

# National subjects:

## September 11 and Pearl Harbor

### ABSTRACT

Despite a long tradition of writing on collective representations of the past, anthropology has contributed relatively little to the expanding literature on national memory. Yet ethnographic approaches have the facility to delineate practices that create historical narrative and give it emotive power while keeping in view longer-term political forces that underwrite dominant imaginaries. In this article I inquire into the discursive origins of emotional involvement in national history by juxtaposing two events of spectacular violence, September 11 and Pearl Harbor. Focusing on the representation of these events in public culture and at memorial sites, I argue that personal narratives play a central role in formations of national subjectivity, at times emotionalizing dominant memories and at other times opening possibilities for alternative visions. [*memory, nation, subjectivity, emotion, war, memorial, ritual*]

For a discipline that takes itself to be one of the most encompassing of the social sciences, anthropology has been somewhat subdued on the subject of September 11. Although anthropology classrooms are no doubt full of discussion of the subject and the *American Anthropologist* published a powerful set of articles within one year of the attack (September 2002), the discipline has been relatively absent from the arenas of public debate and dialogue. In the volume *Understanding September 11*, produced by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC; Calhoun et al. 2002), only 1 of 24 contributing authors is an anthropologist—Robert Hefner, writing about Islam. In a second SSRC volume (Hershberg and Moore 2002) focusing on the same subject in terms of “analyses from around the world,” anthropology is only slightly better represented, with 2 of 15 authors positioned in the field. Elsewhere, in the humanities, one finds a similar level of anthropologist participation. Special issues on September 11 produced by the prominent journals *Social Text* (Edwards et al. 2002) and *South Atlantic Quarterly* (Hauerwas and Lentricchia 2002) each feature 1 person writing from anthropology among 15 and 17 authors, respectively.

Anthropology is not the only field to struggle with the unruly topic of September 11, finding difficulty in applying existing paradigms to a subject that is both so immediate and so remote, so personal and so large. On the occasion of the first anniversary of September 11, Robert Smith, a reporter for National Public Radio (NPR), commented to me that he was having difficulty finding historians willing to talk about the subject on the air. A number had declined interviews saying that the subject was still too close, too raw, for them to have much to say historically. Indeed, when Smith's segment aired on NPR on September 11, 2002, it included a reference to the problem of representing “history” that happened just last year and even characterized September 11 history as “not real history; not yet.” This nearness, it would seem, should not be an impediment for anthropological analyses. To the contrary, it is just such a fluid moment of contested meaning making that anthropology would be expected to embrace.

I take this lacuna as a starting point for a discussion of dominant American (i.e., U.S.) understandings of the September 11 attacks, particularly as represented in emerging forms of memorialization. My strategy is to place September 11 in the same frame with Pearl Harbor, the 1941 attack that drew the United States into World War II. Contrary to the tendency to see it as singular or already fixed in meaning, Pearl Harbor, too, encompasses contested memories and continues to shift and be transformed (Rosenberg 2004). Just as Pearl Harbor was widely invoked to interpret the September 11 attacks, so, too, have popular understandings of Pearl Harbor been sharply affected by September 11, reinscribing themes of military urgency not unlike calls to “remember Pearl Harbor” heard during World War II.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of comparing representations of these events is not to list points of similarity and difference (see Chomsky 2002; White 2003) but to examine the production of emotional meaning in discourse that enters into wider spheres of state power and violence.<sup>2</sup> The mythic history of Pearl Harbor has been used to understand and rationalize the U.S. response to September 11 as “war,” activating a discourse that, when not slipping into the language of “crusade,” creates military threats (weapons of mass destruction), unlikely heroes (Jessica Lynch), presidential declarations of victory, and a postwar occupation compared to World War II reconstruction (Dower 2003). Recently, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice invoked Pearl Harbor in her testimony before the congressional commission investigating the September 11 attacks: “The U.S. government did not act against the growing threat from Imperial Japan until it became too evident at Pearl Harbor. And, tragically, for all the language of war spoken before Sept. 11 this country simply was not on war footing” (*New York Times* 2004).

By considering two moments of spectacular violence that mobilized widespread sentiments of war, I examine discursive practices that work to emotionalize national subjectivity. I find that personal narratives telling of the experiences of individuals caught up in Pearl Harbor and September 11 are a consistent presence in popular representations as well as in more formal memorial activities enacted in public spaces. In these contexts, personal narratives provide cultural tools that mediate affective involvement with more distant, imagined events. Just as memorial sites and ceremonies have long been acknowledged as a basic means of symbolizing identification with the nation, embodied by citizen soldiers, so narrative productions in popular media, news reporting, film, and the Internet now create a vast electronic archive of and for national sentiment.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, popular cultural productions and memorial practices are often in conversation with one another, such that memorial sites acquire meaning through stories circulating in popular culture,

whereas the sites themselves propagate stories marked as collective experience.

My consideration of Pearl Harbor draws on fieldwork with the sites and texts of that history, particularly at the national memorial located at Pearl Harbor, the USS *Arizona* Memorial. Discussion of September 11 and the World Trade Center (WTC) memorial, by comparison, analyzes media sources and stories elicited from students and other “informants.”<sup>4</sup> I begin with a brief reflection on traditions of research on collective memory that sets out an agenda for the ethnography of emotional meaning. Then, comparing Pearl Harbor and September 11, I trace some of the ways these events have been represented and narrativized in public culture to imbue them with moral and emotional significance. I then consider the (re)production of personal narrative at the memorial sites for Pearl Harbor and the WTC, suggesting that these spaces of public memory are more complex and ambivalent sites of national memory making than is often acknowledged.

### The emotionality of violent histories

The major traditions of research on collective memory are burdened by long-standing dichotomies of individual–society and psychology–culture that separate the personal–subjective from the political–structural (White 2000). These binaries have been reproduced and policed through a history of disciplinary insularity that has sustained parallel genealogies of psychological and sociological research on memory. At the risk of gross simplification, a psychological tradition with Frederic Bartlett (1932) and Soviet psychologist A. R. Luria (1979) as intellectual heirs finds its descendants in today’s cultural and discursive psychology (Brockmeier 2002; Bruner 1990; Cole 1971; Edwards and Middleton 1990; Wertsch 2002). A sociological tradition descended from Emile Durkheim through Maurice Halbwachs (Cosser 1992) and Walter Benjamin (Benjamin et al. 1994) plays out in such diverse social theorists as Pierre Nora (1989), Paul Connerton (1989), and many historians and anthropologists.

Studies exist on both sides of this duality, of course, that link psychological paradigms with work on institutional structures of memory (e.g., Cole 2004; Wertsch 2002). One of the most notable lines of work, particularly relevant for the two events considered here, concerns “flashbulb memories” (Brown and Kulik 1982; Pillemer 1998; Sturken 1997). The term *flashbulb memory* refers to the well-known phenomenon of recall for the circumstances in which one first heard about shocking historical events, such as the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Against early psychological theorizing that this phenomenon can be explained as a kind of physiological imprinting, Ulric Neisser (Neisser and Hyman 2000) and others offered a more sociological explanation that sees the intensification of personal memory

as a result of the *intersection* of personal experience with significant events in collective history. In other words, flashbulb memories are associated with events that occur on a national (or global) scale and somehow disturb the routine of personal lives (after the John F. Kennedy shooting, e.g., Americans as a whole took time out from work and school and watched unfolding events on television). For Americans of the World War II generation, the bombing of Pearl Harbor gave rise to such a flashbulb memory—as that event both altered the course of history and redirected the course of individual lives as the nation mobilized for war.

Whereas Pearl Harbor generated news stories, songs, and newsreels that brought the story into U.S. living rooms and theaters (Rosenberg 2004), the September 11 attacks reached immediately into people's lives, amplified by powerful technologies of communication. The highly compressed space–time of today's electronic media gives distant events a compelling immediacy. Ultimately, people far removed from the violence in New York City, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania found it necessary to turn off their televisions to deal with sleeplessness, anxiety, and depression.

