Journal of American Studies of Turkey
14 (2001) : 61-74

Heartbreak Written on the Landscape: Public Memorials and Remembering the Attack on the World Trade Center

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> "On Sept. 11, New York was filled with such overwhelming sorrow that personal rituals of grief spilled out of private lives and homes into public spaces. People used every medium at their disposal to express themselves, some even scrawled messages in the dust from the explosions that coated vehicles and windows in the area."
>
> New York Historical Society Installation

Monuments facilitate remembering or prevent forgetting, but who or what is being commemorated - thereby shaping public memory - is often a matter of contestation. Monuments and memorials are among the earliest media capable of bearing witness, communicating across generations an idea, value, person, event, or deed that is symbolized and venerated. Memorials are associated with places of mourning and institutionalized remembrance.

Public Space and the Process of Mourning

Monuments and memorials are not synonymous terms. Memorials are generally associated with recalling past deaths whereas monuments are "essentially celebratory markers of triumphs and heroic individuals" (Young, 1993, 3). Monuments celebrate heroism, bestow honor and mark past victories and defeats and symbolize the values of those who erect them. Monuments commemorate the memorable and memorials ritualize remembrance but the same object or site can perform both functions (Young 3). Monuments are designed and erected by diverse sources for disparate reasons. Governments sponsor memorials to honor lost citizens. Some are constructed as historical markers while others are conceived of as tourist attractions. Survivors build others. It is difficult to disentangle the interchangeability of monuments and memorials but the later are explicitly created for public viewing in public settings.

September 11, 2001

The initial memorials to commemorate the events of September 11th ranged from public art installations to flyers identifying "the missing"— they were diverse in their representation and function. They served to mourn victims, to immediately commemorate in the absence of individual cemeteries and tombstones, to indict for crimes against humanity, to pay homage or to celebrate the heroic. Identifying what or who is being mourned can be complex. The victims include those who perished — those in the buildings attacked, the helpless in the highjacked planes, those unfortunate enough to be in the vicinity of the towers as they toppled, the emergency service workers seeking to rescue whoever they could, the survivors including family, friends, co-workers and would be rescuers, New Yorkers who suffered the loss or dislocation of homes and businesses, those who lost their livelihoods and all who lost their sense of security. The list of victims extends beyond those immediately affected and it becomes difficult to distinguish victims and mourners. They were scattered worldwide. The mourners were located in all corners of the globe. New Yorkers suffered physically, economically, psychologically and through the destruction of "their" skyline. The image of two missing buildings replaced the two towers. It is this notion of the *missing* structures that becomes a driving force in the construction and commemoration of monument or memorial.

The installation of memorials and monuments are part of a process of grief and mourning, an ephemeral process that can be represented in stages running from shock and panic to guilt, hostility, and reconciliation of grief. Swiss-born psychiatrist Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross identified five stages including denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance (1997). Understanding the process of commemoration as well as the resulting artifacts placed on the landscape requires recognition of the stage at which the memorial is designed, created or installed. Mourning and commemoration are institutional and non-institutional, official and unofficial, formal and informal.

Spontaneous Memorials

Almost immediately, the streets of Manhattan were filled with images of "the missing." Within the first days of the attack posters of the "missing" were taped to walls, windows, doors, telephone booths, bus shelters, mailboxes, subway station walls and parking meters throughout the city. Kinkos, a commercial copy center, offered free copy services. "These flyers introduced strangers to fellow New Yorkers they'd never meet, introducing details of lives from physical descriptions, dates of birth, last known whereabouts and heartbreaking details of lives led. Smiling faces of brides and grooms, images of happy people holding dogs, proudly holding children, members of the police and fire departments dressed in dress uniform. These informational posters quickly metamorphosed into memorials with flowers, teddy bears, flags, ribbons piled below on pavements and floors by mourners known and unknown to the victims. "Manufactured in hope, the flyers have now transmuted into Memorial." (Waldman, 2001).

