DESIGNATING COMMEMORATION: THE RHETORIC OF THE TEMPORARY BODY AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE

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ABSTRACT

LETIA ROSE FRANDINA: Designating Commemoration: The Rhetoric of the Temporary Body at the World Trade Center Site
(Under the direction of Carole Blair)

This dissertation examines the influence of the body (both living and deceased) on the rebuilding and commemorative activity at the World Trade Center site. Through an analysis of artifacts in relation to the body, the importance of temporary rhetoric is examined. I argue, through the use of Kenneth E. Foote’s continuum of responses to spaces of violence and tragedy, that the designation stage (in which temporary rhetoric is most pronounced) is an imperative stage of investigation. Throughout my discussion, I address how the commemorative activity at the World Trade Center site argues for, responds to, negotiates, and creates new “spaces” in relation to the different variables on Foote’s continuum. In effect, the role of the body, the Twin Towers, and the importance of both the private and American family are highlighted in their significant influence on what is built (or not built), moved, saved, or destroyed in relation to the material memory of September 11, 2001.
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Finally, as with all my work surrounding the World Trade Center site, the dissertation is dedicated to my grandfather, John Williams, and my uncle, Anthony Frandina. Both of these men, who helped build the original Twin Towers with their
hands, know more about hard work, perseverance, and strength than I will ever know.

They continue to inspire and direct me in life.
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CHAPTER 1
TEMPORARY BODILY RHETORIC AND COMMEMORATION STUDIES

Within weeks of September 11, 2001, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) was formed to oversee the recovery, removal, rebuilding, and commemoration of the area now commonly referred to as Ground Zero but which I will refer to as the World Trade Center (WTC) site. The terrorist attacks at the WTC site destroyed the Twin Towers and severely damaged surrounding buildings. More significantly, the site was the death place of over 2500 people. The official architectural design for redeveloping the site was selected through a public competition in February 2003. The main element of the design, a skyscraper named “Freedom Tower,” was slated to be built by 2007. On July 4, 2004, a ground breaking ceremony was held, and a shovel hit the foundation for a political photo opportunity. However, until recently, most of the physical work at the site has been on hold. After such quick action to plan and decide on the future plan for the space, the public has been frustrated by the lack of material activity at the site. They continue to wait for the space to be rebuilt and “canonized.” Public discourse about the site often remarks on how little is happening in the rebuilding process. Speaking about the webcam placed at Ground Zero in September 2008 to allow for public view, Ed Pilkington writes, “the most visible action [is] raindrops falling on the camera lens.” In March 2009, the first structural work on the focal skyscraper became
visible, although that building will no longer be named “Freedom Tower.” The most recent estimate for completion of the focal tower and the official memorial is 2012.

Much of the combined redevelopment and memory project has been on hold and few above-ground material structures have been built, but it would be a serious misconception to say nothing is happening at the WTC site. The timeline and development are far off the original course, yet it is important to commemoration studies and to the historical moment to investigate the rhetoric of this highly controversial and influential process. In the following chapters, I investigate the temporary, material instantiations of memory at and about the WTC site along with how they inform, reinforce, and challenge expectations of modern commemoration. While the perimeters of the “object” of my study have been difficult to define, one element remained constant-the power of the body, and its temporary relationship to space, as an argument for how memory should and should not be formulated materially. It is the major claim of this dissertation that arguments about the body, particularly the deceased body, and its temporary relationship to space, are the major rhetorical forces driving the imagined future of the WTC site as well as the temporary character of the physical space. In turn, these arguments have a powerful influence both in the creation and on the removal of temporary spaces of commemoration of September 11, 2001.

It is my primary aim in this introductory chapter to set forth an understanding of the term “temporary” in relation to the body and American commemoration. I am particularly concerned with setting the perimeters for how I will use the term and how other scholars have understood it. First, I attend to how the term has been utilized in commemorative studies. Second, I address scholarship on the deceased body in
commemorative spaces and specifically, how the deceased body transforms spaces of official commemoration. Third, I situate my claim within the field of rhetoric and set forth my mode of analysis. Fourth, I provide an overview of my chapters, artifacts, and their connection to temporary rhetoric. Finally, I offer a few concluding remarks that set the stage for the remainder of this dissertation.

Temporary Rhetoric and American Commemoration

The rhetorical significance of “the temporary” in regard to commemoration has been noted but under-theorized. The two relevant lines of inquiry focus upon temporary markings as sense-making tools and/or upon temporary monuments as important communal practices. Yet, both of these lines of inquiry conflate the temporary with the vernacular. Geographer Kenneth E. Foote, offers a different approach that is useful in an understanding of temporary, but still official, markings of sites of tragedy or violence.

Temporary markings of or about spaces of tragedy have been explored most often in relation to what has been left or done by people visiting these spaces. Carole Blair discusses the memorabilia left at The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which supplements the official commemoration, and therefore transforms, “the commemorative site from a completed text to a context for individual, but still public, memory practices (“Contemporary”, 40). Markers of memory change official commemorations and offer instructions to publics to help make sense of a space and how it should be used or understood. Many past studies of commemorative sites address temporary markers commemorating national tragedies and present nuanced analyses of how marking functions as a sense-making tool for visitors. Such marking seems to have several
functions, including self-discovery, critical engagement, political compromise,
production of ambiguity, therapy, and/or forgetting.\textsuperscript{4}

Scholars, more specifically addressing temporary markers \textit{at} sites of tragedy, note
that spontaneous shrines can personalize grief and public political issues. The rhetorical
significance of such marking is strengthened by its temporary nature and by the
spontaneity of its performance. Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp and Lori A. Lanzilotti hold that
the construction of temporary shrines at the sites of tragedy offers permeable boundaries
between public and private grief. Individuals bring relics to either represent or to offer to
the “martyred” at sacred sites in order “to help write the final story on the tragedy, and
thereby regain control over the scene” (160). The temporary nature of shrines as well as
the rapidity by which they take form alters both the commemorative practice of shrines
and the visitor’s relationship to the commemorated bodies. Specifically to
commemoration of the events of September 11, Jack Santino argues spontaneous shrines
offer reflections on political violence and terrorism (12). He claims these shrines identify
visitors as part of a larger family, construct identifications that “disrupt the mundane,”
and conjure the “presence of the absent people,” thereby “acknowledging the real people,
the real lives lost, the devastation to the commonwealth these politics hold” (13).

Spontaneous shrines operate differently in and through various spaces and
temporalities. Harriet Senie argues that because shrines were so immediate after the 9/11
attacks, they look different from those at roadside memorials, the Vietnam Veterans
Memorial, or even those created as distance grew from the actual attacks of 9/11. In the
days after the attacks, the specifics of those who died were unknown and therefore,
earlier personalized representations were replaced later with broader representations (47).
Recent advertisements for donations for the official memorial at the WTC site attempt to harness the early spontaneous experience with photographs of the temporary shrine. The calls to the public include text over the Union Square shrine photo in full-page magazine ads that read, “WE NEEDED ONE THEN. WE NEED ONE NOW” (World Trade Center). New York’s Union Square and its equestrian statue of George Washington have long been returned to pre 9/11 states. However, Casey argues that between the initial spontaneous commemoration at Union Square and the plans for the official commemoration of September 11, “the formative phase was more poignant” (“Public Memory,” 42). Senie argues this poignancy stems from the fact that public shrines cannot be re-organized, moved or re-displayed in a way that retains the communal power of the original formation, what she calls a grassroots response of commemoration (51).

The tone of this research has marked temporary vernacular commemorations as a more communal, productive, revolutionary and/or meaningful type of public commemoration than official commemoration projects, because of its “grassroots” strategy and its ephemeral nature. Throughout the dissertation, I wish to challenge this privileging of temporary vernacular markings as necessarily more poignant or influential than official commemorative activity. This project focuses on how temporary official markers work materially in the waiting time during rebuilding and official commemoration of the space. While some vernacular markings will be addressed, I am more interested in their relationships with official markings and uncovering the rhetoric of temporary official acts of memory that will not necessarily last and may go unnoticed, yet have lasting consequences for the space and commemorative practices.
Foote has put forth a continuum to categorize material responses to violence, which offers an entry point for understanding temporary official commemorations. He divides the continuum into four categories: sanctification, designation, rectification, and obliteration. Sanctification is characterized by Foote as a space set aside for veneration and consecration, distinguished from surrounding landscape, and often dedicated to memory with a durable marker, monument, garden, park or building. Foote emphasizes that sanctification does not meant the same thing as “the sacred” would mean in an institutionalized religious sense. Such sites arise in a variety of situations including heroic struggles, the veneration of heroes and martyrs, and community loss.

Foote categorizes spaces of violence cleansed and returned to original or other functional use as “rectified.” A rectified site’s notoriety is temporary. The site typically does not have honor or dishonor attached to it and the association with the fatal event usually dissipates with time. Further, little commemorative activity takes place at the sight and the activity that does take place usually revolves around cleaning up the tragedy. Foote claims that, historically, rectification is the rule for most sites of tragedy and violence. Rectification spaces are “exonerated of involvement in the tragedy” (23).

At the end of the spectrum, Foote claims that obliteration occurs when spaces of violence or tragedy cause such shame that there is a communal urge to efface all evidence of the tragedy. Unlike rectification, the space is often removed from use entirely; if the space is eventually returned to use it is usually given an entirely different type of purpose. Further, while sanctification is about remembering, obliteration is about a desire to forget. Opposed to sanctification, obliterated sites of shame are usually associated with “notorious and disreputable characters” (25).
The category I am most interested in is “designation,” which can be understood as the “waiting” category. Foote marks some spaces of designation as occupying a transitional and a pivotal position on the continuum. He claims the meaning and marking may change over time either toward sanctification or toward obliteration. The WTC site fits this category as a space in process. I argue throughout this dissertation that most of the artifacts of commemoration at the WTC site can best be understood as designations. There is no public doubt that the WTC site is a space of significance, yet it is still in process of what Foote calls “canonization” (20). Foote identifies some of the rationales for spaces remaining in process as financial support, time, passage from private to public stewardship, and/or the need to gain resources for a fitting scale.

Foote's categorization is not used in this dissertation to place different commemorative objects or practices into discrete categories. In fact, Foote clearly recognizes the slippages and overlap of these categories. However, his continuum offers one of the few places that temporary commemorations receive recognition. Further, it is invaluable to organizing and understanding the interplay of rhetorical responses to violence through the temporary commemorations at and about the WTC site.

The Influence of the Body at Commemoration Spaces

Official commemorative spaces focus, and therefore constrain, public memory of events by means of the relationships they invite among the commemorated body, the visitor’s body, and the national body. They are created to tell a story and physically direct how the space, events, and people involved should be remembered, and how that memory should inform the future. Such an official site offers a space in common where different publics can locate memory, and therefore, attempt to constrain memory’s borders. Since
the WTC site housed a monumental structure and now will be an official commemorative space, it promotes messages that promulgate some while concealing other facets of identity and political issues related to the events and people involved of September 11, 2001 (Lefebvre 143). As public memory spaces, memorials are multivocal; yet commemoration, and particularly sites of state and nationally sponsored commemorations, tend to celebrate official concerns over vernacular concerns. This is not to say that vernacular memories and issues are absent from national memorials; they are often incorporated into and performed at national commemoration spaces. However, the overall intended meaning or message tends to be nationalistic. According to John Bodnar, the organization of various public memories, interests, and concerns is mediated by the deployment of the ideograph of patriotism that allows for a common identification with an ambiguous conception of loyalty (16). This mediation partially accounts for the appeal of national commemorative sites to multiple publics and their ability to fold different public memories into official displays.

One of the rhetorical strategies of official American commemorative spaces is a focus on the symbolism of the deceased body. National commemorative spaces often abstract the body being commemorated and define it in relation to other rhetorical markers that reassert particular American commitments. For example, Stephen H. Browne declares that the official memorial of Crispus Attucks in Boston Square works to “diffuse the racial charge that Attucks carried by re-writing him into more universalized narratives of American origins, growth, and prosperity” (179). Likewise, Bernard J. Armada contends that the recreation of the assassination site of Martin Luther King, Jr. as part of Memphis’s Civil Rights Museum encourages visitors to see King as a Christ-like
figure, abstracted as the martyr to bring about the nation’s rebirth (241). The rhetorical act of transforming the deceased body into a larger value system works precisely because the visitor’s body is abstracted as well. Armada claims that such narrations enables the articulation of the visitor to the museum’s interpretation of a community of Civil Rights sympathizers, in part because of their proximity to the actual assassination site (240). The accompanying affect, he argues, creates narrative closure and truncates alternatives to King’s vision of Civil Rights (241). Further, Marouf Hasian finds that the narration at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum proposes a preferred reading by juxtaposing images of victims of the Holocaust with those of American soldiers. In turn, the American visitor is invited to transcend both geopolitical and cultural boundaries not only to become a witness to the Holocaust, but also to identify American soldiers as the heroes who brought down the Third Reich and brought an end to the Holocaust (76).

Central to the rhetorical performance of the temporary artifacts discussed in the following chapters is the role of the body--not only the symbolic body--but also the material deceased body. Christine Harold and Kevin Michel DeLuca’s recent scholarship on Emmett Till begins to address this line of inquiry. While their focus is on visual images of Till, they note how the dissemination of those images urged thousands of mourners to view Till’s body in person at the funeral home. This public viewing of the material body became another moment that further aggregated communities. The images, along with the events of Till’s murder, continue to be referenced to shape social discourse in various contexts.

Recent research has focused specifically on the deceased body's role in how September 11, 2001 is remembered. Barbie Zelizer analyzes the media images of the
about-to-die moment when the bodies were captured on camera either falling or jumping from the Twin Towers. She claims that these images did not allow enough possible narrative outcomes for the American public, and therefore that the “preferred” images of memory became the Twin Towers burning rather than that of the bodies falling. In Chapter Five, I utilize her discussion to address how abstraction plays a role in appropriate commemoration of the deceased body. Marita Sturken deals more specifically with the remains of the deceased bodies and devotes a chapter of her book to their instrumental force in shifting Ground Zero from a space of emergency to a space of tourism. She argues that the remains, or the dust of the remains, are what designates the space at the WTC site as sacred. She claims that this sacralization, along with kitsch reminders of the space’s sacred character, marks the site as unique and therefore not amenable to contextualization within a broader history (218). Because Sturken's thorough argument deals with many temporary artifacts from the designs, memorabilia, and the bodies, it influences this dissertation as a whole. Specifically, it offers a starting point for Chapter Four, which deals with how and in what types of arguments the deceased body is deployed rhetorically in relation to the scope of the official commemoration.

Critical Rhetoric and the Temporary Body

I argue throughout this dissertation that rhetorical scholars should pay more attention to temporary rhetorics. I also maintain that we need to pay more attention to the role of the body in rhetoric and in material rhetorical scholarship specifically. I work through this argument from the basis of a critical rhetoric approach. This approach, I argue, addresses the core characteristics of rhetoric and underscores why it is an invaluable mode for understanding public political culture. In the following paragraphs, I
suggest a rationale for why the body has been “left out” of much rhetorical scholarship. Second, I carve out an area for the study of temporary rhetorics within the larger field of rhetoric. Specifically, I discuss the connection to, and importance of, studying temporary rhetorics at the WTC site by using a critical rhetoric approach.

Herbert Wicheln’s *The Literary Criticism of Oratory* relegated rhetoric to a category of literary criticism and thus truncated rhetoric’s connection to the performing body. Further, early social movement rhetorical studies, in their distinction between rhetoric as rational discourse and the force of the body as coercion, have further constrained rhetorical scholarship on the body. Carole Blair offers possibilities for the body’s reemergence in rhetoric. She cites the most influential forces as feminism and post-Cartesian positions, followed by calls for materialism in general by Michel Foucault, Jean-François Lyotard, Michel de Certeau, and Gilles Deleuze. Blair argues the 1970s expansion of rhetorical studies made room for studying materiality and the body (‘Reflections’, 172-173). While those studies may have made room for the expansion of material artifacts or bodies, it has been only in the past five to ten years that rhetoricians began to explore the visual/material persuasion of the pained body and its ability to constitute publics. Specifically to commemoration, Blair calls attention to how the visitor’s body is rhetorically organized and directed at national commemoration sites. I wish to contribute to this discussion with an analysis of how the deceased body, or pained body, influences memory and spatial constructions.6

Joining the need for further studies on the rhetorical body is the need to focus more specifically on temporary rhetoric. Traditionally, rhetorical studies have understood the power of rhetoric as fleeting, specifically situated, and powerful but not necessarily
lasting; yet, the majority of that which has been studied are artifacts argued to have
lasting importance. By using the term importance I mean those artifacts that have endured
over time through their continued use or reference. Understood in this manner, longevity
has established these artifacts as worthy of study. This is not to say that theorists do not
understand the ephemeral nature of the original discourse, or the complexity of the term
“original.” However, the persistent traces of texts and how they endure in different
contexts have often been used to justify rhetoricians’ critical studies. In particular,
commemorative artifacts have been studied because the memory of the speech,
monument, or moment has persisted. But what about commemorative activity that is not
meant to and most likely will not endure? The WTC site plans, markers, and boundaries
are not meant to last; they are not planned for long-term use; and they are not typically
meant to be called upon in years to come. Most of them are forgettable, even intended to
be forgotten, as a presumably “permanent” memorial site develops. Suggesting further
study into the WTC site commemorative process complicates how we justify the
significance of artifacts, and it calls to attention artifacts that reflect early
characterizations of rhetoric as ephemeral and of the moment.

When I initially began writing about the events of September 11, 2001, I
investigated a “completed” commemorative artifact--the documentary 9/11, that
chronicled the events of the day as well as an American dream journey of a rookie
firefighter (Frandina). Then, I moved on to an analysis of what I thought would be the
official design for the new WTC site. However, I found that, once I started writing about
the design, I was constantly revising my work. The design plans changed dramatically,
and the process of rebuilding was regularly stalled as various controversies arose.
Because of these issues, I directed my focus upon the process of commemorating the space of the attacks rather than on the “final” product, which remains unknowable. In so doing, I have encountered the difficulty of fixing an artifact to study. The perimeters of the study are almost impossible to set and quite slippery at best. First, the artifacts are temporary by nature. Most artifacts are not meant to remain in or around the space for the final official memorial. They are stand-in commemorative artifacts, and some are seemingly mundane construction boundaries. Therefore, there is often no way for me to revisit some of the artifacts once they have been removed, or to find extensive information on the artifacts after removal. Second, the accumulating artifacts at the WTC site and revisions to the designs for the space are almost impossible to track as new controversies continue to arise. Third, with the immense amount of public discourse that accompanies the growing controversies, it is often overwhelming to attempt to capture the fleeting historical moment.

These difficulties can be seen as drawbacks, but the inability to “fix” or contain an artifact speaks to the importance of temporary discourses. Commemorations are always changing, even when they are declared to be “complete” or “final.” Studying material rhetoric always has slippery boundaries. The influence and consequences of spaces and artifacts vary in terms of their interaction according to publics addressed and specific circumstances. At its essence, rhetoric is contextually grounded; it speaks to particular, fleeting, historical moments. Therefore, what better way to understand public memory, controversy, and consequential arguments over public commemoration of the events of September 11 than by discussing artifacts that have appeared in the interim, between the event and its “permanent” commemoration?
In keeping with the highly fragmented and contextual focus of critical rhetoric, I do not have predetermined instruments or modes of analysis. However, I use as a guide Blair’s suggestions for investigation of what material rhetoric does (“Contemporary”, 30). Her organizing questions offer a framework to focus more directly on the doing and to deter from placing too much emphasis on the symbolism of what a commemoration means. The questions are: What is the significance of the text’s material existence - what is different as a result of the text’s existence, as opposed to what might be the case if the text was not there? What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the text? What are the text’s modes and possibilities of reproduction or preservation? What does the text do to or with or against other texts? How does the text act on person(s)? While Blair uses the descriptive “text” here, I follow her understanding of “texts” as broadly defined, highly fragmented, contextual, not necessarily verbal, and never fixed, particularly in relation to public memory interests.

Focal Artifacts and Chapter Overview

By analyzing temporary commemoration, I argue throughout the following chapters that the body--deceased and survived--and its relationship to space and time makes claims on visitors’ imagination of the temporary space as well as upon the official physical space. In so doing, the body creates new spaces of commemoration and subverts others. In the following chapters I investigate specific arguments produced by these relationships. I focus on the nuances, degrees, and continua created in relation to the body, space and time. Foote’s categories come into play with each instance of commemoration and enter discussion in regard to the deceased body, its materiality and its degree of abstraction. Chapter Two addresses the intended physical relationship
between the visitor and temporary official memorials. Chapter Three investigates the imagined relationship between the visitor and the not-yet-built commemoration through the design process. Chapter Four attends to the deceased body and its relationship to the space and time during the rebuilding process. Chapter Five analyzes the relationship between the public and alternative representations of the deceased body. Chapter Six concludes.

The artifacts I have selected are: the steel cross, *Tribute in Light*, borders and boundaries at Ground Zero, the official design for the site and its major revision, the physical deceased body at the site, and three works of art by Kerry Skarbakka, Sharon Paz, and Eric Fischl. However, since underlying my argument is the assumption that the interrelation of the contextual elements is what gives temporary rhetoric force, other artifacts emerge and inform my chapters as well. I selected each of the focal artifacts because of their temporary nature. They are each temporary in their display and in their interactions with publics, either by the revision process, the changing historical moment, mode of display, or censorship. They are part of the process, not necessarily the end result, of commemoration related to the WTC site. Therefore, they evoke the importance of rhetoric’s temporary nature and its response to specific historical conditions. Although many of my objects of study would most likely not be the focal point of other commemorative studies, they raise questions about what is considered a commemorative artifact as well as what is considered to be “legitimate” commemoration.

In Chapter Two, I introduce the power of mediated witnessing of the events and the influence of spaces of erasure. Specifically, I look at official designations of memory at the WTC site during the rebuilding process and the complex rhetorical act of linking a
designated space to a deferred hope of sanctification. In attempting to understand the link between the temporary and sacred, I look at the specific ways the sacred is understood through a juxtaposition between seemingly profane elements of construction borders and boundaries with more clearly identified sacred memorials of the cross and *Tribute in Light*. I address how these elements operate in tandem in order to negotiate the binary of sacred and profane. In so doing, these temporary narratives create the co-existence of sanctification and rectification to promote a material display of civil religion. By investigating these temporary and varied memorials in terms of their scope, material, and longevity, Chapter Two will attempt to decipher how the profane and sacred interact, influence, and negotiate a commemorative space.

In Chapter Three, I tour the imagined space of the designs for rebuilding the site. I explore the pivotal moment of designation, in Foote’s sense, of a design that attempts simultaneously to offer a solution of rectification and sanctification. In so doing, the design exhibits the tensions of competing goals. I argue that particular definitions of democracy and survivorship emerge and are adjusted throughout the revisions of the designs. Through an analysis of the first official design alongside the major revision to Freedom Tower, I seek to uncover the ways the designs reflect the historical moment and speak to the importance, yet danger, of positioning imagined bodies in particular ways in blueprints of commemoration.

