NOTES

1. SEEING IN THE DARK


9. By “worldview,” I am referring not just to the more familiar usage that describes one’s outlook or individual cosmological interpretation of events, although this is undoubtedly part of it. My conception of worldview encompasses not just the personal, social, and political ideology that we use to organize events and objects in the world but also the technological and media-driven means by which we come to know the world in the first place. In this sense I am attempting to marry the literal “frame” of the computer, television, tablet, and so on to the more abstract, psychological “framing effect” that any particular representation imposes. Documentary aesthetics in this sense not only instantiate a particular worldview but also shape and express the worldview of the audiences who see and agree with any particular film.


12. A brief note here on terminology: the two media listed here are enormously capacious and lend themselves to widely divergent interpretations in different contexts. “The moving image,” of course, can refer to both film and television, two separate forms of media that have unique histories and disciplines, and yet the two overlap in that they share similar properties, producers, and content. My point here is not that all forms of moving images are
identical (nor are all Internets or digital technologies), but simply that, taken together, these
general groups point to larger historical trends.

13. Douglas Gomery, The Coming of Sound (Routledge, 2005), 14–20; Donald Crafton,

14. To see this sort of transitional integration between technologies at work across

15. In this sense my study draws on the model of media emergence Bolter and Grusin outline in their influential work Remediation. They describe the process as a double ac-
tion in which any new form of media both draws on and influences prior forms of media.
Thus, a new technology like the web will draw from existing media like newspapers (in
both form and content) in order to gain legitimacy, while at the same time these older
forms will adopt characteristics of new forms in order to remain viable in this shifting
media landscape. In my formulation, new forms of networked political action will thus
draw on certain tendencies and characteristics of documentary film even as documentary
itself evolves to take advantage of newly available digital technologies. Given this, my aim is
to chart a spectrum of different work, from mainstream political documentaries on one end
to those that bear little actual resemblance to documentary on the other.

16. This independent tradition, as Patricia Zimmerman’s powerful account States
of Emergency: Documentaries, Wars, Democracy (University of Minnesota Press, 2000)
demonstrates, was one of the targets that emerged in the decade or so between the end of
the Cold War and the start of the war on terror. Zimmermann meticulously outlines the
connections between public media, public spaces, and the independent voices and agencies
that act as a check on power. Zimmermann’s own work through festivals (primarily the
Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival), the Flaherty Seminar, the Visible Evidence
community, and many other venues is another example of the deep connections between
independent documentary and political activism.

17. This has been extensively discussed by both Bill Nichols and Carl Plantinga,
among others. See Bill Nichols, “Rhetoric and What Exceeds It,” chap. 5 in Representing
Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary (Indiana University Press, 1991); and Carl
R. Plantinga, Rhetoric and Representation in Nonfiction Film (Cambridge University
Press, 1997).

18. Not all of the blame for this extreme polarization can be laid at Bush’s feet, however.
The protests that emerged during the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle, the
Clinton impeachment over the Monica Lewinsky scandal, and Newt Gingrich’s “Contract
with America” in 1995 might all be cited as further starting points for a political trend that
has hardly ceased since Bush left office. Wherever we place the starting point, however, it
should still be noted that events during Bush’s tenure pushed this general political enmity
to a fevered pitch.
19. As Jane Mayer notes, the debate that I refer to here wasn’t so much an internal debate about the ethics of torture within the Bush administration, but rather an attempt to stretch semantic and legal boundaries in order to accommodate the inhumane and illegal techniques already in use by the CIA and other groups in charge of interrogating suspects. In any case, most observers ended up agreeing with Mark Danner’s point of view that regardless of how you categorize these illegal and inhumane acts, they are also ineffective, rendering any payoff irrelevant. See Jane Mayer, *The Dark Side: The Inside Story of How The War on Terror Turned into a War on American Ideals* (Knopf Doubleday, 2009), 148–57; and Mark Danner, *Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror* (New York Review of Books, 2004), 10–26.

20. José van Dijck and her later collaborators have brilliantly delineated the evolution of these impulses into their eventual commercialization on some of the largest platforms on the web today (Facebook, Twitter, Google, Uber). See José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media* (Oxford University Press, 2013); and José van Dijck, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal, *The Platform Society* (Oxford University Press, 2018). Clay Shirky provides a number of useful case studies demonstrating the productive power of these tools. See Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations*, reprint (Penguin, 2009).

21. It would be more accurate to say that Snowden’s revelations accelerated these debates, given that the NSA’s warrantless wiretapping program was already an object of clear scrutiny by many. For a full account of both, see Glenn Greenwald, *No Place to Hide: Edward Snowden, the NSA, and the U.S. Surveillance State* (Henry Holt and Company, 2014).


23. The same scenario plays out again with the transition from film to video and the mainstream emergence of cable television and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in the 1970s and 1980s. The decreased production cost of shooting on video enabled an explosion of new documentary forms, from the autobiographical work of people like Sadie Benning, Abraham Ravett, and Alan Berliner to the political documentaries of other filmmakers like Jill Godmilow, Rea Tajiri, Marlon Fuentes, and Marlon Riggs. Like the major television networks that first exhibited the work of many Direct Cinema filmmakers, PBS and public access both proved to be important distributors and exhibition sites for documentary work produced on video. As with Direct Cinema, changes in technology accompanied changes in the form, subject, and audience of documentary film. To borrow the taxonomy that Bill Nichols puts forward, we might simply state that just as 16mm and network television in the 1950s and 1960s gave rise to the “observational” and “participatory” modes of documentary, video and public television gave rise to the “performative” mode. See Nichols, *Representing Reality*.

