipline of war photography. This manipulation suggests that the stereoscopes from the Battle of Gettysburg on display must be subject to similar scrutiny, despite photography's seemingly inherent association with capturing the truth or the "real" scene.[9]

Photography must be understood as both art and document, with as many entitled artistic liberties as any other form of artistic expression. For example, Stephen Warner's photograph of a young soldier holding his weapon in the dense Vietnamese jungle reflects an ostensibly true moment, yet also reveals Warner's artistic interest in framing the soldier amidst his detailed and leafy surroundings. Warner's editing process is made apparent in one photograph inscribed in red with the word "Help!" The photograph at once reveals his instructions and plea for help in editing the final photographic print, but the viewer cannot help but understand this word to convey Warner's personal perspective in the midst of a horrifying and ultimately tragic war. Documentary photographs are often viewed as unbiased or objective, particularly when they purport to be journalistic. Personal politics and biases nonetheless permeate much of the war photography seen in this exhibition, particularly as Warner's antiwar sentiments affected his photographs in Vietnam. Ultimately, photography powerfully captures moments of death and provides alarming evidence of military actions.[10]

Artists are also witnesses and contributors and can be either direct or indirect victims of war. Artist and curator Susanne Slavick explains, "Artists face a gauntlet of critical and ethical expectations, conditions and prohibitions in reacting to and representing pain, disaster, and tragedy."[11] Often a viewer expects to understand a conflict through an artistic representation, forcing the artist to be responsible for recording, remembering, reflecting, re-purposing, and restoring the rubble of war.[12] This expectation leads to an ethical quandary regarding the outcomes of art. Slavick states, "Beautifully representing suffering or destruction, turning it into something that can be perceived as art, threatens to make it palatable, perhaps even seductive and pleasurable. If violence becomes appealing, it is unwittingly redeemed and ultimately erased."[13] Artists like Wafaa Bilal represent suffering and conflict artistically, while retaining a sense of the confusion and bewilderment that

are experienced in war. If a viewer is able to identify with a representation of other people suffering, it is possible to "cheapen" the suffering, making the image less successful.[14] However, it can also be beneficial to encourage identification with suffering, as it can be more effective in producing action. Therefore it is vital to acknowledge the aesthetic and theoretical risks of depicting suffering and the need to provide testimony and to be political in one's art. Sontag believes when viewing images of the body in conflict it is consequential to monitor the use of pronouns, as an "us" versus "them" mentality may hinder the intended purpose of its publication. Sontag reiterates this message; "No 'we' should be taken for granted when the subject is looking at other people's pain."[15] One of the posters on exhibit, *Vietnam Summer 1967*, challenges the viewer's identification with the figures represented; the artist creates an image powerful enough to inhibit the majority of Americans from identifying with the plight of the woman.

The goal of many propagandistic images is to encourage the viewer to identify with the bodies depicted. Illustrations such as *Feed the Fighter* effectively bring the viewer into the trenches with the soldiers. Because of the apparent anonymity of the soldiers represented in the poster, each viewer is made to feel a familial or personal connection to every soldier; such an affinity was a central goal of World War I propaganda.[16] This poster, along with other illustrations created by war artists in the United States, used the bodies of soldiers and women to implore, involve, and solicit help from the home front during the war.[17] This goal of accessibility was also a main concern of Stephen Warner, who created photographic portraits of many soldiers posing with a small Christmas tree during the holiday season in Vietnam. Again, this exhibition suggests that no one medium is more or less effective than another in creating an intentionally accessible or non-accessible subject. Rather, image efficacy and viewer sympathy frequently depend on subject, composition, and more elusive messages of immediacy, intimacy, and emotion.

The artist's choice of medium also directly relates to the kind of explicit content that the image contains, a controversial subject that evolves with each war.[18] As Sontag describes, "For a long time some people believed that if the horror could be made vivid enough, most people would finally take in the outrageousness, the insanity of war."[19] Over the course of World War II, government censorship over journalistic images became less strict, allowing select photographs that had been dubbed "too graphic" and sent to the "Chamber of Horrors" to be printed and published for the public.[20] Elmer Davis, the head of the government's primary wartime propaganda agency, the Office of War Information, stated, "The love of peace has no meaning or stamina unless it is based on a knowledge of war's terror ... dead men have indeed died in vain if live men refuse to look at them."[21] With this idea in mind, one must consider the difference between recognition and mobilization and how images have the power to beget social change.

Previously held ideas about these issues were directly challenged during the Vietnam War, due to the extraordinary freedom the media had to report without direct government control.[22] As a result of this freedom, horrific photographs of burned and mutilated bodies, decimated villages, and orphaned children appeared in the daily news, fueling antiwar protests across the county.[23] Many antiwar propaganda materials, such as the poster titled *Vietnam Summer 1967* seen here, were created and shown on college campuses as the movement to leave Vietnam drew support among young Americans. Coupled with the graphic journalistic photographs that flooded the media in

the 1960s, these antiwar posters were effective in the mobilization of political activism. Although this poster's political aims are different from the propaganda dispersed during World Wars I and II, it shows similarities in its subject of women and children. World War I propaganda relied on images of women and children as a motivator for men to enlist, most often by showing them in peril or being threatened by the "German Hun."[24] In World War II, women were often depicted in propaganda posters to encourage them to work for the war effort both inside and outside the home.[25] In contrast to these earlier representations, the purpose of the woman and two children in this protest poster is to bring attention to the widespread and devastating effects of war. This poster emphasizes the imperilment of the women and children of Vietnam, and when accompanied with many photographs of killed civilians, sends a powerful message regarding the horrors of war.

Representations of bodies in conflict demand particular considerations of ethics and mores, including what the body represents, how much of the body is shown, and the exploitation and sexualization of the images. The body is a powerful tool, and it can be used in myriad ways to communicate devastation, to effect change, to sway political and public opinion, and to document or cover up what "really happened" in a conflict. Gender theorist Judith Butler states, "The body is a social phenomenon: it is exposed to others, vulnerable by definition. It is not, however, a mere surface upon which social meanings are inscribed, but that which suffers, enjoys and responds to the exteriority of the world."[26] This begs the question: what are "ethical" and "non ethical" uses of the body for propagandistic purposes, if there are any? Does this ethicality change based on the identities or the bareness of the exposed bodies? Sontag suggests that the answer to this question is dependent on how "close" or "far" the group portrayed in an image is to the audience. In other words, the more remote or exotic the place, the more likely the audience is to have fully exposed and uncensored views of the dead and dying, while the closer to home the more discrete they become.[27] This tendency toward displaying the dead of other cultures is intrinsically linked with the association between photography and exploitation. A photograph has the ability to turn any event or person into something that can be owned and possessed, an action that can be predatory and demeaning if not given permission.[28]

While representations of the body in conflict are presented in a variety of ways with a myriad of intentions, the viewer must constantly ask the vital question, "Whose cruelties, and whose deaths are not being shown?"[29] The images in this exhibition are inherently political and transcend their time period, country of origin, and conflict to highlight the unchanging outcome of war: the death and suffering of humans. So many depictions of war appear startlingly similar for this reason, though it is important to recognize how each work fosters an adherence to or repudiation of national identity. Images of the body enduring conflict can give cultural significance to a certain place. Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the location of this exhibition, exemplifies this idea, as it is a site marked by carnage; at the end of the three-day battle, the number of casualties totaled 51,000. The death and suffering of so many people will be forever linked to this site, as it is revered nationwide as the location of the turning point in the Civil War. Arguably one of the Civil War's most important battles, Gettysburg is a town dedicated to remembrance and to education. Through its monuments and historical markers, visitors continually are asked to imagine the spectacle and suffering of this war. This exhibition, in a place that has been shaped by the bodies that have suffered on Gettysburg's battlefield, then challenges its viewer to make connections among many wars and to consider the body in conflict.

1 On the subject of war in contemporary art, see Susanne Slavick, *Out of Rubble* (New York City: Charta Books Ltd., 2011). Regarding ethical considerations about the body in conflict, see Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (Maple Vail: Verso, 2009); Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, New York: Picador, 2003).

2 Susanne Slavick states, "Pain actually destroys language, leaving the suffering subject in absolute isolation." Susanne Slavick, *Out of Rubble* (New York City: Charta Books Ltd., 2011), 16.