In Chapter Four I investigate the physical remains of the deceased body and argue that these remains, as grounds and evidence for arguments, are the major influence on the rebuilding process. The body is understood as a sanctified site, and therefore arguments about the body dictate the scope, shape, and time frame of commemoration at the WTC.
site. After thinking through both imagined and material markers of memory in the previous chapters, the role of the body as argumentative “proof” becomes impossible to ignore. As artifacts of and grounds for argument, the body has different relationships to contextualization and publics than rhetorics of primarily linguistic or visual form. Visual rhetoric scholarship has marked how the visual (re)presentations of the body in pain constitute publics, policy decisions, and narratives that shape conceptions of national identity. I wish to further this discussion by exploring how the presence and absence of the physical deceased body directs the rebuilding process. Further, I seek to understand the implications for both deceased and living bodies in relation to the present and future commemorative activity at the site and about September 11, 2001. I argue that arguments about bodily remains direct movement on the continuum towards sanctification or rectification at the site. However, their presence also prolongs the designation stage at the site.

In Chapter Five, I look at what is understood as inappropriate commemoration, and more importantly, how particular representations of the sanctified body are so controversial that their public reception pushes them towards obliteration. I wish to explore the controversy, potentiality, and possibility of alternative ephemeral commemorations of the collapse of the Twin Towers. I believe Chapter Five will lend insight into the relationship between the deceased body and its publics, as well as the Twin Towers as the preferred markers of memory of September 11, 2001. Consideration of performances and art that were openly condemned or censored by the public and officials can lend insight into the questions: What is a commemoration? What are issues of how the body can, will, and should be used in commemoration? What is appropriate
commemoration? Through the analysis of three representations of the dying body during the collapse of the Twin Towers, I seek to understand not only the continuum of responses to spaces of violence but also the continuum of abstraction of the body that occurs and how an appropriate body is distinguished for commemoration practices.

Concluding Remarks

My rhetorical analysis of the designation zone of commemoration attempts to render temporary rhetoric visible and analyzable. According to the advertisement for the official memorial, there were the “poignant” spontaneous shrines, and now there needs to be an official commemoration. In so doing, the interim temporary commemorations are passed off as non-spaces: plans, boundaries, temporary markers, and bodies that are only place holders until there is some official built space, in some ways their activity and consequences become invisible. It is my aim to make the temporary rhetoric visible in the following pages. Spaces of commemoration shape memory not just when they open for official business but during designation as well. Waiting time is important. Temporary rhetoric has permanent effects on commemoration practices, subjectivity, and national identity.
The World Trade Center (WTC) site was named “Ground Zero” by the media shortly after the attacks and quickly became the common name for the site by the general public. The term “Ground Zero” had been used commonly to refer to a point of impact of an explosion, or more accurately, the surface directly below the impact. The term’s origin in American political discourse can be traced to the Manhattan Project and WWII and the impact zone of the nuclear bomb. However, it is now most commonly recognized in reference to the WTC site as a proper noun.

I utilize the term “vernacular” here to correspond to John Bodnar’s distinction between official and vernacular culture in commemoration. He claims that public commemoration, as an attempt to shape what reality looks like, privileges official culture (structures of power) over vernacular culture (ordinary people). I wonder if you might want to use Bodnar’s own definitions here, since vernacular culture also is a structure of power. The quotation from him below is about how official and vernacular cultures are balanced differentially, I believe. Therefore, public commemoration through public memory “speaks primarily about the structure of power in society” (16). Likewise, other theorists have attempted a distinction between official and other commemorative activity. Jack Santino utilizes the term “spontaneous” to refer to unofficial markings that are popular, of the people, and not instigated by either church or state (12). I particularly find Santino’s distinction limiting. However, there is a blurry boundary between official and unofficial, and that indistinct distinction should be noted.
I utilize the term commemorative “space” throughout the dissertation in line with Lefebvre's main argument in The Production of Space that “space” is a social product as well a complex social construction. I believe that his understanding of the term emphasizes that each of the commemorations I discuss are constructions and continue to evolve depending on social interactions.


I use the word “pained body” in addition to “deceased body” because it is not only the deceased body that is having a rhetorical influence at the site. Those people who are physically ill because of their recovery efforts at the site are also influencing the process of commemoration at the site. Further, those bodies that are grieving because of their losses of loved ones also hold a strong rhetorical position in the development of the site.
WORKS CITED


CHAPTER 2
TEMPORARY MARKERS OF MOVEMENT AND MEMORY:
CIVIL RELIGION AND THE SACRED

Within days of the Twin Towers’ destruction it became evident that Americans and people from around the world were and would continue to be drawn to lower Manhattan to visit the site of the attacks after witnessing their spectacular mass-mediated collapse. Organizing the space became a necessity in order to accommodate the volume and expectations of thousands of daily visitors, negotiate the area as a work place, maintain traffic control, and continue the recovery, cleanup and rebuilding process. Therefore, the temporary stage of development at the site needed to have official temporary commemorative activities and organizing rhetoric to deal with the sacred nature of a site that was simultaneously undergoing seemingly more profane operations.

I have chosen to lead my analysis chapters with the temporary commemorative activity at the World Trade Center (WTC) site as a way of introduction into the importance of mass witnessing of mediated disasters, the power of erasure, and the influence of the presence of the absent bodies and towers at the space of their destruction. These issues will continue to play a role in how arguments are formed about artifacts throughout the dissertation. Starting with the temporary activity at the site also helps address how the space was used previous to the attacks and how the site after the attacks remains a complex multi-use space. In so doing, the temporary activity at the site
introduces the importance of the designation stage at the site (in relation to Foote’s obliteration, rectification, designation, sanctification continuum), and how designation negotiates other options for commemorative spaces.

In particular, in this chapter, I argue that the commemorative activity during the designation stage at the WTC site illuminates the material tensions and consequences of a struggle to materially define American sacred space. I claim temporary artifacts at the WTC site gain permanence and or have lasting implications for the site due to the interplay of sanctification and rectification activities. In many cases, the very argument that the artifacts are temporary, or at least temporarily placed, enables them to become imbued with a more lasting sacred role at the site. Therefore, designation negotiates many elements of what would usually be characteristics of rectification into arguments for sanctification. Typically, it is the permanent, not the temporary that is associated with the sacred. These artifacts and practices disrupt that association, instead linking the temporary to the sacred and therefore, argue for permanent measures. As a result, a material display of civil religion emerges; linking artifacts and activities that are more often are found in rectification sites with the sacredness of the WTC site.

In developing these claims, I discuss numerous artifacts representing a wide range of commemorative activity. I investigate two memorials along with the boundaries and borders that make up the site. First, I look at Tribute in Light, a memorial consisting of twin beams of light that illuminate the sky on each anniversary of the attacks. Second, I investigate a cross consisting of remnants of steel from one of the Twin Towers, found and erected at the site by rescuers during the first days after the attacks. Third, I examine various makeshift borders and boundaries of the site constructed during different stages
of development. In particular, I look at how they have been utilized to organize visitors, business interests, and commemorative space.

These artifacts have at least three important elements in common: they are temporary in nature, they invoke a presence of the absent, and they utilize the Twin Towers through representations, fragments, and boundaries around their foundation as the preferred markers of memory for September 11, 2001. While they have these elements in common, each has particular rhetorical strategies and effects. First, Tribute in Light utilizes the presence of the absent to offer a sacred public commemoration that influences the future of the skyline. Second, the cross physically marks the absent, spontaneously and temporarily hosted for recovery workers, but suggests a slippage of civil religion into Christianity. Third, the borders and boundaries of the site, marked by temporary blockades, emphasize civil religion’s sacred connection to the economy, the body’s sacrifice, and in so doing, establishes a hierarchy of access to the epicenter of the attacks.

In developing these claims, I first work to understand the public investment of the site, introducing the concepts of erasure, presence, and absence. I then move to a discussion of the sacred, its link to civil religion, and its importance to temporary rhetoric. Lastly, I utilize my discussion of these terms for my critical analysis of the official temporary markers and memorials at the WTC site, primarily within the first two years after the attacks.¹ I divide my analysis into three main sections: the Tribute in Light Memorial, the cross erected at the site, and the borders and boundaries to the site.

The Rhetorical Power of Mediated Erasures on Publics

The Twin Towers no longer exist, yet they are not nonexistent. As a material act of “blacking out,” erasure creates a powerful emphasis on the absence of the Twin
Towers and the space of their destruction requiring a response. Literary theorist Jacques Derrida illustrates erasure in his discussion of the possibilities of Being. The key word, 

Being, marked out, remains legible (89). According to art historian Annabel Wharton, in spatial practices, erasure is “the act of rubbing or scraping out, of removing from existence” (195). Erasure exhibits control because it establishes the eraser’s authority to suppress and destabilize. However, erasure leaves a mark that “frustrates the gesture and reverses the effect” (Wharton 195). The mark introduces the power of the absent. The viewer is drawn to the absent, and thus the act of erasure and interest in what has been erased are emphasized by the very attempt to mask or delete material from existence. In this respect, both marks of and markers within erasure at the WTC site can be seen as insistences that continue to work towards some form of existence. Slavoj Žižek argues, “The opposite of existence is not nonexistence, but insistence” (22). Žižek’s notion of insistences correlates with a space of erasure, which “preserves an emptiness that was once full, an absence that demands restitution, a void that generates possible meanings” (Wharton 195). The mark of erasure creates a focus on the WTC site, insisting on restitution and providing the opportunity for meaning generation. The space continues to persist and insist towards existence, becoming more significant through erasure than it was in its former material shape. Wharton uses erasure as an expression of political and religious hegemony in which the disempowered find possibilities for resistance through the power of marking. Yet, the Twin Towers were destroyed not by a dominant power but by the “Other”, temporarily elevated from anonymity by the success of a spatial attack. Official power reemerges, despite, and in light of, the absence of the Twin Towers, through subsequent markings in the space, constructing markers that guide
memory and future uses of the site.

Americans’ focus on the WTC site is even more profound due to the mediated dissemination of the Twin Towers’ destruction. The mass mediated events of September 11 constituted publics with particular expectations and visual memories about the WTC site. Recent media remind us of and respond to our particular fascination with mass destruction. On the day of and days after the attacks, Americans were glued to their television sets, witnessing the destruction over and over again. Some saw the second plane hit Tower 2, then the collapse of Tower 2, followed by the failure of Tower 1—all live. Mediated witnesses saw bodies jumping, people running, and followed along as rescuers searched for bodies in the rubble. Lisa de Moraes reported in the week following the attacks that all of the major networks clocked the longest stream of coverage ever in television history regarding a single news story (C07). Žižek states, “We were all forced to experience what the ‘compulsion to repeat’ and jouissance beyond the pleasure principle are: we wanted to see it again and again; the same shots were repeated ad nauseum, and the uncanny satisfaction we got from it was jouissance at its purest” (12). We watched the images of disaster played again and again, and they became engrained in our social psyche, promising the fixated viewer the mass carnage of disaster.

Mass mediated destruction allows for the creation of mass subjectivity as the viewer is abstracted from their individual body into a collective subject. According to Michael Warner, when large numbers of separate injuries occur, they don’t hold the same fascination as mass injury (177). This focus is part of the process of collective identification with bodies in pain. Disaster coverage promises reconciliation between embodiment and self-abstraction (181). We become witnesses, with the understanding
that the disaster is happening; yet happening elsewhere (179). Therefore, the sympathetic identification that occurs with the bodies in peril is only part of the explanation for disasters’ public appeal. The abstraction of the body that allows one to act as a witness is available only if we become part of the injury to the mass body. The fascination with the disaster is the only way for the subject to become a non-corporeal mass witness, and therefore a visit to the mediated disaster site too becomes a desire of the public.

Through mediated images of the body in peril, the mass subject becomes haunted by the “before.” Christine Harold and Kevin Deluca claim that through the interplay of images of Emmett Till before and after his brutal attack, the viewer is haunted by the presence of the absent - the image of “the face-that-was” of a fifteen year old boy juxtaposed with the mutilated face of his corpse (274). Haunting iconic images of a subject in pain, according to Lucaites and Hariman, can lead to a condition of moral failure for viewers, frozen in their identification with bodily pain and unable to act to correct the situation. In turn, it becomes necessary to “get time moving again so that the moment may eventually recede, dissipate, or become complicated by other elements of larger stories” (45). Therefore, not only do these pained images draw in the viewer, but also they are used to guide memory and action in various and particular directions.5

As discussed throughout the chapters, the media spectacle of September 11, 2001 heavily influences the public’s own experience with commemorative activities about the event. The focus created by erasure at the site formed collective publics with the urgency to see the “reality” of what was projected on the television, particularly the images of the Twin Towers falling over and over. The material rhetoric that emerges at the site organizes the viewers’ experience. The Twin Towers, through their absence and the
memory of their destruction, haunt publics. In turn, the erasure persists, demanding some type of restitution. In the first years after the attacks, at the WTC site, sacred repetitions of the Twin Towers, whether through steel, light beams, or markers around the epicenter of their destruction, reminded visitors of the presence of their absence. In so doing, a material model of civil religion, which links the profane with the sacred, emerged on the backbone of the reminders and remnants of the Twin Towers.

Sacred Naming: The Materiality of Civil Religion

I do not propose in this chapter a universal definition of the sacred. I am more interested in how American sacred is materially defined. I suggest the material displays of temporary commemorations at the site offers civil religion as the backbone of American sacred space in its combination of both sanctification and rectification. The notion of the “pure sacred” is often associated with a desire to preserve the space, object, or idea which is sacred. Mircea Eliade links that which is sacred to power, endurance, and the ability to produce effects (12). In his definition of sacred, Eliade also links the “pure sacred” to visibility. Traditionally, something or somewhere that is “pure sacred” is usually set apart from the ordinary (11). In The Bible, Matthew 22:21 states “Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s and unto God those things that belong to God.” One interpretation of this passage is that the civil and the religious occupy separate domains. In actuality, their paths quite often cross, overlap, and duel. The WTC site, in its rebuilding stages, has become a material example of American civil religion. Because of the civil religious demands of the site, the space continues to offer rectification as a key component of sanctification, combining the profane (return to work) with the sacred (set aside for veneration). Therefore, the commemorative representations are necessarily
temporary due to practical reasons, and at the same time they enable arguments for their own permanence or consequences at and about the site.

Robert Bellah scours the documents of the founding fathers and key figures in America’s development to parse out the characteristics and consequences of American civil religion. He defines civil religion as a public religious dimension expressed through a set of beliefs, symbols, and rituals; he argues that it has been crucial to the development of American institutions and life (42). It is not completely secular, nor is it specific to a particular religion, e.g., Christianity, but it is fundamentally American. It is grounded in rights, making political absolutism illegitimate. It provides a transcendent goal and therefore takes on a very activist and non-contemplative conception of religious obligation to the state (43). It has a Unitarian nature and is more about order, law, and rights than salvation and love (45). Further, after what Bellah calls the second American trial of the Civil War, American civil religion, as an always adapting and transitioning religion, became more about death, sacrifice, and rebirth (47). Through the creation of national holidays, civil religion has increasingly become ritualistic revolving around the family (49). He claims it has its own prophets in the form of Jefferson, Washington, and Lincoln, along with its own sacred events, rituals, symbols, and spaces (54).

In this chapter I will explore what a commemorative space of civil religion looks like. Spaces of violent death of American bodies are imbued with a sacred status because of their connection to the civil religious principles of death, sacrifice, and rebirth. Kenneth Foote defines such sacred spaces as “publicly consecrated and widely venerated” areas set apart and dedicated to memory (8). Battlefields have been one specific space in which the connection between the body and civil religion has been
materially articulated. Edward Linenthal claims battlefields offer an environmental connection with the space of death, which in turn, provides the visitor with patriotic inspiration (Sacred Ground 3). In recent times, spaces of violent death, not traditionally understood as battlefields, have been socially articulated as battleground sites. Speaking at the dedication of the Oklahoma City National Memorial, President Clinton marked the site as sacred because it is a landscape of “freedom’s sacrifice” and therefore, has the ability to shape the American soul (qtd. by Linenthal, The Unfinished Bombing 234). In addition, soon after the acts of September 11, President Bush weighed in with his discourse of war, and identified Ground Zero (the WTC site) as a battlefield. Because of the sacrifice of bodies, recent sites of violent “battlefield” deaths in America structure their commemorations around the loss of the bodies. For example, the argument was successfully made for 5th street in Oklahoma City to be permanently closed out of respect for those who died in the street (190). At the WTC site, as the next chapter will discuss in detail, the scope of the project continues to grow because of the proclamation that no building will be built where a large number of bodies were found. At the same time as the deceased body takes precedent, the social body invested so widely in the space after the mediated witnessing of erasure requires organizing rhetoric at the unfinished commemoration site.

At the WTC site, official markers and their temporary use within a sacred space become imbued with the sacred nature of the site, and therefore, insist on their continued use and importance to the public memory of the site (Eliade 12). A material display of American civil religion is projected, temporarily, as the Twin Towers (corporate buildings and American symbols) become the preferred mode of memory for the events
of September 11 during the site’s designation stage. However, this projection of civil
religion at the site has consequences beyond the temporary that put limitations on public
movement, memorial options, and modern commemorative objectives. It also reinforces
the adapting nature and the family focus of civil religion. I turn now to an investigation of
my three areas of commemorative activity, beginning with a haunting return of the towers
through the powerful presence of light in the skyline.

A Tribute in Light: A Temporary Argument for Permanence

The hole in the skyline left by the destruction of the Twin Towers is a powerful
example of an erasure that created an intense focus on the space. The memorial Tribute in
Light offers a temporary commemoration of the “skyline that was.” While it began as “a
filler” until an official commemorative solution could be reached, it has taken on a life of
its own with rhetorical significance. The temporary displays of “the towers that were”
became sacred because of their connection to the mediated investment of publics as well
as the sacred connection to light, height, and a symbolic presence of the deceased. The
displays abstract the bodies lost in the attacks into representations of the Twin Towers.
Yet, while the tribute has been widely praised, its rhetorical effects may also guide and
narrow discussions about what should be rebuilt at the site. I offer a brief description of
the memorial before discussing the Tribute’s connection to re-presenting the absent
through the symbolism of haunting towers, and in turn, emphasizing the urgency to
replace the hole in the skyline permanently.

A team of architects and designers led by John Bennett and Gustavo Bonevardi
and overseen by the Municipal Arts Society of New York created Tribute in Light. In
March 2002, on the 6-month commemoration of the attacks, the design, consisting of two
light beams shaped like the Twin Towers to mark their absence, took the towers’ space in the skyline. These beams, created by 7,000 bulbs, were projected from dusk till 11 p.m. for 32 days from a site adjacent to what has been named by officials as The Void (the area where the Twin Towers once stood). The light beams were visible for 25 miles in any direction. Mayor Bloomberg and Governor Pataki of New York offered the commemoration as a dedication to those who lost loved ones in the attacks and as a celebration of the city’s resolve joining the concepts of the individual family in mourning with the American family in mourning. The tribute was displayed on the six-month anniversary of the attacks and again on September 11, 2003 and on each consecutive anniversary of the attacks thereafter. In the original mandate, the hope was that Tribute in Light would continue until there could be a permanent replacement of a memorial at the WTC site. Because of continued construction, the location of the Tribute has changed places but remains close to the epicenter of the attacks. However, organizations funding the project did not anticipate the lengthy delays in rebuilding the site. In the past the LMDC has allotted a $350,000 for the annual commemoration, but has not made a long-term commitment to funding the memorial. Yet, the popular display, which represents the lives lost in the attacks, has publics urging for this tribute to continue while America waits for a permanent replacement. The suggestion that Tribute in Light remain until there is a permanent memorial emphasizes the common assumption that something will eventually “refill” the place of the Twin Towers in the skyline.

Witnessing the erasure of the Twin Towers created a powerful focus on the hole in the skyline. According to Bonevardi, Tribute in Light offers a direct reflection on the mediated experience of the attacks. He states, “I think it’s because we had all been staring
at the towers for so many hours that day. The after-image was practically burned in our retinas. So the idea of trying to evoke what was lost was almost self-evident. In our minds’ eye, the image was as clear as the towers themselves had been the day before.”

Descriptions of the post September 11th environment often note both the loss of familiarity provided by the towers and the glaring hole left in the skyline. Resident Diane Gatterdame stated, “I always knew where I was by looking up at the towers” (qtd. by Maeder 70). The absence of the Twin Towers has not reduced the focus. Tourists and residents alike often find themselves seeking and pointing out “where they were.”

Columnist E.J. Dionne Jr. brought his daughter on the Staten Island Ferry to see the site. On the way there they were struck by their absence, the void, in the skyline. On the way back, in the evening, the Tribute was on display. He was reassured, “New York is still here, stronger than before” (A23). As with any hole, Tribute in Light offers an opportunity for a temporary filling that re-presented the destroyed towers in the skyline, in turn, offering both reassurance and suggesting a permanent replacement.

In their re-presentation, the Twin Towers are connected to the sacred in terms of civil religion because they operate on symbols of pure religion, emphasize the body’s sacrifice, and connect that sacrifice to the ideals of state. The projection of towers can be related to the biblical Tower of Babel. Coupled with the sacred archetypes of light and height, the holy nature of the tower is emphasized as the projection fills the void in the cityscape and disappears into the sky, exemplifying birth, hope, renewal, and heaven. Further, the representation of The Towers becomes a stand-in for the innocent bodies lost. The display also offers a ghost and/or angel-like presence that demands restitution of the bodies lost and offers guidance for the bodies that remain. The absence
commemorated, informed just as Emmett Till’s picture was by repetitions into history, becomes sacred precisely because of the buildings-that-were, the mass body that was, and the familiarity of the Towers once promised within that space. Just as with the Tower of Babel, the representation has a distinct connection to the state. Bill Clinton asserted that innocent bodies were sacrificed for the principles of America at the Oklahoma City Memorial site, therefore making it sacred. At the WTC site, many argue bodies have again been sacrificed because of the principles of America. Re-presenting the towers recognizes this sacrifice for the state and as discussed more specifically in Chapter Three, their replacement asserts an inspirational symbol for the future direction of America.

This remembrance has consequences for the possibilities of future memorials and design of the site. The commemoration offers an added reminder that erasure demands a focus and restitution. The “tease” of having both the towers back and knowing they are ephemeral remind and urge for a more permanent preservation of the sacred. The symbolic commemoration while at the same time inspirational, threatens to erase both the bodies and the towers from public memory if some sort of preservation is not achieved. The beams of light displayed each year do not allow for a “getting used to” of the fractured skyline. For Bonevardi, there was a need to repair the skyline, and the public has expressed insecurity with the light beams’ temporary nature as well (Chaban). According to Barron and Connelly, 75% of victims’ families interviewed would like to see the lights become permanent. This desire to rebuild the skyline through the government funded Tribute in Light seems to have informed the public sentiment about building another material skyscraper in its place (B1). As discussed in Chapter Three, while there was some discussion of rebuilding something other than a skyscraper, the
impact was minimal as evidenced by the design competition rules and choice of Daniel Libeskind’s Freedom Tower. Tribute in Light began under the assumption that something would replace it and the final guidelines of the design competition for rebuilding mandated that a skyscraper be a focal point. Hence, defining Tribute in Light as sacred, yet temporary, helped make the argument for a permanent replacement of a new towering office building over alternative uses for the site.