Beyond the sheer fact of marking collective salience, the intensification of recall for particular events says little about their personal or emotional significance. The indeterminate quality of flashbulb memory is evident in essays by students at the University of Hawai'i assigned the task of writing about the circumstances in which they first learned of September 11. As theory would suggest, students find these essays easy to write, probably because in them they relate stories that have been repeated in ordinary conversation. Although many expect that residents of Hawai'i, located 2,500 miles from the U.S. west coast, should feel more detached from the calamity of September 11 events than mainland residents, geography turns out to be a poor indicator of emotional involvement in this era of electronically mediated national imagination (except for those in the actual attack zones who witnessed firsthand or live with continual reminders of destruction).

As an indication of the emotive tenor of recollections of September 11 seen from afar, consider the following excerpts from three essays: the first by a male student from New York State who was attending school in Hawai'i at the time; the second by a female student who was attending a private high school in midtown Manhattan on the day of the attacks; and the third by a female grad student who was then living in California. Many people in Hawai'i shared the experience of being woken up by phone calls (around 4 a.m.) from loved ones living in time zones where most people were already watching their televisions.

The phone rang. . . . When I answered, on the other line was my father. "David, turn the TV on . . ." I did

so, "the Twin Towers were hit, and they think its terrorists." I watched the live broadcast and only saw one tower. Before I could ask my dad said, "The first tower is gone, it fell to the ground." I stood shocked. . . . Panic took over me, then a numb-vacuous state of mind. I was absolutely dumb-founded. I sat and watched as many broadcasts as I could.

The second student recalled the reactions of those in her school who suddenly found themselves in the middle of a state of emergency:

I can see my principal pitifully try to console us by murmuring "there's no reason to worry" and by saying "we'd all be alright." Staring directly at her I knew she was lying—we both knew that everything was never going to be all right and that there really was reason to worry.

The entire day I was feeling fear for myself and the unknown, and sympathy for the girls who were scared of their known. I can't say the effects of the WTC attacks ever really wore off because for that entire year and even now the possibilities seemed to haunt me.

Although the range of emotions in these essays varies widely, the fact of emotionality—the use of emotion as a metalanguage to signify personal involvement—is a consistent feature and is usually reported in social context. In fact, the expectation of emotionality in September 11 memory is such that the *absence* of emotion is sometimes topicalized, as in the following passage from the third student's essay, which recalls the dissonance of not feeling deeply until finally succumbing to a moment of catharsis:

People kept asking me, "Are you upset?" My affirmative reply seemed to placate them. The truth was: I was afraid to admit that I felt next to nothing. I remember wanting to feel sadness, terror, or anger. The incomprehensible footage I saw that morning and afternoon of those planes, the smoke, the debris, and strangers crying in horror seemed to have no effect on me. I went home that afternoon angry at myself for my inability to muster empathy for the suffering people whose images I had seen.

That night at seven, I turned on my television once more. . . . Five minutes into watching, it happened: I saw something so horrifying that my hard heart dissolved.

The emotionality of September 11 has also been a subject of debate among scholars and critics, who are often concerned that emotions tend to work against critical self-understanding. Although many writers dropped their intellectual guard and wrote in a personal and

poetic voice following the attacks (see, e.g., Denzin and Lincoln 2003), others have questioned the affective register of September 11 discourse. Frederic Jameson, for example, asks if

it is natural and self-explanatory for masses of people to be so devastated by catastrophe in which they have lost no one they know, in a place in which they have no particular connections. Is nationality really so natural a function of human or even social being? Even more than that, is pity or sympathy really so innate a feature of the human constitution? History casts some doubt on both propositions. [2002:298]

History may cast doubt on these propositions, but ubiquitous first-person testimonies such as the student essays cited above (and see the poetry of Hawai'i fifth graders in Curtis 2002) would seem to lend them support. Rather than ask whether such responses are "natural" (such a question could only be rhetorical in anthropological circles), one might ask, "How do emotionality and nationality come into mutually defining relations?"

It may seem obvious to say that the emotional power of Pearl Harbor and September 11 derives from the fact that both events involved the sudden, violent death of thousands of people. As such, they are not only recalled as violent events or histories, but they are also *memorialized* through acts of remembrance, large and small, formal and informal. Over the course of the past three years, an expanding range of stories and memorial activities, from the intensely personal to the grandly ceremonial, has focused public attention on the human toll of the September 11 attacks.

Even though representations of September 11 are as contested as the war(s) that followed, acts of memorializing—constantly at the center of mass-mediated representations—have been less controversial. Stories of violent death and suffering readily command sympathy and respect. Yet lurking just beneath the surface of scholarly discussion of these sentiments is the worry that emotion is easily recruited to the service of militant nationalism. As Catherine Lutz writes,

Even some of those who now have multiple flags pasted on or flying from their cars and homes and clothes mean simply to memorialize the dead, not face down enemies, foreign or domestic. But the symbol's danger is its muteness, which allows each flag to be gathered together by the administration and claimed as its own belligerent charter. [2002:294]

### Person-centered memory

Historically, ritualized recognition of those who died in war, in the service of the nation, has been a powerful

means of engendering national subjectivity. As John Gillis writes of Europe, "In the interwar period the spirit and image of the fallen were repeatedly mobilized on film as well as in political rhetoric to serve a variety of causes. . . . They had become the very embodiment of national identities" (1994:11; cf. Mosse 1980). By narrativizing the September 11 attacks as "war," the U.S. administration worked to *create* the conditions of war and to render the context of violence one of national suffering and sacrifice.<sup>5</sup>

Whereas visual images of spectacular destruction at Pearl Harbor and the WTC have become emblematic of those events (the exploding battleships of Pearl Harbor and the burning twin towers; White 2003), these images remain largely ambiguous in terms of moral or emotional meaning.<sup>6</sup> They are "empty signifiers" that require some form of narrative to fill in their human drama.<sup>7</sup> Despite wide differences in their historical circumstances, then, Pearl Harbor and September 11 show striking similarities in the importance of personal stories for their emotional meaning.

Before looking at some of the means used to construct historic events as personal experience, it is important to note that historical moments such as Pearl Harbor and September 11 create *event-centered* frames for memory that are amenable to narrative and dramaturgical modes of representation. Because both events centered on attack scenes coded in visual images of destruction, they provide a lens that focuses storytelling on moments of violence and on the human dramas that unfolded around them.<sup>8</sup>

For Pearl Harbor, event-centered history has produced a hypercoded record of the few hours of the actual attack on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, beginning with the appearance of the first wave of attack planes on a radar scope and ending with the departing planes of the second wave three hours later. For the WTC, the prolonged period of destruction between the first plane's attack and the collapse of the second tower produced nearly two hours of densely recorded, photographed, and filmed events. Consider, for example, the material compiled by the *New York Times*, which makes available online a graphically rendered minute-by-minute analysis of events inside the two towers, as well as transcripts of cell phone calls in and out of the buildings during the time of the attack (organized in a floor-by-floor index; *New York Times* 2002a). This archive provides the basis for the same kind of detailed event-centered history characteristic of the Pearl Harbor record. Within these frames, one finds thousands of stories of individuals caught up in lethal events.

The most widely read book about the Pearl Harbor bombing is Walter Lord's *Day of Infamy* (1957), which was researched and written on the basis of interviews with survivors. It tells its story as a pastiche of individual stories, organized in a minute-to-minute temporal frame. The entire book spans a period of 14 hours. Chapters are



organized chronometrically, beginning at 3:30 a.m. the day of the attack and concluding “after 5:30 p.m.”<sup>9</sup> Survivor stories direct memory’s eye to specific, situated moments of attack, understood through the embodied experience of people involved. This chronology also provided the framework for the first film depiction of the attack, a 30-minute documentary called *December 7th*, produced by the U.S. Office of War Information in 1942 (White and Yi 2001). Later documentaries and feature films have expanded the frame to include wider historical context, although the attack sequence is always the central, focalized episode.