3 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, New York: Picador, 2003), 8.

4 See Maura Lyons, "An Embodied Landscape: Wounded Trees at Gettysburg," *American Art* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 44-65.

5 In his book *Shoot an Iraqi*, artist Wafaa Bilal explains, "I'm here to shed light on the destruction and violence of warfare in a language that I hope people who have never experienced conflict can understand." Wafaa Bilal and Kari Lydersen, *Shoot an Iraqi: Art, Life and Resistance Under the Gun* (San Francisco CA: City Lights Books, 2008), 5

6 Ibid., 70.

7 "Lens of War: Exploring Iconic Photographs of the Civil War," *Friends Fund*, UnCivil Wars, 2015, 7.

8 "Alexander Gardner PHOTOGRAPHER," *The Civil War Trust*, n.d. http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/biographies/alexander-gardner.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/.

9 Two of the three stereoscopes have published information written on the back of the cards, providing an interesting look into how they were presented to the public twenty-five years after they were taken. The back of *The Horrors of War* states: "A Union soldier killed by a shell at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. His arm was torn off, and can be seen on the ground near his musket, and entirely separated from his body. The shell also completely disemboweled the poor fellow, and killed him so quick that he never knew what struck him. Think of a battlefield covering nearly twenty-five square miles, and covered with thousands of dead, many of them mangled even worse than this one and you can have a faint idea of Gettysburg in the early days of July, 1863."

10 Sontag, 59.

11 Ibid., 15.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., 17.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., 7.

16 Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 26.

17 Ibid., 30.

18 George Roedner writes, "Propagandists, like generals, are guided by lessons learned in past wars when fighting a new one." George Roeder, The Censored War: American Visual Experience During World War II (Yale University Press, 1993), 7.

19 Sontag, 14.

20 Debra Ramsay, *American Media and the Memory of World War II* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2015).

21 Roeder, 11.

22 Daniel Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": Media in Vietnam* (London, England: University of California Press, 1986), 2.

23 Kingsbury, 28.

24 Debra Ramsay, *American Media and the Memory of World War II* (New York, New York: Routledge, 2015).

25 Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (Maple Vail: Verso, 2009), 34.

26 Sontag, 64.

27 Ibid., 81.

28 Judith Butler elaborates on this subject: "Specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living. If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lies are never lived nor lost in the full sense." Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (Maple Vail: Verso, 2009),14.

29 Sontag, 80.

Edwin Forbes, *Gallant Attack of 150 Pennsylvania Bucktails*, 1862

GALLANT ATTACK OF 150 PENNSYLVANIA BUCKTAILS, LED BY COLONEL KANE, UPON A DETACHMENT OF "STONEWALL" JACKSON'S ARMY, NEAR HARRISONBURG, VA., FRIDAY, JUNE 6th, 1862

Gallant Attack of 150 Pennsylvania Bucktails, Led by Colonel Kane, Upon a Detachment of "Stonewall" Jackson's Army, Near Harrisonburg, Va., Friday, June 6th, 1862

from a sketch by Edwin Forbes (American, 1839–1895), 1862

lithograph published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated History of the Civil War* (New York, 1895)

40.5 cm x 51 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

This lithograph of the 150 Pennsylvania Bucktails depicts two groups of men fighting at close range in Harrisonburg, Virginia, in the American Civil War. Produced from a sketch by Edwin Forbes, this print was first published in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* in 1862 and reproduced again in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated History of the Civil War* in 1895. The cloud of gunpowder and the waving flag on the right side of the frame convey movement, and the closeness between the battle scene and the picture plane draws the viewer into the action. Two men appear to be at the instant of receiving a mortal injury, and three already lie dead on the battlefield. The print almost theatrically depicts the climax of a battle, a scene that photography at the time was unable to accomplish due to technological constraints. Because of the similarity in its composition and subject to dramatic history paintings, *Gallant Attack of 150 Pennsylvania Bucktails* adheres to art-historical conventions that celebrate the heroism of war. In contrast to the eerily still corpses in contemporary war photographs, this print is a carefully composed scene of dynamic combat. The barren and leaning trees echo the fate of the fallen and present a haunting backdrop for the quick movement of the men and the deadly fire of guns.[1] At the time of publication, this illustration was presented as news for the home front and readers who were not first-hand witnesses of the war. This portrayal of war using art-historical conventions, pictorial symbolism, and iconography is a carefully constricted representation of an actual battle. Although Forbes was present at the scene and sketched his impressions as he saw them, the final print must be understood ultimately as an artistic interpretation.

1 Art historian Maura Lyons states, "A correspondent for the *New York Herald*, who visited the battlefield shortly before (Mathew) Brady, delineated the natural destruction in even more detail: 'I find tree after tree scarred from base to limbs so thickly that it would have been impossible to place one's hand upon their trunks without covering the mark of a bullet. One tree was stripped of more than half its leaves by the effect of the bullets alone, and many of the twigs were cut half off, and were hanging wilted and ready to drop to the ground." See Maura Lyons, "An Embodied Landscape: Wounded Trees at Gettysburg," *American Art* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 45.

Stereoscopic Cards from the Battle of Gettysburg, 1863

The three stereoscopes portray the horrific aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg; the photographers focus on the gruesome corpses that litter the battlefield.[1] With hundreds of bodies fallen in the fields of Gettysburg, most soldiers were given quick burials in shallow graves, many without coffins or any sort of headstone.[2] After the Battle of Gettysburg, thousands of these graves were exhumed, and Union soldiers were transported to the National Cemetery where they were reburied.[3] There are multiple accounts from the citizens of Gettysburg of the stench that surrounded the battlefields; the odor permeated the air for miles.[4] These photographs place the viewer incredibly close to the decomposing bodies, forcing them to confront the grizzly outcomes of war; the three-dimensional effect of the stereoscopes emphasizes the viewer's proximity to the scene. The American Civil War was among the first wars to be photographed, so the pictures taken during the conflict had major ramifications on the home front. Most importantly, viewers could see, with a sense of immediacy and realism, what was happening on the battlefields for the first time

through the seemingly veritable lens of photography.[5]

Civil War-era publications such as *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* were incredibly popular at the time, though the new photographs had a profoundly different effect on the viewer than lithographs and sketches. Because the Civil War was the first war to be photographed extensively throughout its duration, the Northern public was provided with "accurate" photographic news for the first time. However, the technology of the camera at the time, along with bulky and cumbersome equipment and a long exposure time, limited the photographers' ability to capture conflict and the action of war.[6] Civil War photographers often depicted the daily lives of soldiers and the aftermath on the battlefields. In a way, these photographs, in writer Susan Sontag's words, were "bringing the bodies back home," in a much more profound and recognizable manner than contemporaneous lithographs.[7] Civil War photographer Alexander Gardner profoundly affected the discipline of war photography and played a critical role in morphing how Americans understood the war.

Originally employed by Mathew Brady, Gardner traveled the country with twenty other photographers dispatched by Brady to compile a photographic history of the war. Witnessing and photographing battles in Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Antietam and the siege of Petersburg, many of Gardner's photographs are venerated as the most well known images of the Civil War.[8]

Stereoscopic cards were viewed with a holder that would transform the two-dimensional surfaces into a three-dimensional viewing experience.[9] It is also worth noting that these stereoscopes were not published until twenty-five years after they were originally taken. Although the original photographs would have been used as models for wood engravings published in the illustrated magazines, these stereoscopes can be seen as functioning as a type of memorial; they allowed a continued contemplation of the dead bodies of soldiers and ruins of the war.[10] The Civil War photographers established a new precedent for photojournalism in all wars to follow and redefined how the American public participated in and understood war.