> Within hours of the attack, even as the city was "closed down" with all bridges and tunnels closed blocking entrance into the city, groups gathered in Union Square, a large open space that had offered a view of the towers in lower Manhattan. Up and down Canal Street, Times Square, Chinatown, Penn Station and Grand Central Station, and in Central Park, groups gathered, candles were lighted, flowers left. "Red, white and blue candles flickered alongside Christian votive candles, Jewish memorial 'yahrtzeit' candles and offertory candles" (New York Historical Society, 2002).

Media memorials immediately emerged. Websites represented aspatial cyberspace memorials. New York newspapers created a unique memorial that took the form of extended

biographies of each of the victims. Most striking was the *New York Times* publication of "Portraits of Grief." As *The New York Times* itself described the project:

> It began as an imperfect answer to a journalistic problem; the absence of a definitive list of the dead in the days after the World Trade Center was attacked. But it evolved improbably in the weeks and months after Sept. 11 into a sort of national shrine. Three days after the attacks, reporters at *The New York Times*, armed with stacks of the homemade missing-persons fliers that were papering the city, began dialing the numbers on the fliers, interviewing friends and relatives of the missing and writing brief portraits, or sketches, of their lives (Scott, 2001).

Each 200-word sketch was intended to give a snapshot of each victim's personality and life. Executive vice presidents and battalion chiefs appeared alongside food handlers and janitors. In total, 1,800 sketches were published through the end of 2001 (Scott, 2001) and a hardcover book of all the portraits was eventually published.

As the days progressed and most of the missing turned into victims, many of the makeshift shrines that developed under the flyers were transformed into publicly recognized "Wailing Walls." One of the instant commemorative sites was located next to the Long Island Railroad Ticket offices while another sat in the Amtrak level of the station in front of the police booth. They were seen by hundreds of thousands of commuters as they passed the areas soon protected by red velvet ropes and guarded by National guardsmen and New York City police officers. A similar memorial appeared at Grand Central Station. These non-institutional, informal forms of commemoration became more institutionalized over time as the stages of grief moved from denial and bargaining to acceptance.

Memorials sprang up outside of firehouses. Flowers, pictures, drawings, signs and notes of thanks and remembrance joined candles outside of purple and black flag draped firehouses throughout the city. For weeks firehouses remained a focal point with people stopping in off the street to offer condolences and thanks. Losing 343 members of the department, some firehouses were opened with people coming to have a cup of coffee and talk. This pattern was followed in neighboring firehouses in outer boroughs culminating in a candlelight vigil in Maspeth outside Squad 288 at which almost 3,000 mourners crowded around the home of Hazardous Material Company One, which lost 19 members (Mackay, 2001). Reports noted that the "saddened but proud crowd held candles, offered prayers and sang patriotic songs."

From candles and flowers to flags and teddy bears, spontaneous and temporary memorials sprang up. This form of memorialization used perishable items -- flowers, letters, photographs, clothing, American flags that would fade, shred or deteriorate over time – the opposite of a formal memorial which is a long-lived or permanent statement made of durable materials like marble.

Within the first six months after the event, a renaming of public places became a ritual of official commemoration. A section of Queens Boulevard, between 63rd Street and 65th Place in Sunnyside would soon bear the name "Boulevard of Heroes" (Lippincott, 2001). Windmuller Park, located at the intersection of 52nd Street and 39th Drive in Woodside, will be renamed "Lawrence Virgilio Park" in honor of a firefighter from Woodside. A section of 57th Street, between 30th and 31st Avenues in Woodside, Queens, would be renamed "Teddy White Place" in honor of a firefighter who was born in

Woodside's Boulevard Gardens. Another section of Queens Boulevard, would take the additional name of "Boulevard of Bravery" in honor of Rescue Company 4. The intersection of Perry Avenue and 68th Street in Maspeth was renamed to honor Squad 288, HazMat 1, after the only hazardous materials unit in the borough of Queens. The locations in Queens were part of a City Council proposal that included 11 public space renamings in Queens, the Bronx and Brooklyn. These proposals followed closely on the heels of a few renamings in Manhattan. One changed a block on 31st Street in Midtown to honor fallen Fire Department Chaplain Mychal Judge (Lippincott, 2001).