25. Quoted in Richard Roud, *Jean-Luc Godard* (Thames and Hudson/British Film Institute, 1970), 163. Significantly, his remark is directed at Richard Leacock’s assertion that Direct Cinema’s technological enhancements enabled it to foster subject-driven observation.

26. Indeed, cheaper access to production materials, as Jennifer Malkowski notes in her brilliant exploration of death (documentary’s most taboo of topics), allows many more stories to be told. Quoting Kate Davis, the director of *Southern Comfort*, she notes that this, and a great many other stories, might have failed to be told if they had depended upon the interest of traditional funding outlets or large crews in order to get started. See Jennifer Malkowski, *Dying in Full Detail: Mortality and Digital Documentary* (Duke University Press, 2017), 88.


33. See, e.g., Trinh T. Minh-ha’s films *Reassemblage* (1983) and *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* (1989) and either of her books *Framer Framed: Film Scripts and Interviews* (Routledge, 1992) and *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism* (Indiana University Press, 1989).

34. The move I am describing here can be seen in work by Paper Tiger TV, Chris Marker, Harun Farocki, Lynne Sachs, Péter Forgács, Leandro Katz, Jeffrey Skoller, and others. All of these artists demonstrate in one way or another the connections between an expressive aesthetic form and a committed engagement with politics.

35. Kahana’s *Intelligence Work*, which reiterates, incidentally, the same three periods outlined above, deals in particular with films after the emergence of postmodern skepticism but before 9/11. His reading of *Journeys with George*, Alexandra Pelosi’s 2000 documentary about the first Bush election, characterizes ideally the situation of political ennui indicative of the pre-9/11 documentary.

36. One, admittedly limited, indication of this increased engagement is the twelve-year shift from 1996’s record low voter turnout to 2008’s nearly record-breaking turnout.


38. The importance of the Internet when combined with the DVD as a distribution channel cannot be overestimated. Not only does this cement documentary’s claim to providing an “independent” point of view outside of the mainstream media, but it also allows documentary films that would have lacked the resources to mount a theatrical release or television commitment from a major network (all of whom, including PBS, were increasingly less willing to give time to “political” films for fear of being branded organs of liberal/conservative media) to eventually find a niche market in the “long tail” (the term given to the large number of products and films that find small audiences instead of the small number that find large audiences) online.

39. A note here on terminology. Although the phrase “database aesthetics” was formalized with the recent publication of Victoria Vesna’s edited volume *Database Aesthetics: Art in the Age of Information Overflow* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), a number of uses had sprung up prior to this—most notably for me here, in Lev Manovich, “Database as Symbolic Form,” *Convergence: The International Journal of Research Into New Media Technologies* 5, no. 2 (June 1999): 80–99. An extended discussion of the term forms part of this chapter, particularly since my reading here stretches its usage somewhat by arguing that a film text (Manovich’s primary example of narrative aesthetics and, hence, the binary opposite of the database) is used by Morris to overtly explore the database aesthetic at work in a collection of digital images.


41. A few examples: DNA provides the “code” of life; we can track our health and well-being through various personal metrics and record all of our relationships on social networks that in turn provide a “social graph” of our most intimate connections; the health of the state is measured and administered through various statistical indicators whose models attempt to optimize results through various “tweaks” to the data.

2. “WE SEE WHAT WE WANT TO BELIEVE”


2. As in all of his films, Morris is still interested in the way that given individuals arrive at the startlingly idiosyncratic and erroneous conclusions that they do, but in these two recent films, his focus is more directly on the media-laden road that they took to get there. See, for example, his 2000 interview in the journal *Cineaste* about his film *Mr. Death*, where he states, “Ultimately, it is a movie about denial. Denial about the obvious, denial of self, denial of death, denial of the Holocaust. But at its center, it is a failure to see the world, to see reality. Living in a cocoon of one’s own devising. Fabricating
a universe that one occupies, that may in fact be divorced from the real world.” Roy Grundmann and Cynthia Rockwell, “Truth Is Not Subjective: An Interview with Errol Morris,” *Cineaste* 25, no. 3 (January 2000): 6.

3. The transmediation of analog material to digital archives on the Internet has been a topic of concern both for those actually doing the work (librarians, archivists, and others) and for New Media scholars concerned with the theoretical frameworks that ground such projects. Wendy Chun, for example, has pointed out that memory and storage are often erroneously conflated in progressivist accounts of the Internet’s ability to save analog media while providing complete, instant, permanent access to the world’s information. Marija Dalbello, writing as a librarian and archivist, worries on the other hand that digital archives as currently instantiated don’t present a complete enough historical record, focusing as they do on the popularly accessible collection over the complete and rigorous approach. See Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, “The Enduring Ephemeral, or the Future Is a Memory,” *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 1 (Autumn 2008): 148–71; and Marija Dalbello, “Institutional Shaping of Cultural Memory: Digital Library as Environment for Textual Transmission,” *Library Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (July 2004): 265–98.


