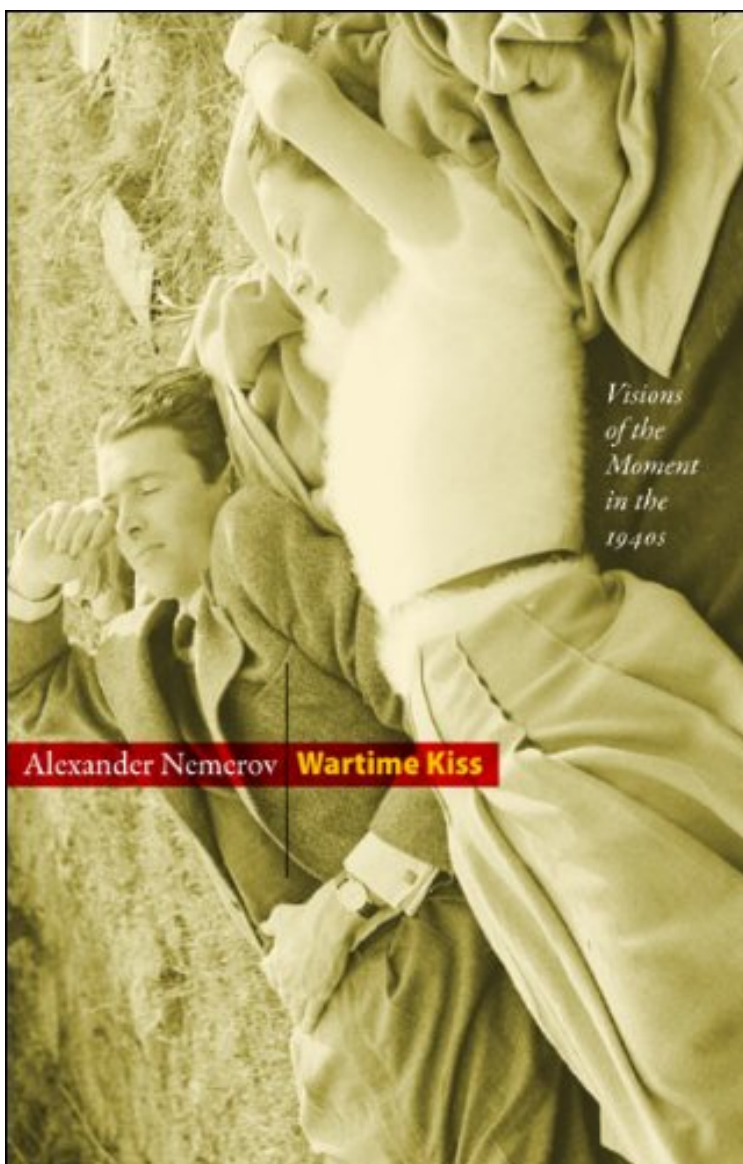


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Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s (Essays in the Arts)

Alexander Nemerov

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Alexander Nemerov : Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s (Essays in the Arts) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wartime Kiss: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s: Visions of the Moment in the 1940s (Essays in the Arts):

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the following review helpful. A strange, enigmatic book of unparalleled beauty and insight ...By Bill Blazajowski
A strange, enigmatic book of unparalleled beauty and insight, *Wartime Kiss* provides readers exclusive access to the 1940s through Nemerov's own sensitive engagement with photographs and film stills from the period. He investigates artifacts that appear to represent only a mere cross-section of the era, but his analysis opens avenues to the atmosphere of the entire decade. No longer entirely barred to us, we enter a hybrid form of nostalgia and outright time travel. They may not be our moments, but Nemerov fine-tunes representations of them in such a way that we become an uncanny amalgam of both viewer and participant. This book redefines what it means to read art history.