Official Memorials Large and Small

The September 11th disaster had an impact upon many throughout the world, but certainly the abrupt transformation of the downtown Manhattan skyline, the absence of the two monolithic structures from the disseminated image of New York, is particularly interesting. The reaction of motion picture producers whose films were about to be released in which action revolved around the World Trade Center was to postpone the release dates and to modify some of the action (e.g. *Spiderman*). In other films, the presence of the two towers in the background forced the postponement of release until the images could be digitally removed (e.g. *The Time Machine*) (The 2001 Fall and Winter Film Preview, 2001). The studios took the position that the image of the towers was too painful a reminder so near to the time of the actual disaster. But as the images of the structures were exorcised, the very absence of the physical objects became a reminder of their presence. And yet we seek to replace what once was, but no longer is. We are simultaneously torn to forget and to remember. It becomes difficult for our consciousness not to trigger vivid images of the two buildings, because they remain and persist in memory.

Neuroscientists have long been aware of the phantom limb syndrome in which long after the amputation of an arm or leg the person reports feeling the sensations of the missing limb. Matthew Gumpert, in *The Grafting of Helen*," (2001) states, "poetry is the way culture seeks to mend or restore itself, over and over again. But the past cannot really be brought back to life; the damage has been done (it has always already been done). We remain incomplete, the past torn from us. The past we salvage and attempt to restores ourselves is only a fiction, *or a phantom*" (261). For those who experienced the destruction of the World Trade Center, experiences in the sense of being touched by the event, remembering what was there before, the void in the perceived Manhattan landscape will always be filled with the phantom image of what was and is no more. It is that voice and that phantom structure which becomes a compelling drive for memorials.

One of the earliest 9/11 institutional memorials is particularly relevant in this discussion. On the sixth month anniversary of the attack, beginning on March 11, 2002, two narrow beams of blue light rising from a site just north of Ground Zero were projected into the night sky, visible for miles from dusk until 11 p.m. The projection of the prosthetic beams lasted for one month.[1] There was much support to make the apparition-like "Tribute in Light" a permanent part of the Manhattan skyline but the quest for a large-scale permanent complex persisted.

Groups representing the victims' families, who consider the site a graveyard, demanded that all 16 acres of the Trade Center site be devoted to a memorial, a notion seconded by former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. Nearby residents wanted to make sure that a memorial would not be so intrusive or depressing that the character of their neighborhood would not be overwhelmed. Real-estate interests, meanwhile, wanted to make sure enough land remained for income producing buildings.

The size of the memorial became the first, and most emotional issue.

> 'The whole area is sacred ground -- there's no other way to look at it,' said Monica Iken, founder of September's Mission, a group representing victims' families' thoughts on the memorial. 'You can't rebuild on top of people, you just can't.' Ms. Iken is the 31-year-old widow of Michael Iken, a bond broker who worked on the 84th floor of the South Tower. Ms. Iken's group envisions a grand park, a museum describing the lives of those killed, some type of monument and a children's area. Anthony Gardner, chairman of the World Trade Center United Family Group, whose brother Harvey died in the attacks, says he'd like to see 'some sort of pedestal with light beams on it in the position of the Twin Towers.' He echoes Ms. Iken's view that the entire 16 acres should be set aside since it is likely that many bodies may never be recovered. 'How would you feel if you went to the cemetery to pay respects to your loved one and there's an office building on it?' (Petersen, 2002).

Contrast this with the views of local small business owners who are trying to hang on in the immediate effected areas:"…A small park would be good," said Joe McGinty, the manager of Foxhounds, a bar near ground zero. "We're more concerned with having the workers come back and the residents come back." (Petersen, 2002).