Confederate soldiers as they fell, near the centre of the battle-field of Gettysburg, 1863

Negative by Alexander Gardner

c. 1870–1890

stereoscopic card

8 cm x 17 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

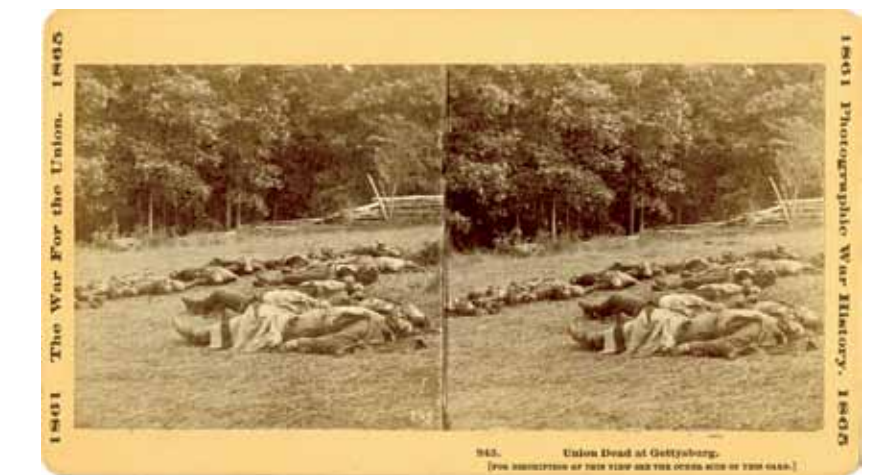
The Horrors of War – Gettysburg, PA, July 1863

Taylor & Huntington, Hartford, Connecticut

c. 1890

stereoscopic card

9 cm x 18 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Union Dead at Gettysburg, July 1863

The War Photograph & Exhibition Company, Hartford, Connecticut

c. 1890

stereoscopic card

10 cm x 17.5 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

1 Two of the three stereoscopes have published information written on the back of the cards, providing an interesting look into how they were presented to the public twenty-five years after they were taken. *The back of The Horrors of War* states: "A Union soldier killed by a shell at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. His arm was torn off, and can be seen on the ground near his musket, and entirely separated from his body. The shell also completely disemboweled the poor fellow, and killed him so quick that he never knew what struck him. Think of a battlefield covering nearly twenty-five square miles, and covered with thousands of dead, many of them mangled even worse than this one and you can have a faint idea of Gettysburg in the early days of July, 1863." *Union Dead at Gettysburg* reads, "This group of dead was in 'wheat-field.' The burial details found many such groups on that terrible field. The work of burring the thousands of dead was a Herculean task in itself. The hot July sun made it imperative that the dead should be placed underground as soon as possible. In some cases a little mound of earth was piled over the bodies as they lay, and after the first rainstorms the hands and feet of the bodies could be seen sticking out from their covering of earth." The top and middle stereoscopic cards seen here appear in the exhibition.

2 Michael Ruane, "After 1863 Battle of Gettysburg, a Grisly but Noble Enterprise to Honor the Fallen," *The Washington Post*, September 13, 2013, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/after-1863-battle-of-gettysburg-a-grisly-but-noble-enterprise-to-honor-the-fallen/2013/09/12/769c47e6-163c-11e3-a2ec-b47e45e6f8ef_story.html.

3 Samuel Weaver reported, "In no instance was a body allowed to be removed which had any portion of the rebel clothing on it." Ibid.

4 It is recorded that the men exhuming the bodies of these soldiers, usually black men such as Samuel Weaver, carried bottles of peppermint oil and pennyroyal to mask to smell. Ibid.

5 According to historian Will Kaufman, "The Civil War was 'the first war to be extensively photographed from start to finish.'" See Will Kaufman, *The Civil War in American Culture* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006). See also Lucian Ciupei, "Censorship in the Crimean War Photography A Case Study: Carol Pop de Szathmari and Roger Fenton," *Journal of Media Research* 1, no. 12 (2012): 61–67. In her article, Elizabeth Cahill states, "The creation of this vast treasury did something the opposing armies and their leaders could not: it defined, and perhaps even helped to unify, the nation via an unrehearsed and unscripted act of collective memory-making." Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill, "Calling Cards of the Dead: Photography and the American Civil War," *Commonweal*, January 10, 2014.

6 Cahill states, "To the cell-phone-camera artist of our time, it is difficult to comprehend the daunting challenges of cumbersome equipment, rough terrain, and complicated photographic processes that faced the battlefield photographer." Ibid., 1.

7 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, New York: Picador, 2003), 63.

8 "Alexander Gardner PHOTOGRAPHER," *The Civil War Trust*, n.d., http://www.civilwar.org/education/history/biographies/alexander-gardner.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/.

9 Maura Lyons, "An Embodied Landscape: Wounded Trees at Gettysburg," *American Art* 26, no. 3 (Fall 2012): 44-65.

10 Contemporaneous to these stereoscopes are many Union monuments that were also erected in the 1880s, as the next generation of American citizens honored the casualties of the war. These monuments include the 146th New York Infantry Monument, the 14th Connecticut Infantry Monument, the 118th Pennsylvania Infantry Monument, the 13th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Monument, and the 5th New Hampshire Volunteer Infantry Monument along with many others.
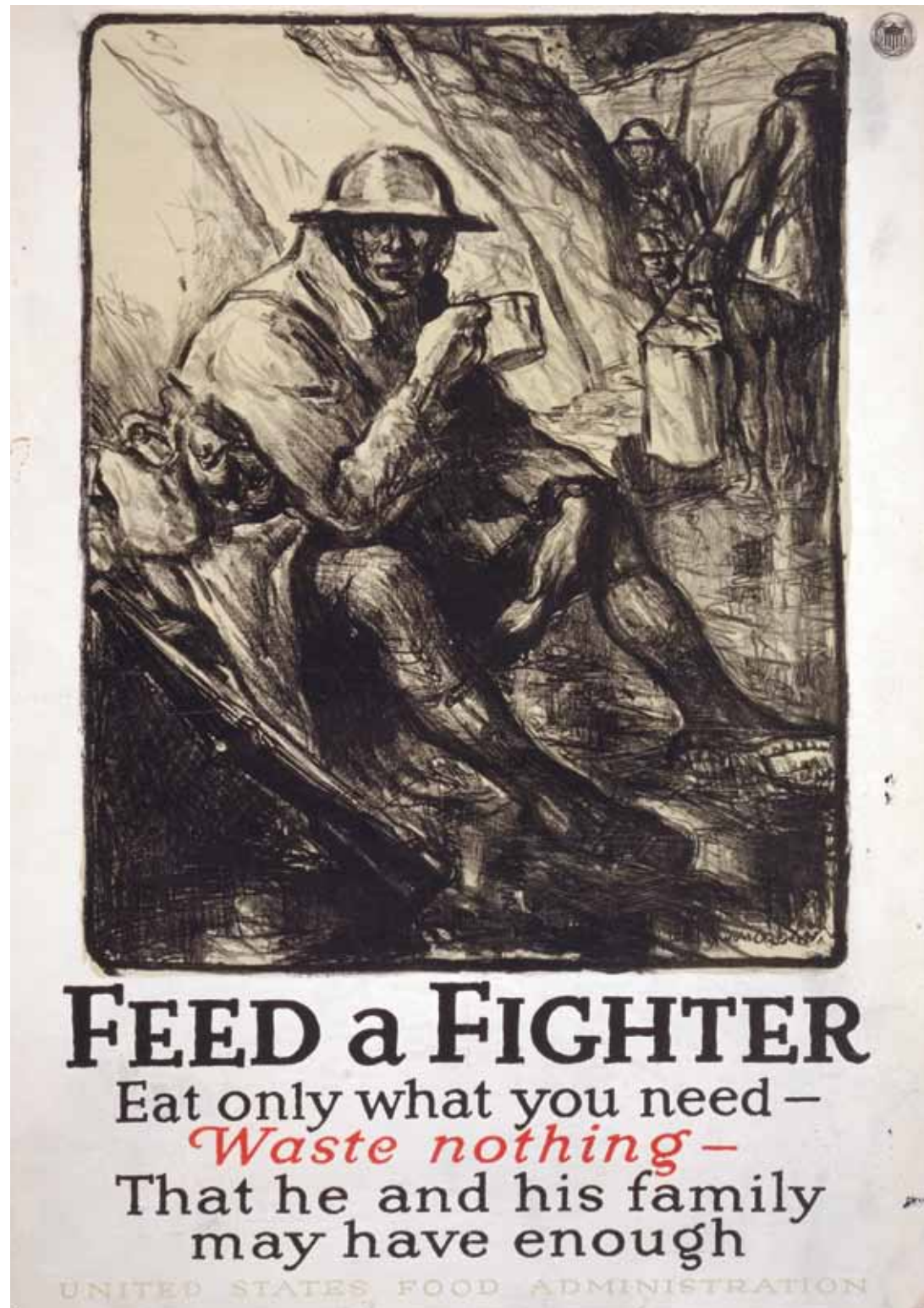
Feed a Fighter

