

The book was found

## Doug Rickard: N.A.



## Synopsis

For the last three years, photographer Doug Rickard has been immersed in YouTube videos uploaded by Americans from their cellphones. These videos, documenting a dizzying array of activities, from seemingly criminal or semilegal acts to comic antics, allowed Rickard to witness scenarios he otherwise would never have seen—"right from the hands and eyes of other people," he writes, "hijacking their own device to give me very special views and intimate situations." Reveling in this vicariousness, he found that he could be "riding in a car full of teens through Detroit at night with a camera phone hanging out the window" or witnessing, from their own lens, someone who is paying a drug addict to dance for a dollar to later get 'View,' 'Comments' and 'Likes' on YouTube." Rickard then selected and appropriated specific images by pausing the footage and advancing through it second by second. The resulting volume expands on his previous and critically lauded monograph *A New American Picture*, offering a darker and more dynamic portrait of America's urban underbelly, and engaging with themes of race, politics, technology, surveillance and our cultural shift toward an ever-present camera. Rickard explains the title: "[It] has always been 'N.A.,' coming for 'National Anthem' or it also could be interpreted to mean 'Not Applicable,' a common statistical check box on government forms here in the US, [or] 'North America.'" Visceral and intense, this volume offers an extraordinary inventory of America today. Doug Rickard (born 1968) studied history and sociology at the University of California, San Diego. He is the founder of *American Suburb X* ([www.americansuburbx.com](http://www.americansuburbx.com)) and *These Americans* ([www.theseamericans.com](http://www.theseamericans.com)), aggregating websites for essays on contemporary photography and historical photographic archives. His previous monograph, *A New American Picture* (2010, 2012), which offered a view of America through Google Street View, was widely acclaimed, and (in its first edition by White-Press, Helge Schlaghecke, 2010) was voted "best book" of 2010 by *Photo-Eye* magazine and is reproduced on the last spread of Phaidon's *The Photobook Vol. III* by Martin Parr and Gerry Badger.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not everyone can agree whether shooting images from Google Earth, and now, appropriating images from other people's YouTube videos, constitutes art. At least one said his Google Earth images were not documentary photography, that it was no more than "an idea." • Call it what you will, Rickard's work is unique. (John Foster The Design Observer Group) Access to the Internet is relentlessly marching across the global population, and (almost) everyone will have a computer in their hand at all times, at some point. The result is a massive volume of content that is then exponentially and endlessly growing. Richard Prince had his magazines and tear sheets to work from • artists now have a billion images, in addition to those magazines. Everything on the net is simply "material." • If you look at Tumblr, Instagram, and most of the social media apps, appropriation is becoming a de facto mode of expression, as people remix visual images over and over. Art is reflecting this, and it should. The challenge for artists is then to find a voice within an ocean of endless appropriation possibilities. (Scott Indrisek Artinfo) Abandoned is the word typically deployed to describe these parts of America, yet the first premise of National Anthem is that the places shown are not, in fact, abandoned; they're merely populated by people without agency, castaways from the middle and upper-class projects of narrative self-representation. The self-representations of the disenfranchised are scattered across mediums with low-publicity and low-barriers to entry, like YouTube, where they exist with a minimum of cross-reference and dialogue, connected by the whims of the algorithms that create the links between them. Rickard takes stills from YouTube, freezes them and rephotographs them. The result is remarkable, atmospheric street photography for the era where everything has already been photographed and selection rivals original documentation. (Owen Campbell American Suburb X) Like much of modern history, the Eric Garner decision will eventually be boiled down to a few memorable images • or in this case, unforgettable video footage taken by a bystander. The photographer Doug Rickard's timely new book, N.A. (D.A.P.), is a catalogue of striking stills he took from hours of YouTube videos uploaded by amateurs in America's urban underbellies. Some of the images seem criminal,

some titillating, some ridiculous, some unbearably intimate. Seen together, they are vivid evidence of the nonstop surveillance culture in which we live. You might think that the police wouldâ™ve picked up on that by now. (Fan Zhong wmagazine.com)The resulting volume expands on his previous and critically lauded monograph, *A New American Picture*, offering a darker and more dynamic portrait of America's urban underbelly, and engaging with themes of race, politics, technology, surveillance and our speedy cultural shift toward an ever-present camera in the hand of everyone. Rickard explains the title: "[It] has always been 'N.A.,' an acronym of 'National Anthem' ... it also could be interpreted to mean 'Not Applicable,' a common statistical check box on government forms here in the US, [or] 'North America.'" Visceral and intense, this volume offers an extraordinary inventory of America today. (The Editors *L'oeil de la Photographie*)A crash course in found photography in the mobile age, artist Doug Rickard takes still frames from YouTube videos depicting semi-illegal and at times unsettling acts and repurposes them as still images, posing harsh and undeniable questions about private vs. public, photography vs. video and art vs. appropriation. (Phil Bicker *TIME Lightbox*)

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