5. The Interrotron is Morris’s signature, self-invented camera setup for conducting interviews. It essentially consists of two modified teleprompters placed in separate rooms, which each project the feed from a camera placed behind the other. This allows the subject to look Morris, and consequently the camera, in the eye as the interview is conducted. On-screen in the final film, the setup produces an unsettling degree of eye contact between subject and viewer.

6. On a side note, “Lesson 1: Empathize with Your Enemy,” which draws on McNamara’s experiences with both Fidel Castro and Nikita Khrushchev, also seems to double as an enjoinder to the audience, many of whom might vilify McNamara for his role in Vietnam, to check any prejudices against McNamara at least long enough to hear him out.


11. The show originally aired on September 25, 1963, on CBS.


13. Ibid., 28:17.

14. As Vinzenz Hediger points out in his discussion of Hollerith in early German industrial films, “Both technologically and in institutional terms, the Hollerith data processor is a predecessor of the modern-day computer. The Hollerith tabulating machine uses punched cards to tabulate statistics from data” (133). See Vinzenz Hediger and Patrick Vonderau, *Films That Work: Industrial Film and the Productivity of Media* (Amsterdam University Press, 2009).
15. The controversy to which I refer was set off by the publication of Edwin Black’s book detailing the relationship between IBM and its German subsidiary Dehomag. Black, a science fiction writer, has steadfastly defended the book’s claims while denouncing its detractors as corporate thugs for IBM. The book was both widely lauded and condemned, achieving best-seller status while earning Black awards for his work as well as condemnation as a crank. See Edwin Black, *IBM and the Holocaust: The Strategic Alliance between Nazi Germany and America’s Most Powerful Corporation* (Dialog Press, 2008). For refutation of the book and an outline of its faults, see Michael Allen, “Review: Stranger than Science Fiction: Edwin Black, IBM, and the Holocaust,” *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 1 (January 2002): 150–54.


18. Wiener’s ethical stance on government funding is still commemorated by the annual Wiener Award, which the Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility group hands out. See Wiener, “Men, Machines,” 65.


22. The “domino theory,” as it came to be known, held that if one country fell to communist control, the other countries in Southeast Asia would quickly follow. As Gordon Goldstein puts it: “By 1964 the domino theory had the force of doctrine, becoming a de facto feature of the political debate over Vietnam, the teetering domino that could ostensibly unleash communism across Southeast Asia.” Gordon M. Goldstein, *Lessons in Disaster: McGeorge Bundy and the Path to War in Vietnam* (Macmillan, 2008), 139.


24. This of course is hardly the only account of these events, or of their interpretation. Eric Alterman’s account of the incident describes Johnson as being “deliberately deceptive” about the event in order to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which gave him the unconditional authority to escalate the war. See his chapter titled “Lyndon B. Johnson and the Gulf of Tonkin Incidents,” in Eric Alterman, *When Presidents Lie: A History of Official Deception and Its Consequences* (Penguin, 2005).

25. Indeed, David Mosen’s analysis of *Report* in *Film Quarterly* sounds eerily reminiscent of *The Fog of War*. He states: “In Conner’s eyes society thrives on violence, destruction, and death no matter how hard we try to hide it with immaculately clean offices, the worship of modern science, or the creation of instant martyrs. From the bullfight arena to the nuclear arena we clamor for the spectacle of destruction.” David Mosen, “Review: ‘Report’ Bruce
Conner,” *Film Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (Spring 1966): 55. For an extended analysis of the film, which expands upon the connection between the film and its media roots (what he calls the “complicity of the moving image media in the rise and fall of John F. Kennedy” [250]), see Bruce Jenkins, “Bruce Conner’s Report: Contesting Camelot,” in *Masterpieces of Modernist Cinema*, ed. Ted Perry (Indiana University Press, 2006), 236–51.


27. Consider, for instance, the recent evolution and ongoing debates in the discipline of history itself. While the field is hardly unified into a single body of practitioners espousing a single set of concerns, several recent texts might be pointed to as evidence of a larger disciplinary evolution, including: (1) the rise and fall of both social and cultural history as chronicled in chapter 2 of William Sewell’s *The Logics of History* (University of Chicago Press, 2009) and more fully elaborated in Peter Burke’s *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Pennsylvania State University, 2011); (2) the effects of poststructuralism and the larger linguistic turn as explored in Frank Ankersmit and Hans Kellner’s edited volume *A New Philosophy of History* (University of Chicago Press, 1995) and Derek Attridge’s *Post-Structuralism and the Question of History* (Cambridge University Press, 1999); and (3), more generally, the ongoing scandal incited by the publication of Hayden White’s *Metahistory* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), or the overall influence of the French Annales school.


29. Ibid., 7.

30. This lack of transparency regarding the past, and the ability to misinterpret evidence, explains in part Morris’s continued fascination with those individuals who delude themselves for whatever reason about the information they are presented with, be it the Dallas Police Department (*The Thin Blue Line*), Fred Leuchter (*Mr. Death*), or Robert McNamara.


33. Here we could point to such high-profile endeavors as the Google Books’s scanning project, which seeks to create a digital copy of every book ever printed, on down to the activities of individual libraries and archives that work on specific collections of photographs and historical documents, to subject-focused archives like the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, which consolidates and digitizes historical records from a number of historical sources relating to the transatlantic slave trade. Other notable examples include the Archive.org Prelinger Archives, which digitizes and distributes found films, and journal and newspaper databases such as the popular JSTOR project or the *New York Times* archive, which makes every article published in the *New York Times*’s 150-year history searchable online.