Wallace Morgan (American, 1875-1948)

Issued by United States Food Administration

1918

lithograph

74 cm x 54 cm

Special Collections and College Archives,
Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Feed a Fighter, 1918

Created by artist Wallace Morgan in 1918 for the United States Food Administration, the poster urging the viewer to "Feed a Fighter" depicts the realities of trench warfare during the First World War.[1] To duplicate the dark and claustrophobic atmosphere of the trenches, the artist focuses on the form of a large, seated soldier, who stares pensively out of the frame. Morgan intensifies the crowded feeling within the frame by including two crouched figures in the background and a third who lumbers heavily through a puddle into the picture. Because of the close proximity of the man to the foreground, the viewer feels as if he or she is seated in the trench, at eye level with the man. The few short lines of text, "Feed a Fighter: Eat only what you need- waste nothing- That he and his family may have enough," elicit empathy for the soldiers and implore Americans to conserve their resources. "As we will see, propaganda [during the First World War] relies heavily on family relationships," explains historian Celia Kingsbury, "and the family as a

social unit varies little across cultural boundaries, especially in the Western cultures."[2] The poster adheres to an Expressionist style, which can be identified as a subjective distortion of the subject in order to evoke a heightened sense of emotion or mood; through dark shadows and gestural lines, the artist conveys the cold and dampness of the man's surroundings as he looks out at the viewer holding a cup, his feet sinking into the mud of the trench. The soldier looks directly at the viewer, as if patiently waiting for an explanation, with the lip of his helmet obscuring the majority of his face.

In World War I hand-drawn illustrations such as Morgan's were commonly seen on propaganda posters, and the United States government maintained strict censorship and endorsed resolutely patriotic messages. Photographs were also used in World War I propaganda, though they were less frequent and carefully picked through to decide which were suitable for the public and which

were destined for the "Chamber of Horrors."[3] Due to the obscured features of the faces in Morgan's poster, the soldier staring blindly out of the frame could be any man; he could be a brother, father, husband, or neighbor. Most of the posters were directed toward women at home, and the anonymity of the figures was intended to appeal to the women's sympathy for their husbands, brothers, fathers, sons, or neighbors at war.[4] Therefore, the American women who viewed the poster would feel more obligated to "feed a fighter" and conserve their resources at home for the war effort.[5] According to Kinsbury, however, one must question "the suggestion that food alone could be the source of victory." She explains, "Such an oversimplification ignores questions of weapons, manpower, strategy, and even weather."[6] Of course, propaganda ultimately is defined by such oversimplification, as the message must be distilled to its simplest form to appeal widely.

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1 Posters like *Feed a Fighter* were critical to the United States war effort due to their ability to create public support for the war. According to historian Charles Mills, this meant targeting women in propaganda, "Propaganda used images of women and children as a motivator for men to enlist. Conversely, men of fighting age who were not in uniform were often viewed with suspicion or were the subject of public derision." See Charles Albert Mills, *American Domestic Propaganda in World War I* (United States: University of Missouri Press, 2000) 10. Similarly, Celia Kingsbury states, "Using the language of domestic science, U.S. Food Administration propaganda brought women into direct contact with the war by urging them to enlist in that "'American army of housewives.'" See Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (University of Nebraska Press, 2010) 35.

2 Kingsbury writes, "When women and children were not the target of propaganda, they were often used in propaganda to remind red-blooded men just what the war was all about." Kingsbury, 8-9.

3 Mills, 11.

4 Kingsburg furthers this point by stating, "Everyone is made to feel a sibling, wife, or mother to every soldier." Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 26

5 Kingsbury explains "[M]uch war propaganda focuses on the responsibilities of women to civilize their men and to feed and educate their children," 27.

6 Ibid.,41.

# Scrapbook of Lt. Francis M. Tompkins, c. 1917-1921

In this album, approximately 100 photographs, many with detailed captions, record the experiences of American Francis M. Tompkins, 1st Lt. 305 Engineers, in World War I. Tompkins and his fellow engineers were in charge of repairing the devastation of the war to expedite troop movements through surveying, bridge and road repair, constructing buildings, maintaining communication lines, removal of land mines and "booby" traps, digging trenches and constructing shelters, providing clean water, and removing barbed wire. They also launched gas attacks; built hospitals, barracks, mess halls, stables, and target ranges; and repaired miles of train tracks. Such extensive and time consuming duties left the men little time for rifle practice and drills, and they were not relied upon for frontline combat.[1] Because of the nature of his service, many of Tompkins's photographs depict European scenery and large bustling cities, rather than the carnage of war. Tompkins's album at times tends to be touristic in nature, as he includes a postcard set of the major sites in Paris such as Versailles, the Arc de Triomphe, and the Eiffel Tower. These colored images contrast starkly to the more shocking, first-hand views of the trenches and decomposing bodies. Tompkins also included photographs of machinery and artillery, with a special interest in airplanes, which are situated in the book next to luxurious gardens and palaces.

Additionally, photographs of cemeteries and wounded soldiers awaiting treatment at a French hospital appear among the pages. As he and his platoon traveled through France, they witnessed horrible atrocities, such as destroyed cities and towns and battlefields littered with the decaying remains of men and horses.

Tompkins photographs German tanks and airplanes, as well as remains of German bases, but does not capture the bodies of German officers or soldiers. Many of these photographs are accompanied with a caption explaining German involvement, such as "One of the first shell holes we had seen. This was made by a six inch German shell," or "A French Chateau destroyed by a German shell." Another photograph of the aftermath of a skirmish is captioned, "The toll of one shell: Hethincourt 10-2-18;" the remains of multiple horses and men are strewn across a battlefield after being hit by a German shell. Through these photographs, Tompkins reveals more personal interactions with superior officers, formations, and sleeping arrangements, and these photographs suggest Tompkins's friendships with other soldiers. The album highlights the wide range of experiences of war and shows the totality and multiple perspectives that are integral to understanding a soldier's reality.[2]

Dead man's hill at Verdun
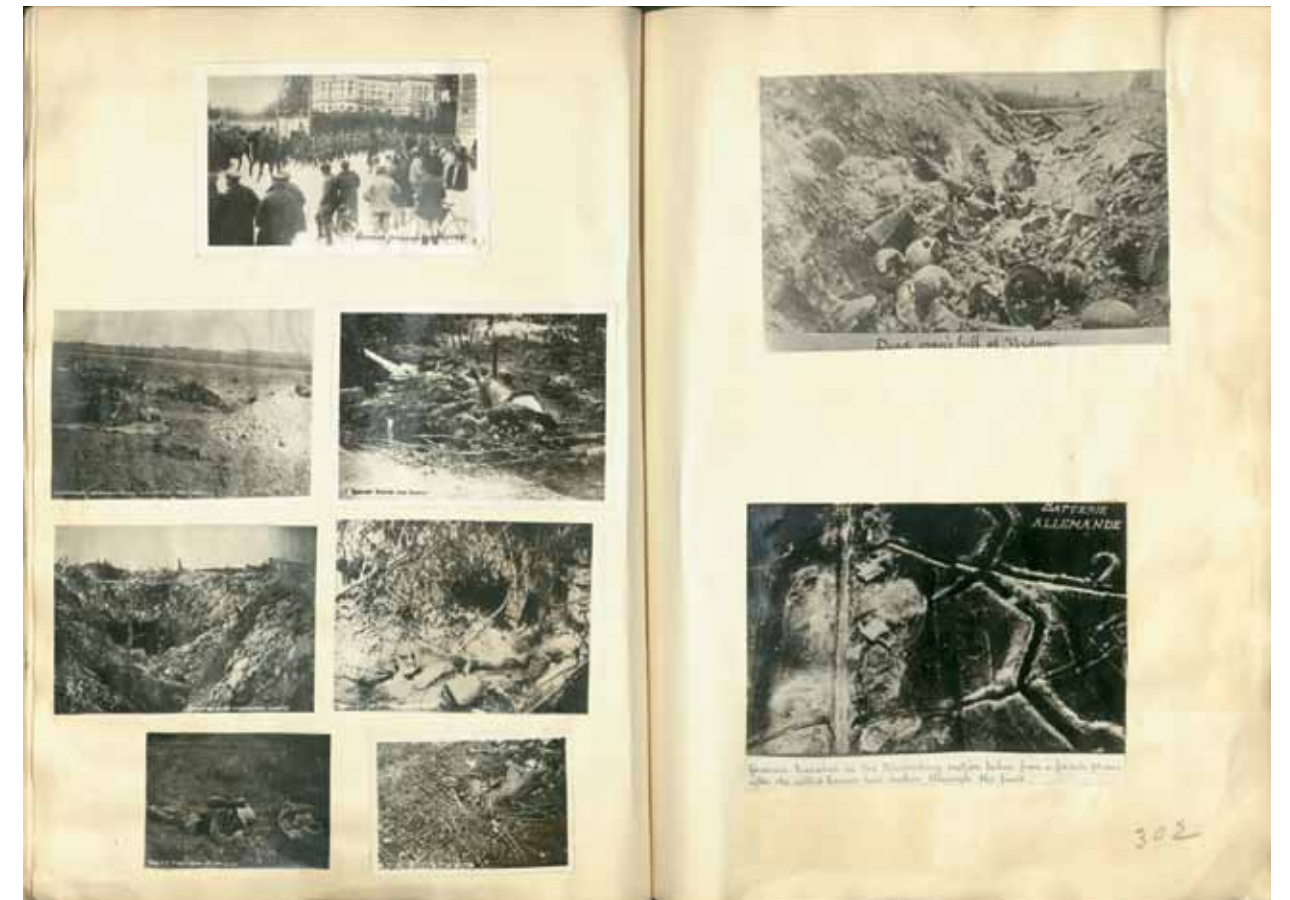
1 "Army Engineers in World War I." *World War I Vets*, n.d. http://www.wwvets.com/Engineers.html.

