“Genocide,” “genre,” and “gender” share a common linguistic root in the Latin “genus.” This talk explores the ways in which gender marks the enunciation of genocide through the genres and aesthetics of visual production. If a Greek understanding of aesthetics encompassed something like an abstract science of feeling, and its negative form, anesthesia, initially referred to a defect of physical sensation, how is it that photographs meant to provide evidence of sexual violence and mass death, may not only numb, but arouse particular passions? In exploring the mass media production and circulation of working photos of the “Gujarat genocide,” I ask an unstable archive to yield to a feminist practice of the counter-visual.

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