36. Ibid., 20.
45. Consider, for example, the difference in the two companion volumes. The Blight and Lang companion text for *The Fog of War* offers something like a set of footnotes to the historical documents and other materials that the film references in passing. In essence, it substantiates the claims the film makes with an expanded set of materials as evidence. Gourevitch’s narrative for *Standard Operating Procedure* is something closer to a complete story or expanded version of the events in the film. Whereas the ancillary media on errol-morris.com for *The Fog of War* are directly about the film, the ancillary media for *Standard Operating Procedure* extend the issues discussed in the film.


51. Irina Leimbacher, for example, claims that the reenactments are “a subject of fetishistic display or perverse ornamental possession for Morris.” See Irina Leimbacher, “Response to Papers and Comments on *Standard Operating Procedure*,” *Jumpcut: A Review of Contemporary Media* 52 (Summer 2010), www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc52.2010/sopLimbacher/index.html.

52. As Linda Williams puts it, “[T]he humiliation, abuse and torture are so often enacted as if for the camera.” Williams, “Cluster Fuck,” 48.


54. These three films obviously place *Standard Operating Procedure* in a constellation of films on torture and detainee abuse. Read alternatively as a film about the direction of the war in Iraq, it might be seen alongside others like *Iraq in Fragments* (James Longley, 2006), *Gunner Palace* (Petra Epperlein and Michael Tucker, 2004), *Uncovered: The War on Iraq* (Robert Greenwald, 2004), and *No End in Sight* (Charles Ferguson, 2007).

55. I place the term “like” in scare quotes simply because it is hard to claim that one likes a film about such a horrific topic. It should be taken therefore to stand in for something more akin to my earlier formulation—namely, that one does or does not find merit in the film’s approach.

56. The controversy to which I am alluding here was nicely formalized in a panel presentation at the 2010 Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in Los Angeles, which brought together scholars on both sides of the issue. Their points were later printed in issue 52 of the journal *Jump Cut*. On the side of the film were Jonathan Kahana and Linda Williams, with Nichols and Leimbacher both criticizing it. The discussion afterward largely mirrored the split on the panel. See “Conference Report: Reframing *Standard Operating Procedure*—Errol Morris and the Creative Treatment of Abu Ghraib,” *Jump Cut* 52 (Summer 2010).


58. Lesage, “Torture Documentaries.”

59. Williams, “Cluster Fuck.”


61. The term is taken from Victoria Vesna’s new collection of the same name. In it, Vesna collects discussions from several prominent New Media artists as well as theorists like Warren Sack and Lev Manovich, and curators of digital art like Christiane Paul. See Victoria Vesna, ed., *Database Aesthetics* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007).


63. The term “Universal Media Machine” is Manovich’s, one he uses to describe the rise to prominence of the computer as an essential tool in the creation, distribution, and consumption of various forms of media.
64. It should be noted that this does not mean that the database itself is unstructured, but simply that interacting with a database from an end-user perspective is open to many different structures and interpretations.
65. These sequences contain the film’s most extensive use of computer-generated imagery.
69. Here I am thinking of The Thin Blue Line, which has political implications in its critique of the justice system, as well as Mr. Death, which deals with the politics around anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial. But where one explores these issues through an isolated event (the false accusation of Randall Adams in The Thin Blue Line) and the other through an individual figure (Fred Leuchter in Mr. Death), both Standard Operating Procedure and The Fog of War deal with issues (Abu Ghraib, Vietnam) that were a primary focus of national discussion over an extended period.

3. NETWORKED AUDIENCES

The epigraph is from Clay Shirky, Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations, reprint (Penguin, 2009).


5. The eventual interconnection between moving images and social technology seems to provide further evidence of the “convergence culture” that Henry Jenkins and others describe. See Henry Jenkins, Convergence Culture (NYU Press, 2006). Instead, I’ll argue that documentary’s long connection to social change pushed it to prominence at a time when the utopian hopes it inspired were increasingly placed instead on newer digital forms of social organization.


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Film 3, no. 3 (December 2009): 199–218, https://doi.org/10.1386/sdf.3.3.199/1; Christian Christensen, “Political Documentary, Online Organization and Activist Synergies,” Studies in Documentary Film 3, no. 2 (November 2009): 77–94, https://doi.org/10.1386/sdf.3.2.77/1. For Musser, Greenwald was ahead of the curve (and, significantly, ahead of conservative activists working toward the same end) on moving from the traditional theatrical release first to DVDs and then to YouTube as a means of allowing greater access to his films in critical periods before the US presidential elections in 2004, 2006, and 2008.

8. Christensen, “Political Documentary.”


17. Boynton, “Guerrilla Documentary.”

18. Stelter, “Released on Web.”

19. Musser, “Political Documentary.” As Musser points out, it was only with the appearance of YouTube in 2006 that a turnkey solution for online video streaming was made available to a wide audience of producers and consumers, making it a natural outlet for those on both sides of the media equation seeking a way around what Greenwald referred to as “the traditional gatekeepers.”