2 Celia Malone Kingsbury, *For Home and Country: World War I Propaganda on the Home Front* (University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 19-25.

World War II Posters, c.1939-1945

Two pieces of tape form an X over a man's mouth in the poster *Closed for the Duration*, designed by war artist Howard Scott. This implicitly violent image asserts that "loose talk" in the United States could result in the endangerment of countless American soldiers as well as their loved ones due to leaked information. Directed towards American civilians, the print calls for the protection of American soldiers in warzones, aims to discourage dissident speech against the war effort, and warns against the threat of espionage.[1] Therefore, *Closed for the Duration* at once heightens the public's feeling of responsibility for the war effort and discourages nonconformist discourse within the American population. Above all, the work reminds Americans of their ultimate trustworthiness and nationalism.[2]

The lithograph *American Field Service*, created by Virginia Gilmore, depicts two muscular soldiers carrying the body of a fallen man as a string of fast moving ambulances fill the lower half of the frame. These men represent the dedication of those who serve in the U.S Army; they bow their heads in respect for the fallen soldier while bearing the weight of his body. Contrasted with this seemingly slow and reverent movement of the figures hovering in the sky are the spinning tires of the ambulances below as they transport wounded soldiers to safety along a dusty road. This poster serves two purposes; it both acknowledges the certainty of death and injury in war and also highlights the importance of services such as the American Field Service. The work assures young men that they can save many lives if they join this organization.[3]

Though the *American Field Service* and *Closed for the Duration* posters have different targeted audiences, both Scott and Gilmore convey their messages with visual clarity and stimulating directness. Despite the ostensible simplicity of the compositions, these posters reflect an important movement in World War II propaganda as the newly created Office of War Information had to compete for attention with an increasingly poster-saturated public. Consequently, these representations of bodies in conflict mobilized the public by making a distant war seem real to those who were expected to supply the resources, human effort, and political support necessary for victory.[4]

Closed for the Duration

Howard Scott (American, 1902-1983)

Issued by British and American Ambulance Corps, Inc., New York

1942

lithograph

50.5 cm x 35.5 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

American Field Service

Virginia Gilmore

L.I.P. & B.A., New York

c. 1939-1945

lithograph

55.5 cm x 41 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

1 George Roeder, *The Censored War: American Visual Experience During World War II* (Yale University Press, 1993), 15.

2 According to Roeder, "During the war the U.S. Government, with extensive support from other public and private organizations, made the most systematic and far-reaching effort in its history to shape the visual experience of the citizenry." In the beginning stages of World War II the government stated they would follow "The Strategy of Truth" and promised that the "U.S. Government would tell the truth because it had nothing to hide, because citizens in a democracy deserved full and accurate explanations of the actions of those who governed by their consent, and because the strategy produced results." This strategy soon morphed into one of intense censorship and relentless propaganda, with many of the most powerful images that came out of World War II being drawn or written rather than photographic. This was because the government could screen photographs, but could not screen what writers and artists took home in their memories. Ibid., 17.

3 Ibid., 3.

4 Elmer Davis, head of the Office of War Information, states, "The love of peace has no meaning or stamina unless it is based on a knowledge of war's terror ... dead men have indeed died in vain if live men refuse to look at them." This encapsulates the office's movement away from strict censorship towards the end of the war, as the longer it went on, the more futile it seemed to suppress harsh photographs of the reality of war. Furthermore, it was believed that these more realistic images would prepare the American public for peace talks as the war drew to a close. Ibid., 1, 11, 15.

Photographic album of Marmaduke N. Dickson, Jr., c. 1945

This album, belonging to soldier Marmaduke N. Dickson, Jr., of the Army Air Force, is a comprehensive record of 350 photographs mounted in 85 pages and reveals Dickson's friends, hobbies, and interests. A hand-drawn map on the front fly signed "Moss Mabry '46," depicts Dickson's progress across the Pacific Theatre; he traveled to New Guinea, Pelew, the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan. Throughout the album Dickson's photographs depict both high-ranking officials and lower-ranking soldiers, and provide an interesting commentary on the different ways these men experience war. In multiple photographs high-ranking men in conversation appear in startlingly clean and orderly uniforms, while on the very same page lower-ranking soldiers traverse wet and muddy terrain in dirty and baggy clothing. The scrapbook opens gloomily with photographs of an American cemetery in New Guinea and a soldier posing in the midst of digging a grave. Other photographs unabashedly reveal dead bodies decaying in the jungle and capture the mushroom clouds of bombs. In contrast to such disheartening scenes, Dickson also includes photographs of USO performances with Bob Hope and dancing girls in leotards. This stark opposition comprises a remarkable first-hand account of warfare, and creates an intimacy with the viewer due to the personal nature of the album and how the American public understands a now historical war.[1]

Dickson displays a keen interest in his areas of deployment and photographed many local people in their everyday lives. These photographs often depict men and women posing for portraits or completing various tasks, such as unloading canoes, constructing buildings, or preparing meals. The roles and identities of the local people are seen in contrast to the regimented life of an American soldier. In comparison, the scrapbook of World War I soldier Lt. Francis M. Tompkins, also on display in this exhibition, includes fewer photographs of people and more images of both beautiful and ruined landscapes, as well as military machinery. Tompkins also included various media in his scrapbook, including postcards and handwritten segments, while Dickson's album is composed exclusively of photographs.