The Steel Construction of Civil Religion

The cross, erected to oversee the space, as the only “permanent” temporary memorial within the site, joins Tribute in Light as a re-presentation of the absent body and exemplifies civil religion through a relationship with the original Twin Towers. While Bellah emphasizes that civil religion is not necessarily based on, or limited to Christianity, the representation of Christian faith through a cross limits public inclusion while also further establishing the towers as the preferred marker of memory of the events of September 11. A slippage into a clearly Christian symbol was not subjected to much controversy, partially because of its temporary nature but also because of its “authenticity” as an artifact of the presence of the absent. During its temporary display, the presence of the absent tower found through the steel remnants again stands in for the deceased body at the site. Therefore, it fulfills both the civil religious characteristics of sacrifice, family, and commitment to state through the display of the steel remnants of an American financial fixture. In this section, I first describe the “life” of the cross in detail. I then discuss the cross’s place in civil religion, specifically its focus on presence of the absent, its future focus on rebirth for America post 9/11, and its implications for public commemoration.
The cross is the only memorial to remain in a prominent position in the WTC site during the rebuilding process. The steel support beams were displayed on a concrete platform overlooking the recovery and reconstruction effort from October 2001 through 2006. The cross was then moved to a display outside a nearby church until it could be considered for inclusion in the final memorial. A cross of steel could be seen as an ordinary consequence of the collapse of thousands of steel beams all constructed in grid formations, hence forming thousands of “T’s”. However, this is not how the narrative of this marker played out. Frank Silecchia, a laborer helping with the clean up, found the cross on September 13, 2001. As he was immersed in the rubble attempting to find bodies, he looked up towards the light, and saw the cross standing almost entirely upright and immediately began to weep. He likens the space with the cross inside as reminiscent of a religious grotto. Silecchia stated, “To me it was an act of God” (qtd. by Gittrich and Siemaszko 18). The authorities of Ground Zero agreed, and in October 2001, the cross was raised onto a concrete platform and blessed by Reverend Bryan J. Jordan. On October 6, 2006, the cross was moved to nearby St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church during a procession led by Jordan. An inscription was added, “The Cross at Ground Zero. Found Sept. 13, 2001. Blessed Oct. 4, 2006. Will Return to WTC Museum. A sign of comfort for ALL.” The cross has been blessed twice (so far), carefully preserved, and carried by flatbed in a ceremonial precession. During the ceremony, a retired sanitation worker led the crowd in a rendition of God Bless America. It has been highlighted as an artifact of September 11, 2001 but separated from all other artifacts. Rev. Jordan and Silecchia successfully led a public campaign that distinguished the cross further from other authentic relics of the site. The cross was slated for a hangar at JFK airport with all
of the other relics that are being considered for the memorial. However, the public campaign enabled the cross to be carefully dismantled and carried by paid government union workers to St. Peter’s because of its sacred status.\textsuperscript{12}

The cross became a representation of the body, sacrifice, the origins of state, and family. The cross was “found” when very few bodies were found. In that sense, it became both a miraculous discovery to highlight the presence of all the bodies that were absent and, at the same time, the representation of the body’s sacrifice on an American “battlefield.” Therefore, the steel remnants have been held up as the symbol of civil religion and America’s rebirth after 9/11. Eliade claims the cross is equivalent to the consecration of country, an imperative sign of the sacred (32). At the WTC site, the cross was discovered and therefore, became a point of origin. It was a source of inspiration for recovery workers. They would meet for coffee at the cross to regroup from the overwhelming work at the site. Recovery worker, Charlie Vitchers, stated, ‘It gave a lot of people a space to go when they were trying to make sense of the work all of us were doing’” (qtd. by Konigsberg B1). The cross became a representation of family. It was a representation for individual families who lost loved ones, a place of renewal for the family of recovery workers united at the site, and a relic mandated to become a symbol of inspiration for the American family in its permanent display.

Relatively little public criticism or legal questioning has come from the cross remaining as the focal point at the site for the past five years. More discussion and emphasis has been placed on making sure that the cross finds its way into the official memorial. The memorial’s program statement, written by families of the victims, emphasizes that the design should include original relics from the site, mark the site as
sacred, and honor all the individuals who lost their lives (Memorial Mission Statement). Family coalitions and advisory panels have insisted the cross be part of the permanent memorial (Haberman and Gittrich 28). Yet, both the American Atheists and Coalition for Jewish Concerns have expressed concern, protested, and threatened lawsuits if the cross is made part of the final memorial due to its exclusion of their religious beliefs. Ellen Johnson, president of the American Atheists, said, “Many people who died on September 11 weren’t Christian. There were Jews, Muslims, and Atheists who died…this is a Christian religious advertisement, and allowing it to stay there is an insult to everyone who doesn’t believe in that particular religion” (qtd. in “Unholy Row”, 29). Rev. Jordan disagreed and suggested the “discovery” nature of the cross is a rationale for its use. He stated, “I consider this an interfaith sign,” Further, he claims, “Had we found a Star of David or a menorah or a crescent, we would have erected it and used it as a sign of God’s presence” (qtd. by Levy 11). The cross, displayed temporarily to inspire workers, gains justification for its permanence because of its accidental nature and usage by the heroes who worked in the recovery effort. It remains without lawsuits filed during the designation stage precisely because it is not permanent, and because it continues to gain authentic official status as the only relic to remain in prominent position at the site. Its civil religious connotations have made it understandable in relation to much of the public that it should be a focal point in a permanent memorial. Yet, the predominance of the cross without representation of other faith symbols in a permanent public commemoration should meet legal questioning in relation to the separation of church and state.

The cross is an enduring symbol of civil religion that originates with Christianity.
through its focus on the presence of the absent, signification of rebirth, family, and the deceased body. Regardless of the final decision of where the cross will go, it remained for five years without legal challenge constituting a religious focal point in a public commemorative zone with no other faith’s representation. During its temporary state in the “pit” to inspire workers, the cross became part of the memory of the aftermath of the attacks, and thus, became imbued with an enduring sacred status. In this case, the rhetoric of the temporary has negotiated an official narrative of American public commemoration with a sacred marker of Christian faith. The controversy is further mediated by the accidental nature of the cross allowing for the argument that, since it was an official relic found at the site, it should be exempt from discussions of inclusive civic religious representations. Therefore the sacred, the temporary, and the argument of “authenticity” reconstruct the steel into sacred, projecting the private power of families with public force. The bodies of lives lost are again abstracted and represented by material from the corporate building as a symbol of American identity. In turn, a religious proclamation that constitutes American faith and excludes other American faith groups is accepted, funded, and endorsed by the state. The cross, which was highlighted within the epicenter of the attacks, is further marked for importance and focus by the use of borders that organize both the physical and emotional space of the sacred to which I now turn.

Boundaries and Borders of Public Access

Markers at the site are rhetorically necessary in order to designate the seemingly mundane area as a sacred space, therefore representing civil religion through the physical alignment of sanctification and rectification. Without the site’s media history and reminder of Tribute in Light, it looked almost like any new construction site. Barriers and
DO NOT ENTER signs were posted. Cranes, trailers, and trucks were all present within the site. Construction workers operated under the illumination of hundreds of fluorescent bulbs. These “profane” elements of any construction site were a threat to the investment at the site created by the media spectacle. State sanctioned materials that delineated boundaries, commemorative spaces, and consumer spaces structured how to “read” the space, highlighting sacred space and directing how the space should be used. At least two important rhetorical effects emerge; the sacred is linked with the seemingly profane, rectified elements of the economy, and at the same time a smaller and seemingly more “pure sacred” boundary negotiates access to the central wound, the space where the Twin Towers fell. This boundary aligns with the emerging material civil religion because it allows for the everyday work around most of the site to continue, promotes the inclusion of particular prominent visitors, and promises to open for the larger public when it is safe to do so. I turn now to descriptions of these major construction borders and boundaries before entering into the larger discussion of their rhetorical effects.

Traffic control issues and congestion, which have always challenged lower Manhattan, have compounded since 2001 from the thousands of visitors who want to view the site each day. The compact space is surrounded by tall buildings and is bordered on all four sides by busy streets. A visitor who is looking at what has been delegated the front viewing perspective of the disaster stands directly in front of the busy Church Street and opposite the congested West Side Highway. Completing the square on the southern-most side is Liberty Street and on the northern-most side is Vesey Street. In addition to these urban boundaries, for the first year, the epicenter of the absent towers was partially concealed and delineated by a fence covered in green mesh. For part of that first year
after the attacks, a corner of the perimeter included a viewing platform with visiting hours for the public. In addition to the viewing platform, various tears in the mesh all along the fence offered partial views of different vantage points of the site. In the following year, for viewing and traffic purposes, an observation walkway was created over Liberty Street, crossing the West Side Highway. This walkway continues to serve at least three functions. First, it delineated what is now officially called The Void, clearly marking off one side of its perimeter. Second, through a plexiglass window visitors can stop and view the depth of The Void from a heightened vantage point. Third, the walkway makes a direct physical connection to New York’s World Financial Center. Consequently, both meandering visitors taking pictures of the sacred site and business professionals rushing back and forth between workspaces populate the walkway every day.

As the site developed, the green mesh covering was removed making viewing available from Church Street in addition to the observation walkway. Further, on September 12, 2002 the first stage of The Viewing Wall project replaced the green mesh fencing with a steel grid. The grid included fiberglass panels with historical information about the site and the rebuilding process. Situated above the eye-level panels were additional black panels etched with names of all those who, at the time, had been named victims of the attacks, entitled The Heroes of September 11, 2001. A plaque erected on the Wall read:

On this site, on August 21, 2002, Governor George E. Pataki, Governor James E. McGreevy of New Jersey and Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City proclaimed that in honor of the heroes of September 11, 2001 this viewing wall would be erected by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey so that the world community can reflect upon and remember the events that took place here, and draw strength and
In September 2003, the second phase of the Wall was completed on Liberty Street with an additional 17 historical panels chronicling along with the events of September 11, 2001, the history of the WTC site. The observation walkway and adjoining fenced perimeter remained as an organizing boundary to direct movement and create boundaries to where visitors are allowed, while clearly distinguishing the site of the erasure.

Soon after The Viewing Wall was erected, official restriction signs were posted providing further proclamations of ownership as well as a narrative that underscores the site’s relationship with the economy. On the front of The Viewing Wall is a gold metal sign that reads:

The regulations of the Port Authority of New York for this location PROHIBIT:
- Selling or distributing material
- Littering or abandoning property
- Attaching any items to any wall, post or surface
- Distributing printed material within 20 feet of the viewing fence and other prohibited areas
- Climbing on fences
- Defacing, marking, or damaging property

Joining the borders of the site was the 200 foot tall mural draped over a building on 90 West Street which consisted of a heart encompassing the statue of liberty, the American Flag, debris of the attacks and an urban landscape. The artist, Yakov Smirnoff, claimed the painting consisted of 3,000 brush strokes to honor each life lost. Smirnoff also incorporated the saying “The human spirit is not measured by the size of the act, but by the size of the heart.” The mural was not only designated as sacred through its inclusion near the erasure, but also through its erection on the first anniversary of the attacks. On that day and on subsequent events, it became an appealing backdrop for commemorative
and political speeches. In November 2003 it was torn in a windstorm and removed. According to reports, the mural was soon to be removed anyway as the owners of 90 West Street began to convert their building into a high-rent apartment complex (Frangos B8).

Borders and boundaries at the WTC site serve at least three rhetorical functions: they delineate what is considered sacred ground, they redefine the profane as part of the sacred, and they utilize the temporary nature of the blockades to define rules for public and private movement. Borders and markings renegotiate the space in order to allow sanctification and rectification to continue to coexist. Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp and Lori A. Lanzilotti note how the restrictive fence at the Oklahoma City bombing site was moved nearer to the former building to allow visitors closer contact with the sacred (166). The need to delineate some boundaries between the profane and the sacred become an even greater necessity at the WTC site due to all four roadways around the site remaining in use, unlike the decision in Oklahoma City to mark the sacred site by closing Fifth Street, the road in front of the Murrah Building (Linenthal, Unfinished Bombing 190). 14 However, rectification was not at all eliminated from the sanctified site, but both operations were restricted and controlled through rules of usage of the space. The signage marks whom the sacred belongs to, proclaiming who has authority at the site. The act of announcing the site’s official personnel formally takes back the space from the “Other” as well as exerts influence in the fight for political control. The boundaries exhibit control over where rectification activities can occur, where sanctification is focused, and where the two should be joined. Further, it eliminates spontaneous vernacular temporary memorials from accruing at the site, allowing only official temporary commemorative
activity to persist. In so doing, the WTC site projects the rebuilding of the economy at the very heart of the material civil religion at the site. The walkway that serves as a viewing platform as well as the path to the World Financial Center clearly marks the interdependence of the sacred and profane. The space of reflection is circumvented by the momentum of literally “moving on” with work through the hectic foot traffic of the financial workers. In addition to these borders that invite a moving forward with business, boundaries at the site were constructed for the selling of 9/11. In response, the “vendor free zone” was set up around the perimeters of the site to further mark the site as a sacred, “commercial free” zone. However, the officials’ relationship with vendors seems contingent on political appearances. Until March 2004, the vendor free zone was fluid; the area was expanded when officials visited or spoke at the site. At other times tourists could find tables with 9/11 memorabilia set directly in front of the viewing wall. In 2004, legislation was passed banning vending in all but a small area of The Void. Pataki claimed this legislation was passed to protect the sacred nature of the site and the people who come to reflect and remember (Trimarco and Depret 49). The enforcement of selling restrictions at the site seems rather ineffective; a walk one block in any direction will provide the tourist with numerous stands and gift shops hawking September 11 memorabilia.

While individual vending was circumvented, other economic ventures were quickly connected back to the WTC site. The planned removal of the mural in preparation for rental space was evidence of the increasing pressure to make the space profit producing. On March 2002, the notoriously crowded discount designer store Century 21, located directly behind the front of the viewing wall, reopened. At a mere six
months after the attacks, it became one of the first buildings to reopen. Every day of the week this space is chaotic with shoppers searching for a deal and exiting and entering directly onto the sacred boundaries of the erasure. Commerce becomes a necessary element to commemorating and reclaiming the sacred site. In this respect, the relationship between the two at the WTC site responds to Mayor Giuliani and President Bush’s call to “go out and shop”, suggesting that the appropriate response to the erasure lies in the sacred act of consuming.19

As the areas around the epicenter went back to work, restrictive boundaries reduced in size, focusing sanctification on the more “pure” sacred space. However, civil religious characteristics are evident by the type of people allowed in the site, particularly the emphasis on American celebrities, politicians, and family. While the site is being prepared for both rectification and sanctification, public and private access has been restricted. Because the rhetoric at the space promises a future public commemoration within the WTC site, there has been minimal public outcry about restriction. At the same time, the permeability of the boundaries by particular publics provides evidence of the hierarchy that operates within the official material narration of the sacred site. Politicians and celebrities were common visitors to the epicenter in the months and early years after September 11. Miss America, Martha Stewart and Governor Jessie Ventura received access to the site. Access has been more limited in recent years but politicians, like House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi, still frequent the site, speaking to the characteristic of civil religion in which politician and cultural members are highlighted for their American commitment.

The most powerful group to maintain a presence within the official boundaries of
the site has been families of the victims of September 11, 2001. During each anniversary event held at the WTC site, the families of the victims have been allowed to enter the area for private mourning. Controversy ensued on September 11, 2007 when officials decided that the WTC site was too dangerous for the commemorative ceremony and moved it to a nearby park. After families protested the decision, they were once again granted access to the site after threatening to boycott the public commemoration (Lee B03). The families will also have a meditation room exclusively for private mourning in the final official memorial similar to The Oklahoma City National Memorial, which set the precedent for family space when it chose to privatize part of the public commemoration.\(^{20}\) Family groups also had an influence in the banning of Iran’s leader from the sacred site. In 2007, city officials denied, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, access to the site in what his officials claim was an attempt to lay a wreath in remembrance of the victims. It is unclear whether Ahmadinejad wanted to lay the wreath inside the marked off area or place it on the public sidewalk, but the Port Authority denied both requests. Politicians and families of 9/11 victims spoke out that it was inappropriate for a President whose country harbors terrorists to view the hallowed ground (Linzer A06; Waugh 22). While different rationales have been given for why he was not allowed access, the chief of police in New York said it was due to security concerns and ongoing construction.

The boundaries around and at the epicenter of the site are temporary and permeable. They expand, contract, move, and are removed as the space is restored back into a work place. They are also used to emphasize where the commemorative activity should focus, in turn, negotiating both the rectification activity and sanctification activity within the same space. These borders speak to a materiality of civil religion. As Bellah
has noted, the family becomes increasingly important in civil religion. The boundaries
place a focus on the family as the kin to the sacrifice made by the body. In turn, there is a
sense in which these recent commemorations of political violence attempt to provide for
the families for their sacrifice. With the promise of a large future public commemoration,
relatively little controversy emerges about which Americans are allowed within the
space. Yet the space does not retain a pure sacred focus with access limited to religious
figures. Instead, individuals with access are representative of America’s government and
culture. However, in so doing, a hierarchy in the public commemoration develops, of
who is and will be allowed in the site. This joins other hierarchical decisions around
naming of the victims and the importance of their bodies, which I will expand on in
Chapter Three.

The Rhetoric of the Temporary Memorial

The analysis of these temporary markers of memory puts a material face to the
specificities of Bellah’s argument regarding civil religion emphasizing family, sacrifice,
and state power. In conjunction with the focus of erasure, the re-presentations of the
absent bodies and Twin Towers through artifacts and symbols negotiate a civil religious
display that allows rectification and sanctification to co-exist at the site. It is precisely the
boundary condition between rectification and sanctification that allows a corporate
building to be remembered by the symbol of idealized light, a cross of building steel to
arise from the ashes of that building, and the boundaries of sacred space to be fluid and
limiting to public access. In so doing, temporary activity receives sacred status, and
therefore carries more permanent consequences.

The focus on the family in civil religion and the connection between the private
family and the American family in the civil religion display at the site emerges and will continued to play a large influence in the future chapters. In so doing, even temporary commemoration becomes less about public commemoration and more about a negotiation between the private family and corporate interests at the site. The private families’ influence and their connection to the physical body create problematic limitations to the space and inclusion of non-inclusive religious representations, emphasizing the growing focus on the family in civil religion. For rationales that will continue to be explored throughout the chapters, the public commemoration activity becomes almost entirely concerned by resurrecting the towers or fragments of the towers as a stand-in for the individual bodies lost. Therefore, the official public commemoration of the WTC site is simultaneously identified with private mourning space (sanctification) and corporate space (rectification) and these two interests are joined by the idea that family is the backbone of both.

Defining something as sacred has long held great rhetorical power. What is interesting about the material display of civil religion at the WTC site is how the argument of the “temporary” becomes a key rhetorical step to defining sacred. The temporary mediates binaries of sacred/profane, public/private, and church/state. The temporary sacred constitutes publics and offers a rationale for the exclusion of other publics. The temporary offers direction and definition of American commemoration. The rhetoric of the temporary makes the argument for permanence. The rhetorical power of the temporary should not be overlooked, particularly when thought of in conjunction with the power of erasure. The erasure and mass mediated viewing of the events of September 11 constituted a mass public with a focused affective response to the site. Therefore,
commemorative activity that responds to that erasure has tremendous power to direct and define memory and future policies.
END NOTES

1 I have chosen to emphasize this time frame based on its proximity to the first official decisions regarding rebuilding the area and my exposure to temporary markers during this time.

2 For further discussion on space and erasure see Branham.

3 These marks of erasure create a space for discourses to generate meaning in regard to the buildings’ absences. Second, marks of erasure allow rhetorical discourses to gain momentum that would not be possible without widely disseminated destruction. In Elizabeth Birmingham’s analysis of the removal of Saint Louis’ Pruitt-Igoe apartment buildings, erasure allows for particular discourses to supply explanations for the destruction. Birmingham argues that when the first building was dynamited in 1972, discourse equated the destruction as the symbolic end of high modernism (291). In deconstructing this myth, Birmingham contends the cause of the failure and subsequent destruction of the building because of design flaws virtually eliminates discussion of structural racism and how architecture reinforces this racism. For the critic, the destruction and subsequent discussion creates a focus on the absence as a means for offering evidence of structural racism. Likewise, the rationale Birmingham critiques is created or made accessible only through the erasure of the buildings. Similarly, the rhetorical impact of absence is further explored through Robert Scott’s discussion of the controversy surrounding the destruction of artist Diego Rivera’s mural in New York City. Scott contends that while the mural was destroyed, at the same time it was not (75).
Rivera created photographic reproductions and used Rockefeller’s money to continue his artwork around the city as well as to create a similar fresco in Mexico City, still viewable today. Further, literary works, poems, protests, and news articles were all produced because of the controversy. While Rivera contends his murals are not the same, Scott argues that art spawned controversy and controversy created art (75). He quotes Horace Gregory in saying “The blank space is now a better testimonial to the cause of art and the revolution than the work itself would have been” (76). Through its absence, the mural becomes a more powerful force than it was or could have been if it remained materially intact.

4 In 2001, the dance floor collapsed at a wedding in Jerusalem killing 23, garnering international attention led by a video account of the horrific collapse. The Southeast Asia Tsunami footage, Hurricane Katrina, Oklahoma City, the State Island Ferry crash, and the destruction of the WTC are all recent examples of our fixation with disaster coverage.

5 Journalist Daniel Pearl’s decapitation, according to Grindstaff and Deluca, constructs publics through its use as a recruitment tool in the Mideast, as evidence to gain support for a response by the American government, and as a contested artifact in Pakistan that has led to outbreaks of collective violence (306). Cori Dauber, in her analysis of Desert Storm images, shows numerous examples of how images are co-opted by dominant forces as appropriation for particular narratives. The scholarship shows the powerful force of the mass mediated images of the body in pain to construct publics and these insistences of official narrations to utilize the rhetorical power of the images to
construct narrative in particular directions.

6 As early as September 20, Bush was specifically using the word “war” in reference to the attacks in his address to the joint session of Congress. He stated, “Now this war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.” He continued, “Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen.”

7 A full explanation of the light memorial can be found in the Tribute in Light PDF from www.renewnyc.org, the official site for the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation.

8 For an in-depth discussion of many of the temporary memorials as elements of heritage see Greenspan.

9 For further discussion see Gittrich and Siemaszko; and Steinhauer.

10 Further emphasizing the connection to Christianity surrounding the site is Out of Dust, an exhibit of artifacts erected in a national historic site, the 18th century Saint Paul’s Chapel at the intersection of Fulton and Broadway, one block from the site. The Chapel, which housed a volunteer relief effort for the first eleven months, now chronicles this effort and contains relics, commemorative flags and banners. Not only is it officially a holy space; it is one of the oldest churches in the nation. It is also a national historic site. A virtual trip to the museum can be found at <http://www.saintpaulschapel.org>.
A mystery has emerged about a new cross inscription recently. Within the last few years, a small gold plaque has been added to the cross, which reads, “In memory of Bruno Gioffre September 26, 2006.” There is no information on this additional inscription in newspapers, documentation at the visitor’s center, or at the New York Public Library. I spoke with the family liaison at the Visitor’s Center who oversees the cross and she said that it is unknown who did this or authorized it, and she expressed that she is sick about it because the cross was meant for everyone. The representative worked on the recovery effort and never came across that name during her efforts. She continues to investigate the inscription but has found no one, even the Father who was in charge of the cross during the recovery effort, who knows who the man is or how the plaque got there. Further, I corresponded with David Dunlap, a reporter for The New York Times who has covered Ground Zero since the attacks and he did not know about the origin of the plaque, but thinks Bruno Gioffre was a recovery worker.

Another cross made from steel from the WTC site was erected in Shanksville Pennsylvania where one of the hijacked planes crashed in an effort to tie together the three events.

The official website of the comedian is found at <http://www.yakov.com>.