20. Christensen, “Political Documentary.”

32. Charles Musser, “Political Documentary.
36. Boynton, “Guerrilla Documentary.”
38. Ibid.
41. Boynton, “Guerrilla Documentary.”
44. Auletta, “Vox Fox.”
46. Boynton, “Guerrilla Documentary.”
47. Ibid.
56. As David Norman Rodowick asserts, “[H]ome theater has already overtaken commercial exhibition in popularity and economic importance.” Rodowick, The Virtual Life of Film (Harvard University Press, 2007), 109.
57. Interestingly, although video posts were only semifrequent, the site’s message boards regularly got posts from users, indicating that the site was a destination for people interested in the issue long after the film’s release. Its tongue-in-cheek approach to the material runs closer to parody than the film version does, but the site also offered a special FOX ATTACKS: Special Edition version of the Outfoxed film that includes some of the viral videos created for the website alongside the film. The original site can still be accessed via the Wayback Machine at archive.org. As of 2019, the URL redirects to a YouTube video with the full original film, and the comments section contains material similar to the sort of debate that appeared on the original FoxAttacks website.
58. Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* (Harper Perennial, 2009). See also Levitt and Dubner, *Freakonomics: The Hidden Side of Everything* (blog/website/podcast) http://freakonomics.com. The site initially functioned as a frequently updated blog, but since 2017 it seems to have shifted its attention to producing the radio show and podcast as a way of generating interest and attention in the books.

59. Boynton, “Guerrilla Documentary.”


61. Consider, for instance, the enormous popularity of Netflix’s “Watch Instantly” streaming option.

62. Musser, "Political Documentary.”


69. Ibid.


71. Ibid.


74. Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*, 106.


76. The argument here strongly echoes the argument that Wendy Chun puts forth in her first book, although she is primarily concerned in this early iteration with the individual rather than a larger social/organizational institution. See Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (MIT Press, 2008).


78. Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody*.

81. Ibid.
85. Ibid., 46.
86. Ibid., 49.
89. Whiteman, “Out of the Theaters.”

4. “STATES OF EXCEPTION”

2. The cynical view of the delay, one with certain foundations, is that it was a product of the administration’s desire not to close the base at all, or to close the base in name only by shifting its duties (and crimes) to other locations cloaked under other legal auspices (like the detention center at Bagram, Afghanistan). Glenn Greenwald, “An Emerging Progressive Consensus on Obama’s Executive Power and Secrecy Abuses,” Salon, April 13, 2009, www.salon.com/2009/04/13/obama_94/.
4. The term here is drawn from the title, and argument, of Derek Gregory’s essay in the collection that he coedited with Allan Pred. While Gregory explores both Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib as vanishing points, he activates the wider set of exceptional policies, practices, and fields of engagement that I would point to as well. See Derek Gregory, “Vanishing Points,” in Violent Geographies: Fear, Terror, and Political Violence, ed. Derek Gregory and Allan Pred (Routledge, 2007), 205.
7. By “represent,” I’m referring here both to efforts to offer political and legal representation to the detainees of Guantánamo and to the efforts by media makers to figuratively represent the place on-screen—something that throughout the Bush era was notoriously difficult to do. It is the conflation of the political and the aesthetic (following Rancière in The Politics of Aesthetics) that sits at the heart of the chapter that follows.
8. The project's blog, http://gonegitmo.blogspot.com, recounts the various stages, sabotages, and setbacks the project went through before reaching its current state as well as the various conferences, events, and press coverage at or in which it has been discussed since.


11. The relationship between fiction film and the historical past is, of course, well-plowed ground. See, for example, Robert Rosenstone, History on Film/Film on History (Pearson, 2006).


13. In her recent Jump Cut article “Torture Documentaries,” Julia Lesage puts the issue of documentary’s facts-cum-ethics thus: “Their films give information about the subject, indicate ways of dealing with the issues, invite an emotional response, and invoke an ethical stance. They offer a path to mastery over a complex topic, even if it is only a provisional mastery that becomes more nuanced and revised the more we consider other facts and other voices on the subject.” Julia Lesage, “Torture Documentaries,” Jumpcut: A Review of Contemporary Media 51 (Spring 2009), http://www.ejumpcut.org/currentissue/TortureDocumentaries/index.html.

14. Fiction film, of course, has its own, less overt politics, and the same could certainly be said of Second Life in general, but again, Gone Gitmo's overt approach to politics puts it in the same oppositional stance to the rest of Second Life that documentary occupies in relation to the majority of fiction film.


16. As reflected on the site's blog, the closing of Camp X-Ray and the construction of Camp Delta are both developments that took place during the site's construction. Nonny De La Peña, “Gone Gitmo: C-17, Camp Delta and a Visit from Gandhi,” Gone Gitmo (blog), April 23, 2008, https://gonegitmo.blogspot.com/2008/04/c-17-camp-delta-and-visit-from-gandhi.html.

17. Ironically, there is nonetheless a kernel of photographic “truth” lurking in some of the images on the site in that its designers used digital images of the camp itself to create faithful virtual images in Second Life. For an account of replicating the actual razor wire used in the real camp, see Peggy Weil, “Gone Gitmo: Building Cages,” Gone Gitmo (blog), June 7, 2007, https://gonegitmo.blogspot.com/2008/01/building-cages.html.