Though he was not a professional photographer, it would be difficult to discount the aesthetic and technical skill displayed in Dickson's photographs. Interestingly, Dickson also added to his album twenty-four color Polaroid photographs, taken with one of the first available color film cameras. Because this book was intended for personal use, Dickson was able to chronicle his time overseas without fear of scrutiny, arguably leading to a less biased and more comprehensive work. Ultimately, Dickson's album transports its viewers to the tumultuous experience of war,

one marked by contrasts of threats and pleasures. Photographs of the local victims of war are juxtaposed with photographs of dancing girls, nameless soldiers pose with celebrity entertainers, and bombed buildings appear on the same page as newly constructed army bases.
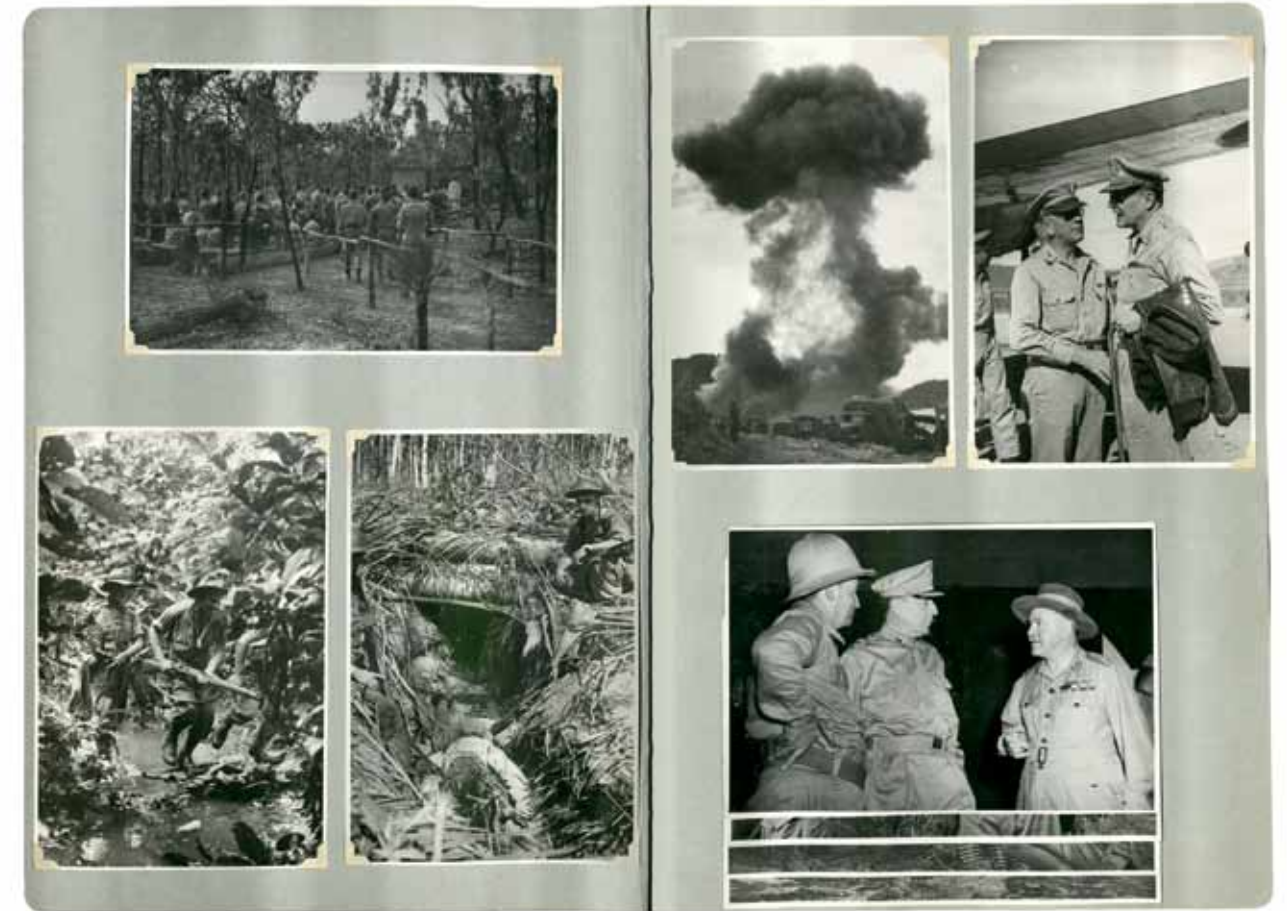
Photographic album

Marmaduke N. Dickson, Jr. (American, b. 1922–death date unknown)

c. 1945

33.5 cm x 26.5 cm x 5.5 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

1 For more on the Air Force in the Pacific Theater, see Charlie Cooper, *War in Pacific Skies* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Zenith Press, 2010).

Yue Nan Bi Sheng, Mei Di Bi Bai (Vietnam will triumph, the American Imperialists will be defeated), c. 1965

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Yue Nan Bi Sheng, Mei Di Bi Bai (Vietnam will triumph, the American Imperialists will be defeated)

Ren Manxin

c. 1965

lithograph

Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House

74.5 cm x 52.5 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

In this poster a disproportionately large and pink-cheeked Vietnamese soldier prods a small U.S. soldier, flailing helplessly in the lower right corner, at gunpoint. The large hands and determined stare convey the vitality and strength of the Vietnamese army, in contrast to the greenish hue of the American soldier; his curved back and thin arm indicate that this man is at once cowardly and weak. The Vietnamese soldier powerfully traverses the jungle terrain, while the American appears to be stumbling through the forest and is ill equipped to defend himself. This disparity in the figures' sizes highlights the hero and the perpetrator in the image, leaving no doubt regarding the bias of the producer. The clear red text at the bottom of the frame directly complements the message of domination, which translates to "Vietnam will triumph; the American imperialists will be defeated." Curiously, the Chinese text is also stated in Pinyin, the romanized system for spelling standard Chinese letters, possibly

to increase viewership and to allow speakers of other dialects to more easily read the statement. It is also likely that this poster was made in response to low literacy rates in China and Vietnam; its illustrated message is understood independent of the text.[1]

Despite their obvious differences and contradictory perspectives, American World War II posters, also on display in this exhibition, share similarities in their style, compositions, and propagandistic goals.[2] The posters all sought mass viewership with broad audiences in mind; the governments intended for the messages to be clearly conveyed without ambiguity. In stark contrast to the American posters, here the Americans are seen as the enemy "imperialists," easily captured by the fearsome, young, and healthy Vietnamese soldier. This work is included in the exhibition in order to acknowledge both multiple nationalistic perspectives in war and a shared visual language.

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1 "At a Glance: Viet Nam: Statistics." n.d. http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/vietnam_statistics.html.

2 On Vietnamese propaganda, see Philippe Peycam, *The Birth of Vietnamese Political Journalism: Saigon 1916-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.

Vietnam Summer, 1967

This illustration of a crying woman carrying two babies was printed in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1967 for a campaign protesting the Vietnam War. Widespread antiwar movements in the United States in the 1960s included intense protests, demonstrations and activism, sparked by the most unrestricted journalistic coverage of any war to date.[1] Grizzly photographs of the consequences of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam flooded American media, outraging thousands and sparking movements on college campuses around the country.[2] In comparison to previous wars, more attention was paid by the media to numbers of civilian casualties, due to the explicit evidence provided by the work of American photojournalists stationed in Vietnam. What was often referred to as "collateral damage" was now given a face, a change that dramatically affected the public's support for the war.[3] This movement sparked a shift in the American pathos as the fate of children and innocents in Vietnam era antiwar propaganda became dramatically more important.