Wartime Kiss is a personal meditation on the haunting power of American photographs and films from World War II and the later 1940s. Starting with a stunning reinterpretation of one of the most famous photos of all time, Alfred Eisenstaedt's image of a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square on V-J Day, Alexander Nemerov goes on to examine an array of mostly forgotten images and movie episodes--from a photo of Jimmy Stewart and Olivia de Havilland lying on a picnic blanket in the Santa Barbara hills to scenes from such films as *Twelve O'Clock High* and *Hold Back the Dawn*. Erotically charged and bearing traces of trauma even when they seem far removed from the war, these photos and scenes seem to hold out the promise of a palpable and emotional connection to those years. Through a series of fascinating stories, Nemerov reveals the surprising background of these bits of film and discovers unexpected connections between the war and Hollywood, from an obsession with aviation to Anne Frank's love of the movies. Beautifully written and illustrated, *Wartime Kiss* vividly evokes a world in which Margaret Bourke-White could follow a heroic assignment photographing a B-17 bombing mission over Tunis with a job in Hollywood documenting the filming of a war movie. Ultimately this is a book about history as a sensuous experience, a work as mysterious, indescribable, and affecting as a novel by W. G. Sebald.

One of Choice's Outstanding Academic Titles for 2013
Beginning with Alfred Eisenstaedt's famous image of a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square at the end of the Second World War, the art historian Alexander Nemerov's *Wartime Kiss* examines photos and film stills from the war period and later in the nineteen-forties. Many of the images collected here are lesser-known or obscure, and the more recognizable ones he interprets in surprising ways. . . . By providing the stories behind these images, he examines the ties between war and Hollywood, romance and violence, and provides a glimpse into a particular moment in American history."--New Yorker, Page-Turner blog
As art historian Nemerov reminds us in this exceptional set of reflections on photography and history, photographs bring a lost moment and person directly into our view, so that what was and what is coalesce in eerie combination. . . . Nemerov's radiant meditations cast a penetrating glance into the moments captured in the photos and the larger stories they reflect."--Publishers Weekly
Alexander Nemerov is preoccupied with photographic or cinematic images that trigger 'a piercing, wounding sensation without explanation,' or as Roland Barthes' put it, a punctum. . . . In *Wartime Kiss*, his speculative study of American movie scenes and photojournalism of World War II, Nemerov 'tries to imagine a different way of writing history' that addresses and tries to illuminate the renegade aspects of the moment that seem to lurk within or just beyond the images. . . . The many pleasures of *Wartime Kiss* hinge on Nemerov's assemblage of anecdote and related fact."--Ron Slate, *On the Seawall*
This stunning book defies easy categorization. . . . [A] personal meditation on why we love art and the movies and the enduring power of popular culture to transcend its own moment in time. . . . Nemerov does the world, or at least avid film fans, a great service. . . . Indeed, the book flows in time like a beautifully made movie. . . . Reading *Wartime Kiss* is something akin to flying."--Farisa Khalid, *PopMatters*
In this engagingly written, even poetic book, Nemerov views selected images from films and photographs of the 1940s. . . . Through the experience of reading this extraordinary historical meditation, students will learn how they can engage, and engage others, in pursuing a personal and social understanding of history."--Choice
Wartime Kiss is a fascinating introduction to the underlying symbolism, planned and unplanned, of the war. It encourages the reader to look with fresh eyes at old movies and photo stills hidden in private albums or stuffed away in drawers."--Stephen Williams, *H-Net*
From the Back Cover
Alexander Nemerov's incandescent new book elucidates moments of being--an electrifying kiss, a lost snapshot of a dreamy Olivia de Havilland and Jimmy Stewart, the shimmering arc of a swimmer on the cover of *Life* magazine--and through them reveals and deciphers the invisible writing of lost time. A mesmerizing meditation by one of our most brilliant and original thinkers."--Cynthia Zarin, author of *An Enlarged Heart: A Personal History*
Wartime Kiss creates an exhilarating high from a seductively humble set of connections with the strange, fragmentary pictures of the past that happen to move us. It is a luminous and deeply felt meditation on pursuing history as a poetic flight."--Elisa Tamarkin, University of California, Berkeley
Filled with personal self-reflection and insightful analysis of photographs and films, this eloquent book is ultimately a meditation on how we know and write history. Nemerov is a wonderful stylist and he is extraordinarily adept at picking out telling details and mining them for all they are worth. *Wartime Kiss* is a pleasure to read."--Cecile Whiting, University of California, Irvine
About the Author
Alexander Nemerov is the Carl and Marilyn Thoma Provostial Professor in the Arts and Humanities at Stanford University. He is the author of five previous books, including *To Make a World: George Ault and 1940s America*, *Icons of Grief: Val Lewton's Home Front Pictures*, and *Acting in the Night*:

"Macbeth" and the Places of the Civil War.