18. See, for example, the comments on the project's blog page at http://gonegitmo.blogspot.com.


20. Nonny de la Peña's later project After Solitary was an effort to achieve this same experience using VR technology. See Lilly Knoepp, “Forget Oculus Rift, Meet the Godmother


24. For Agamben, this specific “state” is neither a historical development (indeed, its antecedents include the Roman iustitium and auctoritas, used in state funerals) nor the product of any specific form of constitution. In this sense, 9/11, Guantánamo and the Patriot Act aren’t so much new developments as they are clear examples of the extreme limits to which state sovereignty and individual rights can be pushed under the right conditions. In his book State of Exception, Agamben himself makes the rather scandalous comparison between Hitler’s “Decree for the Protection of the People” and the Patriot Act itself. What this persistence points to for Agamben is the impossibility of any outside to the “state of exception,” which also nullifies any possibility of a future free of such things. (In essence, the rule always contains the possibility of its exception; the exception is the condition of possibility for the rule, or maybe even the act of ruling as such.) While this may be so, it nonetheless fails to account for the possibility that developments like the Patriot Act or Guantánamo can be reversed and closed, respectively—something that the forms of representation I’m addressing here specifically seek to achieve. The exception may always exist, but as a potentiality rather than an actuality—a difference that would have significance for those groups and individuals subjected to its application. See Agamben, State of Exception (University of Chicago Press, 2005); and his earlier text Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (Stanford University Press, 1998), in which he more fully discusses the foundations of sovereignty.


27. Butler’s primary goal in this text is primarily discursive in the sense that she is particularly concerned with demonstrating how the replacement of one form of discourse (considerations of why the United States was attacked on 9/11) with another (the political designation of detainees as “illegal enemy combatants”) carries political, ethical, and moral stakes. Moreover, for my purposes here, the representation of the Other to the self, particularly in forms of media representation and their exclusion or censorship, is part of the way in which such discursive shifts are enacted. See Judith Butler, Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence (Verso, 2006).
28. The Uighurs I refer to here are Muslim Chinese separatists who went to Afghanistan to receive terrorist training in order to overthrow their secular government. They were rounded up after the invasion and ended up in Guantánamo. As proclaimed enemies of the state, they clearly could not be sent back to China, and yet they can't be legally detained as a threat to the United States (not to mention the political outrage the suggestion of resettling them in the United States sparked). Where, then, to send them? In an aid deal negotiated in 2009 by the Obama administration with the governments of Bermuda and Palau, the Uighurs will end up on one of the few island nations smaller than Cuba.

29. Carlos Williams, “Guantánamo Echoes U.S. ‘Gunboat’ Past / Anti-American Forces Use Navy Base as Rallying Symbol,” *Los Angeles Times*, Sunday April 22, 2007. The original terms of the contract stipulated that the United States pay the Cuban government, in the form of a check, an annual sum of $4,085, which it has faithfully sent every year; but the checks have remained uncashed since 1960. Purportedly, Castro keeps the checks themselves in a drawer in his desk. Long before September 11, 2001, and the prison camp that it would eventually bring, US occupation of the base itself and the terms under which the United States has occupied the territory have been a point of contention for otherwise politically friendly countries in the region. To add to the irony, there is now a proposal by the Council on Hemispheric Relations to litigate the United States off the island by claiming that the original terms of the lease, which prohibited commercial operations of any sort, were broken by the military when it opened McDonald's, Starbucks, and Subway locations on the base in order to offer soldiers stationed there some of the amenities of home.


32. Ibid.


34. A great deal of Dreyfus’s work has gone into working out what artificial intelligence systems (both those in existence and those in development) fail to achieve in terms of philosophical standards and expectations of “mind” and cognition, and why they fail to achieve them. See Hubert Dreyfus, *What Computers Can’t Do* (Harper and Row, 1972); and his follow-up book, *What Computers Still Can’t Do* (MIT Press, 1992).

35. See Hubert Dreyfus, “Virtual Embodiment: Myths of Meaning in Second Life,” in *On the Internet*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2008). A phenomenologist of the first order, Dreyfus draws from both Martin Heidegger (“focal experience”) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (gesture and intercorporeality) for his discussion of what’s most rewarding in real life—sources that are then supplemented with recent research in cognitive and neuropsychology (mirror neurons, social proxemics, etc.).

36. See Tom Boellstorff, *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human* (Princeton University Press, 2008). Of particular use here to me was chap. 5,

37. Boellstorff’s most extreme example of this is the case of a user named “Pavia,” who occupied Second Life as a female but real life as a male. In the course of her time in Second Life, Pavia came to identify far more with the female gender in real life, to the extent that she later came to identify as transgender. Boellstorff, Coming of Age, 138–39.


39. See Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, Remediation: Understanding New Media (MIT Press, 2000), in which the authors argue that new visual media achieve their cultural significance precisely by paying homage to, rivaling, and refashioning such earlier media as perspective painting, photography, film, and television. They call this process of refashioning “remediation,” and they note that earlier media have also often refashioned one another: photography remediated painting; film remediated stage production and photography; and television remediated film, vaudeville, and radio.

40. The specific irony of using the term “black sites” to refer to those that don’t exist under legal and rhetorical terms, but must, by definition, exist in some physical space (and hence be open to some form of representation) has been extensively mined by the geographer Trevor Paglen in his explorations of the secret, internal workings of the CIA and related government agencies that seek to work under the veil of secrecy. Paglen has produced two relevant studies of such places and their by-products. The first, Torture Taxi, which he coauthored with A.C. Thompson, investigates CIA policies of extraordinary rendition by capitalizing on the fact that such secret flights still have to adhere to the exigencies of any given flight, including taking off and landing at airports, refueling, and so forth. The second, Blank Spots on the Map, is a study that documents “black sites”—from Area 51 in Nevada, to the elusive “Salt Pit” in Afghanistan, to even more secret locations whose names are unknown. See Trevor Paglen and A.C. Thompson, Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA’s Rendition Flights (Melville House, 2006); and A.C. Paglen, Blank Spots on the Map: The Dark Geography of the Pentagon’s Secret World (Dutton, 2009).


