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United States War Memorials: The Transformation of Design and Significance
Influenced by the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the change United States war memorials underwent after the Vietnam War ended in 1975 and when the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial was created in 1982. The first memorials analyzed are the Marine Corps Memorial, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Gettysburg National Military Park, which were all built prior to the Vietnam memorial. The stark differences of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial are then examined. The Korean War Veteran's Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, and the 9/11 Memorial in New York City conclude the study of memorials built after the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. These separate sets of memorials represent most of the major wars the U.S. fought in its history, or significant events and individuals that are vital to the specific war.

These three chronological sections present the argument that the design and public reaction of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial shaped future war memorials. Before the Vietnam War, war memorials were large and displayed pride and a sense of victory. The controversy of the Vietnam War required a change in the representation of war from a romantic view to a realistic one. However, this stimulated a dispute in its own right. Memorials created after were then reverted back to the opulent designs, but faced more criticism from the public.

This thesis first draws from sources on the importance of memory and the significance of memorials. A first-hand excursion of visiting most of the memorials is then used to capture the emotional experience at the site and for the description of the architecture the memorials present. Newspaper articles dated during the creation and dedication process capture the emotional atmosphere and public opinions of the memorial site. Personal accounts from the designers and coordinators of the projects provide their thoughts on the importance of the memorials, why they undertook the projects, and methods they used during the developmental phases. This collection of sources further illuminates the changes seen in war memorials.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review

In August of 2015, my father and I took a trip to Washington, D.C to visit the prominent memorials around the city. This was an important trip because we were able to bond over our love for American history. As a Naval Academy graduate, my dad has enormous respect for soldiers and the wars they participated in. As a History major, I was excited to finally visit and experience the war memorials I have seen in textbooks and photographs. I wanted to experience the surroundings, emotions, and atmosphere with the other tourists for myself since I knew war memorials was going to be the topic for my thesis. Due to both of our busy schedules, we only had one day to visit all of the memorials. I was still able to sit down for about twenty minutes at each memorial, write down my observations, take pictures, and witness the reactions of others even though we were only there for a day.

I was not prepared for my reaction to the memorials during this trip. I experienced surges of emotions ranging from sadness and anger to pride and patriotism. Richard Nixon explains this patriotic experience at the dedication of the Marine Corps Memorial. He found that this particular memorial exuded the hopes of the American people. He continued that this memorial and others like it will stand “as a testimony to the freedom-loving philosophy of Americans”¹ and that America will join foreign battles “not because we want land or peoples or concessions but

¹ The Associated Press, “Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated,” *New York Times*, November 11th, 1954.

because all we want is peace and freedom.”² Viewing the memorials undeniably exposed the importance and significance of Public History to American society.

I discovered an interesting array of aesthetic changes between the memorials, specifically the contrast between the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial and the other war memorials. This paper examines the difference between the memorials in Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area before the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial and the ones created after the dedication of this memorial. This examination is not only focused on the difference in design, but also the creative process and reaction from veterans, family members of those who died, and the general American public. Before the Vietnam War, American war memorials displayed more patriotic statue figures of soldiers with a sense of grandeur. This common style was due to the confidence the nation had in its military and government, especially during times of war. The Vietnam War completely changed that feeling of security. Controversies were prominent around the government and the explanations for the involvement in the war. Soldiers were not praised when they arrived home and felt ashamed for participating. The monument revealed these differences by having a more abstract style that was apolitical and displayed a realist perspective. After this memorial was dedicated in 1982, memorials for past wars were still being created and the designs reverted back to the style seen before the Vietnam memorial to instill patriotism into the American public through public memory.

² The Associated Press, “Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated,” *New York Times*, November 11th, 1954.

Professor Michael-Rolph Trouillot at Johns Hopkins University finds that history describes “both the facts of the matter and a narrative of those facts, both “what happened” and “that which is said to have happened”.³ Facts, memory, and narrative are all important to try to comprehend any historical event as a whole. Historians have realized the significance of using history and memory together to enhance each other. They not only approach it as a source, but as a subject all on its own. They analyze what is remembered from the past, how it is remembered, and why it is remembered in one way and not the other.⁴ The significance of using memory as a subject is a recent phenomenon, especially in the last twenty years.⁵ Before using memory as a subject, historians primarily used memory, also called oral testimony by some academics, as a source to gain historical knowledge. Many still use this process today.

