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| Sommario/riassunto | How can literature respond to a monumental event, unprecedented historically, politically and culturally, whose memory will forever be inseparable from its mass media coverage? How can writers represent what Jean Baudrillard called an "image-event"? In particular, what form can they use to convey the unspeakable - that was at the same time broadcast live across the globe? These questions are central to Ewa Kowal's comparative study of thirteen early post-9/11 novels. Written |

in four different Western countries between 2003 and 2007, during the now historical time of George W. Bush's "war on terror," the selected works provide the earliest literary reactions to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and/or their aftermath. Kowal examines them in a wider cultural context, focusing especially on audio-visual media, motifs of childhood and magical thinking as well as the destabilised division into reality and fiction. Offering an original reading of the whole body of work, the author places each analysed book on a scale according to its closeness to a terrorist attack, revealing a correspondence between the distance from the tragedy, the levels of danger and risk taken and the degree of formal (un)conventionality.