Vesey and Liberty Street did remain closed for the first several years of removal and rebuilding but in 2007 all four perimeters were opened.

For a discussion of the fight for Ground Zero see Goldberger; and Nobel.

A recent visit in 2007 to the site, shows an even greater emphasis on the walkway’s connection to the economy and consumerism. The history boards of the WTC
have been taken down, and posters and banners emphasize the shopping to be found in The World Financial Center.

17 Various essays arguing this claim can be found in Heller.

18 For instance, in 2007, I was offered water for sale by a man sitting on a cooler in front of The Viewing Wall.

19 This sentiment by Mayor Giuliani and President Bush can be located in numerous political addresses. A CNN transcript of Giuliani on local radio September 21, 2001 records him asking Americans to “Come here and spend money, just spend a little money. Like go to a store, do your Christmas or holiday shopping now, this weekend.” See “America’s New War.” Further, on September 20, 2001, President Bush addressed the nation and to the American public he states, “I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy.”

20 In their memorial chair exhibit, The Oklahoma Bombing Memorial roped off the chair exhibit and allows access only to families of the victims who died.


Foote, Kenneth E. *Shadowed Ground: America’s Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*. 58
Austin: University of Texas, 1997.


Hariman, Robert, and John Louis Lucaites. “Public Identity and Collective Memory in U.S.


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CHAPTER 3

TEMPORARY IMAGINATION OF COMMEMORATIVE SPACE:
DESIGNING AND DESIGNATING VISITORS AS VICTIMS, SURVIVORS, AND
WORKERS AT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER SITE

“But the pleasure we take in space--both private and public--is not theoretical; it is fundamental, to how our cities are organized and built and, ultimately, to how we live our lives, in our communities, in the future.”

-Daniel Libeskind in Breaking Ground 272

On February 27, 2003, Daniel Libeskind’s architectural vision for rebuilding and commemorating the World Trade Center (WTC) site was chosen the winner of the official public design competition for redevelopment. His design, selected after a highly public and controversial process, featured the skyscraper, Freedom Tower, as well as the park, The Void, the latter of which was slated to hold the official memorial intended to commemorate September 11, 2001 as well as the 1993 WTC bombing. Shortly after Libeskind’s design was chosen, visual elements began to disappear, design team members began to shift, and contested viewpoints began to emerge in the highly political rebuilding process. While some of these discussions were released publicly during the years that followed, the first visually significant, official “revision” of Libeskind’s design was announced on June 29, 2005.

In this chapter, I wish to take the reader on an imaginative tour of the future of the WTC site through the two major, yet temporary, blueprints that have been released to the
public during the designation stage. I put into conversation Libeskind’s original design and its major revision, designed by architect David Childs, in order to investigate temporary rhetoric which attempts to imagine how bodies will operate in a space of tragedy that suggests dual responses of rectification and sanctification to that tragedy. The previous chapter also examined the combination of sanctification and rectification of temporary memorials at the WTC site during rebuilding. I argued rectification became an imperative part to the sanctification of seemingly profane elements. The outcome exemplified material civil religion and defined sacred as both rectification and sanctification. In this chapter, the two ideals meet again but struggle to co-exist in the imagined space. I argue that the WTC plans remain in designation for a longer time frame than originally anticipated, in part, because of conflicted meaning. Kenneth E. Foote claims conflicts arise when competing and conflicting interpretations make it impossible to “celebrate one side of the dispute without denigrating the other” (322). The WTC blueprints highlight a dispute about whether to respond to the September 11, 2001 attacks primarily through rectification of the site or primarily through sanctification of the site. These two operations are not commonly combined materially in commemorative spaces (with both retaining dominant features), thus creating conflicting emotional and physical prescriptions for the visitors and workers of the space. The visitors and future workers at the site, as the previous chapter discussed, are heavily invested in both the absence of the towers, and the bodies they once held. Their erasure makes the designation process of design fraught with competing desires and ideals. The design and its major revision are temporary by their very nature in that they attempt to imagine a future for a permanent space. Yet the imagined future has important implications. Foote marks the importance of
studying the particulars of the process of designation (or temporary placement) because the waiting period of a space highlights the particulars of historical moments, emphasizes the social production of space, and reflects social and political tensions and agendas (332). Thus, the WTC designs, while temporary, have lasting effects on the space and commemorative practices.

Through an investigation of the original design plan, which emphasized sanctification, in conjunction with the major revision, which emphasizes rectification, I seek to understand the imagined prescriptions offered for future visitors and workers of the built space for how to utilize and be in a space of tragedy. Carole Blair and Neil Michel’s analysis of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the AIDS Quilt puts into play issues of democracy and survivorship in modern commemorative practices. In this chapter, I explore the particular versions of democracy and survivorship, as they are instantiated in the seemingly dueling plans for rebuilding the WTC site, as a rhetoric of healing. In the original public design, I argue sanctification is prioritized, focusing on the visitor of the space. I argue the two major design elements work together to posture visitors as victims of the attacks who become survivors aided by a selective construction of democracy. In the major, and private, revision, rectification is emphasized, focusing on the workers at the future site. Distinct boundaries are attempted between sanctified space and rectified space and the priority is on prevention and safety, a seemingly unique move for commemorative practices. In consequence, the revised design faces the challenges of a “rectified” healing due to the presence of the absent towers and bodies in both the designs, in the temporary memorials discussed in Chapter Two, and in various other commemorative activities discussed in the later chapters of the dissertation.
I divide this chapter into five sections. First, I outline a brief history of the design process. Second, I investigate how the blueprints position visitors as survivors. Third, I work to understand the projection of democracy that emerges through specific elements primarily in Libeskind’s design. Fourth, I critique the surveillance function of the designs. Fifth, I address how Child’s revision incorporates workers, focusing on rectification. Finally, I discuss the possibilities for visitors to the commemoration based on the above facets of the imagined future space.

The Design Competition and its Aftermath

The LMDC was formed shortly after the cleanup at the WTC site began with the purpose of overseeing the redevelopment and commemoration of the area - a job complicated by the wide dispersion of stakeholder power invested at the site. In July 2002, after six preliminary designs for the space proved unsatisfactory to the public, the LMDC went back to the drawing board, establishing a design competition for a new vision for the WTC site. Nine more designs were released and exhibited at the Winter Garden lobby in lower Manhattan, and were seen by 80,000 visitors from December 2002 through early February 2003. Visitors’ comments were logged in person as well as through a website that virtually displayed each of the finalists’ designs. In mid-January, The New York Times reported that the public favored three designs: Daniel Libeskind’s plan featuring an angular tower and the Twin Towers’ foundation, Norman Foster’s blueprints reflecting the original towers “kissing”, and Peter Littenberg’s design focusing on a large amount of garden park space (Wyatt).

When the LMDC narrowed the field, Libeskind’s design was the only one of the three that remained. The committee chose Libeskind's design in competition with a
design by the agency THINK, consisting of two large skeletal towers of exposed steel grids resembling the original Twin Towers. While Libeskind’s design received early praise and popularity at public presentations, the tone of editorials changed in favor of the THINK proposal after the two finalists were announced. Campaigns ensued from both camps as they attempted to address concerns from the public, the Port Authority, developers, and the Governor, before their final presentations. On February 25, 2007, the LMDC voted for the THINK proposal. Yet, at the insistence of Libeskind’s lawyer, a private final presentation was given to both Governor George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York. After the presentation, Pataki overruled the LMDC claiming Libeskind’s design was the only one that could actually be built. On February 27, 2003, Daniel Libeskind’s design was officially named the future vision for the WTC site. Pataki discussed Libeskind’s model as “a plan born out of tragedy but forged in democracy” (Collins B3). Newspaper accounts reported that the commission reached the decision unanimously with strong support from both Governor Pataki and Mayor Bloomberg.

The most prominent components of Libeskind’s design were: (1) the memorial park named The Void, encompassing the foundation plots of the original Twin Towers as well as the future official memorial design chosen in a separate competition and (2) Freedom Tower (named by Pataki), slated to become the tallest building in the world at 1776 feet. In Libeskind's design Freedom Tower was attached to an office building and adjacent to a museum, performing arts complex, and a rail station. Libeskind described the aesthetic of the design as circular - “to surround and shelter the Ground Zero memorial with a ring of embracing towers” (Libeskind 156). A son of a Holocaust survivor, Libeskind’s biography has been used by himself, officials, and media to help
explain his credentials for rebuilding after tragedy. Libeskind, who has been praised and criticized for his enthusiasm and story telling ability, stated, “I never forget that skyline and what it means to an immigrant, an American. It’s about the values we all share” (Hirschhorn). While Libeskind’s design initially received wide support for its centralization of the space for a memorial, the plan generated controversy as well. Freedom Tower’s design had been both praised and condemned for its height, and the practicality of the design was called into question almost immediately. Skeptics contended that Libeskind would not be able to follow through on many of the symbolic visions that he supplied in his narrations during public presentations.

Architect David M. Childs was hired by WTC developer Larry Silverstein to “join” Libeskind in the process of turning the original vision into a built space, a move that Libeskind and others refer to as a “forced marriage” (Libeskind 243). Apparently, Childs was added to the project in part because Libeskind had never built a skyscraper (Dunlap 16). Libeskind argues Childs aimed to redesign the entire space and would have done so, had he not encountered resistance from the wide public support of, and Pataki’s insistence on, Freedom Tower’s asymmetric frame and height (Libeskind 245). According to Professor Hilary Baloon, chairwoman of the Art History and Archaeology Department at Columbia University, “The conflict between Libeskind and Childs reproduces the conflict between Pataki, who wants an iconic tower to echo the asymmetric salute of the Statue of Liberty, and Silverstein, who wants to maximize rentable floor space” (qtd. by Dunlap). With minor revisions released in September 2003 and then again in December 2003, the completion of the site was originally slated for 2007-2008. Both architects attended the official ground breaking ceremony in 2004 in
what appeared to be a compromise on the design. However, in June 2005, a long rumored master revision was released, completely transforming the look of Freedom Tower in a claimed effort to address security concerns. While Libeskind remained the face of the design, Freedom Tower was solely credited to Childs, and in March 2009, it was announced that Freedom Tower would now be called One World Trade Center. The building was slated to be ready for occupancy in 2010, but due to the revisions, a realistic timeframe is no longer clear.

I believe studying these two designs together offers significant advantages for this analysis. First, Libeskind's design strongly emphasized the need to sanctify the space. His design seemed to have paid less attention to practicality, sacrificing engineering and economics to concerns of commemorating the event. Second, the selection of his design, which won public and critical support, came very soon after the attacks, when the wounds were relatively fresh and therefore, more likely to code the hurts and hopes of the months following the attacks. At that time, Libeskind's design seems best to embody not only the desires of those who attended to the competition, but also the broader public discourses about the events of September 11. In contrast, the major revision to Freedom Tower, with Childs as the lead, emphasizes a move towards rectification through the practical concerns of economics and security, mapping a shift in the historical moment and field of commemoration. The interdependence of the rhetoric of the designs, their temporary nature, and the complexities of the moment raise serious issues about commemorative practices at the site and modern commemoration in general, and thus merit greater attention. I turn now to an analysis of Libeskind’s design, specifically the construction of visitors as victims.
Creating the Commemoration: Visitors as Victims

Blair and Michel claim that some modern commemorations are not only for the survivors but are explicitly about them and their relationship to victims (609). In Libeskind's design, The Void postured visitors not as survivors of the attacks but primarily as victims of the attacks. In so doing, The Void was set aside for sanctification as a space of death. The creation of boundaries and depth to The Void, the symbolic and material naming of the space, and the inclusion of remnants of the Twin Towers joined visitors’ bodies as one with deceased bodies, setting a tone of vulnerability that was not assuaged within the space.

The design included distinct physical and symbolic boundaries that positioned visitors as victims and separated The Void from other areas of the WTC site. In the original design, a circular walkway took visitors to the hallowed ground where the Twin Towers once stood. Distinct boundaries around the site organized the visitors’ experience amidst the hectic grids of lower Manhattan, a complex and compact space of numerous office buildings, transportation hubs, ports, highways, and millions of pedestrians. Therefore, boundaries distinguished visitors’ bodies from “other” New York bodies. These other bodies included workers who would have to utilize part of the site as a transfer to the World Financial Center, various other office buildings, and transportation hubs. The physical boundaries also attempted to organize visitors’ experiences within the commemoration space, guiding the emotional response of The Void in contrast to the feelings intended to be provoked by Freedom Tower. By prescribing a particular space and tone for the memorial and the ritual of remembering, the design attempted to forecast how the space would be used and how the elements of the design would work together.
In addition to physical boundaries, the descent into the space created room for mental preparation and identification with victims of the attacks. The design took visitors on a gradual journey that led to the point of death for most of the actual victims, and therefore, is a gravesite for many of the victims that were never recovered. Following Libeskind’s vision to encircle the space where the buildings fell, originally visitors were taken on a 75-foot descent into the depth of the tragedy. While the public wanted sanctification of the bodies, too much focus on the descent to a space of mass death was criticized. Some commentators described the depth as too representative of a mass grave and therefore, “tasteless” and “ghoulish” (McGuigan 59). To create a more rhetorically appeasing balance, The Void’s depth was reduced to 30 feet below street level and the gradual circular decent was changed to a street level linear entrance. The walkway created important mental preparation for visitors. Visitors became identified with and as victims, taken to a space of erasure designated by absence in which the presence of the dead is meant to be felt (Etlin 172).

The descent into the depth of The Void aligns with the rhetorical power of archetypal metaphors of darkness and depth intended to solicit particular responses of vulnerability from their audiences. According to Michel Osborn, archetypes of light and dark are frequently combined with the vertical scale due to the natural association of light with height and darkness with depth. Metaphors of depth and darkness are often associated with fear of the unknown, loss of sight, helplessness, and loss of control. The darkness that ensues from depth makes “one ignorant of his [sic] environment – vulnerable to its dangers and blind to its rewards” (Osborn 117). In keeping with archetypal metaphors as Osborn refers to them in speech, “the present situation is darker
than midnight, but the speaker’s solution will bring the dawn” (117). The Void is the space that presents the situation of darkness, aligning visitors with the dead, intended to provoke feelings of a loss of control and helplessness.

In Libeskind’s design, visitors were prescribed the emotional response of vulnerability and connection to victims based on the boundaries and symbolism of the design, as well as through their active participation in the space by walking in the “footprints” of the original Twin Towers. The name, The Void, means to be unoccupied, containing nothing, to be empty. When associated with an emotion, it most often represents a feeling of isolation or emptiness. There is a sense that something or someone needs to be “filled up” in order to heal, or to be complete. Naming the point of mass death, The Void, positioned visitors as active participants amidst that death. Central to The Void are the Twin Towers’ footprints (the area of their original foundations). Visitors were marked as survivors not only because they witnessed the tragedy on television and are members of a community of Americans, but also because they were placed as “bodies” among the perished bodies in the site of death. Walking where others died offered an individualized memorial experience; and the rhetorical strategy of putting visitors into the space of the tragedy helped reinforce the vulnerability and isolation of the space. Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp and Lori A. Lanzilotti claim that commemoration at the site of tragedy acts to bring notice to the public's inability to prevent the tragedy. They state, “The site of tragedy takes on a symbolic admonitory power to remind us of our helplessness in the face of evil” (159). The Void was a material reminder of this helplessness, designed to place visitors directly in the “wound” created by the attacks, a wound that at one time, was made up of thousands of bodies. The visitors were placed as
active participants who could physically walk in The Void while at the same time feel the enormity of the space and their inability to fill the space up on their own. If the wound was the primary experience and vantage point of the space, without reinforcement of the focal tower, a healing rhetoric might not be possible and a commemorative experience of living with The Void would suggest a different possibility for American identity. However, with the help of Freedom Tower, a specific and narrowly defined “solution” of democracy emerges for the experience of victims within The Void.

Surviving the Commemoration through Democracy

As with many sites of sanctification, Freedom Tower offered an inspirational focal monument which pointed towards the virtues of America (Foote 8). The replacement skyscraper also added yet another marker suggesting the preferred commemorations of September 11, 2001 are inspirational stand-ins for the Twin Towers. In so doing, Freedom Tower projected a rhetoric of survivorship as an antidote to the rhetoric of victimage inspired in The Void. I argue, Libeskind's Freedom Tower, which was both unifying and reductive, cloaked democracy in discourses of exceptionalist nationalism. This chosen projection of democracy in Libeskind's design did not offer a “democracy of difference,” as Blair and Michel name it in their analysis of the AIDS Memorial Quilt (599). Instead, what was projected was a democracy of a unified America, different from the rest of the world.

This representation of democracy was evident in public discourse as early as the night of September 11. Drawing distinctions between America and its virtues from the rest of the world, and inviting a unified response from its people were encouraged as the antidote to feelings of helplessness and fear induced by the attacks. President Bush stated,
“America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world.” He went on to say, “This is the day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace” (Bush). Congressional discussion took on a similar tone, delaying earlier priorities in order to avoid hotly contested topics that would shatter their newly found unity (Broder 1). The everyday, unified, actions of Americans were evident in other forms as well. American flags were sold out across the New England region; red, white and blue clothes became uniforms; community barbeques were held; and enlistment inquiries were higher than before as men and women of all ages offered to help in waging the “War on Terror” (English 14).

Joining public discourse in defining democracy were the blueprints for the future focal monument at the site. In this section, I investigate what this democracy looked like. Specifically, I suggest the naming of the tower, the shape of the tower, and the two primary vantage points offered by Freedom Tower promoted a solution that transformed visitors from victims to survivors.

The most obvious rhetorical choice was the naming of Freedom Tower. This naming discourse was further emphasized by the designated height, 1776 feet, to symbolize the year of America’s freedom. Both symbols and their material counterparts were part of Libeskind’s original vision, and Pataki insisted both elements remain in the built space, regardless of revisions. According to Libeskind, the height demonstrates “the durability of democracy” (Hirschkorı). The exact height of 1776 acted as a signpost to remind the American public that freedom is a crucial value of U.S. national identity. Although, as in the past, the trophy of the tallest building in the world will soon go to another building (perhaps even before Freedom Tower is built), no other is likely to be
exactly 1776 feet tall. Joining this act of naming and physically marking freedom was the design of the spire. In Libeskind’s design, the angular building with the asymmetrical spire virtually disappeared into the sky as homage to The Statue of Liberty, and specifically, her torch. A gift by the French on the centennial of U.S. independence, the abstract representation of the lady was a further signpost of U.S. national identity as a free country, separate and different from others. “Freedom,” identified both by name and symbolic height marked America as unique, while further characteristics helped mark it as unified.

The decision to rebuild vertically, and to rebuild singularly, offers further evidence of democracy being defined as a unified America. A skyscraper, an American invention, was a requirement for the design competition and, therefore, the publicly favored finalists all had at least one tower that would fill the hole in the New York skyline. While some visitors to the public viewing of the finalists’ exhibition expressed fear or distaste for rebuilding a skyscraper, others proclaimed it a necessary response to the attacks. Journalist Binyamin Appelbaum described the spire at the summit of Libeskind’s design as a giant finger raised towards terrorism (Newman B1). The defiant decision to rebuild higher and better than before, while similar to the phallic tone of the original skyline, projected the endurance of America’s unified democracy to rebuild whatever terrorism had destroyed or can destroy. However, Freedom Tower was not a replica of the original Twin Towers because, as America witnessed, those towers were too easily destroyed. Instead, the new design, angled, pointy, and singular, promised a future that was built on the past without retreating into the past, and offered a singular vision of a “whole” national identity in response to the “hole” created by the terrorist
attacks.

The two major vantage points of Freedom Tower further solidified the optimistic solution to the pervading sense of vulnerability produced from The Void. From the “hallowed” ground of The Void, visitors look up at the singular “beacon of light” from the depth of the grave, as individual visitors looking for hope, direction, and rebirth. Once the visitor is at the observation deck of Freedom Tower looking down, The Void and most of lower Manhattan become visible. Roland Barthes marks the importance of this type of vantage point because of the panoramic vision it unveils. Panoramic vision allows for the reconstitution of a person’s perceptions in order to merge sensation and memory. In so doing, visitors are given the powerful position of perceiving, comprehending and deciphering (10). The design of Freedom Tower allowed the enormity of the site of disaster to be viewable as visitors potentially overlooked hundreds of bodies walking within the space of the original towers. In that way, they were transformed from victims of The Void, into survivors of both the attacks and the memorial’s design. Further, from the height of a skyscraper observation deck, people below would become indistinguishable as individuals and instead could operate visually as moving parts of a unified mass. In the resulting rhetoric of survivorship, the unified body became connected with the optimistic, if perhaps slightly belligerent, tone of Freedom Tower as opposed to the isolation of being in The Void. As discussed in the next section, this vantage point of height not only helped visitors to rise above the tragedy; it also promoted the powerful position of surveillance.

Surviving the Commemoration through Symbolic Surveillance

Freedom Tower may have offered an antidote for the vulnerability of The Void,
but this antidote’s emphasis on surveillance began to complicate the “black/white” rhetorical prescription offered from the interdependence of the symbolic depth of The Void and height of Freedom Tower. In so doing, the shift, first symbolically and then as an explicit revision, marks a unique modern commemoration trend that emphasizes rectification as commemoration through surveillance and prevention. In this section, I look at how the Twin Towers’ symbolism of surveillance reaffirms America’s sacred identity post-September 11th as a response to the attacks. In the next section, I discuss the very real emphasis on safety and prevention that revised Libeskind’s Freedom Tower into Child’s One World Trade Center.

Through surveillance lust, Freedom Tower became not just about unifying America, but asserted America’s position as a “global-overseer” in order to make the world legible through sight and height. In Libeskind’s publicly chosen design, a symbolic claim of surveillance was created by the shape, height and symbolic elements of the tower’s design. While the shape of Freedom Tower may have seemed less powerful than the boxy durability of the Twin Towers, this tower had a more pronounced disciplinary position. Freedom Tower symbolically situated America as the watchful eye over the rest of the world. There was no need for more than one tower because the singular eye could see all. The spire lengthened the building until the very tip was almost invisible in the sky. Within the spire was slated to be an indoor garden coined, “Garden in the Sky”, a symbolic affirmation of life and a reaffirmation of America's growing prosperity. The future would inevitably give way to taller buildings, yet the spire and its gardens were metaphoric surveillance “teasers” to how high and how much Americans could see and from how far American symbols can be seen. According to Witold Rybczynski, a
professor of urbanism, skyscrapers are boastful, “and they declare it so that you can see it from far, far away. And they are very self-confident, which is perhaps the most terrible thing about Sept. 11. Our self-confidence has been rocked” (qtd. in “Skyscrapers are Here”, E1). The tower was a response to the focus of erasure. As mentioned, a skyscraper was requirement of the competition. Its necessity was argued in public discourse as an imperative response to the attacks, “raised a middle finger” that showed the world, and specifically, the terrorists, that we were, are, and will, continue to be a surveyor of the world.

