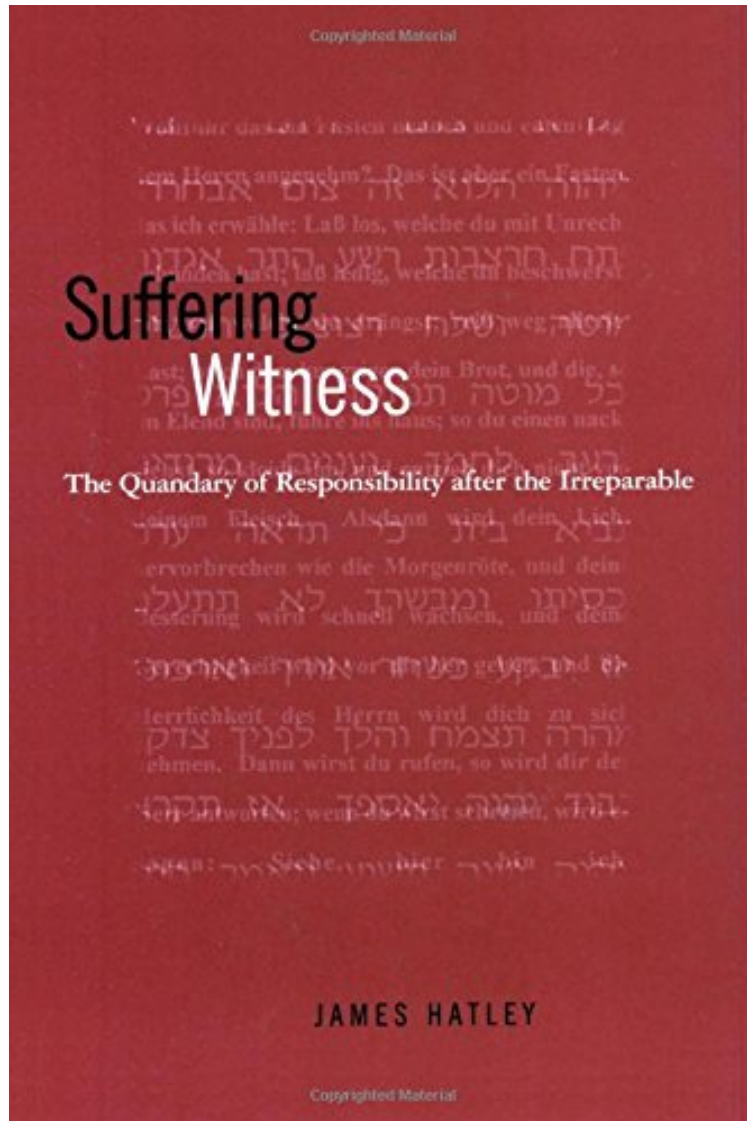


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# **Suffering Witness: The Quandary of Responsibility after the Irreparable (SUNY series in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art)**

James Hatley

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**James Hatley : Suffering Witness: The Quandary of Responsibility after the Irreparable (SUNY series in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Suffering Witness: The Quandary of Responsibility after the Irreparable (SUNY series in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art)*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A compelling ethical account of "the irreparable" By M. PARADISO-MICHAU James Hatley has provided for us a wonderful philosophical treatment of the Holocaust and life in its wake afterwards. His (Emmanuel) Levinasian approach to the issue is absolutely right-on, and his discussions of Paul Celan's poetry fit in beautifully in his narrative of witness and a post-Shoah ethics of responsibility. Also recommended is Sandor Goodhart, *Sacrificing Commentary: Reading the End of Literature*, which Hatley seems to favor. 4 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Add This Title to Your Holocaust Library By Gary Quinn I have read many nonfiction and fiction books dealing with the Holocaust. Reading this book took me to a higher level of thought and understanding than any other book I have read about the Holocaust. I hope we will hear more from this author soon.

Conceptualizes the question of witness and responsibility, following the Holocaust, using continental philosophy, theology, and literary theory. Drawing on the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, James Hatley uses the prose of Primo Levi and Tadeusz Borowski, as well as the poetry of Paul Celan, to question why witnessing the Shoah is so pressing a responsibility for anyone living in its aftermath. He argues that the witnessing of irreparable loss leaves one in an irresolvable quandary but that the attentiveness of that witness resists the destructive legacy of annihilation. "In this new and sensitive synthesis of scrupulous thinking about the Holocaust (beginning with scruples about the term Holocaust itself), James Hatley approaches all the major questions surrounding our overwhelming inadequacy in the aftermath of the irreparable. If there is anything unique (in a non-trivial sense) about the Holocaust, surely it is the imperious moral urgency that compels those who contemplate it to revise their view of what it means to be human, and to bear witness to such an event." Hatley's accomplishment, the fruit of his many years of research and instruction on the Holocaust, will prove a valuable aid to all who would, in whatever capacity, begin or carry on with the task of witness and response." -- Michael B. Smith, translator of *Alterity and Transcendence* "James Hatley has written an extraordinary meditation on suffering, witness, and responsibility. He offers a singularly brilliant thesis: that the suffering of the other individual is incomparable to my own and irremediable, and that the infinite responsibility and ineluctable witness to which I am obligated requires my ownership of this incapacity and this burden not as the defeat of my response but ironically as its enabling condition. As we reflect upon a century of violence and extremity, I predict that Hatley's meditation will set the stage for all serious future discussion of these matters." -- Sandor Goodhart, author of *Sacrificing Commentary: Reading the End of Literature* "An elegant reading of Levi, Celan, Levinas, and Borowski, one which demonstrates the power of literature within a philosophical framework, and which uses this relationship in order to remind us not just of our ethical response to the Shoah, but of our ethical response to the narratives themselves." -- Claire Katz, Pennsylvania State University

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About the Author James Hatley is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Salisbury State University.