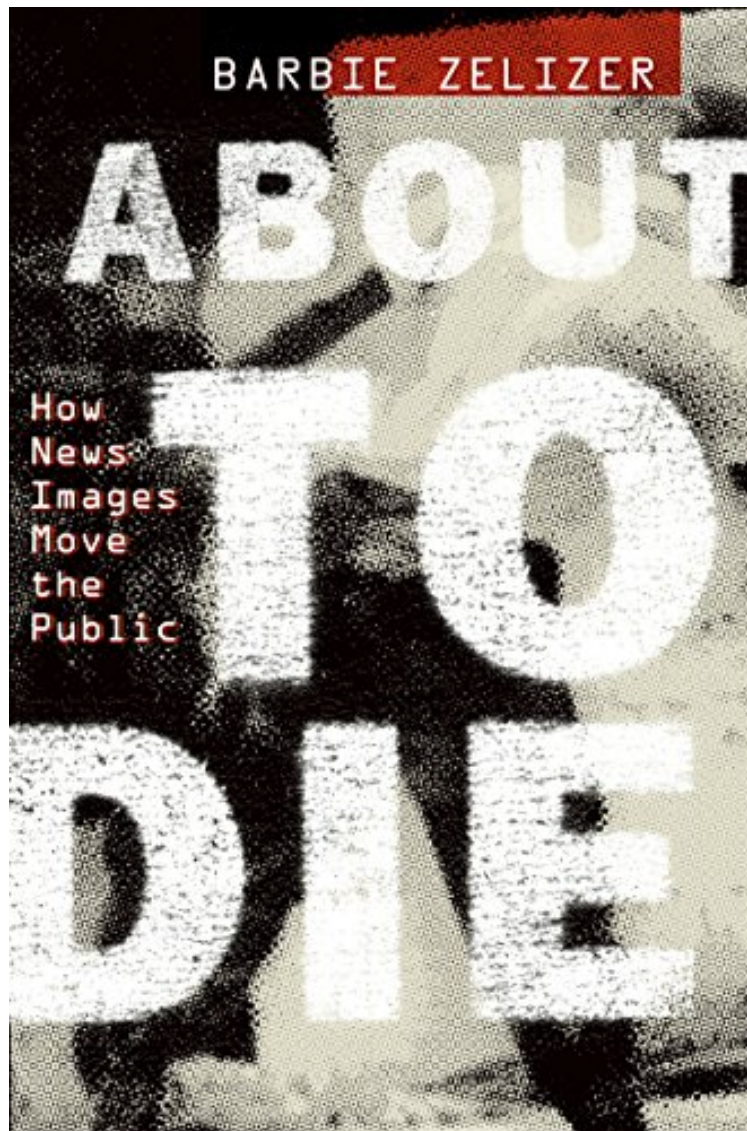


## About to Die: How News Images Move the Public

*Barbie Zelizer*

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**Barbie Zelizer : About to Die: How News Images Move the Public** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised About to Die: How News Images Move the Public:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Understanding the role of photojournalismBy Jill Goldman-callahanthis book is a brilliant study of photography. the author is very well read and puts together a lot of the major thinking about the contemporary culture of news photography. I teach photography and this book was very helpful to me in my work in giving me a deeper understanding of the roles of journalism in shaping our world. I am grateful to the author.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Overall a good readBy Annilee PerkinsI liked the book overall. The print was small I had a problem with that. Would recommend this book if this subject is your thing.5 of 6

people found the following review helpful. A Great ReadBy Sanford ShifrinThis book will change the way we think about news images. In tracing how images of disasters, war and terrorism have taken their place in the news, it raises important questions about what news images are for. A must-read!

Due to its ability to freeze a moment in time, the photo is a uniquely powerful device for ordering and understanding the world. But when an image depicts complex, ambiguous, or controversial events--terrorist attacks, wars, political assassinations--its ability to influence perception can prove deeply unsettling. Are we really seeing the world "as it is" or is the image a fabrication or projection? How do a photo's content and form shape a viewer's impressions? What do such images contribute to historical memory? *About to Die* focuses on one emotionally charged category of news photograph--depictions of individuals who are facing imminent death--as a prism for addressing such vital questions. Tracking events as wide-ranging as the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, and 9/11, Barbie Zelizer demonstrates that modes of journalistic depiction and the power of the image are immense cultural forces that are still far from understood. Through a survey of a century of photojournalism, including close analysis of over sixty photos, *About to Die* provides a framework and vocabulary for understanding the news imagery that so profoundly shapes our view of the world.

"Zelizer bolsters her arguments with extensive primary research, including readers' reactions from letters to the editor and blog postings regarding daring and shocking images. Her seventy-nine pages of notes are a treasure trove to readers and researchers because they are so detailed and thorough." --*Journalism History* "Why are some deaths fit spectacles for the camera and others off-limits? What philosophical and social purposes do news images serve? Barbie Zelizer answers such questions in this ambitious new book, a stunning examination of a little-explored aspect of modern journalism." --Phillip Knightley, author of *The First Casualty: The War Correspondent as Hero and Myth-Maker From The Crimea To Kosovo* "In Barbie Zelizer's most powerful, profound, and disturbing work, she shows that news photos do not document reality but are suspended precariously between the 'as is' and the 'as if,' touching feelings, touching off imaginations. With an astonishing cascade of evidence about iconic news images and the stories behind them, Zelizer offers little comfort, no certainty, but much illumination." --Michael Schudson, author of *Why Democracies Need an Unlovable Press* "[*About to Die*] is an audacious and often chilling examination of how visual media handle the moment of death, from engravings of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 to the Pacific tsunami of 2004. With an obvious and admitted debt to the academy's favorite photography buff Susan Sontag, Zelizer treats these images as both rare and powerful." --*The Austin Chronicle* "[An] enlightening new book" --*Slate.com* "[Zelizer] produced an engaging history, with accounts of the best-known about-to-die images and their post-publication trajectories." --*Obit-mag.com* "If, like me, you think that Big Money exerts ever more influence on the way politics gets covered in this country; and if, like me, you think that Citizens United, the recent Supreme Court decision that lifts the lid on corporate campaign spending, will speed up, reinforce and otherwise extend this unfortunate trend; and if, like me, you believe that for the past fifty years the main way corporate money has worked its electoral will is by manipulating news images via television commercials (watch *Mad Men* if you don't believe me), then you will want to read Barbie Zelizer's new book, *About to Die* . . . a refutation of this 'words matter and images don't' perspective . . . [a] densely packed, closely reasoned book." --Victor Navasky, *The Nation* "An extraordinary contribution to the literature...Aside from value of the theoretical construct within which Zelizer contextualizes specific images (and types of images), there is value in her fair, reasoned, and engaging investigation of the authenticity and authority of certain of the most controversial photographs of the past century." --*Political Communication*

About the Author Barbie Zelizer is the Raymond Williams Chair of Communication and the Director of the Scholars Program in Culture and Communication at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.