59. Galloway, “Social Realism in Gaming.”


61. Galloway, “Social Realism in Gaming.”


63. Halter, *From Sun Tzu to Xbox*.


65. Halter, *From Sun Tzu to Xbox*, 118.


68. In general, media effects is the study of the impact of media on individual and social behavior. Priming effects refers to the (controversial) theory that exposure to a certain


83. These soldiers are often consulted on their experiences for future iterations of the game. Oddly enough, the game goes one step further and produces collectible action figures of these soldiers, thereby allowing very young children to engage in the play of war. See Jacqueline M. Hames, “America’s Army—Army Values & Plenty of Action,” U.S. Army, accessed April 16, 2013, http://www.army.mil/article/26405/.

5. TECHNOLOGY, TRANSPARENCY, AND THE DIGITAL PRESIDENCY

The quotations in the epigraph are from, respectively, Louis Brandeis, Other People’s Money: And How the Bankers Use It (F. A. Stokes, 1914), 92; and Edward Tufte, Beautiful Evidence (Graphics Press, 2006), 9.


9. Tufte, Beautiful Evidence, 10; Card, Mackinlay, and Shneiderman, Readings in Information Visualization, xiii.

10. See Jeffrey Heer’s work and the general mission of his lab at the University of Washington: http://idl.cs.washington.edu/.

12. Ibid., 532.


14. Friendly, “The Golden Age of Statistical Graphics,” 505. Various chapters of Hacking, *The Taming of Chance*, also focus on one or another of these figures.


26. Ibid., xi.


33. Ibid., 33.


35. Hacking, *The Taming of Chance*, chap. 3.


41. For Shneiderman’s lab website, see www.cs.umd.edu/hcil/.

42. Card, Mackinlay, and Shneiderman, Readings in Information Visualization, 1.


44. Tufte, Beautiful Evidence, 9.


52. Ironically, Kundra began his career in public service by interviewing for and receiving an IT job for Arlington County, Virginia, on the same day as the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.


55. Ibid.


58. Ibid.


60. See, for example, the cover of the November 24, 2008, issue of Time magazine, which featured a photocollage that placed Obama’s smiling face on a famous photograph of FDR driving, with the headline “The New New Deal”; or Steve Lohr, “F.D.R’s Example


68. Ibid.


70. Initially the site hosted the community forums on the data.gov website, but eventually this list was moved to Stack Exchange. See https://opendata.stackexchange.com.


72. The current apps that use the data.gov data sets can be browsed at https://www.data.gov/applications. Healthy Hive and ZocDoc are both health-care applications. The data set on which Airport Status Service was based can be found at https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/airport-status-web-service-9b3a2.

73. Lakhani, Austin, and Yi, “Data.gov.”

74. Ibid.


77. Van Buskirk, “Sneak Peek.”


81. Quoted in ibid.

85. Ibid.
88. As of the time of this writing, the exact role that Wikileaks played in the 2016 US presidential election and its surprising winner remains unknown, although it is at least clear that Assange timed the release of the DNC and Clinton campaign emails to be most damaging to Hillary Clinton. Assange released a half-hearted attempt to justify these actions in a tweet the day of the election; see https://wikileaks.org/Assange-Statement-on-the-US-Election.html.
89. Domscheit-Berg, Inside WikiLeaks, 8, 16–42.
93. Domscheit-Berg, Inside WikiLeaks; Colbert, “Julian Assange Extended Interview.”
94. For a discussion of Grierson’s use of the term and a critique, see Brian Winston, Claiming the Real: Documentary: Grierson and Beyond, 2nd ed. (British Film Institute, 2009).
95. The full quote is taken from Orwell’s essay “Politics and the English Language” and reads: “Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give the appearance of solidity to pure wind.”
96. Kahana, Intelligence Work.
100. Sifry, WikiLeaks.
103. Ibid.
108. The diplomatic cables seemed to offer more in the way of embarrassment than revelation and managed to tarnish the already fragile image of WikiLeaks as an organization bent on seeking the truth over public glory, and as Bill Keller notes, they offer a “very different kind of treasure” from the material related directly to the wars. See Keller, “Dealing with Assange.”
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid.

6. POST-TRUTH POLITICS

1. This was even an opinion widely subscribed to by the Trump campaign team, including Trump himself. See Ben Schreckinger, “‘He Thought He Was Going to Lose’: Inside Donald Trump’s Election Night War Room,” *GQ*, November 7, 2017, www.gq.com/story/inside-donald-trumps-election-night-war-room.
2. This of course was the title of Clinton’s book, which appeared less than a year after her loss to Donald Trump. For Clinton, the title is more of a declaration than a question, but in the days and weeks immediately after Trump’s victory, suffice it to say that this was very much a question. Hillary Rodham Clinton, *What Happened* (Simon and Schuster, 2017).