Former mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani advocated turning the entire wreckage site into a sacred space and memorial, but his successor, Michael Bloomberg, made clear that this will not happen given the commercial value of the real estate. John C. Whitehead, who chairs the newly created Lower Manhattan Development Corp., cautioned that the 16-acre site must leave room for economic development, including new office buildings. "Sixteen acres is a huge area…The Lincoln Memorial is on a site of 5.6 acres. The Jefferson Memorial is on 3.4 acres." (Haughney, 2002).

The Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Corporation (the group formed by the state and city to formulate and implement plans for the World Trade Center site and the surrounding areas) created a half dozen "advisory boards" to allow the various constituencies to voice their views. The LMDC charged with coordinating the rebuilding, launched a process of public participation. Any memorial design would have to be approved by a number of parties: the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (the government agency that owns the Trade Center site), Larry Silverstein, the developer who heads a group that has a 99-year lease on the World Trade Center, and New York's governor and the city's mayor, who control major sources of funding and permits. The federal government -- with its promise of funds for the cleanup and development of the site –also provides a necessary contributing voice.

A major distinction has been made between the redevelopment concept of the area and the memorial itself. The site refers to the entire 16-acre area; the memorial refers to a precise installation solely devoted to the events of September 11th. This is confusing because, to an extent, the 16-acre site could be considered a memorial in itself. An international competition for the site development was launched after preliminary designs were introduced to the public

in July 2002 resulting in a number of negative reactions. The original plans were “derided as boring and overstuffed with office space” (Herman, 2003). Among proposals for the site were:

> A 700-foot steel sundial. Quiet parks lined with tall evergreens.
>
> Contorted skyscrapers.
>
> A 70-story steel sundial studded with crystal prisms designed to shine day and night.
>
> ‘The sculptor J. Seward Johnson, at the informal request of several Wall Street companies, is planning a 20-foot bronze sculpture of rescue workers ascending, and civilians descending a stairwell’ (Fong, 2002).
>
> German architect Frei Otto, who designed the Munich Olympic Stadium, envisioned the two footprints of the WTC buildings covered with water and surrounded by trees. His plan includes a world map embedded in the park with countries at war marked with lights and a continuously updated board announcing the number of people killed in war from Sept. 11 onward (Fong, 2002).
>
> One of the finalists, the THINK team, designed a plan for a ‘World Cultural Center’ envisioning two 1, 665 foot latticework towers straddling the footprints of the original towers.
>
> ‘Designers from the green school of thought firmly believe a park is the best space for contemplative thought and healing reflection’ (Fong, 2002). A New York firm drew plans for a memorial landscapes located on the footprint areas of the World Trade Center, planted with 440 evergreens to commemorate the uniformed personnel who lost their lives, and another included a below-street-level waterfall flowing over the names of victims killed. The pool, designed to rise and fall with Hudson River tides, celebrates the value of water during the life-saving and cleanup process.

Nine finalists for redeveloping the trade center site were unveiled in December 2002, with two finalists selected and asked to revise plans to make them more workable. In February 2003, a design submitted by Studio Daniel Liebeskind was awarded the project. The design features the exposed slurry wall that survived the attacks and held back the Hudson River. Liebeskind’s vision made the slurry wall central to the design as a way of commemorating how deep the wound of the attack was and “how solid the city's physical and social foundations proved in time of attack”(Keeping the Vision at Ground Zero, 2003). The LMDC chairman notified Liebeskind of his selection, noting that the architect’s vision “has brought hope and inspiration to a city still recovering from a terrible tragedy.” The choice of Mr. Liebeskind's concept was controversial in some quarters but supported by the Development Corporation and New York Governor George Pataki, who pushed for the Liebeskind proposal (Keeping the Vision at Ground Zero, 2003). The plan for the site includes soaring towers with jagged buildings and a 1,776 foot spire and memorial park below ground level. The spire is planned to be taller than the former World Trade Center towers and will be topped by a broadcast antenna and hanging “vertical gardens.” The architect has reported that the height was not chosen by accident and was not meant simply to be the tallest tower in the world but a tower that has a specific quantitative meaning found in 1776, the year the Declaration of Independence was signed. He has said he thought this was “part of an inspiring answer to the evil deeds that put New York back into the forefront of civility” (Interview, 2003). The winning design is distinguished by two key ideas: an open pit, 30 feet below ground (scaled back from 70 feet) where a memorial would go in the footprints of the