One of the major questions asked after September 11 was: “Why didn’t we see what was coming?” The push towards surveillance at a national commemorative site responds to the spatial struggle of the attacks. de Certeau defines strategies as actions of power structures that establish space over time, enhance sight through surveillance, and “transform the uncertainties of history into readable spaces” (36). Tactics operate within the territory of strategy by the “art of the weak” through “isolated actions, blow by blow” (37). There is a sense in which the terrorists were therefore the ultimate tacticians. They used every day, banal resources available to them within the system to resist and attack the system. This tactical practice in turn raises the need for a panoptic strategy. Freedom Tower was a strategy that allowed a way to project that Americans are enhancing sight. Yet, according to de Certeau, the presumed power of being at the top of the skyscraper creates a fictional knowledge that in actuality fulfills “the lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more.” This fiction “creates readers, makes the city readable, and immobilizes its opaque mobility in a transparent text” (92). Therefore, on the surface, the viewer - whether the American, the terrorist, or the world community - was given a simple reading.
of an American identity that reclaimed a brute power over the world, and one that has united a country that was once divided. Yet, the original design attempted to conceal the larger, longer and much more complicated responses to the attacks of 9/11.

Shoring up the Design for Rectification

Amidst the growing climate of insecurity created by terrorist bombings in London, a failing preemptive war, and recurring discourse from the September 11 Commission and security officials that America was not secure, the viability of Freedom Tower, as a workplace, took discursive center stage. In an effort to sell Freedom Tower not as a sanctified commemoration for visitors, but as a workplace for thousands of people, the explicit emphasis on surveillance, prevention, and safety became a necessity. I argue that, through Child’s design, the shift from sanctification to rectification is realized. As the designers struggle to achieve a balance between sanctified and rectified space and confront the more pressing concern of renting out the tower, Child's major revision puts a material emphasis on the building as a safe work space. Therefore the emphasis of the focal tower is shifted from the visitor to the worker at the imagined site.

First, I will discuss the continuing issue of people not wanting to work in Freedom Tower. I will then discuss Child's blueprints, which shifts the emphasis to rectification through safety features, surveillance, and by further distinction from the sanctified memorial space, including The Void.

The building still has abundant lease space available except for a certain square footage promised by the government for government agencies. In 2006, the Port Authority took back the building from Silverstein who claimed the new design would not be profitable. However, the Port Authority, although owners of the space, announced that
it would not put its employees in the buildings because they lost 84 colleagues in the September 11, 2001 attacks. Other federal agency workers who were originally housed in the Twin Towers said they would be unable to go back to working at the site because of the memories of the events and the presence of the absent bodies. Tax auditor, Alicia Ferrer, stated "It would be beyond imaginable to put someone back there. If you had to go back there every day where you know their souls and spirits have to be, I don't know. I couldn't do it every single day" (qtd. by McGeehan). Safety concerns also emerged about Freedom Tower because of its name, height, and other symbolic assertions, which some claim mark it as a target of terrorism. A Pace University study cited that of 500 downtown residents, only 29% would feel safe being in Freedom Tower. One resident claimed that sitting in a target would be disquieting (MacBride 17). Further, in 2005, one of the few confirmed major lessees in the area, the company Goldman Sachs, threatened to pull out of rebuilding, in part because of security concerns. In response to all these fears, Daniel Benjamin claims Freedom Tower “ignores the difference between heroic resolve and foolishness. Dangling an iconic and indefensible target in front of terrorists is inconsistent with a strategy of reducing our vulnerabilities wherever possible” (A23). In effect, the original Freedom Tower design that suggested a symbolic “unified America” antidote to visitors of the commemoration, also, in part, caused resistance to working in the building. In consequence, new rhetoric, and a new tower, emerged in order to help reassure workers.

The redesign of Freedom Tower, more than ever, focuses on a rhetoric of workers and how to make them be in the space. In both designs, Freedom Tower will be one of the tallest buildings in the world, yet office space will cease after the first 1000 feet. In the
major revision by David Childs, there is an even greater shift from symbolic surveillance to a very real emphasis on security and prevention, making an explicit connection between impermeability and vulnerability. The new Freedom Tower is comprised of a series of slanted and tapering sides that form an octagon in the middle of the tower. The perimeter of the building has shrunk and a 200-foot concrete base has been added. Along with the loss of its asymmetrical design, the angled spire, wind turbines, and topmost cabling have been eliminated for safety and economic concerns. A replacement spire to be used as a media antenna, situated in the center of the structure’s roof, will light up at night and therefore, according to Child’s description, will mirror the torch of the Statue of Liberty (Getlin 10). The base, having been described as a bomb “shelter,” “fortress,” or in its more marketable terms, “a pedestal,” will be virtually windowless, reinforced by blast resistant materials of titanium and steel. The formerly torqued building has been straightened in an effort to withstand impacts, allowing for structural redundancy, in which some areas of the building will be able to stand in for other sections in case of an impact. Within the building there will be a solid concrete core used to strengthen the structure and operate as a shell for emergency life systems and walkways. To further address security concerns, the tower has also been moved from its original placement 25 feet from West Street to 90 feet from West Street. The changes have not gone entirely unnoticed in public discourse. The “shoring up” of the design has been described as a “symbol of a city still in the grip of fear” and an “icon of nervousness” (Ouroussof B1; Davidson A05).

In addition, the symbolic surveillance discussed by de Certeau and Barthes in relation to skyscrapers has transferred into explicit panoptic surveillance features in and
around the site. Homeland security created the lower Manhattan Security Initiative, which issued a 36-page report focusing on New York City security, primarily in lower Manhattan. Among the proposals, technology will allow for all vehicles entering Manhattan to be scanned and recorded, as well as sensors to detect radioactive, chemical, and biological substances. If the plan is fully funded, at least 3,000 advanced public and private cameras will be placed in various areas south of Canal Street, joining the 4,200 private and public cameras already installed below 14th street. (Buckley 1). Surveillance will operate under a central command center in lower Manhattan at 55 Broadway focusing on the WTC site and World Financial Center. At the WTC site, guard booths will be put in place allowing limited access to vehicles in the area. Delivery and service vehicles will be directed to underground bomb screening sites before entry (Bagli 1). Further monitoring, screening, and detection will be implemented within Freedom Tower as well. Many of the other security and monitoring measures are classified, and several complaints and suits have already been filed by the New York Civil Liberties Union asking for further information on how the monitoring information will be used. Perhaps most importantly, the material move to shoring up the design and explicitly moving to panoptic technology is a reminder that Freedom Tower may not lead to freedom after all; instead, this antidote may actually be predicated on a higher level of restriction and suspicion.

Even with all the additional security measures, the symbolic name, Freedom Tower could not survive. In 2009, Freedom Tower officially lost its name to business. In Child’s official description of the site, as well as in the LMDC’s revised description of the tower it is referred to as One World Trade Center. The official announcement was
made that Freedom Tower was being renamed One World Trade Center around March 2009. This announcement coincided with the first private tenants signing a lease to work in the tower--the Chinese firm, Vantone Industry. The chairman of the Port Authority, Anthony Coscia, stated, “As we market the building, we will ensure that the building is presented in the best possible way” (qtd. by Topousis). Also gone is the emphasis on symbolism in press releases and descriptions for the tower design from the LMDC website. Of the three paragraph official description, two paragraphs are devoted to the preventive safety measures that will make One World Trade Center “unprecedented in terms of life safety and security.” In addition, the tower is commonly separated from discussions of the memorial. Recent announcements claim the memorial will be built first and the office building will come later, while in earlier stages of planning, Freedom Tower was central to the commemorative design. Michael Arad, lead designer of the memorial within The Void, stated the revised tower was "a quieter and simpler form" that "doesn't compete with the memorial” (Dunlap and Collins 1). While visitors to the memorial will also be visitors to the tower, Child’s design emphasizes the desire to draw a greater distinction between a sanctified space at The Void for visitors and a rectified space at One World Trade Center for workers.

The overt move toward material security reflects the difficulty of fulfilling the dual promises of a space as rectified and sanctified. In the growing conflict between Mayor Bloomberg, Governor Pataki, the developers, and the public, whether the solution becomes adding more impermeability to the structure to “ease” Americans’ fears or creating a completely new design for the site, the situation provokes lease problems, ethical concerns, and hierarchical survivor rhetoric. Those companies that had signed up
to work in the building are now retracting their agreements because of construction delays, while the owners attempt to ease the fears of other potential tenants. Ethical issues also emerge. Many government employees argue they will be forced to work in fear because of the desired need to project a unified American identity in the commemoration. Perhaps most importantly, the symbolic “unified America” as survivors comes into question in public discourse. A hierarchy of survivorship has begun to form. The Port Authority claims the number of people they lost in the attacks makes it understandable why they will not go back to the building. The question, who has the right “not” to work in One World Trade Center, the workspace, is now a hot debate, as opposed to the question, who “gets” to work in Freedom Tower, the sanctified, heroic commemoration? Perhaps most evident, is the challenges rectification undergoes at a site that seems to demand sanctification because of the memory of the body, the reality of it as a gravesite, and the erasure of the Towers. Various forms of the skyscrapers have been the preferred marker of memory and inspiration, but perhaps not when living bodies are asked to spend their days in those markers. The site seems to resist rectification and in turn, rectification as a commemorative activity undergoes its own transformation that emphasizes surveillance and prevention as part of healing process of survivorship.

Survivor Rhetoric and Temporary Adjustments

What can the dialogue between the designs for the WTC site tell us about a growing “embarrassment” to the city? Studying the rhetoric of the designation stage points to the impermanence of the designs and the challenges of imagining how bodies will interact in a space. The tour through the designs marks the importance of studying artifacts during the designation stage. The temporary designs illuminate the shifting
historical moment. They highlight the struggle of meaning and use at the site. And they underscore a common trend in commemoration, which promotes healing as a major facet of commemorative space.

The designation stage speaks to the specificity of the historical moment. The earliest designs were created in the months after the attacks. This, coupled with a public campaign, led to design elements that may have been more symbolic than practical, but highlighted designated emotional spaces for emotional responses. In Libeskind’s design, which is quickly disappearing from public dialogue, the sanctification of the space and of America and American identity was the primary focus. The potential visitors in the design were postured as victims through the memorial space of The Void. In response, Freedom Tower promised an antidote for this vulnerability through a strong and unified democracy. Yet, the democracy projected was reductive and predicated itself on a version of expectionalist nationalism. This placed the focus not only on our differences from other countries but eventually, on our differences from each other.

With the tonal shift to rectification in Child’s design, surveillance, safety, and prevention became a major emphasis of commemorative activity. This joins other such strategies like the Patriot Act, airport screenings, random road checks, and preemptive wars. Michel Foucault might call this “the perfected form of surveillance, a summation of malveillance” that leads to a circulating mistrust for those around us as we police each other while boarding a plane, viewing Internet surveillance of public areas, or visiting iconic sites of commemoration (158). Child’s revision accentuates a unique rectification commemorative posture for the site over the original sanctification desires. The focus of the design is on the worker and the material rhetoric prescribes safety and prevention as
the means to survive the memory and future fear of terrorism. The material rhetoric of the major revision suggests that the freedom promised from the democracy promoted in the commemoration will not provide freedom from the fear of Freedom Tower as a workspace.

The two designs emphasize alternative prescriptions for dealing with the attacks and promote a healing rhetoric. Yet, the revision to the design, which attempts to deal with the historical climate by designating separate spaces for sanctification and rectification within the same area, may not be enough of a negotiation. The lack of space leased in One World Trade Center suggests that a rhetoric of survivors that shares space with a rhetoric of workers may prove to be too far from the scope of successful survivor rhetoric at a commemoration space of recent terrorist violence. It also suggests that the space is resisting rectification as a commemorative response to the attacks of September 11, 2001.

Foote claims designation stages are often prolonged because of unresolved meaning. He asserts these spaces “must be gradually linked to and interpreted within a broader vision of local, regional, or national history” (294). In the first design, healing is focused around sanctification. In the major revision, healing is attempted by rectifying the site. In both cases, discourse about the design and the designs themselves position people as survivors of the attack. Blair and Michel suggest that a rhetoric of survivors is a growing trend in public commemoration, and a tone of healing is becoming prominent in and about national commemorations. They warn that a focus on healing trauma may offer challenges for the future of public commemoration. The designs point to some of these challenges. One of these complications is a competing interpretation of what it means to
heal. Particularly, what does it mean to heal sites of terrorism? Does healing require sanctification, rectification, or both? I will continue to explore these issues throughout the dissertation. Further, the focus on healing works in conjunction with another growing commemoration trend: our quickness to commemorate, or plans to commemorate events that are all too recent in public memory. The commemorative imagination, while temporary in nature, may be responsible for us living in and with the wound much longer than we would have, had the discussions of rebuilding happened at a longer temporal remove from the original attacks. More importantly, the quickness to plan may lead to a less public commemoration influenced more by the private interests of both families in need of healing and an economy in need of healing.
END NOTES

1 The revisions were designed behind closed doors with no public input. This is in direct contrast to the winning design by Libeskind which was chosen in the public design competition.

2 The Port Authority, a regional agency for New York and New Jersey, owns the land on which the WTC stood. Private realtor, Larry Silverstein, held the lease on the buildings at the time of the attacks. A state agency, the Metropolitan Transit Authority, controls the transportation hub of the area. An Australian retail corporation owns approximately 1 million square feet of the mall space of the WTC that was destroyed. Insurers of these agencies along with nearby residents and families of victims are also seeking a voice in the rebuilding project.

3 According to accounts from Libeskind’s book, Pataki told Libeskind’s lawyer that the picture they had given the governor, capturing Libeskind in front of a haystack resembled Pataki’s own background, pushed him to choose Libeskind over THINK (187).

4 It is becoming increasingly rare to find Daniel Libeskind’s name in relation to the World Trade Center project at all. Daniel Libeskind’s website no longer lists the site as one of his current projects so it is unclear what his involvement is or will be in the future.

5 Theorists Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp and Lori A. Lanzilotti use Burke's notion that domination of a scene constrains the agents involved in their discussion of the importance of the site in commemoration of tragic deaths. Burke’s conception of the
pentad is most specifically described in Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives.*
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CHAPTER 4
TEMPORARY BODIES AND THEIR MATERIAL LEGACY

“If anything is sacred, the human body is sacred”
-Walt Whitman

On May 30, 2002, fire department bells rang and a procession, led by an empty stretcher draped with the American flag, exited the WTC Site. The ceremony was the symbolic end to the search for human remains. (Hampson 2A; Steinhauer 1). The absence of the body, marked by the empty stretcher, may have put the body to rest symbolically, but the material body remains a major rhetorical force at the WTC Site. In the words of Marita Sturken, the body is “the material refuse of 9/11 [that is] fraught with conflict and contested meanings” (166). The power of this material refuse will be examined in this chapter. More specifically, this chapter will explore the role of the deceased body, not necessarily in terms of what it means, but how it operates as grounds for and evidence for arguments that differentiate human remains from each other. In so doing, the remains are keyed rhetorically, accreting the potential to decisively reshape the WTC site. As discussed in prior chapters, much of the early planning and many of the temporary memorials have constructed material definitions of the symbolic American family. The body has been construed as the family body both in arguments for rectification as well as sanctification proposals for the site. The difference is that in some cases the body
emphasized is the private family’s body, and in other cases it is constructed as the American family body, sometimes working together while at other times offering conflicting narratives. I argue here that the material remains of the body serve as the grounds for powerful physical arguments that promote a stronger influence of the private family, and must be negotiated with the symbolic representations of the public, American family.

In this chapter, I seek to understand the differential ways in which people seem to understand the remains themselves as well as their significance. I suggest that the distinguishing arguments about the presence of remains, the quantity of remains found, the state in which they are found, and the past activity of the bodies have serious implications for the rebuilding and commemorative projects at and about the WTC site. These arguments have come to dictate the amount of sacred space at the site, what types of discourse will be promoted within the site, the pace of rebuilding, and the shape of the official commemoration. In so doing, the arguments create a hierarchy among the deceased bodies at the WTC site. In developing these lines of inquiry, I first position the body within the discussion of bodily rhetoric and the physical nature of the public sphere. I then discuss evolving moments from the site to show the role of bodily remains in transforming the scope of the commemoration. I organize these examples into the major categories of arguments being made about and by means of the remains: 1) the presence of remains, 2) the quantity of remains, 3) the state of remains and 4) the history of the remains in terms of their past activities. Before offering concluding remarks, I emphasize the importance of the body’s temporary status in relation to the lasting consequences for the redevelopment of lower Manhattan.
Rhetoric of the Body

As noted in the introduction, the body as an artifact of rhetoric is a relatively recent area of inquiry for rhetorical studies. The body has been investigated more thoroughly in relation to gender implications and social movement scholarship in both the ways the body is disciplined by and offers resistance to particular narratives. Yet, the role of the deceased body is a relatively neglected area of exploration, particularly in relation to the material importance of its presence, interaction with other bodies, and influence in physical places of violence and commemoration. The debates in social movement scholarship that took place in the early 1970s articulated a narrow understanding of the body in regard to violence. The body as a performer of violent action was used as evidence of its rhetorical inferiority to rational discourse. The inferiority of violent action as a tactic of coercion precluded the body from being further explored. In 1964, Leland Griffin coined the term “body rhetoric” and then dismissed its possibility as an ethical and rational means of persuasion when he divided the body into two camps: the nonviolent body that supports persuasion and the violent body that is distinguished from persuasion altogether (119-120). Physical rhetoric, or body rhetoric, is defined by Griffin as “by choice absurd (i.e., essentially non-rational; coercive rather than persuasive; dependent on ‘seat of the pants’ rather than ‘seat of the intellect’)” (127).

More recent visual rhetoric scholarship broadens the exploration into violence enacted on the body and its rhetorical force in the public sphere. Kevin Michel Deluca and Jennifer Peeples use the term “public screen” in their argument that dissemination of the images of violence enacted on nonviolent bodies during social protests has the ability to constitute publics for social action (143-144). Further, David Allen Grindstaff and
Kevin Michael Deluca argue that the American journalist, Daniel Pearl, “through torture, is transformed into raw material for multiple discourses of terrorism and nationalism” (308). Images of his deceased body and his severed head are used as a recruitment tools in the Middle East, as evidence to encourage the American government to act, and as a contested artifact in Pakistan that has led to outbreaks of collective violence (306). The authors offer these examples as evidence that the non-violent body subject to violent death can quickly create publics.

Images of the dying or deceased body are powerful rhetoric of public formation because they provoke moral responses from the viewer. In her analysis of recent American POWs and combat casualties, Cori Dauber finds that even the fear that gruesome images of American bodies will create dissenting publics has the ability to change military policy (668). Most important for thinking about the power of the dying or deceased body on the public, Dauber’s analysis finds that the greater the body in peril, the more it resists a contextual narrative to explain or justify it (674). This connection between the viewing of the deceased body and the material effects is explored in Christine Harold and Deluca’s scholarship on Emmett Till. Emmett’s mother, Mamie Till Bradley, insisted on exposing her son’s body in its raw form (she refused retouching from the funeral director). In turn, gruesome images were widely published in magazines and newspapers (272). As mentioned in Chapter One, the public viewing of the material body created further public outcry, which in turn led to the extended use of the images and reference to the murder in various contexts.

This scholarship points to the importance of images of the deceased body as an area of analysis. Yet, in privileging images and virtual experience of the dying body,
scholars have neglected the spatial implications of the body, particularly in relation to the events of September 11. Slavoj Žižek argues that a derealization of horror occurred during our viewing of September 11th footage where the virtual disaster replaced substance, and the material event lacked inertia. Žižek claims the relatively low coverage of actual carnage created boundaries between the real and the virtual (17). Žižek points to this as one of the reasons 9/11 was not taken as an opportunity for America to analyze its position in the world but instead was used as a means for America to reposition itself as a victim. Because of the lack of force of the material body, Žižek argues, historical traumas that are not remembered through their gruesome reality continue to haunt, to act as insistences. The majority of critical studies of September 11, particularly in rhetoric and media studies, do seem to be evidence that the physical body has lost resistance, at least in scholarship. Yet, the WTC site and the spatial implications of the deceased body are a valuable area of study precisely because, in relation to the public commemoration space, the bodily remains actually dictate the scope of the largest commemoration project in America’s history.

The Presence of Remains

In the last five years, major legal arguments have ensued about the removal of remains from the WTC site. Sturken claims that these discussions are defined by the absence of remains and the quest for identification (209). Yet, really what propels organized groups of family members to seek legal action and influence rebuilding policies is the continued presence of remains and the hope for their identification. As of January 7, 2010, of the official 2,759 victims, more than 1,100 have not yet been identified. Of the 21,000 partial remains that have been found, many have not been
identified due to severe damage from heat and the passage of time (“Two Women”, 16). The continued discovery of remains at the WTC site during this current designation stage is the foundation for the argument that supports the site as sacred and as the only legitimate site for commemoration, specifically because it is functionally a gravesite.

On March 26, 2006, the Deutsche Bank building adjacent to the site was being prepared for demolition when several bone fragments were found on the rooftop. This discovery halted preparation for the building’s destruction and prompted a more thorough combing of it for fragments. The building became “a graveyard waiting to be found” (Smith 8). By December 2006, almost 700 sets of partial bodily remains were recovered from the bank. According to Rosaleen Tallon, who lost her brother in the attacks, “You can’t dismantle that building that quickly now -- we need to make sure other interests are not coming before the preservation of human dignity” (Dwyer and Barron 4). For Tallon, the preservation of the private body is an issue of dignity that must come before the creation of the symbolic memorial of and for the American family.

In October of 2006, several manholes were found to contain further remains, including one where over 200 sets of remains were found. Families of the victims organized rallies to call for more careful inspection at the site. In response, Mayor Bloomberg announced that the city would extend the search to 12 different locations, including hotel roof tops, service roads and foundational plots (Dunlap “Where the City Will Search”). A team of forensic anthropologists then worked at the site, doing spot excavations that included searching beneath temporary asphalt roads laid after the attacks. Family organizations have continued to seek even more recovery effort, suggesting military forensic team intervention and FEMA support. The city has denied these requests. The families have also requested that the debris, which was taken from the
site during the recovery effort, be carefully sifted through. In December 2007, the official excavation project came to a close, with a possible 1772 bone fragments, many of which were less than four inches long, found since September 2005. As the rebuilding process continues, there will be mobile units present to aide in the recovery of further remains. For the city, the preservation of dignity has a hefty price tag, as the official excavation project has cost 38 million dollars (Cardwell 2).

These discoveries, and therefore, the presence of bodily remains have serious implications for the rebuilding and commemorating process. The continued discovery of bodily remains has severely affected the pace of rebuilding and officially commemorating the site. Many times in recent years building projects have come to a complete halt because of the discovery of bone fragments. Roads have been excavated and buildings that need to be torn down before further rebuilding can continue have had to be more carefully examined for remains. Even more significant, the promise of identification of the remains has sparked arguments regarding all aspects of the remains including quantity, state, and past life. In turn, these remains and their arguments are altering the speed, size, and shape of the WTC commemoration project.

Quantity of Remains Found

The quantity of bodily remains found at the WTC site dictates what is considered sacred space and therefore, the size and type of “public” space that should be allowed around the sanctified grounds. In June 2002, Pataki announced, “We will never build where the towers stood” (Dunlap “Marking”, B3). From this, a sacred border was created called the “memorial quadrant” in the area where the majority of bodies were discovered. However, Fire Department maps show that bodily remains were and continue to be found
in almost all areas in and around the WTC, even where the Freedom Tower was planned.\textsuperscript{5} The memorial quadrant began to expand, and it is now slated to be a 6.5-acre block. The evidence of bodily remains has sustained the argument, successfully so far, for a larger emphasis on sanctified space and less on rectified space, particularly in relation to proposals that “threaten” the private family’s body. Yet, from a planner’s perspective, there is a desire to contain the expansion of the sacred site. If the space needs to remain “empty” for sacred purposes then the original four office towers, the International Freedom Center, the performing arts center and a half-million square feet of retail space are put in limbo. With the expanding influence of the bodily remains, the original plans are being drastically revised, and new constraints are being put on what type of buildings, and what type of discourses, will be allowed in the commemoration zone.