#### *From documentary to eulogy*

To report on these events is to remember the persons involved. Inevitably, media representations become “remembrances” produced as respectful or empathic representations of last moments, appropriating speech practices and affective registers normally reserved for more intimate situations. Documentary becomes eulogy.

The semiotic tools available for representing Pearl Harbor were radically different from those associated with September 11. Only five to six minutes of film footage of the Pearl Harbor attacks were produced, all of which have been used repeatedly in documentary and feature films in the ensuing years (Nornes et al. 1991:191). Despite the relative scarcity of audio and video recordings of the event, documentary films of the Pearl Harbor attack also incorporate a memorial voice by using fictional devices. The *December 7th* documentary includes an extended sequence of photos and the imaginary voices of those who died, presented as a conversation between the narrator and individual sailors and marines lost in the attack. This portion of the film uses photos of the deceased, voice over, and brief clips of surviving family members to create a personalized sense of national “sacrifice,” situated in the domestic spaces of surviving kin (White and Yi 2001).

Whereas *December 7th* was made as wartime propaganda (produced by Lt. Commander John Ford and a navy film unit as part of the Department of War’s morale-building and fundraising efforts), the memorial voice continues to be evident in today’s official documentary representation of those events. The film that is currently shown at the national memorial at Pearl Harbor was produced in 1992 to provide a more accurate, balanced account of the attack than that presented in previous films. Nonetheless, its account, narrated by a melancholy female voice, begins by scanning the wall of names in the memorial’s shrine room and concludes by inviting the audience to participate in collective mourning: “How shall we remember them, those who died? Mourn the dead. Remember the battle. Understand the tragedy. Honor the memory. Let our grief for the men of the *Arizona* be for all those whose futures were taken from

them on December 7th, 1941. Here they will never be forgotten” (U.S. National Park Service 1992:16).<sup>10</sup>

The first major television documentary about the WTC attacks was entitled *In Memoriam: New York City, 9/11/01* (Home Box Office 2002). It begins with the assertion that the September 11 attack was “the most documented event in history.” The producer, Home Box Office, collected close to a thousand hours of film and tape for the project. It includes video footage shot by 118 people in the vicinity of the WTC on the morning of the attack as well as video from 16 news organizations.<sup>11</sup> The titles of other video or DVD programs about the September 11 attack tell a similar story: *America 911—We Will Never Forget* (2001); *World Trade Center—In Memoriam* (2001); *Remember—September 11, 2001* (Cartwright 2002); and *9/11—The Filmmakers’ Commemorative Edition* (Naudet et al. 2002).

Some media sources, especially newspapers in New York City and Washington, DC, developed sustained projects listing names and biographies of all those who died in their cities, placing the material on newspaper websites.<sup>12</sup> Almost immediately after the attacks, the *New York Times* began publishing “Portraits of Grief,” a daily page of obituaries of individuals killed. *New York Times* reporters conducted phone interviews with surviving relatives and friends to write short personal reflections, thumbnail biographies of the ordinary, of mundane lives interrupted. Marita Sturken notes the effect of these portraits on many readers:

The rituals of memory have become incorporated into the media spectacle of September 11, and the media has been in part a vehicle for mourning. Many people that I know began their days after September 11 reading the “Portraits of Grief” in *The New York Times* and weeping over the simple descriptions of those who died. [2002:381]

These *New York Times* portraits have since been collected together online and also published in a thick, sad volume (*New York Times* 2002b). They also inspired a play entitled *Portraits* (Bell 2003), which the author conceived of as a “memorial” to those lost in the September 11 attacks that would “amplify the personal experiences of a few everyday (yet extraordinary) people on that significant day” (Genzlinger 2003). When the play made its debut in New York City around the time of the second anniversary of the attacks, however, a theater critic commented that audiences had been so saturated with “memorial” discourse, that the very word evoked suspicions of overuse: “In the last two years the word ‘memorial’ has been stamped on too many television specials, record albums, advertisements, speeches and so on, whose main agenda has been to capitalize, not commiserate” (Genzlinger

2003). Inevitably, the proliferation of memorial projects reported in the media has provoked a degree of cynicism about their meaning or effect.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, as has been the case for Pearl Harbor, stories of those who died and the experience of survivors continue to be widely reproduced, creating conditions for empathy.

### Refiguring tragedy

If images of death and destruction were all there were to the stories of Pearl Harbor and September 11, one might ask how and why they inspired such interest, evident in stories, songs, books, and photographic records. The visual images of the attacks, after all, seem to be only about defeat. Tragic circumstances, however, are often redeemed by acts of heroism that, in turn, become emblematic of valued forms of personhood. Such narratives offer conceptual tools for thinking about responses to events that, although not experienced directly, may thereby obtain greater relevance for one's own world.

In the larger history of the Pacific war, the story of Pearl Harbor is reframed as the first episode in a longer narrative of victory, of recovery from a devastating attack that ultimately led to triumph in a brutal war. As the Pearl Harbor story is told in books and film, the effort to salvage and refit ships damaged in the bombing became a symbol of triumph told in the language of "resurrection" (Madsen 2003). Similarly, at the sites of destruction caused by the attacks of September 11, efforts at reconstruction transform a story of catastrophe into one of recovery and renewal. This was most immediately evident in the effort to rebuild the Pentagon, a process that, like repairing the Pacific fleet, could be engineered entirely by military planning put in fast-forward mode, as a demonstration of the continuing strength of the armed forces damaged in the attack. The plan to rebuild the damaged wing of the Pentagon was named "Phoenix Rising." It called for an accelerated timetable that would move employees back into their offices at the point of impact within one year of the destruction. The analogous process at the WTC site, also marked by ritual enactments of patriotic commitment, was the mammoth job of "clearing the pile" and launching plans for redesign and reconstruction (Lange-wiesche 2002).

Media accounts of the Pentagon rebuilding focused on the manner in which construction workers took their jobs personally, refusing time off and completing the task ahead of schedule. The *Washington Post* featured a story of one worker who had lost a son in the attack. A videographer spent four months with the man, sheet metal worker Michael Flocco, who volunteered to work on the Pentagon after his son, a young naval officer, was killed September 11. The resulting video, entitled *Rebuilding a Fortress; Rebuilding a Life* (*Washington Post* 2002), is presented in five segments on the *Washington Post* web-

site and was also aired in August 2002 by ABC News on its *Nightline UpClose* program. It epitomizes a large corpus of media accounts of the rebuilding process framed as moral renewal.

An anniversary ceremony was held at the Pentagon on September 11, 2002, honoring the 184 people who died there a year earlier. Speaking at the event, President Bush cast the project as an architectural signifier emblematic of national resolve.

The terrorists chose this target hoping to demoralize our country. They failed. Within minutes, brave men and women were rescuing their comrades. Within hours, in this building, the planning began for a military response. Within weeks, commands went forth from this place that would clear terrorist camps and caves and liberate a nation. And within one year, this great building has been made whole once again. Many civilian and military personnel have now returned to offices they occupied before the attack. [White House 2002]

The president's rhetoric was echoed in media accounts of the reconstruction and its ceremonial celebration. Just as Bush referenced the efforts of individual men and women to save others, journalists featured the testimonials of survivors who had risked their lives in the conflagration and who expressed determination to "get back to work." As has been the case at Pearl Harbor anniversaries for over 60 years, ceremonial remembrances at the September 11 sites have focused on those who died and those who struggled to survive.