Twin Towers. Known at "the bathtub," the pit exposes the original foundation…" The other key feature is a "wedge of light" created by precise positioning of the future buildings that are to surround Ground Zero, so that every year on September 11 a shaft of unshadowed sunlight will fall onto a public square from 8:46 a.m. ET (when the first plane crashed into the North Tower) to 10:28 a.m. ET (when it collapsed, after South Tower went down) (Harmon, 2003). The redevelopment of Lower Manhattan goes beyond Ground Zero but the design is the anchor and sets the tone for plans for the entire area.

The selection process continues for a powerful *memorial* worthy of the site. The *New York Times* notes "The greatest memorial of all to the victims will be a grand, vibrant, diverse community of residences, businesses, cultural institutions and parks." (Keeping the Vision at Ground Zero, 2003). The mission statement and program were released for public comment from January 8, 2003 through February 2, 2003, and revised based on more than 2,000 comments received during that period. Another international competition was announced in Spring 2003 for a memorial "to those lost on September 11th and in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center." (LMDC Announces World Trade Center Site Memorial Design Competition, 2003).

From a legal perspective plans are, in part, determined by issues of property ownership. In the case of Ground Zero, the owner of the lease on the destroyed towers is clearly influencing the rebuilding process (Keeping the Vision at Ground Zero, 2003).

When will a permanent memorial be built? The rubble was cleared by May 2002, ahead of schedule. A somber ceremony marked hauling out the last of the debris. The war on terrorism rages on. Debate on appropriate commemorative space continues. What should the visitor think? Feel? Learn? Experience? Is it for family members of those who died? Rescue workers? Employees who were displaced? Is it a memorial to victims or heroes?

Unintended use of intended spaces is common. There are interesting lessons to be learned from the memorialization process which took place in Oklahoma City to honor the 168 people who perished on the morning of April 19, 1995 when a rental truck carrying a bomb exploded outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building**,** the largest number of causalities as a result of an act of terrorism on the continental United States prior to 9/11. The memorial was the result of a project emphasizing public participation from diverse constituencies, includingfamily members of those who were killed, survivors and people across the country. Ultimately part of the memorial included individual acknowledgement of each of those who died and a reflecting pool. The pool provided the opportunity to light a candle and let it float. A bronze gate was installed through which one passed as they left the memorial site but in an unplanned use of the installation, people began to dip their hands in water and leave an impression on the bronze door. When it was realized that this was an important part of the experience of being at the memorial, authorities overseeing the memorial decided to not wash off the handprints and let it become part of the experience. This became part of the use of the space as ritual space.

When is it appropriate to commemorate? Is it too soon? Fifty years passed before the building of a World War II memorial at the Capital Mall in Washington, D.C. Commemorating the Vietnam War was not delayed as long. "Some design experts say it's too soon for good design ideas to be generated. Alex Krieger, chairman of Harvard

University's Department of Urban Planning and Design, says more time is needed for artists to distance themselves from the events of Sept. 11 and thus "'avoid ostentation and banality' in their designs" (Fong, 2002).

Perhaps the process of decision-making, marked by contestation, is an inherent part of the making of a formal memorial. Debate, communication of dissent and agreement, is itself a key component of public commemoration. The physical memorial is a non-discursive form of expression, but the process of commemoration construction is one of contestation over competing narratives. Whose story is to be told by and through the installation? Who controls the story? The conflict and discourse of debate over memorials is a neglected but significant component in their creation. Appropriateness evolves through dialogue and debate. It has been said that human conversation is more important than the resulting architecture. The debate, the conversation, the essence of dialogue, is part of the emotional response to the events and the loss. The architecture becomes a companion or by-product of the real purpose, be it preservation of memory, storytelling, or healing.