In this poster a woman moves quickly across a barren, black plane, struggling to grasp the two children in her arms. The abstracted landscape in the composition and the deliberately political, explicitly violent representation of the figures reveal marked similarities to Käthe Kollwitz's World War I and Peasant War prints and Francisco Goya's *Disasters of War* series; these artists directly evoke the widespread consequences of conflict. In *Vietnam Summer* the darkness of the figure's dress and hair is starkly contrasted with the sickly yellow background and the red-orange explosion on the horizon, as well as the delicate contour lines of the naked children she is carrying. While one might think of a male soldier when picturing a "body in conflict," women and children were tragically affected by the war in Vietnam and are often targeted in warzones across the world.[4] This woman's pained expression and desperate attempt to save her children certainly depicts a body in conflict, as terror and loss is emphasized by the centrality of the figure and the enigmatic, violent landscape. The depiction of this woman and her children brings resolute attention to the bodies that are often forgotten about or rendered unimportant in times of conflict.[5]
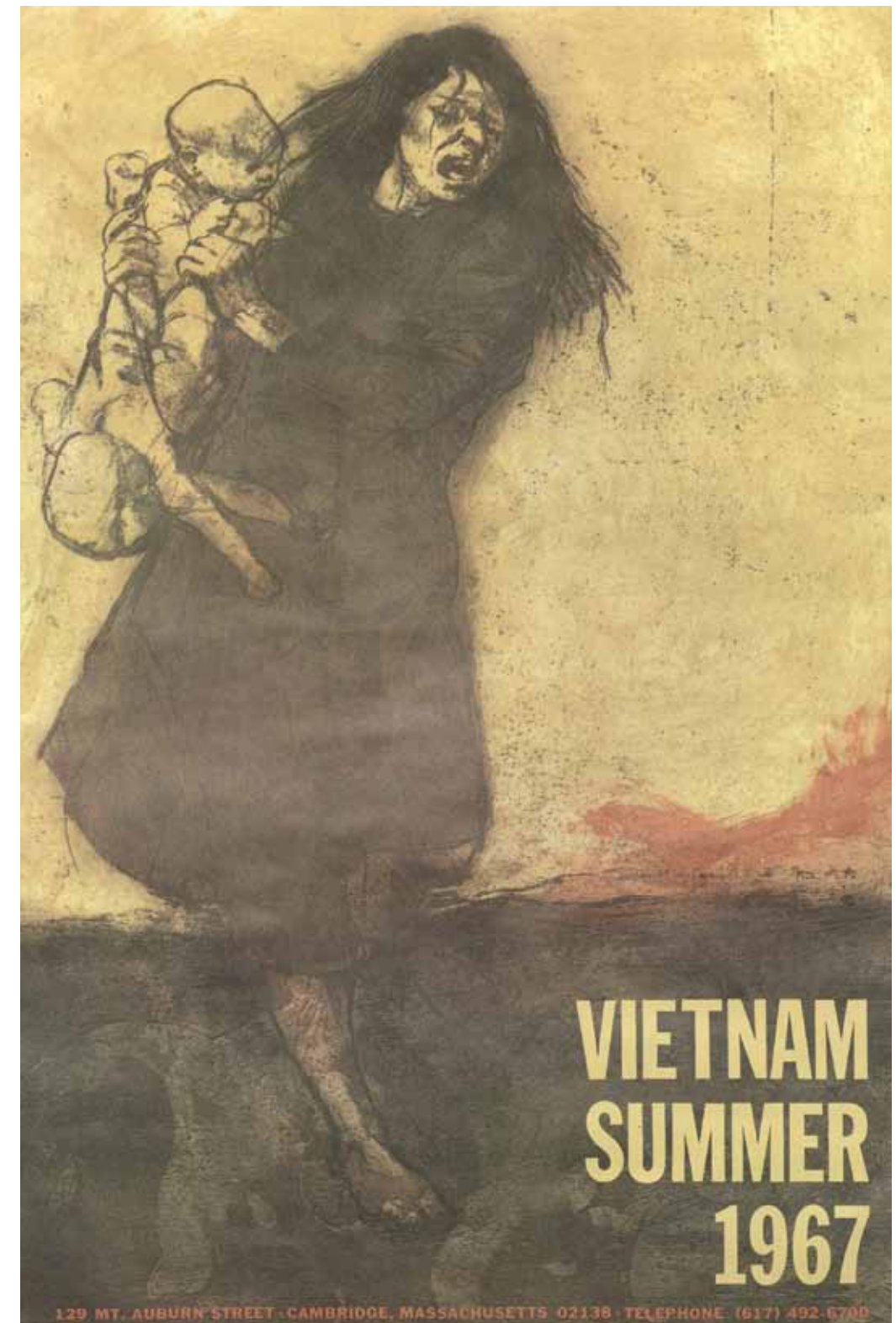
Vietnam Summer

Cambridge, Massachusetts

1967

lithograph

63.5 cm x 42.5 cm

Special Collections and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College

Gift of Mary Margaret Stewart

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1 According to historian Daniel Hallin, the media had extraordinary freedom to report the war in Vietnam without direct government control: it was the first war in which reporters were routinely accredited to accompany military forces yet not subject to censorship. See Daniel Hallin, *The "Uncensored War": Media in Vietnam* (London, England: University of California Press, 1986), 6.

2 Hallin states, "No televised war can long retain political support." Ibid.,4

3 Hallin discusses an "ethic of responsibility" that became integral to journalists and photojournalists in Vietnam and states, "The journalists that went to southeast Asia in the early 1960s were in fact intensely committed to reporting 'the story' despite the generals and ambassadors who were telling them to 'get on the team.'" Ibid.,8

4 Susan Sontag reiterates, "Men make war. Men (most men) like war, since for men there is 'some glory, some necessity, some satisfaction in fighting' that women (most women) do not feel or enjoy." She claims, "War is a man's game - that the killing machine has a gender, and it is male." Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York, New York: Picador, 2003), 3, 6. Furthermore, according to Guenter Lewy in his book *America in Vietnam*, "The number of North Vietnamese civilians killed by Americans bombing was 65,000. This figure is more than twice as many as the U.S. government estimate of 30,000 people killed in North Vietnam. However, according to the official estimate of Hanoi in 1995, the number of civilian deaths in the entire war were almost 2 million people, which is four times higher than other estimates." See Ku Bia, "How Many People Died in the Vietnam War?," *The Vietnam War*, n.d., http://thevietnamwar.info/how-many-people-died-in-the-vietnam-war/.

5 Gender theorist Judith Butler explains, "Specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living. If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lies are never lived nor lost in the full sense." See Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable?* (Maple Vail: Verso, 2009), 1.

Photographs by Stephen H. Warner, c. 1970-1971

Stephen Warner, a 1968 graduate of Gettysburg College, was killed in action just shy of eleven months after being drafted in the Vietnam War.[1] Assigned to the public relations staff of Army HQ, Warner's photographs show a more personal side of the soldiers he encountered, as his subjects are often resting, posing for a portrait, or performing their daily Army duties.[2] This tendency toward photographing noncombative scenes differentiates Warner's photographs from many Vietnam War photojournalists, many of whom photographed the brutality of the war in an antiwar effort. Warner, too, was decidedly antiwar and even traveled to Washington, D.C., with fellow Gettysburg College students in October 1967 to participate in a huge antiwar march on the Pentagon.[3] His photographs underscore the brutality of war by capturing the humanity of the soldiers.

Warner believed that the U.S. Army devalued the individual, leading him to make individual portraits of many of the soldiers he met. He also sympathetically depicted Vietnamese villagers, and many of the subjects are engaged in physical labor, such as driving oxen or preparing a meal. Photographs of soldiers and the locals have been included in this exhibition for comparison, as well as one photograph where the viewer can clearly discern the tense relationship between the soldiers and the Vietnamese people. Here, a group of five U.S. soldiers walk past a group of Vietnamese men, ranging in age. One of the most noticeable differences between the two groups of men is their physical build and the amount of clothing they wear. The American soldiers are significantly taller than the local men and fully clothed, providing a stark contrast to the physically slighter Vietnamese men. The American soldiers also carry large weapons and technology and walk by the Vietnamese men without seemingly engaging them.

Another one of Warner's photographs depicts a resting soldier reclining in a small hammock in the dense Vietnamese jungle. The bright red markings of Warner's pen disrupt the seemingly insignificant nap of the soldier; "Help!" leaps off of the page at the viewer. As the other markings appear to be standard edits for postproduction, the word "Help!" sets this photograph apart from dozens of other photographs with similar post-production markings. While the red "Help!" was directed at Warner's photo editor, when taken out of context the word conveys the implicit danger of the War more generally. Without this information, the word then appears to be directed at the viewer of the photograph, implying a sense of responsibility and immediately creating a connection between the photograph and the viewer. The photograph also highlights a state of incongruity between the relaxed body in the hammock and the exclamation in red.