Four cultural institutions were chosen from over 100 to be part of the master plan for the cultural and performing arts complex. The chosen four were: the Drawing Room - a museum currently located in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of Soho, The International Freedom Center - a planned center to examine the role of freedom in the world, The James Joyce Theater - a place for dance, and the Signature Theater - an off-Broadway company. Since the invitation, two of the four, the Drawing Room and the International Freedom Center, have been dis-invited because they have been deemed inappropriate for the sacred ground where so many lives were lost. In June 2005 the Drawing Room was criticized for an exhibit that satirized George W. Bush’s comments about the Axis of Evil. While the Drawing Room received a lot of support, and was three years of work into the planning stage, it also received a lot of criticism, particularly from victim’s families who organized petitions about the content of the museum. The chairman
of the WTC Memorial Foundation (and former chair of the LMDC), John Whitehead, suggested looking for a place further from the Twin Towers’ footprint (Souccar 1). Soon after, the Drawing Room voluntarily decided to withdraw plans to move to the WTC site after Governor Pataki requested assurance from all cultural institutions in the sacred ground that their content would not be un-American in nature (Souccar 1).

One of the prominent family groups, Take Back The Memorial, praised The Drawing Room’s voluntary retreat from the area (Gardner). However, they did not have such an easy time with The International Freedom Center (IFC). Take Back The Memorial was actually founded, after more specific plans for the IFC were made public, in order to oppose building the center on or near the sacred ground. The movement was motivated by an opinion piece by Debra Burlingame, a sister of the co-pilot on the September 11, 2001 flight that crashed into the Pentagon. Burlingame claimed that the museum would overtake the physical space needed to learn about the events of that day. She also claimed the IFC proposal should be questioned because its main supporters and financers were outspoken on government policies after September 11, like The Patriot Act, and have fought for human rights of detainees in the Iraq War, therefore implying their lack of patriotism. Take Back the Memorial, on which she is a board member, claims in its mission statement, that Ground Zero is no place for politics, and the group enacted a campaign to eliminate the IFC from the area. In response, longtime New York Times correspondent for the rebuilding of the WTC site, David Dunlap, stated that the LMDC and Pataki faced a tough choice. “They could either infuriate hundreds of impassioned relatives of those who died, or alienate influential cultural, academic and business figures, as well as family members who support the center” (“Freedom Center”).
Pataki chose to appease the organization when he expanded the size of the memorial quadrant to 6.5 acres, using as a rationale that the IFC could not be placed within the sanctified space of the quadrant. In 2005, Pataki announced that the area that the International Freedom Center had been slated to occupy needed to remain “empty” for sacred purposes, acknowledging the sacred area has tripled in size since the original plan in 2002 (Dunlap “Marking”, B3).

The issues about building in proximity to the remains are not limited to the museums. Recently it was raised that the performing arts complex, slated to be designed by Frank Gehry, may not be appropriate for a sacred site either. Some family members have even suggested the activities of the complex would be inappropriate because the performers would be “dancing on graves” (Dunlap “Marking”, B3). While there is no official word on the performing arts center, funding and plans have been almost obsolete. Further, in 2007, the Signature Theater pulled out of the area due to logistics, leaving only The James Joyce Theater. By 2008, there was still no fundraising campaign or leadership for the performing arts complex. The World Trade Center Memorial Foundation, which was to oversee the development, had put all of its fundraising efforts into the 9/11 memorial and museum, and with the mounting costs of that project, the future of the complex was rather grim (Taylor). In 2009, it was suggested that the complex be moved to the former location of the Deutsche Bank outside the quadrant for practicality, and concern over the underground development at the site. Because of the continued “hold” on the plans, there is significant concern that the project will never be realized (Pogreiben).
The argument about the size of the sacred memorial space has important rhetorical implications. First, it is evident that the bodily remains are the grounds for arguments about the expansion of commemoration space. Second, the sacred body as a major issue in rebuilding has constituted, called into existence, groups - powerful family groups - that have major political influence. For example, Take Back the Memorial, mustering the influence of the deceased body and a relatively small group of about 15 activists, virtually eliminated an entire portion of the original design, a design that was voted on in a public competition. In the process, other family groups formed, including groups to protect the footprints, to oversee burial of remains, and to support national security efforts. In turn, others have been alienated, including large numbers of families who silently supported the IFC, as well as lower Manhattan residents and businesses. For instance, philanthropist and former MOMA director, Ann Gund, resigned from the memorial board after the controversy surrounding the IFC. In her resignation, she wrote, “I fear that certain vocal family members, who as near as I can tell do not represent a majority of anything, have taken over the process and are uninterested entirely in the needs of the people who actually live and work in lower Manhattan” (Kolker 7).

With the expansion of sacred space and the formation of family organizations specifically to negotiate the memorial space, the body has been used successfully as an argument for what discourses should happen in a commemoration space. Families have successfully advocated for a narrow description and history of September 11, 2001 at the site, keeping the focus on the event itself without a larger cultural context. In so doing, the private family becomes a key player in supporting a definition of American democracy similar to the one found in Freedom Tower and its American exceptionalist
rhetoric. An article in opposition to the removal of the IFC by the editorial staff at *The New York Times* claims that the Take Back the Memorial mission demands, “ground zero must contain no facilities ‘that house controversial debate, dialogue, artistic impressions, or exhibits referring to extraneous historical events.’ This, to us, sounds un-American” (1).

Yet, the support by the government for expanding sacred space is not necessarily at odds with the arguments in my earlier chapters with respect to the evolving definition of sacred space as rectified space. The limited expansion actually can be seen as a political attempt to protect this definition. The way Pataki responded to the call of the families may very well be an attempt to negotiate the future of office space, particularly in relation to Freedom Tower. Pataki announced the need for empty memorial space after the IFC controversy. He also did so after it was further discussed that bodily remains were found where Freedom Tower is planned. He established the terminology “Memorial Quadrant”, justifying the containment of the memorial by the four major roadways to act as more solid boundaries. In so doing, he attempted to identify Freedom Tower as a solid part of the memorial even though it should, like, the rest of the space; need to remain empty for sacred purposes, if consistency were a standard.

**State of Remains**

Whether the remains are in dust form or are comprised of larger body parts has become grounds for how much sacred status they receive. The state of bodily remains has played a huge role in the promise of identification for the families. Further, the excitement and disappointment over DNA testing have led to the fight for more testing. In turn, bodily remains create both compensatory memorials and particular exhibits in the
official memorial design. In order to establish this line of inquiry, I first look at the DNA project at the site; I then discuss the major lawsuit and subsequent memorial at the Fresh Kills Park, and finally, I explore the incorporation of remains within the official WTC memorial design.

The initial DNA testing investment was 80 million dollars and took place for 3 1/2 years following the attacks. The project was loosely “closed” in June 2005 (Lipton 34). During this time, New York City invested in two new advanced DNA technologies to attempt further identification for the 16,000 body parts recovered from the site. In the initial stages of testing with standard technology, 1592 positive identifications were made. However, utilizing the new technologies only 111 more were added to the list of positive identifications. In many cases, positive identification came after a person had already been identified by another body part. As of 2005, the total number of victims identified reached 59%. In September of 2006, the testing resumed because of further advancements on DNA extraction as well as the discovery of more remains.

Much of the refuse from the collapse of the WTC was brought to a previously closed landfill, Fresh Kills, in Staten Island during the cleanup process. The Fresh Kills landfill, a controversial toxic center that is large enough to be seen from space, was opened in 1947 and closed in May of 2001. Named for its location on the Fresh Kills estuary in western Staten Island, the 2,200 acres reopened for approximately 10 months in the days after September 11 to aid in the recovery and removal efforts. Shortly after, a group called W.T.C. Families for Proper Burial was formed after the city medical examiner, Dr. Hirsch, claimed that he was virtually certain that there were remains in the landfill, many of which had been reduced to dust or ash. The family organization wanted
the mound of wreckage to be sorted for possible identification and the dust returned to the WTC Site for burial. Bloomberg announced plans to turn the former landfill into a park around this time as well. The park, described as the California of New York, is slated to be a vast area of ecology refuge and recreation, three times the size of Central Park. The original park plans also include a memorial to September 11 to commemorate the recovery effort at the site. After planners learned of the families’ discomfort with remains being buried in a landfill, a separate memorial for the victims has been suggested at the mound where most of the wreckage was buried. The memorial is slated to be two earthen sculptures as long as the Twin Towers were tall. Yet, the family organization asserts that a memorial would offer no solace from the idea that their loved ones were buried as garbage, and they sued the city of New York. They lost their lawsuit against the city in 2008. In December 2009, the case was taken to the United States Court of Appeals and as of March 2010, the case is still being heard. The memorial and park are still in the planning stage. For the time being, the Department of Parks and Recreation offers tours of the site twice a month and the project is slated to be completed by 2016.

To design the memorial at the site of the attacks, on January 6, 2004, architects Michael Arad and landscape architect Peter Walker were chosen as the winners of the competition. Their design, entitled Reflecting Absence, includes a room located in the depths of the museum of a “very private nature” to be used by the relatives of the victims for private contemplation. Unprecedented in recent commemoration, this room is slated to include what has been termed The Vessel, a refrigerated tomb of over a thousand unidentified remains of those lost in the attacks. The remains not identified were to be placed in the refrigerated Vessel with a window provided into the room in order for
relatives to view the chamber as a whole. The Vessel would also be accessible for the Medical Examiner as DNA technology improves. For the families of the victims, the chamber would act as a (temporary?) gravesite for those that have been lost.

As more specific details were released and bids made for the memorial construction, the practicality of the tomb as a physical space for housing the remains was called into question. Anne Papageorge, senior vice president of the LMDC, in discussing the beginning of construction, states, “Seeing the physical reality begin is very important. And very moving” (Dunlap “Clash”, 3). However, the vessel promised to the families of the dead by the memorial competition jury is now slated to offer a symbolic, empty vessel for remembrance, not for their material remains. Papageorge contends that the practicality of adequate refrigeration, size, and access to the remains made it necessary that the remains be stored elsewhere. In the new plans, the remains will be kept in a climate-controlled room 35 feet from the symbolic vessel, and an adjoining vestibule will offer relatives a view into the room where the remains are stored. The new plans for the bodily remains have caused opposition from both the W.T.C Families for Proper Burial and Take Back the Memorial organization. According to the president of W.T.C Families for Proper Burial, “Our loved ones aren’t symbolically dead. But everything that’s been given to us is symbolic” (Dunlap “Clash”, 3).

This quote by a victim’s family member articulates the continuing battle between the private family and their need for material closure, and the projection of a larger American family and its more symbolic and abstract message. In both the cases of Fresh Kills and Reflecting Absence, the bodily remains help make arguments for physical space and are major forces in the shape and scope of the memorial design. The material body
alters the symbolic *essence* of memorializing, creating controversy over what the function of the memorial should be. The remains also constitute activists groups and are used as arguments for what the space should look like.

For Fresh Kills, the presence of the remains at the site made way for compensatory memorials, both in the initial plans and after the fight with W.T.C. Families for Proper Burial. While the rhetoric of the space varies from “California” to “burying our loved ones with garbage”, the plans for the park, which increased and shifted dramatically after the controversy about the bodily remains, highlight the power of the private family in governing the use of public space. At the same time, the controversy highlights the importance of the state of remains in the planning process. Sturken claims that the dust, from the debris of ground zero, has been held up in the past as highly important part of the mourning process of 9/11. Yet, when the Fresh Kills lawsuit was originally decided, the judge determined that all that was left at the site was unidentifiable dust. In so doing, he justified his ruling not to reopen the landfill to families because of the inability to identify such small quantities of bodily remains. Significance was given to the actual weight of the body parts in determining how much attention remains would receive, whether through DNA testing or proper burial.

In Arad and Walker’s design, remains became part of the vessel project in case DNA technology was to improve. Again, the state of the remains was given significance. If they were large enough for possible future identification they were set apart for memorial display. Others argue that those left as dust or at least among the dust and not yet found, are reduced to trash. The distinction made by the remains being set apart within the memorial has other public consequences as well. The idea of a room and
vessel, material or symbolic, creates boundaries for private and public grief. The remains create limitations of movement for publics who are not part of “the very private nature.” Further, it is unclear who will be considered family and whether or not un-married partners (by choice or by United State’s laws) be allowed access to their loved ones. In the planned memorial, there is a much stronger divide between public and private space than in the Oklahoma City National Memorial. While the Oklahoma City National Memorial has a separate area, the chair exhibit, set apart for family mourning, ceremonies, and reflection, the public is allowed to observe the private grief, from behind a roped off area. At the WTC site, the bodily remains are used as material evidence for the inclusion of a space dedicated solely to the private family that excludes the larger American family.

The Past Activity of the Remains

Whether remains are sacred or not, at least officially, also depends on the deceased person’s job, proximity to the disaster, and other activities his/her body performed in life. The very materiality of the body matters most in determining who is a victim of September 11, and therefore, what bodies are defined as sacred. For this final argument, I look at four specific cases in which the remains of the body and its past activities are used as rationales for its inclusion or exclusion for official victim status of the attacks. I explore the cases of Felicia Dunn-Jones, a women who worked in the area of the attack; Detective James Zadroga, a first responder; Sneha Anne Philip, a women who has been missing since the attacks; and the remains of several of the hijackers of the planes that crashed into the Twin Towers.
While dust was deemed insignificant in the W.T.C Proper Burial case, in another legal argument, surrounding the death of Felicia Dunn-Jones, it was argued successfully that her exposure to dust led to her death. Felicia Dunn-Jones was caught in a dust cloud from a collapsing tower as she ran from her office on September 11. Covered in dust, she made it home to her family in Staten Island, but soon developed a cough. Five months later, in February 2002, she unexpectedly stopped breathing and died. Her death certificate listed the cause as sarcoidosis - a rare lung disease. In 2004, Dunn-Jones’ family was awarded $2.6 million from the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund. Her name was also added to the Staten Island Memorial for September 11; however, the medical examiner refused to add her to the official list of victims of September 11 because there was not medical certainty the death was linked to the events. The Dunn-Jones family and lawyers pressed on, gathering 400 pages of evidence and support. In May of 2007, the medical examiner became convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the dust from the Twin Towers contributed to her death. The medical examiner amended her death certificate, which in turn reclassified her death from natural causes to a homicide. Therefore, Felicia Dunn-Jones was officially added to the victims’ list, raising the number of those killed in the attacks to 2,750. Her name was read with the other victims in the official reading of the names at the 2007 memorial ceremony and has been read each year since.

Another case has proven even more complicated in defining the sacred body. In April 2006, a New York Citycoroner confirmed that the death of one of the first responders in the recovery effort was linked to high toxicity levels at the site. Detective James Zadroga, 34, who had worked in the recovery efforts at WTC site for three weeks
after the attacks, died of respiratory failure in January 2006. The New York City medical examiner report states, “It is felt with a reasonable degree of medical certainty that the cause of death in this case was directly related to the 9/11 incident” (DePalma 1). In so doing, Zadroga became the first death of a first responder to be linked to the WTC site. However, Zadroga’s body has recently gone through a metamorphosis taking him from hero/victim of dust death “fame” to a prescription drug abuser. The new NYC chief medical examiner, Dr. Charles S. Hirsch, concluded in November of 2007 that Zadroga’s immediate death was due not to the dust from the site, but from ground-up pills he had injected into his veins. Further de-heroizing Zadroga, Zadroga’s wife died in 2007, apparently, from intravenous drug use (Kahn 6). Bloomberg set off a controversy when he stated, “science says this was not a hero” (Harris 1). Bloomberg was criticized for these comments and later apologized for his statements. He also had Zadroga’s name added to the Wall of Heroes at 1 Police Place. However, Zadroga is not included on the official victims’ list with Dunn-Jones. The controversy is far from over, and the former medical examiner still does not concur with the current medical examiner’s reports (Sewell 17). Others have criticized the medical examiner’s office for attempting to protect the city from other lawsuits from first responders and residents of lower Manhattan. Further, the original claim that Zadroga died from exposure to toxic dust set the precedent for over 1000 other cases that received the same kind of injury award. In June of 2009, a bill was reintroduced in both the New York and New Jersey Congresses, entitled The Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, which would establish long-term monitoring and health care for those affected by exposure to the WTC site.
In the continuing attempts to define “victim of September 11” and therefore establish a hierarchy of sacred bodies, in December 2007 the New York City medical examiner determined that only those present on the day of the attacks would be considered official victims of September 11.\textsuperscript{11} Therefore, because Police Officer James Godbee, whose death from lung disease has been linked to the toxicity of Ground Zero, began directing traffic in the area \textit{two days} after the attacks, he is not being considered a homicide case and therefore, Godbee will not receive “official victim” status. His death is still attributed to “natural” causes (Westfeldt). This case brings the role of time to the forefront in the definition of victims of September 11; a decision that the chief pathologist for the New York Police Department says is both arbitrary and unprecedented (Westfeldt).

While the presence of physical remains has been used to determine victim status, in the case of Dr. Sneha Anne Philip, the absence of any remains is what helped make the argument that she should be included as an official victim. Philip was last seen on the night of September 10, 2001, shopping at Century 21, a discount department store adjacent to the WTC site. She was originally listed as an official victim, but in 2004, her name was taken off the roster after a judge in Manhattan cited her alcohol issues and her checkered past as a possibility for her disappearance. Her family fought the decision to remove her name but in 2006 a judge ruled against them. Finally in July 2008, the State Supreme Court appellate division ruled that she did in fact die in the attacks (Reid 51). Her death certificate was changed to list her cause of death as homicide and she was relisted as an official victim. The 4 to 1 ruling cited that with her medical training it was likely that Philip stopped to help during the attacks on her way home from her previous
night out (“Doctor Missing”). However, in obtaining the ruling, Sneha’s private life became a subject of the tabloids, television reenactments, and other news accounts.

In addition, the identification of some of the attackers’ bodies has also raised interesting issues related to what remains should be included as sacred. Obviously, based on their roles, they are not considered to be victims; they are classified as murderers in the September 11 attacks. However, as some of their remains have been identified, some families of the victims feel that returning the attackers’ remains to their family members is not appropriate. They think it would be unfair for the attackers’ remains to be returned when their family members, the victims, are not properly buried (Hamill 33). And yet, in reality, the dust that the family organizations are fighting to have returned to the WTC site may contain the attackers’ remains as well. Along the same lines, the remains used in the vessel project could hold attackers’ body parts also. In both these cases, there is a chance that the attackers’ bodies remain among the victims’ bodies and cannot be distinguished.

These arguments and decisions have several important implications for the scope of the WTC site project. First, the death of first responders has had a major influence on the pace of the rebuilding at the WTC site and policies about safety at the site. Not only did the discovery of remains halt the demolition of the Deutsche Bank building, shortly after the search for remains was also halted, this time by the EPA. On May 2, 2006, the Federal Environmental Protection Agency suspended the search after asbestos-like material was found (Dunlap “Metro Briefing”, 4). The cautiousness by the EPA came after the first victims of the post 9/11 environment became sick and died. In fact, in a 2003 report of the EPA, the Inspector General admitted to making blanket statements that
it was safe to be at the WTC site after they were politically pressured from President Bush’s Administration in The White House. The report was relatively ignored until recently when health concerns picked up momentum (Office of The Inspector General). Hence, it was not the written arguments of reports, but the physicality of the deceased body that enacted safer health policies at the site while slowing down the rebuilding process.

Second, there is no question that bodies vulnerable to the post September 11 lower Manhattan environment will continue to die from health related issues. Will the list of victims continue to change for decades to come as autopsies links more and more bodies to the site? This potentially expands the category of victims of September 11 not just to September 11 but also to those affected by the post September 11 environment. Because of the controversy surrounding the decisions about the safety of the area, some may feel that the post 9/11 deaths are not necessarily victims of September 11, but victims of policies about the site after September 11. This is a controversial argument; of course if September 11 had never occurred, these deaths most likely would not have occurred either. However, establishing victims of the cleanup as victims of the attacks by adding them to the official roster of murdered individuals also deflects attention from the government’s role in the safety at the WTC site.

Finally, these arguments create a hierarchy among the bodies involved in the WTC attacks. There have already been arguments about how names should be listed on the memorial, and these arguments have included controversy over who should be considered a hero and if those names should be separated from others (Rogers). Adding to this symbolic argument, the physical remains at the site and their dissection are used as
evidence for arguments for or against heroic status. This, coupled with the decision to classify victims of 9/11 as those who were present on that day only, create a hierarchy of who are considered heroes (or not) of that day and who are considered official victims (or not).

Temporary Measures of the Body

The bodily remains remain the strongest temporary discourse at the site because of the material consequences they have produced for the commemoration and surrounding area. The body itself, at least as identifiable with a personhood, is inherently temporary. The promise of expanding its “life” through science goes only so far. The explosion itself placed the bodily remains in what some understood as a temporary resting ground. When the bodily remains were moved, some family members thought this was a temporary arrangement. Groups were formed demanding proper burial back where the bodies were originally located after the collapse of the Twin Towers. Legal battles were waged and an entirely new memorial space at Fresh Kills was created because of the “temporary” move of the remains to the former landfill. Yet, even once those bodily remains were removed, their one-time presence made the argument for the widening of sacred space - a space that continues to be in flux because of the arguments surrounding the remains. Furthermore, the significance of the body at the WTC site is an evolving process, and yet has lasting consequences as well. Zadroga’s body originally designated him a hero of September 11. When he died, he was named the first victim of the aftermath of September 11. Then, his deceased body lost heroic status, but not without the lasting repercussion of mounting legal battles against the City. These arguments about the bodily remains at the site and how they have altered the operations of
commemoration also make the official victims’ list temporary, contingent on court rulings and evolving policies. The temporality of the physical body at and around the site require urgent yet often temporary responses that have lasting consequences for the final official commemoration outcome, and perhaps, for the future of modern commemoration.

**Concluding Remarks**

In 1969, Robert Scott and Donald Smith tried to broaden the definition of rhetoric by claiming that bodily confrontation is rhetorical because it is “inherently symbolic”; it “carries a message” (7). But the body does not just carry a message; the body may be the message. Therefore, it becomes important to analyze not only what the body means, but what the body does. Scholarship surrounding the media images of September 11, 2001 should attend to what is really dictating the time frame and spatial practices of rebuilding. The material bodily remains, from their presence, quantity, state, and past life, are deployed as grounds for arguments and those are taken (by many advocates) as unassailable. In turn, these arguments about the body construct the size, speed, and shape of the rebuilding at the WTC site. The effects of the body as a rhetorical force can be seen through the material effects and discourse that it produces. The bodily remains at the WTC site create space. The remains of the dead make the argument that many elements of a public memorial should not be considered at the site. They create boundaries between public and private grief, privilege particular publics, and creates publics of protests. The bodily remains halt construction and are used to demand restitution for the attacks. The bodily remains act as evidence of cause of death, evidence that will be used to construct rhetorical arguments for decades to come. The body is the key player in the
rhetorical battle over one of the most symbolic and consequential rebuilding processes ever on United States soil.