For the national imaginary, survivor stories that tell of the willingness of citizen subjects to risk their lives for others are highly retellable, especially in public spaces where images of the nation are most visibly produced. Even though neither Pearl Harbor nor September 11 offered much opportunity for those who were attacked to fight back, each event offers examples of courage and self-sacrifice. Witness the September 11 resistance of passengers on Flight 193, who crashed their plane in a field in Pennsylvania rather than into a target in Washington, DC.<sup>14</sup> At Pearl Harbor, where a more conventional battle erupted, efforts of pilots and ship crews to fight back have been extensively documented and mythicized in the ensuing decades. One of the main points of contention in the production of the documentary film shown at the Pearl Harbor memorial today concerned the desire of veteran advisors to include more individual acts of heroism. This dimension of the story was somewhat subdued in the film's final version, which states simply, "Acts of valor were common that day."<sup>15</sup>

Given that both Pearl Harbor and September 11 began with dramatic acts of destruction, the immediate

aftermath in both cases was concerned with the rescue of persons injured or trapped in wreckage. At Pearl Harbor, dozens of medals were given out to men who went into sinking ships to save fellow crew members, some perishing in their attempt. The USS *Oklahoma*, for example, rolled over at its mooring and trapped hundreds of its crew below decks. A massive rescue effort extracted dozens of men, but over 400 ultimately died on the ship. In the case of September 11, much of the drama pertains to individuals who worked to assist others injured or trapped in buildings.

The WTC tragedy is given particular moral meaning in the accounts of firemen and police who rushed to the scene to aid in the rescue effort and who, themselves, suffered grievous losses as a result. Here the figure of the uniformed rescue worker stands in for that of the fallen soldier or the veteran survivor in discourses of war remembrance. Whereas they constitute about 20 percent of the 3,187 dead in the September 11 attacks, firemen and policemen quickly emerged as dominant figures in media accounts and ceremonial activities. The accounts of rescue workers “doing their job” in facing the conflagration and working to save people in the towers constitute stories of heroism and humanity within the larger scene of destruction.

The best-known image to emerge from the rescue and cleanup operations is that of three firefighters hoisting a U.S. flag over the rubble—an image that obtained its notoriety because of its resonance with the most famous photograph to emerge from World War II, that of Marines hoisting a flag atop Mt. Suribachi during the 1945 battle for Iwo Jima (Bradley and Powers 2000; Marling and Wetenhall 1991). The photograph of firemen raising the flag on a pole in the midst of rubble from the collapsed trade towers quickly became the signature image of national resolve in the face of terrorist attacks. It appeared in newspapers and on websites within 24 hours of the actual occurrence and was subsequently reproduced widely in hundreds, if not thousands, of media reports, ceremonial events, sculptures, and even mementos for sale on eBay. Within three months it had been produced in sculptural form with plans for a major installation.<sup>16</sup>

The image of firemen raising the flag not only resonated visually with the Iwo Jima photo (the WTC pole even tilted at an angle like that of the pole righted by Marines in 1945), but it also worked to instantiate a discourse of war that could be won, evoking images of victory in island combat. Just as the Mt. Suribachi image came to symbolize U.S. victory in the Pacific war, the WTC photo showed men determined to “keep the flag flying” while facing the ravages of war. At the dedication of a sculptural rendition of the photo in New York in December 2001, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani called the photograph “one of the most inspirational I have ever seen” and said that it demonstrated that “the spirit of America . . . was

soaring above the evil deeds that were done to us” (Robin 2001: A6). And the connection of the WTC flag to war turned out to be more than symbolic. After the United States launched its war in Afghanistan, the flag was sent to U.S. Marines there, who promptly raised it over their base in Kandahar (Willis 2002:376).<sup>17</sup>

### Sacred ground(s)

The emotional valence of the flag raised at the WTC reflects a common fascination with the material sites and objects of history.<sup>18</sup> Andreas Huyssen, commenting about the difference between television histories and the material spaces of museums and memorials, suggests reasons for the rise in interest in the latter: “Both offer something that television denies: the material quality of the object. The permanence of the monument and the museum object, formerly criticized as deadening reification, takes on a different role in a culture dominated by the fleeting image on the screen” (1995:255). Memorial sites offer a particularly acute version of the materiality of history: presence in the emotion-laden landscapes inhabited by a nation’s dead and, periodically, their living counterparts (survivors).

By visiting the locations of historic events one connects one’s own life history to the larger, imagined sweep of national or world events. This is so not only in the obvious sense of being physically present but also through imagined forms of intersection between personal worlds and historical narrative facilitated by the objects and stories encountered at such sites. As a result, memorial spaces are often said to be highly evocative. I had this brought home to me in a recent email exchange with a graduate student and friend, Himanee Gupta, who mentioned that she was in the middle of a trip to New York and went on to describe her own reactions to visiting Ground Zero:

**Himanee Gupta:** I’m actually in NYC right now, and went to Ground Zero yesterday. It’s a pretty emotionally powerful space . . . tears started rolling down my face as soon as I got there, which was not the reaction I expected at all.

**Geoffrey White:** I’m interested in Ground Zero, and thinking through just the things that you describe. Your reaction doesn’t surprise me at all. I can imagine doing the same thing, and wondering why/how it could be so evocative.

**HG:** Regarding Ground Zero, I didn’t expect to “know” where I was. I hadn’t been to New York City for 13 years, and I’m neither the type of person who visits memorials nor a big TV watcher. Yet, as soon as I emerged into daylight from the subway steps,

I “knew” exactly where I was. Everything was familiar: the deli on the corner, the newsstand, the street intersections. There was nothing to call attention to it; it was just so familiar because we’ve “seen” it so often. . . .

Because you know, there’s a certain discursive formation that has come to define the space as tragic/as sorrowful. So, it seems, nothing else has to be said. . . .

What struck me about walking around the site itself was the silence. Manhattan is a pretty noisy place, yet there, aside from the construction noise (which actually drowns out everything else), you’ve got silence. You’ve got tourists walking around, but it’s very quiet, respectful. Most of the memento type things were gone. The victims’ names are posted on placards pretty much on every corner. The site seems to signify sorrow, authentic sorrow. The only space that felt contrived, actually, was the viewing deck that was, essentially, contrived.

I was telling a friend of mine (a born and raised New Yorker who lives and works in Midtown) about my reaction. His response was: “What happened there was horrible.” I said, “Yeah, of course. All of us know that. But I guess I didn’t really ‘feel’ that until I was there.”<sup>19</sup>

Himanees’s e-mails suggest a kind of pilgrimage, even within a landscape of lower Manhattan that now resembles a construction site more than anything else. Himanees’s description of her visit as an emotional experience is not unlike the accounts of others who have been to Ground Zero or, indeed, to other sites of tragic history, including the USS *Arizona* Memorial (Lippard 1999).<sup>20</sup> Somewhat surprised by her own reaction, Himanees suggests that it follows from prior knowledge of what happened there and what that event “means” at many levels. Given the extensive circulation of images and stories about the attacks, she brought with her a degree of understanding and involvement (also evidenced in the flashbulb memories reported by the Hawai’i students cited earlier). How, then, do memorial sites cultivate this sort of emotional involvement through institutionalized practices that represent and “remember” events that occurred there?

At both Pearl Harbor and the WTC, rescue workers attempting to recover bodies soon realized that most would never be found. They had simply disappeared in the force of the explosions and physical collapse. At Pearl Harbor, 1,177 men died in a massive explosion of the battleship USS *Arizona*, accounting for about half of the total number of people killed in the attack. It is for that reason that the national memorial to Pearl Harbor is called the USS *Arizona* Memorial and that it was built to span the remains of the battleship that sank where it was moored

on December 7, 1941. At the WTC, of the 2,749 people who died in the September 11 attacks, 1,208 had been identified as of January 2004 (Lipton 2004). The remainder disappeared without a trace or without identifiable traces.

Thus, in radically different environments, both the USS *Arizona* and the WTC became cemeteries and shrines to the dead and missing. In an instant, both locations—a sunken ship in Pearl Harbor and Ground Zero, particularly the footprints of the collapsed buildings—became burial sites. As such, they are host to ritual practices that continually (re)define the (sacred) significance of those spaces through actions that express reverence for those who died (and those who survived; Linenthal 1993). Ritual enactments performed at Pearl Harbor range from acts of remembrance by family and friends to grand, national ceremonies.