Historian Michael Bosworth describes the use of oral testimonies as a source for his research in *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*. Bosworth recognizes the limits of using oral testimony in his research, including the fabrication of details and restrictions of memory. However, he finds, “As a source, the oral record can tell the historian how individuals, at a specific moment, felt about things that mattered to them, whether it was food, housing or history.”⁶ The use of oral testimony as a source adds personal characteristics to

³ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 2.

⁴ *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, edited by Joan Tumblety (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2.

⁵ *Memory and History*, Tumblety, 1.

⁶ *Memory and History*, Tumblety, 31.

history that brings depth and emotion to the understanding of historical events and how individuals progressed to the place they are presently.⁷

David Williams, a professor of English at St. Paul's College and the University of Manitoba, agrees with Bosworth on memory as a source in oral history in his book *Media, Memory, and the First World War*. He analyzes research on earlier societies and the role of memory in their culture. He asks the question, "How long can oral memory persist?"⁸ Williams states that scholars discovered oral societies lived more in their present-day than societies do today. They found in these societies that "tradition is always adjusted and assimilated to the conditions of the present by eliminating everything that is no longer relevant".⁹ To learn more about these societies, historians can use the oral memories as a source to understand how their traditions were passed down and how memories were a vital aspect of earlier societies.

Lindsey Dodd agrees with both Bosworth and Williams on memories as a source in oral history, but took her stance on the research one step further. She found that using narratives of memories in her research could help enhance knowledge on broader experiences in the society than just the individual's.¹⁰ She claims, "In oral history, memory becomes not simply a source for the investigation

⁷ *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, edited by Joan Tumblety (New York: Routledge, 2013), 32.

⁸ David Williams, *Media, Memory, and the First World War* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), 64.

⁹ Williams, *Media, Memory, and the First World War*, 64.

¹⁰ *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, edited by Joan Tumblety (New York: Routledge, 2013), 47.

of the past, but an object of study in its own right.”¹¹ Dodd finds that memory is a subject in the field of oral history and many other historians continue this line of thought toward the combination of memory with history as two separate subjects, not just as a source of information.

Many of the other historians that are featured in *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as a Source and Subject* define memories as “‘significant pasts’ that we compose to make a more comfortable sense of our life over time, and in which past and current identities are brought more into line.”¹² This definition differs from the view of Bosworth and Dodd, but this concept is the basis of what most historians use as their explanation of memories. Some of these historians include Ewa Adamkiewicz and her colleagues. They analyze history and memory as two intertwining subjects that seem to depend on one another to fully understand past events. Adamkiewicz analyzed how memory can be combined with history and the benefits of using this process to heighten historical academics in “Introduction: Memories in American Studies”. She and her colleagues found different approaches to this method. The four different aspects they found include the constructiveness of memories, the function of these memories, the construction of identities through memories, and the trauma that can arise from memories.¹³ The constructive approach will be addressed with other theories from different scholars.

¹¹ *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, edited by Joan Tumblety (New York: Routledge, 2013), 47.

¹² *Memory and History*, Tumblety, 4.

¹³ Ewa A. Adamkiewicz, et al., “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” *Aspeers* 6 (2013), vii-xxi.

The function of memories in social, political, and cultural contexts, as found by Adamkiewicz, explains how different members of society could employ memory to display past events in a way that enhances their goals to unite people around the collective memory they want remembered.¹⁴ The construction of identities through memories continues from the function of memories. This approach questions “how memories work in establishing collective (national) identities and who is included in and excluded from such groups for what reasons.”¹⁵ It gives meaning to an entire group and provides a national narrative. The last approach involves trauma a collective group can receive from memories of past events. Adamkiewicz found that trauma offers new insights into the topics relevant to the field of memory. Trauma can explain how individuals can shape the past. In turn, those individuals are shaped by the past.¹⁶ Although these three elements are important to Adamkiewicz and her colleagues, the constructivist approach seems relevant to the research of several academics in the field of memory.

The constructivist approach places memories as social paradigms, described as “involving remembering as much as it involves forgetting, repressing, and adding components.”¹⁷ These different elements of the constructivist approach are vital to the understanding of memory and history because the events or facts a society omits from their history can change an entire perspective on an event. Memories are not used as complete or reliable facts of what happened. They are representations of

¹⁴ Ewa A. Adamkiewicz, et al., “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” *Aspeers* 6 (2013), vii-xxi.

¹⁵ Adamkiewicz, “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” x.

¹⁶ Adamkiewicz, “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” xi.