In a large-scale national commemoration, Foote marks a successful commemoration as one in which there is a balance achieved between private grief and public use. The officials at the site have publicly announced their desire to achieve this balance. Mayor Bloomberg claimed, “We will not forget those who were lost. At the same time we have an obligation to those left behind to continue the rebuilding that has already started. And we will fulfill both those obligations” (Steinhaeur 1). The bodily remains at the WTC site complicate the ability to create this balance in and around the commemoration space, thrusting the pendulum towards the private families’ demands and needs. In so doing, the possibilities of a public commemoration site become limited by the bodily remains of the dead.\textsuperscript{12} As many of the original community-use elements are removed as a result of the bodily arguments, all that may remain is a vast area for honoring the dead and potentially office space. This truncates immensely the potential renaissance of the area many had anxiously anticipated, an area that belongs to a much larger community of residents, families, businesses, and visitors. This obligation felt toward the human remains makes it clear that the empty stretcher carried out of the site almost four years ago truly was a symbolic gesture, for the role of the material body continues to dictate the rebuilding of the WTC site.
I choose to reference the site of the attacks as The World Trade Center Site. While it is often referred to as Ground Zero, this is a term common to war discourse and I believe this would confuse the political purposes of this paper.

Dauber argues that senior level military decisions were made to pull out of Somalia based on these visual images that officials could not properly contextualize and therefore believed had the power to create publics of dissent in regards to military operations (667, 676).


Sturken claims that scholarship has privileged the spectacle of the event over the material refuse (166).
As noted in Chapter 2, Freedom Tower has recently been changed to One World Trade Center. However, at the time of this argument, it was still Freedom Tower.

In Carole Blair’s “Reflections of Rhetoric in Relation to Bodies,” a dialogue ensues between her frequent co-author Neil Michel and herself surrounding The Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. It began when one of them observed “how archaic the Tomb now seems, not only because biotechnology has made the idea of an ‘unknown soldier’ obsolete, but also because of how the Tomb was implicated in what seems the strange cultural preoccupation with the body of the soldier in World War I commemoration” (278). The Vessel project proposed for the WTC Memorial is evidence of a return of this preoccupation with the soldiers’ body. It also shows that DNA may not be advanced enough to make this type of tomb obsolete, just more advanced and accessible.

David Dunlap of The New York Times quotes the representative from the jury, Vartan Gregorian, from the decision two years early. He states, “At bedrock of the north tower’s footprint, loved ones will be able to mourn privately, in a chamber with a large stone vessel containing unidentified remains of victims that will rest at the base of the void.” See “Clash Over 9/11 Memorial’s Symbolism”.

Sturken gives a thorough description on the many ways dust gets complicated by its multiple meanings in relation to the attacks of September 11 (175-181).

Sturken argues the discourse of science is so great at the WTC site, the search for the absent remains a highly political force (210-211).
Jennifer Kahn’s article in The New Yorker gives a thorough overview of the entire case and the possible implications for public policy. See Kahn.

This has already come to be a large issue in the symbolic body and how it will be named on the official memorial once it is built. The most recent revision to Arad’s design is to place all victims in association with their company.
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CHAPTER 5
TEMPORARY ALTERNATIVE COMMEMORATIONS AND THEIR POSSIBILITIES

Throughout the previous chapters, the body has emerged as the most powerful force in relation to the spatial practices of rebuilding the WTC site. The deceased body has been held up as the rationale for the shape, size, and speed of rebuilding at and around the WTC site. Yet, at least three commemorative examples representing this same body have been censored and/or ridiculed. Through the analysis of these commemorations of 9/11, I seek to understand some of the alternative artistic responses to the attacks, particularly, how they represent the deceased body and why these responses are deemed inappropriate commemoration practices of September 11, 2001.

In many cases, the body, and its characteristic as sacred, has made the case for preservation and sanctification of spaces and artifacts in relation to September 11, 2001. In this chapter, I look at commemorative representations of the body that were so controversial the commemorations were moved toward Foote’s category of obliteration, in which they were covered up and removed from viewing (24). The aim of this chapter is to investigate these examples and how they were deemed rhetorical “failures.” I argue that these three works of art, through their reference to a rejected image, use of body, level of abstraction, use of motion, place of commemoration, and rhetorical timing disrupt the possibilities of the voice of memory, as Barbie Zelizer explains it, to summon the viewer to the commemoration. By their investigation here, I hope to further unpack
the challenges of commemorating the deceased body, and delve further into the arguments about the hierarchy of appropriate commemoration, the purpose of commemoration, and what counts as commemoration.

I have chosen three particular commemoration pieces to analyze based on several criteria. First, individually, they were subject to the most controversy and attention of any of the alternative commemorations of September 11, both in New York and on a national level. Second, all three referenced the bodies of those who fell or jumped from the Twin Towers. Third, the artists were all partially inspired by the images of the bodies falling. Fourth, two of the three pieces were censored from public exhibition, and the third was publicly ridiculed and denounced. Finally, all three artists expressed regret and dismay at the way their commemorations were received and removed. In order to look specifically at their relationships to publics, particularly the publics they repel, I first describe all three commemorations and some of the controversies to which they gave rise. Second, I explore the concepts of voice, witnessing, and possibility in commemorating September 11, 2001. Third, I investigate the specific ways in which these three commemorations alter voice possibilities as they represent the bodies in their moments before death.

Descriptions of the Rejected Commemoration

The three alternative commemorations are all responses to the events of September 11, 2001 and especially the memory of the bodies falling from the towers. The three examined commemorations are Eric Fischl’s Tumbling Woman, Sharon Paz’s Falling, and Kerry Skarbakka’s Life Goes On. Unlike most official commemorations, all three exhibits were meant to be displayed only temporarily. Fischl’s and Paz’s exhibits were to be on public display for two weeks and Skarbakka’s piece was in and of itself
temporary due to its ephemeral nature as performance. However, they were rendered even more temporary by the negative public reception which led to their removal or ridicule.

Eric Fischl’s Tumbling Woman

For the one-year anniversary of September 11, 2001, artist Eric Fischl created the bronze sculptures, Tumbling Woman. Fischl created the series in response to images of bodies falling from the Twin Towers. One of the series of five sculptures was originally to be displayed for two weeks in the underground concourse of Rockefeller Center. However, it was displayed one day before being screened from view. After three days, the artwork was completely removed. The sculpture, with dimensions 37x74x50 inches, depicts a female figure, naked, in a crooked, backwards somersault. Her legs, while close together, are angled over the top of her head. The woman’s arms remain close to her face. Her head is close to the ground, and her face exhibits a pained expression. The sculpture was originally accompanied by a plaque at Rockefeller Center, with a Fischl-authored poem that read, "We watched, disbelieving and helpless, on that savage day. People we love began falling, helpless and in disbelief."

One of the major criticisms of the piece was that it highlighted the point of impact of the head as it hit the ground. Yet Fischl states, “One might see a moment of impact in a kind of way that implies brain splattering, a graphic moment there. The thing is that if you look at the piece itself, it feels like a dream in which somebody is floating. There's no weight there that is sending the crushing, rippling current back through the body as it hits a solid mass. It feels more like tumbleweed, even though it's a massive sculpture. So
somebody else looking at it might say, ‘God, it reminds me of falling in a dream right before I wake up.’ Both of those are probably correct” (qtd. by Rakoff, “An Interview”).

Fischl claims the misunderstanding about Tumbling Woman comes from what he calls, the “yellow journalism” of Andrea Peyser, who, he states, never saw his sculpture in person and wrote about his intentions without talking to him. In her article entitled “Shameful Art Attack,” accompanied by a photo of the sculpture with the caption “Heart of Stone,” Peyser described the statue as “violently disturbing” and claimed it represented the exact moment “her head smacks pavement.” In what felt like a personal vendetta, Peyser called Fischl an “80’s darling” and remarked that he was in the Hamptons instead of Manhattan when the towers fells, therefore suggesting he is an elitist and a faux witness. She also separated his work from the photojournalistic images of the bodies falling, claiming those images were and are still shown only carefully in public. Peyser’s editorial was the major catalyst for generating controversy and therefore, highly influential in the sculpture’s removal from Rockefeller Center the day after her editorial was published. In opposition to Peyser’s account, an editorial in The New York Sun compared Fischl and the controversy to Diego Rivera and the censorship that led to his artwork’s destruction at Rockefeller Center. They argued Tumbling Woman captured a moment that will live in the imagination forever and therefore, deserves a place in the city. They jokingly claimed that Peyser should receive her own statue Woman on a Horse and that Fischl should be the one to sculpt it (Editorial Staff).

In defense of his sculpture, Fischl stated, “I wasn't trying to make a universal monument to sum up the entire experience of 9/11. The kind of response that I was wanting to get was one in which people would allow me to share in the experience, the
holding up, the sitting with -- so of course the response of ‘Get this out of here, you can't feel this’ or ‘You can't make us feel this way’ was incredibly hurtful.” Fischl regretted voluntarily agreeing to the statue being removed. He stated, “I hate this idea that there are some people who have a right to express their suffering and others who don't, that there are those in this hierarchy of pain who own it more than you do. It's not about necessarily witnessing firsthand that makes the experience. Picasso wasn't at Guernica when it happened; Goya wasn't there on the firing line. This is what a culture looks to art for, to put image, or voice, or context to a way of rethinking, reseeing, re-experiencing” (qtd. by Rakoff, “An Interview”).

Christy Ferer was the wife of the former executive director of The Port Authority Neil Levine. Levine was having breakfast on September 11, 2001, at Windows of the World on the 106th floor of the North Tower, and was killed in the attacks. Ferer, a friend of Fischl, looked at Tumbling Woman, and said it was hard for her to see, but felt Fischl had a right to make and display it. However, she suggested the timing was not right, that it was too soon (Junod). A year after his initial statements, Fischl commented again on the statue and its relationship to the official memorials being planned at the WTC site. In his editorial, he offered more explanation of his statue as a memorial to a dear friend who died on the 106th floor of one of the towers. He also suggested that, unlike his work, the proposed official memorial plans attempt to utilize the buildings, or precisely, their footprints, as a stand-in for the lives lost that day. In turn, Fischl claims, the official memorial, like the terrorists, risks making the victims disappear (Fischl).

At the heart of the stated controversy about Tumbling Woman are the issues of witnessing, representation, and sensitivity to families of the victims. The argument stirred
by Peyser raises the question of who has the right to represent a body that is “about-to-die.” Peyser’s editorial suggests certain people, “true witnesses,” have more of a right to represent the dying body than those who were not near or at the site. Representation also comes to the forefront as Peyser compares photojournalistic portrayals of the events to artistic representations of the events. Peyser disregards the difference between the two as she projects a limited role for artists. If artists must be true witnesses, much of the world’s art would not exist since the majority of artists were not “on-the-scene” witnesses of the events they depict. Further, the thin line between sensitivity and censorship emerges in the controversy. Fischl states surprise at the reaction to his piece, suggesting it was not meant to provoke, at least to provoke hatred and anger toward the artist. He expresses concern for the families, and in particular, seeks the advice of his friend who lost her husband in the attacks. At the same time, Fischl attempts to justify his response which establishes him in the hierarchy of “who is allowed to feel” by suggesting his commemoration is for a friend who died in the towers. However, Fischl, in hindsight, also regrets voluntarily agreeing to the sculpture being covered up because of this stated need for sensitivity, claiming he too, has the right to react artistically to the events.

Sharon Paz Falling

In the same week Fischl’s sculpture was removed, Sharon Paz and her installation entitled Falling suffered a similar fate. At the Jamaica Center for Art in Queens, NY, Paz placed eleven silhouettes in all of the eleven oversized windows of the three-story building. The art installation, part of an ongoing series of window art displayed by the center, was made up of ten-inch decals of faceless, genderless, ambiguous figures in different falling positions. The lowest window projected a body in a head-first position
aimed towards the concrete. As with Fischl, Paz was influenced by images she found on the Internet of people falling or jumping from the Twin Towers. She stated, “I found the images of people falling the most disturbing and wanted to deal with them, to overcome the fear. I felt the need to explore this moment, to bring out the reality within the memory that this event burns into our mind” (Paz).

The exhibit, planned to run from September 11, 2002 to October 5, 2002, began to raise controversy from the media and people passing by. One person claimed, “We will always have it in our hearts but we do not need to look at it every single day” (“Sharon Paz”). Further, student Daniel Brun, 28, said he averts his eyes when passing the center on his commute. "I don't like it," he said. "I pass by here every day, and I don't look up. I just keep on going" (qtd. by Bertrand “New Furor”). After initial criticism emerged, the Center claimed it had no plans to remove the installation and scheduled a discussion forum with community members. However, that forum, scheduled for October 5, 2002, would never take place. After mounting public pressure, Paz was informed on September 24, 2002, that her art had been removed the previous day after a little less than two weeks into the planned exhibit. Queens Borough President Helen Marshall stated, “This is a time for healing, not opening wounds” (Bertrand “WTC Display”, 5). Paz defended her work, claiming that other commemorations have used nationalism and the buildings to stand in for the human experience while her work confronts human experience directly. Paz, who emigrated from Israel where terror was part of her every day life, stated, “I believe fear will not disappear if you close your eyes” (Paz).

The statements by Paz, the Center, and people passing by bring to the forefront the issue of appropriate commemoration in relation to the assumption some hold that
commemoration should be healing. Paz suggested the representation of the fall of the bodies was a way to come face to face with fear. Roger Simon, Sharon Rosenberg, and Claudia Eppert would most likely categorize this type of remembering of trauma as “a difficult return.” This type of remembrance reflects on, creates, and responds to instability in practices of commemoration. Their major assumption is that there is no final way to close a wound. Instead, the authors argue that a return to the site of trauma over and over, “becomes a series of propositions on how to live with what cannot be redeemed, what must remain a psychic and social wound that bleeds” (5). Healing becomes understood as living with a wound and not in the absence of a wound. Paz suggests that dealing with actual carnage of bodies is a way to really address the wound. In that sense, her claim is similar to Slavoj Žižek’s position discussed in Chapter 4 that the September 11, 2001 coverage lacked the any portrayal of actual carnage (17). Yet, Marshall claims healing is what is called for and suggests that facing fear actually impedes the healing process by re-opening the wound. Other viewers claim that there is no reason to show those figures falling. In turn, these statements suggest a need for the body to remain absent for the healing process to continue. Paz suggests, as did Fischl, that these images had not gone away but were stuck in all our minds; she just represented them through art.

Kerry Skarbakka’s Life Goes On

Kerry Skarbakka’s performance piece received less attention in its initial staging but was reproduced and criticized in the media as an inappropriate response to the events of September 11, 2001. In June of 2005, artist Skarbakka tumbled from the top of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Chicago (MMAC) over 30 times, harnessed by a wire,
while fellow artists took pictures for his exhibit Life Goes On. He attempted different speeds, poses, and attire in the creation of a simulated free fall from the building. The artist was joined by invited guests, as well as a gathering crowd of onlookers, at the base of the building. This was Skarbakka’s first time involving the public in his work, which has primarily centered on the recreation of the human form falling in different environments and with different apparatuses. His performance that day was later turned into an exhibit of a series of photographs in which the harness and wires were edited out and Skarbbaka appears to be free falling from the building. The exhibit captured the jump from various perspectives and created the illusion of different bodies through his attire changes. One photo captured a woman talking on the phone at her desk, looking through her window as the body falls. Despite the controversy, Skarbakka still continues to do similar work and in 2008, he was featured on The Today Show to address the controversy and discuss his ongoing artistic expressions of falling.

Skrbakka contends that he was inspired partially by the TV images that showed the fall of victims from the WTC. However, he states that he was not actually trying to reproduce their fall. In Chicago, Skarbakka’s performance was met by cheers, but in New York it was not. New York Governor Pataki responded to Skarbakka’s work: “It's an utter disgrace that someone would try to turn horrible human suffering and tragedy into an act” (qtd. by Lisberg). Mayor Bloomberg of New York called the acts “nauseatingly offensive.” Rosemarie Giallombardo, whose son died in the attack asked, “What kind of a sick individual is he? Tell him to go jump off the Empire State Building and see how it feels… He's an artist? Go paint a bowl of fruit or something." Skarbakka stated in
defense, "I was so distraught, I needed some way to find an artistic response" (Hermann 5).

From the dialogue that has ensued about Skarbakka’s piece, it is clear that two of the issues that emerge again are: what is acceptable art, and what is appropriate commemoration? Both Pataki’s quote and quotes by family members suggested that Skarbakka’s “act” was not art and that if he was an artist he should go “draw a bowl of fruit”. Their statements recognized his performance as neither legitimate art nor an appropriate form of commemoration. Another issue that emerged is whether Skarbakka’s art can be considered commemoration if he does not consider it specifically as a commemoration. While he did recognize the body’s fall from the towers as influential, much of his other work deals with similar material. Skarbakka’s piece was part of his ongoing series on falling that he had been doing all around the world. He claimed his work, taking out of context, was misrepresented as having a stronger relationship to 9/11 then it should, raising issues of intent vs. reception.

The Voice of the About-To-Die Body

At the heart of the ridicule and removal of these acts of commemoration is an expectation of what commemoration should look like. In general, modern commemoration tends towards abstraction. In the case of 9/11, the preferred abstraction to deal with the enormity of the tragedy has been images, monuments, and artwork representing the Twin Towers. First, I discuss both the tendency for abstraction and specifically, its preference in September 11, 2001 commemorations, which utilizes the less figurative, Twin Towers, as the memory association to the events. Second, I focus on
why the Twin Towers have become the preferred reference point over bodily images, specifically through Zelizer’s argument of subjunctive voice.

There is no question that Maya Lin’s design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has been highly influential in modern commemoration. Many recent memorials have employed reflective surfaces, black granite, minimalist structure, and an abstract sensibility. In terms of its influence on the commemoration of 9/11, Anne Swartz claims more figurative representations have taken a back seat to more solemn and abstract memorials in the vein of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (82). Particularly, the temporary viewing wall at the WTC site and Arad and Walker’s Reflecting Absence, the chosen design for the memorial, have been noted for their many similarities (95). In addition, Maya Lin has been a consultant in the rebuilding process, was on the selection committee for the memorial design, and has expressed concern with the influence of the private families and ownership over the design process (Menand 55). Because of the popularity of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it is no surprise that abstract commemorations would perhaps be favored, and most of the commemorations of September 11, 2001 have been no exception.

For as much influence as the body has had over the rebuilding process, it is relatively absent in the preferred commemorations to and reference points for the attacks. As discussed in previous chapters, at the WTC site and in commemorations of September 11, 2001, the preferred reference to the tragedy has most often been in the form of the Twin Towers buildings. As discussed in Chapter 2, the temporary memorials at the site focused on a cross shaped steel beam from the towers. In addition, the official commemoration process has centered on the preservation of the Towers’ original
foundation “footprints”. And most recently, the planned commemoration at Fresh Kills has been likened to an earthen representation of the towers. These are just a few examples of what has become a common practice in commemoration of the September 11, 2001. Swartz claims that the avant-garde has followed suit with minimalist representations and the Towers as stand-ins for the events. She claims this became more prominent after the controversies about and rejections of the artwork representing the dying body, as in the Paz and Fischl cases. Since, the events have most often been represented through the minimalist representations and the Towers as the preferred stand-in for the bodies (91).

One of the arguments for why the body requires abstraction into a less figurative representation like the Twin Towers stems from the culturally accepted voice for large-scale traumatic events. According to Zelizer, voice is “the relationship developed between spectator and the image – involving state of mind, attitude, temporal and sequential positioning – and to those aspects of the image that help the spectator develop that relationship” (162). Nathan Stormer claims that it is precisely the viewing of mass representations of the sublime in events like the September 11 collapse of the Twin Towers that leads to a possibility of agency, that “believing in certain impossibilities enables discourse about what is possible” (234). The sublime, as a spectacle of mass representation, “normalizes the moment of expected failure” (232). This loss creates yet another paradox in which “inclusion is founded on an aesthetic of expressive failure” (214). Therefore, a new, limited, discursive space is created for the subject, “an entry point into the public as human” (234).

These frozen moments of time influence the relationship between the viewer and object, a relationship Zelizer describes as the subjunctive voice. Zelizer argues the
subjunctive voice allows the difficulties of death to be approached through postponement and the freezing of the sequence that “delays death’s progression” (165). The subjunctive nature of the image, according to Zelizer, creates “a space of possibility, hope, and liminality through which spectators may relate to the images” (163) Two other important characteristics of this type of voice are its focus on the past and its tendency to memorialize large events through condensed representations (Zelizer 163-164). Zelizer argues that subjunctive voice creates possibility by delaying an inevitable reality by breaking the sequence of action. Subsequently, certainty of that action turns into probability, allowing the imagination of the viewer to delay and therefore, handle the subsequent trauma.

Zelizer takes this concept, originating in grammar, and applies it to images she entitles “about-to-die images” including those of bodies jumping from the WTC. She claims that those images disappeared from newspapers, television newscasts, and commemoration artifacts of September 11, 2001 because they did not offer enough of an abstract representation of the tragedy and overwhelmed the subjunctive voice. Zelizer claims the images of the burning Towers were chosen over the pictures of bodies falling or jumping from the towers because the images of the burning buildings captured the preferred degree of subjunctive voice. She states, “Viewing the raw horror of bodies tumbling to their death was clearly problematic because their harsh depiction overwhelmed the subjunctive possibility of muting the finality of death for viewers” (179). Therefore, most references to September 11, 2001 utilize the pictures or video of the towers burning as their memory trigger instead of more individuated representations. By allowing a second-order about-to-die image of the buildings as an abstraction for the
people inside their walls, the subjunctive voice was enlarged, and the imagination of the viewer was allowed greater freedom to handle the tragedy.

Rhetorical Failures of Voice

The controversy surrounding each of the three commemoration pieces I am investigating, stated in official statements, news quotes, and defense remarks, offered some rationales for why the commemorations may have received criticism. The voice offered by the artwork led to the controversy and more importantly, the subsequent acts of ridicule and censorship by some of the viewers of the commemorations. I argue these three commemorations reduced the possibilities of subjunctive voice through their reference to the image, their individuated representation, their use of motion, their level of abstraction, and their placement, location, and their timing.

First, the artist’s choice, whether overt or implied, to reference the images of “bodies jumping” led to closure of voice possibilities between the viewer and commemoration. All three of these commemorative projects were, at least, partially, derived from the artist’s viewing of the photographic images of bodies falling and serve to refer the viewer back to that image, not necessarily to the events of September 11, 2001. While the three commemorative works all had different levels of abstractions that alluded to, but did not entirely remake, the specific bodies of the fall, the images that the pieces referred to, and the trigger of memory for the spectator, was the image--the image of very specific bodies. While many of the actual bodies that jumped have not been identified, close-ups show clothing, color of skin, and facial hair leading to a lot of speculation about the identification of each body in the images. The memory of the image that had already foreclosed subjunctive voice possibilities was too great, at least in the
first decade of the events, for similar representations in commemoration to be well received, particularly in conjunction with level of abstraction, implied motion, location, and timing.