In the aftermath of the Pearl Harbor bombing, there was no clear consensus about whether or how to construct a memorial at the site of the USS *Arizona* (Slackman 1986). By the mid-1950s, with navy veterans’ groups spearheading fundraising, Congress passed legislation mandating that a memorial be built to honor military personnel who died in the attack.<sup>21</sup> In 1962, no fewer than 21 years after the bombing, a memorial was dedicated over the sunken ship. It would be another 18 years before a visitor center was added. From the center, which houses a small museum and theater, groups are taken by boat to stand atop the memorial and view its wall of names. Today, the USS *Arizona* Memorial is a national historic landmark and shrine located in the midst of a sprawling U.S. naval base and is visited by about 1.5 million tourists each year. Managed by the U.S. National Park Service in cooperation with the U.S. Navy, the memorial is also host to ceremonial events of all kinds, especially services held every Memorial Day and December 7.

Despite its complexity, the process of redesigning the WTC area, including a memorial, has been highly compressed. Within days, even hours of the attack, proposals for various kinds of memorial began to emerge, including arguments to rebuild the towers (Sturken 2002).<sup>22</sup> Amidst wide-ranging debate, the city of New York created a commission to review plans to re-create the WTC space as both a commercial center and a memorial. All of the proposals put forward in the first round of competition were asked to set aside about seven acres of the 16-acre site “as sacred ground” to provide a way to “incorporate some tangible reminder of the towers themselves into the memorial design” (Wyatt 2002a: A1). The remaining nine acres would be rebuilt as commercial space. Families of those killed were consulted throughout the planning process. Some families wanted the entire 16-acre site to be used for a memorial, seeing a return to commercial use as a denigration of the memory of those who died.

The architectural firm that was selected, Daniel Libeskind Studio of Berlin, put forward a design that was



avored by many of the families, who stated that they liked the way it treated the memorial space. New York Governor George Pataki, who is said to have remained close to the family representatives, called the Libeskind design a “dignified plan” that symbolized the “strength and courage” of everyone involved.<sup>23</sup> This, then, set the stage for a separate competition to select a design for the memorial space itself, which all parties agreed would be the centerpiece of the overall architectural plan. The competition, overseen by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, attracted 5,201 entries from 62 countries and every state except Alaska—the most entries of any competition of its kind, three times the number submitted for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial competition (Wyatt 2003a).

In January 2004, the 13-member jury selected a design labeled *Reflecting Absence*, centering on two memorial pools marking the footprints of the twin towers. As Marita Sturken notes in her article for this issue, reactions to the winning design replayed some of the debates that surrounded the early stages of the Pearl Harbor memorial and, more recently, the Vietnam memorial in Washington, DC. Specifically, the modernist design’s omission of

human motifs and objects that evoke the materiality of the disaster has been challenged from several directions. Critics forced a modest change in the Vietnam memorial plan, the addition of a sculptural form depicting U.S. warriors. Some of the criticisms of the WTC memorial will be resolved as plans for a museum take shape. Just as the architectural space of the USS *Arizona* Memorial sets up a sacred–profane duality represented by the spatial separation of the sunken ship in the harbor and the shore-side visitor center with museum, theater, and gift shop, so the designer of *Reflecting Absence*, landscape architect Michael Arad, wished to separate the reflecting pools (marking the footprints) from the museum and visitor center also planned for the site.

### Names

From the beginning of the architectural design stage, a requirement of WTC memorial proposals specified that the names of all of the dead be prominently displayed.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, from the start the memory of September 11 has been all about names, as evident from the plaintive signs, posters, and photos put up around the site by people



Figure 1. Names, World Trade Center (March 2004).

searching for their missing relatives in the immediate aftermath of the event. These notices then became impromptu memorials, and some were even collected and incorporated in exhibitions in honor of the victims. The names one now encounters in a large mural placed on the fence bordering the WTC construction site (Figure 1) are, in a sense, a distillation of that history of loss, inscribed in conventional memorial format. The names of the dead also emerged as a central element in the ritual practices marking September 11 anniversaries in 2002 and 2003. The most memorable feature of the ceremony held at the WTC site in 2003 was the participation of children of those who died in the attacks. Roughly two hundred such children and adults, standing in pairs, read the names of all victims in alphabetical order.

Names also figure prominently in the inscriptions at the USS *Arizona* Memorial. The focal point of the memorial is the “shrine room” at one end of the white structure spanning the sunken ship. There, an imposing marble wall lists the names of all the members of the crew killed in the bombing—1,177 names listed according to branch of service (navy, marines) and then alphabetically, with rank

noted (Figure 2).<sup>25</sup> In this manner, the mandated purpose of the memorial to honor the military men killed in the attack is inscribed in the organization of names—identified by ship, service, and rank. Eventually, the Park Service recognized the need to display the names of the other 1,211 who died in the bombing and constructed a “remembrance exhibit” on the lawn of the visitor center for this purpose. The exhibit displays plaques engraved with names of those who died, organized according to ship and base locations, and it includes one plaque for the 48 civilians killed.<sup>26</sup> Given the mandate of the USS *Arizona* Memorial and its location, stories about civilians outside the sphere of military service have remained largely marginal to its histories, even if commonly acknowledged as a topic worthy of attention on special occasions.

Whereas the USS *Arizona* Memorial began with a somewhat narrow inscription of the names of the dead from the ship that incurred the most grievous losses and then worked outward to include a wider range of the dead, debates about the design of the memorial at Ground Zero have involved a reverse process—moving from a complete listing of all names in a singular format to distinguishing