10. Within the fields of sociology, psychology, and cultural studies, questions have focused on the extent to which conspiracy thinking might be the product of some sort of neurosis or psychosis on the part of individuals and groups. The prevalence of conspiracy theories in cultures around the world for much of recorded history, however, seems to indicate that some general dimension of human cognition or recurring social pattern produces it, or that it in fact testifies to the presence of a vast global conspiracy. Barring from consideration the latter, these scholars explore the former.


13. Popper’s original essay and the set of different articles and arguments that it stimulated were brilliantly collected in a volume by David Coady. See Karl R. Popper, “The Conspiracy Theory of Society,” in *Conspiracy Theories: The Philosophical Debate*, ed. David Coady (Ashgate, 2006).


18. Mark Fenster, *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*, 2nd ed. (University of Minnesota Press, 2008). In this book, Fenster tackles conspiracy theories both vast and complex, including the various factions of the 9/11 “truther” movement as well as the more casual fan communities that appeared around Dan Brown’s megaselling *The Da Vinci Code*.


20. The literature on the Zapruder film is vast and, as I am arguing, places one directly in the labyrinth of Kennedy assassination lore. Peter Knight offers a good history of the film and its handling and reception post-assassination, including its inclusion in *Life* magazine. Zapruder’s daughter, Alexandra Zapruder, has a personal history. Øyvind Vågnes’s *Zaprudered* has an excellent discussion of the film’s role within popular and visual culture. And James Fetzer’s text offers an interesting example of the role of the film within conspiracy circles. See Peter Knight, *The Kennedy Assassination* (University Press of Mississippi, 2007); Alexandra Zapruder, *Twenty-Six Seconds: A Personal History of the Zapruder Film* (Grand Central Publishing, 2016); Øyvind Vågnes, *Zaprudered: The Kennedy Assassination Film in Visual Culture* (University of Texas Press, 2012); and James H. Fetzer, *The Great Zapruder Film Hoax: Deceit and Deception in the Death of JFK* (Open Court, 2013).


24. Fenster, *Conspiracy Theories*. This is where Fenster’s work around the narrative structures of conspiracy theories provides a critical understanding of the form.


27. The difference of course is that consensus on climate change, and the connection between smoking and cancer before it, are the result of conscious, organized efforts by specific groups with a vested interest in changing public opinion. For a brilliant account of this, see Naomi Oreskes and Erik M Conway, *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming* (Bloomsbury, 2010).


29. Sunstein and Vermeule, “Conspiracy Theories,” 211.


35. The prime example of existential debate is *Time* magazine’s “Is Truth Dead?” cover, which consciously mimicked an equally famous cover from the 1960s, “Is God Dead?” See Pine, “Donald Trump Truth.”


39. Alongside this popular wave of paranoia around media was the simultaneous emergence of the disciplines of communications research and media studies. This same period is, after all, when seminal scholars like Harold Ennis, Paul Lazarsfeld, and the adherents of the Frankfurt School were turning toward the media as a site investigation for understanding deeper social phenomena. On the whole their response was more measured, even if it benefitted from and in some cases furthered a wider social mistrust. Thus, a scholar like Lazarsfeld, who built his career studying the impact of media, was able to claim, in the early years of communications research, that “mass media are not mainly effective in promoting a specific idea or engendering a stand on a definite issue. What they tend rather to do is to shape for us the picture of the more distant world with which we do not have direct personal contact.” Hence, even as newly invented forms of technological media were introduced, political uses (and misuses) were devised, enabling public fear and academic enquiry to go hand in hand. See Elihu Katz, “Communications Research since Lazarsfeld,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 51, no. 4, pt. 2 (Winter 1987): S25–S45, https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/51.4_PART_2.S25.


49. Even the text’s description of its own tactics as a series of “confessions” is an interesting mark of the time in which it emerged. Holiday seems to admit that it is a sin and must be purged from one’s conscience if one is to receive absolution, but it is also an invitation to commit the same sin—in the long tradition, perhaps, of Saint Augustine. If further evidence were needed of the connection between Holiday and the broader neoliberal framework of individualized subject that he caters to, one need only look at his output after *Trust Me, I’m lying*. Having reached the age of twenty-three when he published *Trust Me*, Holiday seemed to turn reflective, publishing a series of books that include *The Obstacle Is the Way*, *Ego Is the Enemy*, and *The Daily Stoic*. These later works fall within the category of individual self-help books focused on the corporate market and executive audience. Holiday’s readers, we might assume, are the types of individuals focused not on building someone else’s brand or product, but instead on building themselves as a brand and a product. Where Bernays was happy enough, or at least self-conscious enough, to distance himself from his reputation as
a “wire puller” and propagandist, Holiday, in the subtitle of his book, avidly embraces this status as part of his self-anointed qualification for the advice he offers. Holiday’s title, “media manipulator,” is one that might aptly describe both men, but Holiday has the benefit of living in an age where it could be claimed as a point of pride rather than a mark of shame.

50. One of the magazines whose creation Marchand focuses on was True Story, which carried the tagline “Is Truth Stranger Than Fiction?” and provided tabloid-style content in a package that could still appeal to the readers of more-respected publications such as Ladies’ Home Journal and Good Housekeeping. See Marchand, Advertising the American Dream, 53–55.


58. Examples of more-focused midstream outlets can be found in categories like politics (POLITICO), food (Eater), and style (The Cut), not to mention many others.


63. Noam, *Media Ownership and Concentration in America*.


71. Benkler et al., “Study.”