While the end result, the physical memorial, is the artifact or space that communicates across time, it is the formal and informal discussion and deliberation that is vital to understanding commemoration for the first generation, for those alive at the time of the events. Formal hearings have been held and will be held. Informal opinions are offered, entered into public debate through interviews given to publication and broadcast outlets and the many online chat rooms that abound on the Internet. Experts and laymen are encouraged to post their thoughts, weigh in, and enter the discussion. On sites ranging from the Wall Street Journal to the PBS website, the discussion continues. For example, from the PBS web site (2002):

> **Katherine Knetzger**
> I think there should be a sculpture of some kind--A Circle of people holding hands or a peace sign- something signifying world unity for peace.
>
> **Robert Colborne - Attica, IN**
> A sculptural garden filled with abstract sculpture would stimulate tourism and abstract forms could suggest any race, religion, ethnicity or nation. It would confirm who we are, our culture and our history. The sculpture garden would validate the nation's leadership in art.
>
> **Jacques Bakke - Lander, Wyoming**
> The Twin Towers should be re-built.
>
> **Bruno Stroebl - Oakland, CA**
> It should be a quiet site, devoted to peace and non-violence. I don't believe a physical structure should memorialize the dead. The act of walking up to a monument and reading the epithet and names is too specific a thing/activity; it would serve to exploit the dead. The suicide attacks meant something a little different to everyone. Future visitors to the proposed park should be left to their own emotions; names and dates and monuments just won't do.
>
> **Christopher Kohan, President - The Victor D'Amico Institute of Art**
> I think the World Trade Center Memorial should not be a memorial. The thousands of people who died should be commemorated by two 110-storey buildings, with offices,

elevators, restaurants, lounges, bathrooms, shops, the view, etc. The buildings should be rebuilt as they were. The thousands of people who died were simply going about their daily business, as we are doing today. The creation of this "auspicious" monument should not be a judgment. This is not a war. We are at a loss of thousands. They should have gone back to work the following day. We and those to follow should do the same and commemorate the continuation.

Becca Morgan - Rochester Hills, MI

My class is doing a monument design project for the 9/11 tragedy. We have researched many memorials to get some ideas. Some ideas that I thought were good were the eternal flame in Arlington, the water pool at the Oklahoma bombing memorial, and the Vietnam memorial with all the victims names inscribed on the wall. I think the memorial should have 2 platforms with steps leading down to a center with a glass building statue in the center. Because there are two platforms, each represents one of the twin towers. There would be the same number of steps as the number of floors. Victim's names would be inscribed in rows on the steps. In the center of the glass statue would be an eternal flame and on the outside would be a calm water pool. I also think that surrounding the memorial should be flags of the countries that lost people in the 9/11 tragedy.

Jessica Parker - Rochester, MI

Hello! The monument I am building is a symbol for September 11th, in my high school art class. It is a flag that will have all the people who have died names on it. I have looked at several monuments as examples such as the raising the flag monument, like the men who did so at Iwo Jima and at the world trade center. These gave me the idea for a giant flag. I have looked at several monuments for ideas such as the Sadako Statue in the center of Hiroshima’s Peace Park. The elements of my design include, a pool of water, a flag made of polished granite, and lots of trees and plants surrounding it. I hope that people will see the symbolism in my monument!

Christine - Rochester Hills, MI

In my opinion, there definitely should be a memorial for the victims of September 11th, but the memorial should not be placed where the World Trade Center was built. It should be in another location yet not too far away. My vision for a memorial is just a simple pavilion built in a public place.

Rene - Philadelphia, PA

The 110-story steel frames of the twin towers could be rebuilt in the same locations, but only the lower half of each would be habitable. The interior of the upper frames could be covered with steel mesh to create a soft, dream-like image during the day, as well as when lit from the interior at night. Viewing platforms, serviced by elevators, might be created at several "significant" locations within the upper reaches of the structures as a moving remembrance of the events of September 11. Similarly, the earth at the base of the towers might open at several locations to respectfully expose the ground where the original towers, and the lives of those that were lost, now rest in peace.