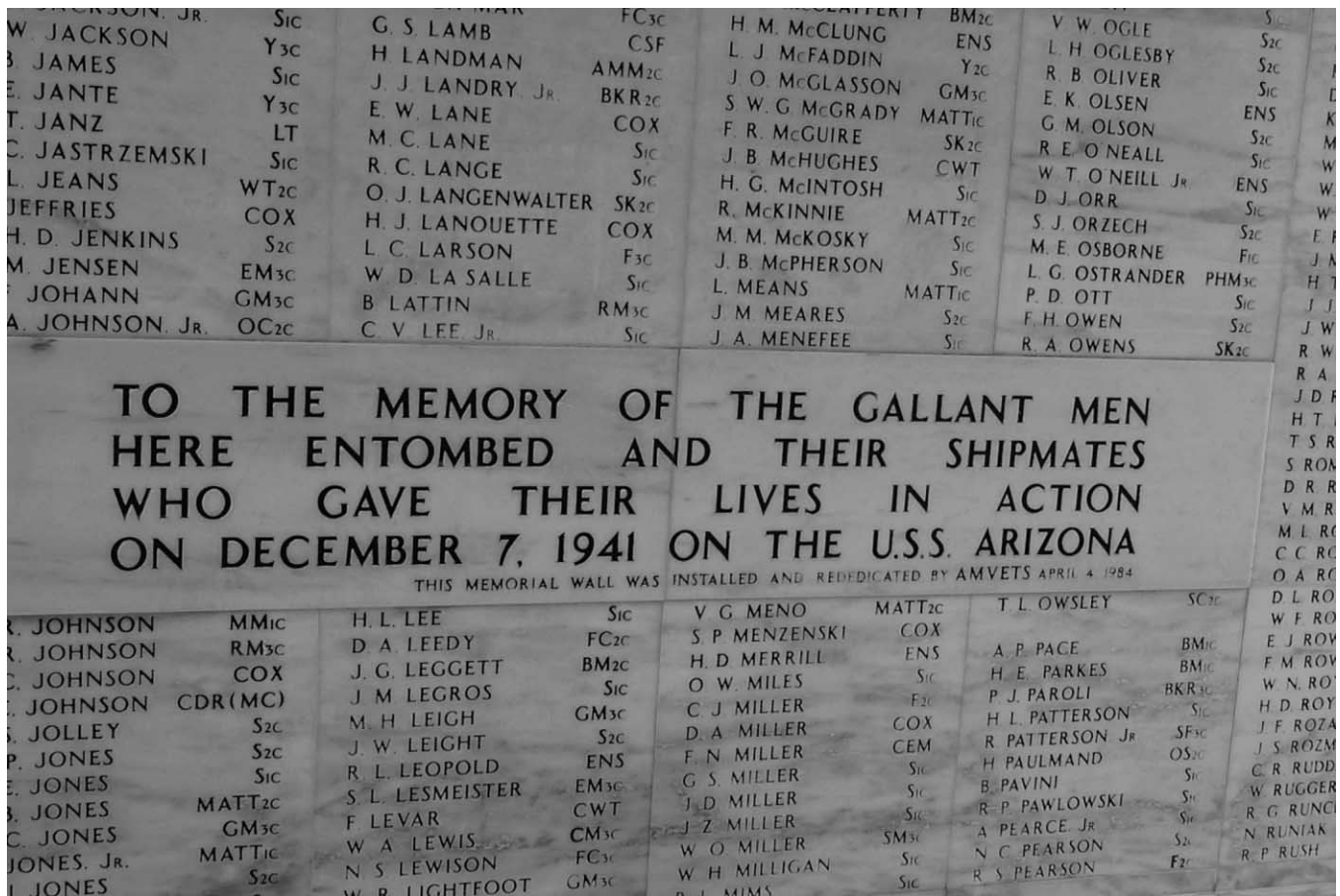


Figure 2. Names in the USS *Arizona* Memorial shrine room.





**Figure 3.** Pearl Harbor survivor Richard Fiske in video conference with high school class.

the rescue workers who died going in to the buildings to save others. Organizations representing firefighters have been vocal in advocating a distinctive listing for rescue workers. A representative of the Uniformed Firefighters

Association said that there should be “some designation for those who died willingly, who risked their lives to save others, as opposed to those who were tragically caught up in the consequences” (Wyatt 2003b). Members of the fire department even formed a group called “Advocates for a 9/11 Fallen Heroes Memorial” to urge construction of a distinctive memorial within the Ground Zero complex. By June 2003, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, speaking at a firefighter’s funeral, said that anyone who visits the memorial should “be able to read their names, know what they did, appreciate their heroism, be inspired by their sacrifice and ensure that they are designated as role models for the next generation who will protect us all” (Lipton 2003: 47).<sup>27</sup> And, indeed, they will. Among the first details announced about the winning memorial design was the agreement that names of victims to be etched in stone around the reflecting pools would distinguish members of “uniformed services” (firefighters, police, and emergency personnel) with shield insignia.

The impulse to distinguish uniformed rescuers in the design of the memorial was foreshadowed by media coverage that featured firefighters and police from the first



**Figure 4.** Pearl Harbor survivor Everett Hyland giving a talk at the USS *Arizona* Memorial.

moments of the attack. Just as military veterans and active-duty military officers are the voices most commonly heard at the Pearl Harbor memorial, so firefighters, police officers, and emergency personnel have been the most visible participants in public events at Ground Zero. For example, during a ceremony conducted to mark the end of the clean-up phase in May 2002, an empty stretcher with a flag draped over it was carried out of the pit by stretcher bearers from all the constituencies involved in the work: firemen, police officers, emergency personnel, and construction workers.<sup>28</sup>

### Survivor discourse

The living counterparts to the names inscribed on memorial walls are those who survived the events concerned. At both Pearl Harbor and the WTC, those in uniform are afforded distinction—in death and in life—in the recollection and personalization of sacred history. For Pearl Harbor, the word *survivor* refers to the veteran sailors and marines who lived through the bombing. This specific meaning is buttressed by the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, eligibility for membership in which requires that one have been on active military duty on the island of Oahu on December 7, 1941.

Veterans organizations as well as active military personnel are highly invested in the site and perform key roles at memorial ceremonies. Individually, Pearl Harbor survivors have long been a focus for national media and filmmakers. Dozens of documentary films and videos have been produced using interviews with Pearl Harbor survivors. Most recently, the Disney film *Pearl Harbor* (Bay 2001) went to great lengths to solicit the views and blessings of survivors in marketing its highly fictionalized depiction of the attacks (White 2002). And, as one of many examples of the way in which survivor voices are projected more widely, a new project of the USS *Arizona* Memorial Museum Association, “Witness to History,” is using video teleconferencing technology to take Pearl Harbor survivors and their stories into high school classrooms around the country (Figure 3).

Throughout the history of the USS *Arizona* Memorial, Pearl Harbor survivors have played prominent roles in representing and interpreting the site for visitors (Figure 4). A number of veterans resident in Honolulu volunteer time at the memorial, engaging visitors who find, to their amazement, that they are conversing with “living history.” Park Service staff often consult with Pearl Harbor veterans about the interpretive program at the memorial, soliciting their views of new exhibits, films, and ceremonial events. One veteran who regularly volunteers to speak at the memorial talked about the importance of eliciting emotional responses from his audience members to connect them with the “real experience” of death and loss represented by the sunken



Figure 5. Pearl Harbor survivor Richard Fiske talking with visitors at the USS *Arizona* Memorial.

ship: “I want them [the audience] to see this as an experience; not just as a tourist attraction. I want them to feel the real experience. There is the hurt, anger, and pain and there are still dead bodies out there in the ship’s hull.”

The presence of survivors, whether in person or in some virtual form, fosters a degree of engagement that breaks down visitors’ sense of voyeurism. Even as the number of World War II veterans decreases, younger generations find personal connections through their relatives. Visitors to the memorial regularly find ways to construct their own involvement with the place and its stories. Consider the following interaction between a middle-aged female visitor and Richard Fiske, a well-known survivor who regularly volunteered his time at the memorial until he passed away in April 2004 (Figure 5). Fiske had just completed speaking to a gathering of visitors about his friendly relations with Japanese veterans and was showing his photo album to a small group:

**Female Visitor:** (explaining to a child) This guy here (pointing to photo) torpedoed the ship he was on. He was trying to kill his ship. And you know what, now they’re friends. They made up and now they’re friends. Kind of neat, uh? (Fiske laughs) Kinda weird how things like that happen.

**Richard Fiske:** And Mr. Yoshida here was one of the zero pilots.

**Male Visitor:** Kamikaze?

**RF:** No.

**MV:** Just a regular . . .

**RF:** I got to know one kamikaze pilot.



**FV:** (inaudible)

**RF:** Yes ma'am, I volunteer every Friday.

**FV:** (pointing to photo) Which ship is that?

**RF:** That's the *Arizona*.

**FV:** My dad was a lieutenant commander on a submarine. And that's why we're here. We're leaving tomorrow morning and my Dad asked me to come by and pick him up a tie tack. I came all the way out here.

**RF:** (with his binder open to photos) That's the *Arizona*. This is the outboard shot of the *West Virginia*. That's what she looked like.

**MV:** You're up here (pointing).

**RF:** I was a bugler aboard ship. I still play the bugle and put the roses out. I've been doing it for six years. Haven't missed a month. My dad, my brother, all three were here December 7th.

**MV:** How old are you?

**RF:** Seventy-five, going on 76.

**FV:** My dad's 69. . . .

Personal narrative, whether produced in a museum text or in the discourse of survivors, has the capacity to deepen involvement in historical events. At the same time, accounts of those caught up in the immediacy of an attack also have the effect of stripping away its wider contexts. In an analysis of exhibits at the USS *Arizona* Memorial's small museum, Phyllis Turnbull comments on displays that feature personal stories and memorabilia of individuals killed in the attack. Noting a pattern that she calls *hero myth*, Turnbull writes,

The hero myth skimps in death as well as life. In other circumstances—as sailor or civilian during peacetime—the cause of . . . death would have been closely scrutinized . . . for his death, if not accidental, would have been a criminal act. In the case of the mass deaths on the *Arizona*, such a question could not arise, and the grisly deaths of the men have been enshrouded in the heroic language of “gave his life,” “fell in action,” or “died gallantly.” [1996:416]

This type of decontextualization is also evident in the “experience-near” stories of survivors. Although an effective device for engaging audiences, such stories also tend to preclude consideration of wider context, including

other forms of agency and perspective taking. As the Pearl Harbor memorial has developed and transformed during the decades since 1941, it has, on occasion, created new narratives that have expanded the canonical Pearl Harbor story in a variety of ways (such as adding reference to the conflict of colonial powers in Asia that preceded the attack and including reference to the impact of the attack on civilians and Japanese Americans). Yet, in other respects, the politics of memory at a national war memorial effectively silence counter-memories (such as reference to the atomic bombings that ended the war or to the history of U.S. colonialism in the Hawaiian islands, motivated in no small measure by an interest in developing a naval base at Pearl Harbor, which proved devastating to the native population).