In Warner's photograph of soldiers in their barracks, five men sit around a table eating and writing letters. Though they appear relaxed and safe during this brief respite from combat, the threat of the active warzone lurks beyond the frame. Therefore, a body in conflict is not always depicted in active warfare, but might often more obliquely refer to the dangerous situation by way of contrast. For example, Warner's photograph of men relaxing in their barracks compares to USO performances during World War II; this contrast between R&R and active combat highlights the extreme juxtaposition of fighting and living. While the viewer cannot see the faces of the soldiers in this photograph, one is able to relentlessly scrutinize the young and exposed bodies of the men and to imagine the fate of these soldiers.[4] With present-day knowledge of the high number of casualties in the Vietnam War, the viewer can assume that these men were traumatized by combat, or, like Warner, killed in action.[5]
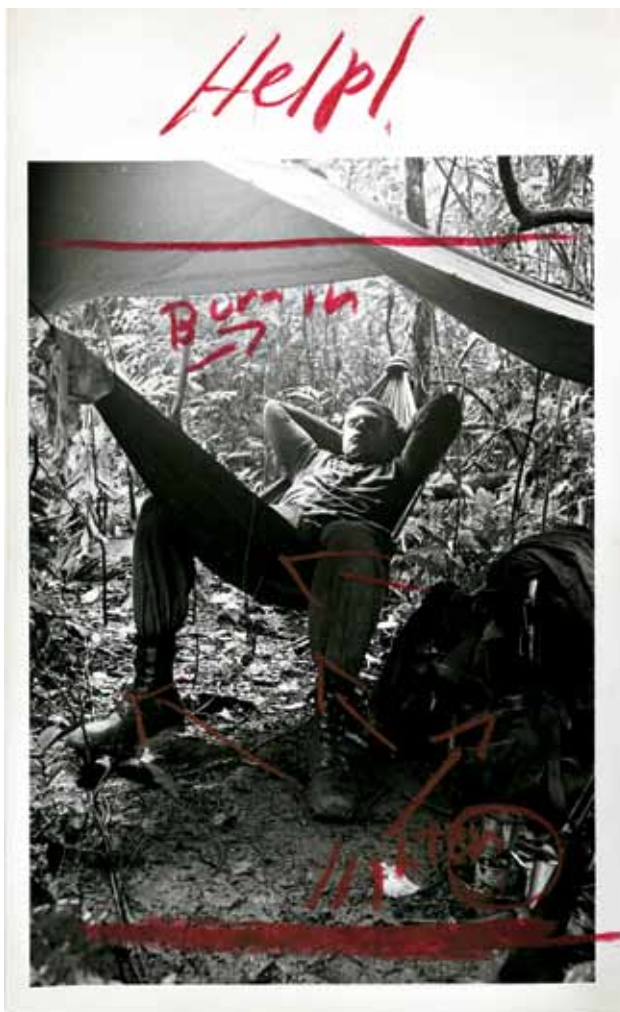
1 Arthur Amchan, *Killed in Action: The Life and Times of SP4 Stephen H. Warner, Draftee, Journalist and Anti-War Activist* (McLean, Virginia: Amchan Publication, 2003), 5.

2 In his first letter home on March 23, Warner wrote, "I was 'hired' by the Seargent Major though no one really knows what I'll be doing. I think eventually I'll be writing command information topics for USARV...". Arthur Amchan, *Killed in Action: The Life and Times of SP4 Stephen H. Warner, Draftee, Journalist and Anti-War Activist* (McLean, Virginia: Amchan Publication, 2003).

3 Ibid.,19.

4 The average age of the 2.5 million American G.I.'s that fought in Vietnam was twenty-one, and one out of every ten men was killed or wounded. See Ku Bia, "How Many People Died in the Vietnam War?," *The Vietnam War*, n.d., http://thevietnamwar.info/how-many-people-died-in-the-vietnam-war/.

5 Roland Barthes explains, "Photography has something to do with resurrection... The date belongs to the photograph: not because it denotes a style (this does concern me), but because it makes me lift my head, allows me to compute life, death, the inexorable extinction of the generations...". Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1980), 52.

Wafaa Bilal, *The Ashes Series: Chair*, 2003-2013

This work, titled *Chair* from *The Ashes Series*, is not simply a documentary photograph of the inside of a partially destroyed house with an ash-covered armchair. Instead, Iraqi-born artist Wafaa Bilal carefully constructed a small-scale model of the inside of Saddam Hussein's home after he was captured in 2003.[1] For *The Ashes Series*, Bilal utilizes journalistic photographs as sources for small-scale replicas, which the artist creates with cardboard, wood panels, Styrofoam, paint, plaster and miniature objects, and then covers in twenty-one grams of human ash.[2] Printed as a large photograph, the image of the destroyed room reveals the results of past conflict as the chair sits amongst rubble and ash with a section of the wall blown away. For some viewers, the context for where the room is, what conflict has passed, and the significance of the chair, may be unknown or ambiguous. The chair takes the place of a human presence within the photograph, as there is no figure pictured, and represents the fates of the bodies affected by Hussein and by larger conflicts.[3] The making of this series has personal significance to the artist as his brother was killed in Iraq, an event which led to the death of his father. Bilal explains, "The models serve as mirrors of my desire to return home or to find my home when this is not possible, and in a sense to rebuild the places where my brother and father were killed." This theme of loss is present throughout the entirety of *The Ashes Series*, as none of the photographs depict bodies amongst their rubble.[4]

Bilal introduces a paradox between the false reality of the constructed set and the perceived veracity of the discipline of photography. The artist also challenges the viewer's recognition of scale by altering it in two ways. The artist first creates a model that is much smaller than the actual room and then enlarges the finished photograph to separate it from journalistic images. As a result, the haunting photographs in *The Ashes Series* envelope the viewer, making one feel as if he or she could step inside the eerie scene. This experience is critical to Bilal: "I'm here to shed light on the destruction and violence of warfare in a language that I hope people who have never experienced it can understand. I'm here to create dialogue and build bridges—human being to human being."[5] Many works in this exhibition call upon the contrast between particular artistic and political perspectives and the realities of war. The photograph, and the entire *The Ashes Series*, reveals that omission is as powerful as inclusion in the depiction of conflict. The exclusion of bodies in this scene heightens the sense of loss and longing. This concern with omission and the origins of the photograph can also be understood in relation to the larger oversights of American news coverage on the war in Iraq; Bilal brings renewed attention to the number of Iraqi men and women that have died and suffered over years of conflict.

Wafaa Bilal (b. 1966, Iraq, lives in New York)
The Ashes Series: Chair
2003-2013
archival inkjet photograph
101.6 cm x 127 cm
Image ©Wafaa Bilal
Schmucker Art Gallery, Gettysburg College. Purchase made possible by Michael J. Birkner '72 and Robin Wagner Art and Photography Acquisition Fund with additional support provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for the Middle East and Islamic Studies program at Gettysburg College.

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1 For more information about the artist, see Wafaa Bilal and Kari Lydersen, *Shoot an Iraqi: Art, Life and Resistance Under the Gun* (San Francisco CA: City Lights Books, 2008). This book details Bilal's project Shoot an Iraqi and provides background information about the artist's life and childhood in Iraq. See also Wafaa Bilal and Shelley Rice, *Wafaa Bilal: The Ashes Series* (New York: Driscoll Babcock Galleries, 2014); and Wafaa Bilal, *The Human Condition Catalog* (Crudeoils, 2005).

2 For Bilal's own description and philosophy of *The Ashes Series*, see http://wafaabilal.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/The-Ashes-Series.pdf.

3 Shelley Rice states, "Devoid of people, the pictures are nevertheless filled with human presence, and the 21 grams of human ashes into which we, body and soul, will one day be transformed." See Bilal and Rice.

4 Artist and curator Susanne Slavick writes, "Twenty-one grams of human ashes are sifted with organic cinders, photographed, blown up and printed in large format, rendering scale ambiguous and disorienting. Dr. Duncan MacDougall ... determined that, at death, the body lost twenty-one grams of weight with the soul's departure." Susanne Slavick, *Out of Rubble* (New York City: Charta Books Ltd., 2011), 34.

5 Bilal and Lydersen, 5.

Bodies in Conflict:
From Gettysburg to Iraq

Curated by Laura Bergin '17

Gallery Talk with Laura Bergin '17:

September 9, 5pm | Reception to follow until 7 pm

Lecture by Wafaa Bilal, Associate Arts Professor, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University:

September 29, 5:30 pm | Lyceum, Pennsylvania Hall
Reception to follow until 7:30 pm | Schmucker Art Gallery

Gallery hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10-4
www.gettysburg.edu/gallery

Design by Ayumi Yasuda

Cover: Wafaa Bilal, *The Ashes Series: Chair*, 2003-2013, archival inkjet photograph, 101.6 cm x 127 cm, Image ©Wafaa Bilal
Schmucker Art Gallery, Gettysburg College. Purchase made possible by Michael J. Birkner '72 and Robin Wagner Art and Photography Acquisition Fund with additional support provided by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for Middle East and Islamic Studies