

# CONSTANT WITNESS

## RE-FRAMING IMAGES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

We had wanted to show you truth, but truth photographs badly.

We had wanted to show you hope, but we could not find it.

(Brown 1945, p. 8)

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## CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature:

Date:

## DEDICATION

For my sister and brother, Caroline and Jeff

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## ABSTRACT

As a member of the British Army Film and Photographic Unit, my father Mike Lewis, took some of the most important images of the Second World War including those of the battle for the bridge at Arnhem and the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Though these iconic images have been repeatedly used in books and documentaries he and his fellow Sergeant Cameraman have remained largely unacknowledged and anonymous. The focus has been on the images without a sense of the photographer, the framing and the photographer's role in the cultural production process or, indeed, the technology used to create them. Using my father's personal archive as a pivotal point of reference, I seek to re-engage these images with their original purpose and meaning through their creators; and explore how this re-framing changes our reading of them, particularly in relation to the liberation of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

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