Similarly, efforts to widen the lens of public history of the September 11 attacks by discussing U.S. policies and actions in the Middle East have met with protestations that such attempts demean the memory of those who died in the attacks. For example, Rudolph Giuliani, mayor of New York at the time of the attacks, returned billionaire Saudi Prince Al-Wadid bin Tala bin Abdulazaz's check for \$10 million to aid victims of the WTC attacks because the prince, in a letter to the mayor, encouraged efforts to examine the conflicts that led to the attacks as well as urging a balanced approach to the Palestinian cause. In the development of design criteria for the WTC memorial competition, the stipulation that the memorial “evolve over time with our understanding of events” was reduced simply to “evolve over time.” A report by the development corporation said that this streamlining reflected the broadly held view that “it would be impossible to understand the rationale of such a savage attack” (Wyatt 2003b: B6). As Ghassan Hage has written,

The monstrous criminality of the September 11 events and the war climate they helped create understandably made them resistant to social explanation at a popular level. . . . To attempt a sociopolitical explanation of the terrorists' action or to explain why those acts were supported by large sections of the Arab population was considered sacrilegious and immoral on the post-September 11 market of outrage. [2003:88]

## Conclusion

One of the issues that emerges repeatedly around memorial sites and discourses of remembrance is the tension between honoring the dead and educating—a tension often articulated in terms of binaries such as memorial–museum, commemoration–education, emotion–reason, and sacred–profane (see, e.g., Linenthal 1995). During the planning for the Berlin Holocaust Memorial, for example, conflict arose when the German minister of culture

asserted that the memorial should “be as pedagogically inclined as possible, a center for learning and research, not just contemplation” (Young 2000:218). Yet the minister blurred the distinction between education and commemoration when he called for a permanent installation devoted to screening Holocaust survivors’ testimonies (now archived electronically in Steven Spielberg’s Shoah Oral History Project).

Indicative of the priority of its function as a memorial honoring war dead, the USS *Arizona* Memorial did not open a visitor center and museum until 1980, 18 years after the memorial was dedicated. Planning for the WTC memorial quickly raised suggestions that the schedule for design work “could be helped by separating the memorial from the museum” (Wyatt 2002b: YNE 27). One official said, “The simpler the message is, the better the memorial will be. . . . If we presume we’re going to build a museum, we can have a lot of messages. So the memorial itself is better kept to a minimum of thoughts and emotions” (Wyatt 2002b: YNE 27). Anticipating these issues, Marita Sturken has commented on the importance of a pedagogical dimension in whatever memorial space emerges at the WTC.

Ultimately, it is important that any process of memorialization confront what memorials do well, and what they don’t do. National memorials traditionally have been built with dual purposes: to act as forms of pedagogy about the nation and historical figures within it, and to honor the dead. . . . Yet, this pedagogy is highly limited. Memorials do not teach well about history, since their role is to remember those who died rather than to understand why they died. . . . It is important that the sites that are created to mourn the dead do not foreclose on discussions about why their lives were lost. [2002:384]

Sturken’s astute observation, however, is complicated by the entanglement of educational and commemorative discourse. The planning for the Berlin Holocaust Memorial is illustrative here because of the way in which survivors’ voices enter the picture in connection with the proposed pedagogical functions of the memorial site. In this instance, the intensely personal, experience-centered discourse of survivors stands in for history, even though it is precisely such voices that are privileged in the *memorial* functions of sites of remembrance. This entanglement of discursive regimes points to more fundamental questions about the way in which history and personal narrative, far from being separate modes of representation, often make each other up, especially around the ambiguous boundaries between “memorial” and “museum.” As Jeremy Popkin notes in a recent article about Holocaust writing, “First person testimony has come to play an unusually large role in constructing Holocaust memory. . . . Survivors’

memoirs have sometimes been accorded an almost sacred status” (2003:51). Even though first-person narrative is often viewed as overly subjective in comparison with the more “objective” language of experience-distant history, in memorial contexts personal narrative establishes moral and emotional authority that often defines the boundaries and parameters of pedagogy.

The process now underway to construct a memorial and museum at the WTC will evolve over the course of decades, with Ground Zero ultimately becoming one of the most visited historic sites anywhere in the world. Given the history of Pearl Harbor memory making, it is apparent that acts of commemorating and educating will intermingle in complex and unpredictable ways, even as a museum is constructed separately from the memorial site. For both pedagogical and commemorative purposes, personal narratives are a powerful means of representing the past as embodied, felt experience. Whereas the emotionalized discourse of survivor narratives will certainly limit the possibilities for historical representation, it may also open up unexpected engagements with alternative histories (cf. Mattingly et al. 2002). So, for example, whereas interpretive policy at the USS *Arizona* Memorial restricts reference to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the presence of survivor volunteers who formed friendships with Japanese veterans of the Pearl Harbor attack introduces a transnational dimension to memorialization not otherwise evident in the more disciplined spaces of state-regulated national history. And the stories offered by another volunteer, a Japanese American survivor of U.S. internment camps, provide a fleeting, personalized view of experiences otherwise absent from the memorial’s canonical history. Even though the passing of the World War II generation would seem to signal an abrupt change in these modes of emotional memory making, they will continue to circulate with yet unknown effects through the expanding resources of electronically mediated storytelling.

## Notes

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1. The iconography of Pearl Harbor added fuel to the savagery of the war against Japan. President Truman, for example, invoked

Pearl Harbor in his speech to the nation justifying the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in August 1945. Given the genealogy of Pearl Harbor memory, its invocation as a precedent for the September 11 attacks can only be worrisome for critics of U.S. aggression in the Middle East.

2. One of the acute differences between Pearl Harbor and September 11 is that the former involved servicemen (and women) in a colonial outpost between two nations on the brink of war, whereas the latter involved ordinary people during the course of a normal day at work in one of the world's busiest commercial centers as well as firemen, police, and others attempting rescue.

Problems with the analogy between the September 11 attacks and Pearl Harbor have been widely noted, as illustrated by Noam Chomsky's observation during an interview following the attacks: "Many commentators have brought up a Pearl Harbor analogy, but that is misleading. On December 7, 1941, military bases in two U.S. colonies were attacked—not the national territory, which was never threatened. The U.S. preferred to call Hawaii a 'territory,' but it was in effect a colony" (2002:11).

Native Hawaiian authors, mindful of the contested colonial history of Hawai'i as a U.S. territory, are also quick to point out that Pearl Harbor in 1941 was not part of the United States, not even a colonial "territory" but, rather, an occupied land. Perhaps for this reason, some popular depictions of Pearl Harbor, such as the 2001 Disney film of that name, go to some length to revision Hawai'i in pastoral scenes of a domestic U.S. homeland.

3. In considering the citizen soldier, it is useful to invoke Benedict Anderson (1991)—who begins his discussion of "national imagination" with a reflection on tombs of unknown soldiers.

4. I am indebted to several classes of undergraduate students at the University of Hawai'i who have written and talked about their experiences of September 11. Their honest and personal statements have informed my own understanding of issues discussed here.