If memorials and monuments are designed to facilitate remembering and avoid forgetting, then discussion, chat and posting represent a necessary activity in the stages of grieving and commemoration.

Virtual Memorials

> The forms and channels of communication related to death, mourning and commemoration are linked to the particular communication environment at the time of the death or event. One assumption being made is that the process of grieving and the creation of memorials is shaped and influenced by the media of mourning. Communication of trauma is linked to both circumstance and medium. The unfolding events of World War II were enmeshed in radio and newsreel images that were lived experience at the time, becoming collective artifacts of commemoration as time passed. The assassination of John F. Kennedy was intimately intertwined with the medium of television. The television coverage following the events in Dallas became part of the process of grief with tape of the coverage subsequently transformed into historical object and part of commemoration.

What make the electronic environment following the events of September 11th so unique are the interactive opportunities available to its participants. The traditional forms of commemoration and communication became one alternative in that communication environment. Public places remained important as sites of commemoration and shared grief. Radio, television and newspapers remained extremely important as the disseminators of the tragic news, but the convergent medium of the Internet added an interactive dimension that was new, unique, and strangely suitable to the process of mourning. After the cataclysmic events and immediate shock, the complicated process of mourning and commemoration moved into cyberspace and the proliferation of virtual memorials.

A Google search reveals 164,000 sites dedicated to "World Trade Center" + "Memorial" while 7,550 sites are devoted to the "World Trade Center Memorial." Among these are The September 11 Digital Archive (911Digitalarchive.org) The September 11 Digital Archive uses electronic media to collect, preserve, and present the history of the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, Virginia, and Pennsylvania and the public responses to them. Their stated goal is to create a permanent record of the events of September 11, 2001. Other memorials in cyberspace include: *New York Magazine Online Memorial*, which provides links to seven other online memorials. *WorldTradeAftermath.com* is a site created to act as a central resource of information for people worried about friends and loved ones in and around the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001. Updates include photos of the new memorial in lights—log onto this and learn that you are not alone… Upon visiting this site one is reminded that "there are currently 24 people viewing this site. Over 172,000 people have visited; viewing over 657,000 pages and registering over 1,875,000 hits since September 11th." *Remembering September 11, 2001.com* is "intended as a place to remember and celebrate the lives of the men, women and children lost on September 11, 2001." Visitors can view a tribute or sign the Guest Book. *Where Were You?* is a site featuring "1,070 compelling first-person narratives of the crisis, many from young people. These personal stories come from across the United States." The stated mission is to offer an open forum in which all citizens of both freedom and faith can unite and remember the tragic legacy that was left. *WTC and Lower Manhattan--past and future* is part of the Lewis Mumford Center for

Comparative Urban and Regional Research at SUNY-Albany. These virtual memorials represent sites created and updated at diverse times and diverse stages of grief. Some are somewhat institutionalized, sponsored by media outlets, organizations, governments, while others are quite informal, individualistic, idiosyncratic and non-institutionalized. Like candles left on streets, unpatrolled electronic spaces are available to the individual to express and reach out.

Conclusions:

Every memorial involves a site with a singular sense of place and identity, and different public dialogues developed between the nexus of site, persons(s), and historical circumstances. Memorials generate two sets of dialogue, the first surrounds the process of, and the second is between the completed installation and audience. Each of these dialogues is significant.

Public space is a manifestation of public life and a medium through which community is sustained. At a time when much public and community activity has migrated to virtual space and electronic public commons have garnered attention, the events of September 11th have produced a powerful new symbolic physical public space. Ground zero "has now become the most public of all American public places, and the decision on what to do with it must be made by public bodies for the public good" (Keeping the Vision at Ground Zero, 2003). Among the unanticipated results of the tragic events of September 11th is the renewed recognition of the importance of public space and public memorials.

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