Second, all three exhibits chose to commemorate the body, disrupting the comfort of the preferred stand-in of the Twin Towers. All three pieces represented singular bodies. They did not attempt to represent the totality of the more than three thousand people who were killed. At most, Paz’s piece represented 11 bodies. Skarbakka attempted three different representations of bodies, all through the use of his own body. Fischl represented the body of one woman. Further, all three pieces scaled the body in different ways. Fischl’s sculpture was larger than life size, and the ambiguous nature of the photographic images’ shadows was replaced not only with the female form but the pained expression in the face. In so doing, it was almost impossible, because of its size coupled with its location, to not see or “deal with” the pained sculpture. Skarbakka’s piece, utilized an actual human body, and therefore, was obviously the most homologous with the bodies that fell. The realism of the fall and its visceral experience confronted the viewer. In contrast, Paz used 10-inch decals that made the bodies ambiguous and scaled them to represent distance. Yet, in so doing, perhaps even more than the other two, Paz’s representation was a memory trigger of the gruesome reality of the events, precisely because it was how most people witnessed the bodies falling, through the initial images that showed distant figures in the air while the smoke billowed in the backdrop from the towers. Because all three of the rejected commemorations use the falling bodies’ form, the ability for these bodies to be abstracted into preferred representations is circumvented by their individuated representations. Therefore, the viewer is confronted with a memory
that s/he had already chosen to abstract into the second-order Twin Towers when confronted with it in news accounts and commemorative artifacts.

Third, each of the three pieces utilizes various levels of abstractions of the body. The least abstract would most likely be understood as the Skarbakka piece. Not only does he simulate a fall from a similar structure, he utilizes business attire, and editing software to create images that appear similar to the original September 11, 2001 images. He also uses a real human body to recreate the fall. Fischl and Paz’s pieces were arguably more abstract, based on the fact that specific people were not recognizable. In some respects, Fischl’s piece seems to have been the most abstract in its reference to the specific event. While it’s representation is the most individuated with specific facial features and characteristics, the statue itself is naked, female, and on the ground, thus distancing it from the memory trigger image of the ambiguous, clothed figures of the falling bodies. However, as I continue to argue, the choice of representing the body falling, its unusual placement, and inappropriate timing of the piece overwhelm the possibilities offered by voice.

The fourth factor that limits voice possibilities in all three pieces was the simulation of motion. These three pieces did not just represent the body, but simulated or facilitated motion of the body’s fall. All three pieces simultaneously froze the moment before death and, at the same time, re-iterated the impossibility of that freezing. Therefore, it became much harder for these bodies to be understood as having other possibilities than death. The simulation of motion created an experience in which the frozen photographic images, that originally delayed the progression of death, began to move again, towards the inevitability of the event’s tragic conclusion. This happened
especially in Skarbakka’s piece. Skarbakka’s art began as a live performance that recreated the fall. It then became a still project that captured the body fall in frozen moments from the perspective of other witnesses inside the building. Further, Paz simulated falling through the placement of the decals on all of the windows from the top to bottom. Looking at one of her silhouettes at a time captured the frozen image of the body. Yet, the exhibit, taken as a whole, captured the descent from the top to bottom of the window frames while allowing the viewer to see the bodies’ progressions at different points of the fall. While, Tumbling Woman was the most “frozen” piece, the contorted face, the awkward angles of the leg, and the descent of the head simulated the specificity of movement during a fall. Further, taken as a series with his other four pieces, the variations of movements at different snapshots of a fall enabled one to see the body progressing towards death. The recreation of motion in all three pieces does not allow for the subjunctive delay Zelizer talks about, or the frozen gaps that create possibility. Instead, all three exhibits projected a progression of a fall, speeding up time to the inevitable conclusion of death.

Fifth, all three pieces interrupted other possible commemoration/viewer relationships through their unusual placement in relation to spaces of commemoration. All three were placed in heavily trafficked areas, halting the motion of people passing by on their way to other destinations. The commemorations were not commonly understood as destinations themselves. Therefore, they were jarring interruptions in the busy traffic surrounding them. They confronted, startled, and made it hard for publics to avoid their presence. As Zelizer points out, the possibilities offered by the subjunctive voice rely on the attitudes of the spectator. The artworks’ placements were not seen as commemorative
destinations where people were prepared for the emotional investment required for the commemoration of tragedy. The geographic space of the installations is also important to note. Fischl’s piece was located forty blocks from the original act of violence, and Paz’s silhouettes were in the city where the tragedy occurred, perhaps making it more likely they would be censored due to the sensitivity that had been shown to families of the attacks. Skarbakka’s art was displayed in Chicago, yet utilized a space that appeared similar to the WTC façade, thus making the representation more striking. The confrontation viewers had with the pieces, which interrupted their commute, did not allow for a proper tone to be set for commemoration, particularly a commemoration of tragic proportions.

Finally, two of the three exhibits violated expectations of timing and therefore, intruded on the temporality of the more “universalizing” displays of September 11, 2001 commemorations. In so doing, they could not escape the label of commemoration because of their character; they also could not escape the label of inappropiate commemoration. Both Paz and Fischl’s works emphasized their commemorative character by their staging on the one-year anniversary of the attack, which led to further controversy about their inappropriate subject material, based on their timing. Skarbakka, “falling” in 2005, seemingly should have been further from controversy. His performance took place in Chicago, four years after the attacks and not near the anniversary month. Further, his piece was consistent with his artistic portfolio and his longtime work on falling, which should have separated even more the performance from commemoration. Yet, Skarbakka’s emphasis on motion and the use of the human form seemed to have overwhelmed any possibility for him to receive amnesty for the exhibit’s distance from
the initial attacks. The Skarbakka example reflected the fact that the subject material of
the body in motion toward death is perhaps too great of a factor to overcome negative
reception even with the piece’s more appropriate geographic placement and timing than
the other obliterated commemorations.

All three commemorations limited the possible relationships between the viewer
and the exhibit, particularly the possibilities Zelizer claims seem necessary in dealing
with the horrific bodily reality of September 11. First, the three commemorations
confronted the viewer with a subjunctive moment, not, “what are we viewing?” but “what
is this referring to?” And since the referring image was already rejected by public
reception, the exhibits began already hampered. Further, they each pointed to specific
bodies that were part of the events, subverting the possibility of abstract abstraction. In
utilizing individuated representations, these three commemorative acts restarted the
frozen moments of possibility, through the implied or reproduced motion of the bodies
falling towards death. And, they violate the tone and frame of reference for
commemoration’s timing and location. Thus, the exhibits violated the constraints of
commemoration of the body in modern commemoration and particularly, in relation to
the bodies of September 11, therefore increasing the chance of their obliteration by public
reception as unacceptable commemorative practices.

Potentiality in Lack of Possibility

The three alternative commemorations are practices that could not, did not want
to, or were not allowed to be part of the preferred commemorations of September 11. All
three responded to the events of September 11 and especially to the memory of the
images of the bodies falling from the towers. Paz, Fischl and Skarbakka, all responding to
the mediated witnessing of the bodies falling, offer examples of alternative possibilities of witnessing and responding to these about-to-die photographs. Although their works were rejected, some would argue they offer potentiality in their own rejection of the preferred, abstracted image of the Towers.

Several performance studies theorists suggest that instead of attempting to heal the pain of tragedy, provoked, in this case, by images of the body falling, allowing them to exist and penetrate may actually offer different possibilities of remembrance to exist. While the images of bodies jumping were quickly replaced in mass circulation with the Towers burning, the response they elicited points to the power of the frozen image as a gap in time. Dwight Conquergood refers to such gaps or pauses as breaches. These breaches can be seen as moments of potentiality, because they operate as a stall in narration. Moreover, the messiness of the pained body resists the forward motion of narrations (479-480). Saidiya Hartman argues that collective remembering of the pained body is possible “in the insistent recognition of the violated body as human flesh” (74).

As discussed in the Paz piece, there is the possibility that there is a benefit to memory of a difficult return. Skarbakka performs another person’s body in pain; Fischl and Paz both represent another person’s body in pain. The exhibits exemplify what happens when remembering is not necessarily about finding meaning but about attempting to experience the present. Kelly Oliver claims this type of remembering create a possibility for a person to understand the “space/time of one’s engagement, the particular investments one brings to remembrance and the continuities and discontinuities one enacts in relation to it” (7).

The rejected exhibits can be seen as projections of the artists “learning of and within the disturbances and disruptions inherent in comprehending these events” (Simon,
Rosenberg, and Eppert 3). They use the body as synecdochic interruptions, inspired by identification with other select bodies from the disaster and therefore, the distinct body becomes a space of memory. As Paz suggests, the possibility emerges for one to confront the fear and horror of carnage and learn to live with a wound, while not covering over it.

By suggesting the possible potential of individuated representations of the body for commemoration, I do not disregard that these representations put their own limits on memory and have their own constraints. However, the fact that they were not allowed to exist alongside other representations is problematic for the complexity and diversity of commemoration. Further, the replacement of the body with the preferred “universal” representation of corporate structures of the Twin Towers deserves to be questioned for what it suggests about how we remember and what we project as the strength of American democracy.

**Possible Conclusions**

Throughout much of the dissertation, I have argued that the body is the most influential force in the rebuilding and commemoration process of the WTC site. And yet in these three cases, the body is rejected for being an inappropriate commemoration of the events that created the WTC site destruction. All three works of art were moved to obliteration, a category usually reserved for “notorious and disreputable characters” not “heroes and martyrs” of sanctification (25). I argued this paradox is created because the use of the about-to-die images, coupled with individuated representations, various levels of abstraction, use of motion, placement, and timing limited possibility for voice, or the relationship between the visitor and commemoration. Peyser quoted a Rockefeller Center security guard: “To see a statue of people falling to the ground. It’s nothing to be happy
about.” *The New York Sun* counters this sentiment by asking why anyone would expect artwork about 9/11 to be happy (*Editorial Staff*). While many may not expect to be happy about commemorations of September 11, they expect, as the previous chapters and the controversy here has shown, to have a certain abstract relationship with the bodies being commemorated. In particular, the public has continuously chosen representations of the Towers as the preferred abstraction when confronted with commemorations of the events. The preferred and well-accepted commemorations all utilize the buildings as the abstracted symbol for commemoration. The three alternative examples by Fischl, Paz, and Skarbakka, attempted to move away from the more abstract symbol of the Twin Towers to individuated representations of the body. In turn, the negative public reception led to their obliteration. Foote claims obliteration occurs when communities attempt to forget and yet, even with the banishing of images and representations of the dying body, the bodies jumping have been engrained on the American psyche.

While all three representations were rejected they may offer potentiality for broadening understandings of September 11, 2001 commemoration and critical consumption of tragedy. Perhaps alternative commemorations can offer reparation by “finding ways to live and love in relation to the injuries of our pasts and futures” (Chambers-Letson 173). Skarbakka’s, Paz’s, and Fischl’s works made for commemorative activity that blurred the boundaries of commemoration; they resisted the abstraction of the body and resisted being articulated to the preferred understanding of September 11 commemoration. Zelizer asks if abstracting these right-before-death images to more preferred images is the best we can do when remembering difficult events (180). While the three commemorations should not be the only commemorations to
represent 9/11, they demand us to pose the question, of whether censoring art and
resurrecting different variations of the towers are the best we can do for the memory of
9/11 and the lives lost, particularly when those lives have been so powerful in shaping the
total scope of the rebuilding process?
WORKS CITED


CHAPTER 6
TEMPORARY CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BODY OF COMMEMORATION

My grandfather immigrated to America from Sicily via Ellis Island. Many immigrants were assigned new names or variations of their original names because of language barriers during registration. My grandfather made sure he could spell our name in English and pronounce it clearly when he entered. He was assigned his original name, Frandina. Over fifty years later, his son, my uncle, worked for Koch Steel when Koch received the bid to construct the World Trade Center. The Twin Towers instantly became a monument of pride for our family. As children, it went unquestioned that our family members had built these towers with their own hands. The Twin Towers became our Towers. They became an integral part of our family’s memory and identity as both immigrants and American citizens. All did not love the Twin Towers as my family did, but they quickly became a synecdoche for New York City and many would argue, for America as a whole. They were an iconic American symbol and major tourist destination. The space that remains after they were destroyed on September 11, 2001 has arguably already become even more iconic, visited, and symbolic of American identity than the original Twin Towers.

My story highlights many of the themes that have emerged throughout this dissertation, including issues of family, American identity, commemoration, the role of the body, the continued impact of the Twin Towers, and the important roles of time and
space. Among these themes, the organizing rhetoric of the body and the temporary are at the forefront. Throughout my analysis, these two influences have emerged in three main ways: as major issues and/or artifacts, as the grounds for arguments, and as consequences of those arguments. As such, they negotiate issues of public versus private family and identify the preferred marker of memory as the Twin Towers. In this concluding chapter, I first summarize how the body negotiates these three elements, I then summarize how the temporary negotiates these three elements, and finally, I address how these arguments reflect and adjust Kenneth Foote’s continuum.

The Threefold Influence of the Body

From the witnessing of the September 11 attacks, to the attempted rescues, recovery, and cleanup process at the WTC site, the question of how to deal with both living and deceased bodies at the site has been a major issue. As commemorative activity and rebuilding took center stage, the body also became the grounds for many arguments surrounding the process. Further, the arguments about rebuilding has had and will continue to have lasting implications for both living and deceased bodies in relation to the September 11, 2001 attacks and its commemorative activity.

Issues related to the body were at the forefront of the rebuilding process. In organizing the space for temporary memorials and designing a future space, the issue of how to negotiate both living and deceased individual bodies with the American body that witnessed the attacks emerged. Primarily in Chapter 2, the question of how to physically deal with a death place as a rectified space that can still project America’s resilience was raised. In Chapter 3, questions arose of how to imagine the interaction of living bodies with deceased bodies at a space that attempts to accommodate both workers and visitors.
In Chapter 4, one major issue that emerged was how to physically deal with the removal and preservation of unidentified bodies. Particularly, how do bodily remains influence the process of rebuilding a public commemoration or other memorials, and how do we negotiate private and public mourning needs and desires? Finally, all the chapters, and particularly, Chapter 5, focused on analyzing the preferred ways and means of commemorating and representing the bodies that perished.

In addressing these questions, the body becomes the grounds for arguments of how we should negotiate temporary commemorations, imagine the future site, build and prepare the site, and of what we should remove from viewing as we construct official memory projects about September 11. In Chapter 2, the sanctified absence of the body was used as an argument for particular displays of civil religion. Chapter 3 demonstrated how the loss of the body at the site made it hard for the space to be imagined for rectification. I further argued that the site, as a gravesite, was used as grounds for why some people should not have to work in Freedom Tower. In Chapter 4, I showed how the physical deceased body became a major persuasive force affecting what should be built. For example, using the deceased body as grounds, Pataki said we should not build the IFC (the proposed Freedom museum) because it would be disrespectful to the deceased and their families. In supporting that argument, the amount of bodily remains found at particular locations was used as evidence, e.g. “We found the most bodies on the memorial quadrant, therefore, the IFC should not be built there.” Finally, in Chapter 5, the sanctified nature of the body became grounds for identifying appropriate commemorations of the attacks. Individuated representations of the dying body by artists were used as evidence of inappropriate representations of family bodies.
The ways these arguments play out have had and will continue to have crucial implications for both the deceased and living body. These arguments define movement of the body by building temporary areas and making designs that attempt to separate sanctified space and rectified space, negotiate civil religion, and define private vs. public mourning space. They renegotiate the burial place of the bodies, offer new spaces as burial places, create memorial spaces, compensatory memorial spaces, and obliterate other memorial activity. Further, the physical arguments about the body create a hierarchy of victims’ bodies at the site, changing how bodies are identified, classified, and understood. The body is a crucial force in the rebuilding process, yet this dissertation has argued that commemorative activity continues to replace the body with the Twin Towers as the preferred marker of memory. The body became a point of contention between the desires of the private family and commemorations that project an American family. In consequence, it seems representations of the Twin Towers have become the negotiation between these two positions.

The Threefold Influence of Temporary Measures

The body joins forces with the power of the temporary, which also is influential in a threefold manner. First, the artifacts studied throughout the dissertation are temporary in nature. Second, the notion of the temporary justified arguments, in turn allowing artifacts to gain permanent status. Third, the notion of the temporary carries with it lasting implications for the site and future commemorative activity.

I have studied artifacts were not necessarily meant to endure. And many of them will not. During the reconstruction, much of the commemorative activity was temporary because the commemorations were makeshift and not practical to maintain as the site was
rebuilt. Due to political appearances and rebuilding efforts, murals at the site were taken
down, the cross of steel was relocated, and boundaries were moved. These artifacts were
temporary because of the revision process, the changing historic moment, and the
competing desires of future commemorative space. Another artifact, the body, is
temporary because of the very nature of a body. It was also a temporary artifact because
of its relocation, removal, and identification procedures. Further, the three art works and
their alternative representations of September 11 started off as temporary because they
were intended as ephemeral displays; yet due to public reception some of these were
forced into a greater state of temporariness or even moved to obliteration.

While “the temporary” was the nature of many artifacts, it also became the
vehicle for which arguments were made regarding the longevity of their display.
Makeshift commemorations were left unquestioned because they were temporary. In the
interim they became imbued with sacred status and are now being considered for the
permanent memorial. The popular public reception of Tribute in Light has led to its
continued funding each year along with a search for a permanent location. The temporary
negotiated a commemorative space that projected civil religion through a combination of
sanctification and rectification. Further temporary dissemination of bodies at the time of
the attacks has successfully made the argument for where, when, when not, what, what not, how to, and how not to rebuild. Arguments for compensatory memorials
were also made based on the further removal of bodies to other areas (e.g. Fresh Kills).

While the temporary was the vehicle for many arguments, it also brought with it
many consequences for the future of the site. Temporary plans, commemorations, and
procedures have led to the space remaining in designation or temporary status for much
longer than anticipated. The temporary plans led to conflicts about what type of memorials should or should not be allowed at the site. The temporary removal of the body caused legal battles and compensatory models. Further, temporary sanctification memorials made it hard to “sell” working in Freedom Tower. And obliteration became a consequence of artwork because of the preferred temporary markers of memory.

**Adjustments to Foote’s Continuum**

The September 11, 2001 commemorative activity, including that at the WTC site, adds new dimensions to Kenneth Foote’s continuum due to the confluence of the deceased body and the temporary. Foote emphasized the continuum to explain types of commemoration zones. Throughout the dissertation, I looked specifically at the designation zone, including what that commemorative activity looks like and whether it addresses other future opportunities for the type of “permanent” commemorations to come (or remain). In so doing, the “in-betweens” of and interplay between Foote’s zones have emerged. Sanctification and rectification are attempted within the same space and struggle for dominate representation. In some cases, rectification helps make the case for sanctification. Here, sanctification is aided by the zone of designation -- temporary artifacts become more permanent by being imbued with a sacred status. In turn, rectification becomes a necessary component of sanctification in terms of material civil religion adding a new type of response to spaces of violence, one of sacred rectification. In other cases, permanent rectification plans struggle because of the sanctifying nature of the body and the influence of temporary memorials in designing a future cohabitated space of visitors and workers perhaps arguing that the body is too sacred of an artifact to promote rectification as a healing option. Finally, while obliteration of a specific site does
not occur, commemorations that are not deemed appropriate are obliterated, marking the fact that the continuum of commemorative spaces also applies to commemorative performances and temporary artifacts.

Perhaps the two most important insights that emerge in relation to the continuum are the visible shift in the idea of rectification as commemoration and the importance of examining the designation stage. Rectification as a commemorative process highlights new commemoration trends. While these trends are present in the sanctification plans for the site, surveillance, prevention, and safety become key components to the commemoration activity of rectification. The combination of rectification as an explicit sanctified expression and security as a necessary and desired trait of commemoration seems to point to a unique modern commemorative practice. Further, designation reigns for longer than anticipated because of conflicts about how to respond to a major terrorist attack in America, including what type of site it will become and how the body should be represented in modern sites of terrorism. Many of these elements during the temporary stage will disappear from discourse, yet my hope is that the important insights that have emerged about the themes and commemorative practices discussed highlights the importance of studying designation instead of waiting for “permanent” rhetoric to emerge.

Concluding Remarks

Commemorative studies have produced valuable scholarship on memory, particularly official displays of memory, but they have not often focused on the process, or designation zone. In keeping with the philosophy that rhetoric is temporary but has lasting consequences, it is imperative for scholarship to focus more on material rhetoric.
that pays attention to more everyday activities that may not persist in their given form once permanent expressions of memory are established. In this dissertation, I looked at the temporary nature of the official commemorative activity surrounding one of the most influential events in recent memory whose spectacular mediated destruction made for an even more substantial public investment. Memory is temporary, rhetoric is temporary, the body is temporary, but all three of their influences are significant. Commemorating an event of this magnitude shouldn’t be an easy process, it shouldn’t be a quick process, and it shouldn’t be an uncomplicated process. Many of the consequences that have emerged throughout the dissertation should warn against creating a black and white response to a much more complex fragmentation of memory and public responses to the events. In many respects, the importance of the private family has become synonymous with the American family, limiting the possibilities and creativity necessary for public commemoration and limiting the types of publics that will be allowed to feel part of the Lower Manhattan space. Shortly after the September 11, 2001, CNN held an open contest for the public to design the future of the WTC site. While many did incorporate the Towers in their designs, some of the most interesting submissions were entered by children, who as a whole, expressed freeing, creative, and open public space designs while incorporating elements of commemoration. Many of the children’s submissions may not have been practical, but in the words of Edward de Bono, “we need creativity in order to break free from the temporary structures that have been set up by a particular sequence of experience.”
WORKS CITED

EPILOGUE

It has been approximately five weeks since I submitted the dissertation to my committee. In keeping with the main arguments about studying the interim of the official memorial, the process and complications at the WTC site have not “waited” for the dissertation’s completion. I wish to spend a few final pages on the latest changes and happenings at the site, in order to one last time reassert the need and importance of the study of this complicated process and be “up-to-date” with the material - as impossible as that may be. Most importantly, I wish to have one last chance to assert the need to balance the power of private grief with the essence of commemoration and public space.

To start, here are just a few of the changes that have occurred. In late April 2010, New York City began voluntarily digging at Fresh Kills again to find remains of bodies. During this time the official victim list has continued to grow, while NY courts recently blocked a monetary claim for victims who fell ill. Further, some funding was released for the Performing Art Complex, which shows promise that a cultural center may be developed, although the scope and time frame are still unclear.

Perhaps, most illuminating to the core issues of the dissertation are two recent events, a terrorist attempt and a proposal to build a mosque near the WTC site. On May 1st, a car bomb in Time Square failed to ignite and two days later, Pakistani-American, Faisal Shahzad, was arrested for the alleged terrorist attempt. Most importantly for the issues discussed in the dissertation, the attempted bombing has led to more political and
financial support for additional surveillance throughout Manhattan, similar to London’s security program, Ring of Steel.

Further, recent controversy has emerged surrounding the placement of a mosque and community center two blocks from the epicenter of the attacks. On May 24, 2010, a NYC community board agreed to allow the project to move forward after family groups and some members of the recently formed Tea Party, a conservative political group, protested that its existence by the “hallowed” ground would be inappropriate. Discourse has been heated and hostile, one radio host going as far to suggest the mosque should be blown up, while other protestors claimed that the allowance of such as space would be a win for the terrorists and that its existence did not show sensitivity to the families. One family group, September Eleventh Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, has received more press attention than in the past during the controversy for their support of the center. They say encouragement of such projects is important for the American way, particularly the promotion of religious tolerance.

Both recent examples are due much more analysis and study as they continue to materialize. Issues will continue to be raised about not only what is allowed to exist at the site, but also what is allowed to exist in proximity to the space (what will be sacred ground? two blocks? five?), in Manhattan as a whole, and in attempted references to 9/11 throughout the world. I leave this project for a time now, knowing many others will continue its work and a hope that the process continues to be followed closely as the temporary continues to speak of the problematics of private grief, the American family, commemoration, surveillance, and commercial and public space.