5. Within a matter of months, September 11 had enabled the Bush administration to initiate real wars in the Middle East, leading commentators to editorialize that the United States was in the middle of World War III (or, perhaps, World War IV, counting the Cold War as World War III). As a result, the dead of September 11 are now joined by a growing list of military servicemen and women, killed in action overseas. John Dower describes an analogous process at work in the militarization of Japan in the 1930s: "Once the war machine had been put in motion, and a 'blood debt' to the war dead established, it was inconceivable not to support the emperor's loyal troops" (2003).

6. In writing about the role of photography in World War II, Susan Moeller (1989) noted that images of exploding and burning battleships at Pearl Harbor became the signature images of and for a nation going to war. The battleship images brought home all of the anxieties of a violent world that demanded U.S. mobilization. Whereas battleships and naval power were the very means for projecting U.S. imperial ambitions in the early to mid-20th century, the twin towers were a powerful symbol of the global reach of the United States at the end of the 20th century.

7. Compare Susan Willis on the mutability of the flag as symbol in the post-September 11 United States: "Whereas the flag is an empty signifier, the context of its display endows it with meaning" (2002:378).

8. As an indication of this, both have stimulated national archival projects, undertaken by researchers at the Library of Congress. In 1941, the day following the Pearl Harbor bombing, folklorist Alan Lomax initiated a nationwide project to record

the reactions of ordinary people. Lomax and his colleagues ultimately produced volumes of tape recordings, now held at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center. In light of this historic precedent, staff at the Folklife Center issued an urgent call over the Internet on September 12, calling for participation in a similar nationwide project to record responses to the previous day's attacks, now called simply the September 11, 2001 Documentary Project (see [www.loc.gov/folklife/nineeleven/nineelevenhome.html](http://www.loc.gov/folklife/nineeleven/nineelevenhome.html)).

9. Two kinds of photos illustrate the book: those of burning battleships and those of individual commanders and men whose stories are told throughout.

10. Indicative of the explicit emotionality of the film, the producer recalled that the narrator, Stockard Channing, was brought to tears while reading the script in the recording studio (Marjorie Kelly interview with Lance Bird, files of the author).

11. See Nagourney 2002. That these events are not only about a diverse range of individuals but also were documented by a wide variety of people with videotape, audiotape, and telephone recordings is producing novel forms of representation with yet unknown consequences for the structure of public memory.

12. Both attacks struck at targets where people from all over the country (and, in the case of September 11, all over the world) had gathered, and, therefore, they directly affected families, towns, and cities nationwide. These events, then, reverberated in stories, obituaries, and memorial events in disparate locations across the country, constituting a national event in terms of geography alone. Even today, the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association has local chapters in nearly every state in the union.

13. Jameson worries that the insistent insertion of emotions of trauma into the public sphere raises questions of *whose* emotions are felt. In his view, "Appeals to mourning and trauma . . . have been sucked so deeply into the disaster news as to make one wonder whether, from the psychological descriptions and diagnoses they purport to offer, they have not been turned into a new kind of therapy in their own right" (2002:299).

14. The words of one of the passengers who decided to fight back, "Let's roll," appeared on a sign at the reconstruction of the Pentagon and were inscribed on a patch placed in a bronze box of September 11 memorabilia interred in the Pentagon wall. They also gave rise to the title of a best-selling book by the passenger's wife (Beamer and Abraham 2002).

15. One prominent exemplar of such valor is Doris Miller, an African American cook on board the battleship *West Virginia*, who received a Navy Cross for manning a machine gun against attacking planes. His heroism was featured in a recruitment campaign during the war and has been a notable episode in most of the major films about the bombing.

16. A clay sculpture depicting the three firefighters raising the flag was unveiled on December 21, 2001, in front of the New York Fire Department's headquarters in Brooklyn. Plans for a \$180,000 bronze statue were placed on hold after controversy arose regarding modifications to depict the firefighters as representing three different races (Robin 2001).

17. Even though U.S. policymakers admit that Iraq played no direct role in the September 11 attacks, many examples of "remember September 11" iconography among U.S. troops fighting in Iraq could be cited. Recently, for example, members of Baker Company, part of an infantry battalion fighting there, circulated an e-mail showing a photograph of the company standing in a formation spelling "9-11, We Remember."

18. Indeed, the value of such objects, emotional and commercial, is so well-known to FBI investigators that several agents were recently charged with stealing artifacts from Ground Zero after

they were discovered to have kept various small objects as personal “souvenirs” that might increase in value.

19. After reading an earlier draft of this article, in which I used a pseudonym to represent her e-mail, Himanee asked that I use her real name.

20. Here, again, I can be more specific by mentioning another example of the power of September 11 to create personal involvement through acts of imagination. The other day, one of the secretaries in my institution mentioned that she would be going on vacation for a couple of weeks, stopping briefly in New York, where she expected to visit Ground Zero (her term). I asked casually if she had been there before, and she said that, indeed, she had visited New York last year, on September 11 (when airplanes and airports were conveniently half empty). On that occasion, she and others from Hawai'i accompanying her for other purposes had specifically prepared leis and carried them from home to leave at the WTC site. Without any personal tie to individuals who died in the attack, her group wished to make a small contribution to the memorial ceremonies. (This time, she said, she would probably take a ribbon lei.) This woman also noted, without my asking, that she had been struck by the profound silence of the area, despite its location in the middle of usually noisy Manhattan—a silence that, she observed, was punctuated mainly by sniffles and quiet displays of emotionality.

21. The authorizing legislation for the memorial refers to the creation of both “memorial and museum.” A 1958 bill, PL 85-344, called for “the construction of a memorial and museum to be located on the hulk of the United States ship *Arizona* or adjacent United States property in Pearl Harbor.” And a 1961 bill, PL 87-201, authorized the construction of a memorial and museum established “in honor and in commemoration of the members of the Armed Forces of the United States who gave their lives to their country during the attack on Pearl Harbor.”

22. For example, the very same week of the attacks, the director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art wrote an editorial suggesting that the last piece of wall left standing at the site and evident in photographs be preserved as an iconic reminder of the destruction. That jagged section of wall, with its eerie similarity to the listing conning tower of the USS *Arizona*, and even to the skeletal remains of the atomic bomb dome in Hiroshima, now sits in storage awaiting plans for memorial architecture.

23. In Libeskind's words, his plan for the downtown complex would emphasize the centrality of a memorial that would have a “dignity that acknowledges all those heroes of nine eleven” (*New York Times* 2003).

24. One proposal in the first round of architectural competition, for example, called for a wide corridor running east and west through the site, lined by rows of signposts along a walkway, each bearing the name of one of the deceased.

25. Recently, indicative of the intense identification between crew and ship, a new roster of names has appeared on a marble bench in the shrine room, listing names of USS *Arizona* survivors who have since passed away and who had requested that their ashes be interred on the ship. Their wishes are accommodated by the U.S. Navy, which conducts a burial at sea and places a container with the ashes in one of the ship's turrets.

26. Crews of some of the other ships have noted the disparity in memorial displays and asked that more prominent attention be paid those who died elsewhere than on the USS *Arizona*. Some surviving members of the USS *Oklahoma*, where the second greatest losses occurred (over 400 dead), have mobilized political support for a new, separate memorial structure to be placed on

the visitor center grounds, where the names of all USS *Oklahoma* dead will be listed.

27. The argument put forward by families of deceased firefighters pointed to the personal identity of the victims as a basis for noting their membership in the community of firefighters.

Families have pleaded publicly that their dead relatives be identified as firefighters in the memorial. The families said the men lived and died as firefighters. Their ladder units were their other families . . . the dead men would want to be remembered as firefighters. They belonged to a community. Their names should be accompanied by F.D.N.Y., maybe even grouped separately. [Lipton 2003]

28. The flag-draped stretcher, without a body, symbolized the victims whose remains were never recovered. It was followed by a flatbed truck carrying the last steel beam to be removed from the pit, also draped in black cloth and flag. Bagpipe music and patriotic songs such as “God Bless America” accompanied the ceremony.

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