



Loss: The Politics of Mourning

From University of California Press

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Taking stock of a century of pervasive loss—of warfare, disease, and political strife—this eloquent book opens a new view on both the past and the future by considering "what is lost" in terms of "what remains." Such a perspective, these essays suggest, engages and reanimates history. Plumbing the cultural and political implications of loss, the authors--political theorists, film and literary critics, museum curators, feminists, psychoanalysts, and AIDS activists--expose the humane and productive possibilities in the workings of witness, memory, and melancholy.

Among the sites of loss the authors revisit are slavery, apartheid, genocide, war, diaspora, migration, suicide, and disease. Their subjects range from the Irish Famine and the Ottoman slaughter of Armenians to the aftermath of the Vietnam War and apartheid in South Africa, problems of partial immigration and assimilation, AIDS, and the re-envisioning of leftist movements. In particular, *Loss* reveals how melancholia can lend meaning and force to notions of activism, ethics, and identity.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Instead of viewing loss in purely negative terms, [the essays] see it as 'productive rather than pathological, abundant rather than lacking, social rather than solipsistic, militant rather than reactionary.' The thinking behind this perspective is that no loss is ever absolute; it always leaves its traces, its remains."--"Times Literary Supplement (TLS)"

From the Inside Flap

"If catastrophe is not representable according to the narrative explanations which would 'make sense' of history, then making sense of ourselves and charting the future are not impossible. But we are, as it were, marked for life, and that mark is insuperable, irrecoverable. It becomes the condition by which life is risked, by which the question of whether one can move, and with whom, and in what way is framed and incited by the irreversibility of loss itself."—Judith Butler, from the *Afterword*

"*Loss* is a wonderful volume: powerful and important, deeply moving and intellectually challenging at the same time, ethical and not moralistic. It is one of those rare collections that work as a multifaceted whole to map new areas for inquiry and pose new questions. I found myself educated and provoked by the experience of participating in an ongoing dialogue."—Amy Kaplan, author of *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*

From the Back Cover

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