

Sociolegal scholars will appreciate the application of critical theory to this important case, especially the role of law in shaping subjects and the role of subjects in shaping law. In particular, Elander's explanation of the hypocrisy behind the court's creation highlights what law and society scholars know well about how law reflects and reinforces existing power structures. Likewise, scholars of critical theory and international law, particularly those hoping to broaden research on international criminal justice away from more standard analyses of its efficacy or history, will appreciate this study as part of a growing body of work on the politics behind the creation and implementation of new legal institutions.

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In Crime's Archive: The Cultural Afterlife of Evidence. By Katherine Biber. London: Routledge, 2018.

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"Evidence," law professor Katherine Biber writes, "is law's epistemology; it establishes what the law knows...." (3). When Biber is writing about it, evidence also tells us something about how law knows, as it is both "object and a process", "noun and a verb", "testimony, documentary or material", "circumstantial, provisional, rebuttable...", "voluminous and complex", public, forensic, digital, ephemeral. Police photographs, for instance, present, like law, as neutral, but are "always tethered to a witness," foundationally "elusive and unstable" (15). A rule-bound system of material presented for deliberation in which various strategies take shape, "Evidence can be given or taken. It can be tendered, admitted, and withdrawn...tampered with, concealed or destroyed (4). Biber's work attempts to upset this legal universe of truth-making materials long enough for us to see not just how law is made but how and why it is preserved after its key performance in court. She does this through close attention to something rarely thought about: a fascinating take on what happens to criminal evidence after the trial.

Biber's work has laid the foundations for emergent areas of visual criminology and cultural studies in relationship to the law (Biber 2007; Brown and Carrabine 2017; Rafter 2014). In this current project, she acts in many ways as a trusted curator, guiding us through a set of exhibitions in which she asks us to stop in

each space long enough to question our own proximity to law's power. In the course of seven wonderfully self-contained chapters, each focused upon different evidentiary afterlives in different institutional contexts, *In Crime's Archive* explores the ways in which criminal evidence continues to play formative and expansive roles in the cultural and popular life of society as well as the very real lives of those most directly implicated in it. Her methodology is intensively archival as well as ethnographic, built upon sometimes serendipitous encounters. She writes reflexively and consistently about a kind of ethical engagement that takes shape as one moves closer to the material objects that assume the standard of evidence. Key sections of each chapter of her volume, in fact, are made up of questions where the reader must work through the dilemmas of viewing, displaying, preserving, and contextualizing wide-ranging forms of always problematic evidence. The probative value of evidence is perennially suspect, often unable to tell us much in the way of intent, motive, or the actual case but, in the archival form of a popular afterlife, telling us much about the dilemmas and tensions of our fascination with and necessity for it.

Her selection of evidentiary contexts feels at once opportune and yet carefully constructed. Cultural investigations of the law are often less about a key site but rather the capacity of the researcher to unravel the tensions of contestation as they materialize moment to moment. Chapter 1 examines what most of us are likely to imagine when visualizing the cultural afterlife of evidence: forensic crime scene photos collected by the police. Biber centers her analysis in one of the world's largest and most important closed collections of forensic photos (130,000 negatives), housed by the New South Wales Police Force. This chapter leads to a second more surprising one in which we are introduced to Frances Glessner Lee's Nutshell Studies of Unexplained Death, a collection of miniature dollhouses, each with a tragic death, filled with furniture, clues, and "little doll corpses" (39), whose creator obsessively designed them with police science and training in mind, meticulously recreating true crime cases for her audience to solve. Chapter 3 takes on the unprecedented expansive problem of open justice—the increasingly speedy public reveal of criminal evidence in news feeds—which Biber treats as a new genre of evidentiary visibility. Her thoughtful exposition of the rape and murder of Jill Meagher and the local fascination with the case demonstrates the ways in which visual evidence raises foundational tensions about sensitivity and dignity for the victim and their loved ones. The commodification of violence demands new levels of intentional deliberative work by police and news agencies. Biber points toward the possibility of a "sensitive jurisprudence" that could respond to criminal cases by "working slowly,

asking questions, consulting widely, deliberating, acting and then reflecting, and maybe then re-thinking, articulating concerns, regrets and proposing new ways forward” (81). Chapter 4 is a close study of the live broadcast of the Oscar Pistorius trial, where all evidence was revealed globally, digitally, in real time at an unprecedented scope and speed to a massive audience—yet another open justice experiment. Chapter 5 is a thoughtful examination of the display of crime evidence in museums, but more so, the tensions and deliberations of curators as they—as well as artists—think through the legal, ethical, and affective dimensions of putting on display the artifacts of trauma

Chapter 6 combines much of the previous volume in an examination of Australia’s most famous miscarriage of justice: that of Lindy Chamberlain who was wrongfully convicted of the murder of her infant daughter Azaria. Lindy’s long-term and ongoing role in the curating of her own case has resulted in a massive archive, much of which will not be publicly displayed until after her death and that of her living children. Here, Biber’s voice is distinctive as she stands with Chamberlain over her daughter’s recovered matinee gown, writing “It is so small. Dirty, bedraggled, heartbreakingly lacerated around the neck, it also has ruled lines drawn on it, sharp scissor cuts and markings left from forensic examination. This tiny, filthy scrap bears the imprint of violent death, accusation, investigation and proof” (140). This “hot object” subject to “scientific depravations” persists hauntingly as evidence wrongly interpreted, and a mother wrongfully convicted.

The final chapter is dedicated to extraordinary crimes and their evidence, that of international criminal tribunals (specifically, Nuremberg and the ICT for the former Yugoslavia) focused upon war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity. Here, the mass archives of paper, testimony, and evidence of mass harm lead to new and unanticipated forms of creative artistry. The conclusion hints at destruction as a key mode of cultural engagement with evidence, including cancellation and redaction, that then too generate new cultural performances in relation to crime and punishment. The question of our attractions to crime, desperation, and tragedy interwoven with the necessity of historical witness and preservation are everywhere in Biber’s volume. Her book inspires us to interrogate the after-life of evidence which teaches us as much about the life of the law as its aftermath. For scholars who have been attentive to the cultural performance of the law, Biber insists that our work persists well after law’s official appearance in the popular imagination, pushing us to consider the pervasive material agency of evidence in archival settings: museums, police stations, storage

files, and the ether of cyberspace. It is here that a curious, sobering, and heartfelt memorial to law's work takes shape in a manner that feels strikingly alive.

References

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- Brown, Michelle & Eamonn Carrabine, eds. (2017) *Routledge International Handbook of Visual Criminology*. London, UK: Taylor & Francis.
- Rafter, Nicole (2014) "Introduction to Special Issue on Visual Culture and the Iconography of Crime and Punishment," 18 *Theoretical Criminology* 127–33.

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