¹⁷ Adamkiewicz, “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” vii.

the essence of the past.¹⁸ For example, David Blight analyzes this phenomenon of forgetting in the context of the Civil War in his book *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Blight analyzed the category of race in context with the healing process for Americans after the Civil War ended.¹⁹ He writes, “It took root in the dead and the living. The living were compelled to find meaning in the dead and, as in most wars, the dead would have a hold on the living.”²⁰ Americans in the late 1800s focused on those who died rather than deal with the underlying cause of the war itself, which was race. This continued up to the fiftieth anniversary of the Civil War with ceremonies at Gettysburg. This war was remembered as “a tragedy that forged greater unity, as a soldier’s call to sacrifice in order to save a troubled, but essentially good, Union, not as the crisis of a nation in 1913 still deeply divided over slavery.”²¹ It was not until World War I when African Americans demanded more rights that a shift occurred in the memory of the Civil War that did involve race. This demonstrates that the things forgotten and remembered in history changes according to the present context.

Professor Trouillot further expands on the notion of forgetting in memory, or what he calls “silences.”

Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making

¹⁸ Ewa A. Adamkiewicz, et al., “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” *Aspeers* 6 (2013), vii-xxi.

¹⁹ David W. Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), 2.

²⁰ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 6.

²¹ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 386.

of *narratives*); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance.²²

The silences Trouillot mentions are the instances of “forgetting” in memories and narratives. They are the pieces of information that are left out of the remembrance of the event. He finds that these silences are tools that can actually help historians enhance their knowledge on the particular event. Questioning why did a collective group forget a certain fact of an event can provide significant information on the culture and society itself. Many of these “silences” may not hold the same significance compared to one another.²³ Understanding these forgotten moments or silences can enhance knowledge on the collective memory and national narrative.

The relationship between personal, individual memory and collective memory is important in the constructivist approach.²⁴ Trouillot acknowledges that individual memories are important in providing a general claim in collective narratives, but he finds they are unable to fully account for all that happens during a single event. He finds that different societies vary in the account of their narrative because they have their own tests for historical credibility of the individual’s interpretation of the event.²⁵ Noa Gedi and Yigal Elam use a different approach when defining collective memory, but they all have the same overarching idea. They define collective memory on a metaphorical level, an approach most historians tend

²² Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 26.

²³ Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, 27.

²⁴ Ewa A. Adamkiewicz, etc., “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” *Aspeers* 6 (2013), vii-xxi.

²⁵ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995), 13.

to agree with. They describe collective memory as a “general code name for something that is supposedly behind myths, traditions, customs, cults, all of which represent the “spirit,” the “psyche,” of a society, a tribe, a nation.”²⁶ The nation or tribe mentioned contains the members that share this same belief and memory. It is never individual or distinct.

Adamkiewicz analyzed collective memories and their role in the construction of a collective identity. Memories can establish national identities and can unite and exclude people from certain groups. They also shape “diverse images and narratives that influence how societies make sense of the past and conceive of the present surroundings.”²⁷ The way these memories are formed can affect the entire culture of a society, even though it may not be a complete or accurate account of the event. Gedi and Elam continue with this idea of collective memory. They ask the question, “does the individual take precedence over society or is s/he ultimately preceded by it?”²⁸ Many historians agree the individual is preceded by society and the collective memory. The individual memories seem to actually be constructed by the collective identity and the social context that represents life.²⁹ Some historians even find that individual memory does not have any substance or meaning outside the society and culture.³⁰ According to these theorists, individuals do not have their own memories; everything is constructed from the collective. Rosanne Kennedy, who wrote a

²⁶ Noa Gedi & Yigal Elam, “Collective Memory-What is it?,” *History and Memory* Vol. 8, No. 1 (1996), 30-50.

²⁷ Ewa A. Adamkiewicz, etc., “Introduction: Memories in American Studies,” *Aspeers* 6 (2013), vii-xxi.

²⁸ Noa Gedi & Yigal Elam, “Collective Memory-What is it?,” *History and Memory* Vol. 8, No. 1 (1996), 30-50.

²⁹ Gedi & Elam, *History and Memory*, 35.

³⁰ Gedi & Elam, *History and Memory*, 36.

chapter in the book *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, expands on this idea of collective memory. She states, “collective memory works selectively; it is a form of myth-making that is shaped by the needs of groups, and the formation of group identity, in the present.”³¹ The theories and beliefs by these academics display the importance of the collective memory in any society.

Monuments and memorials are the concrete interpretations of a society’s collective memory. Historians analyze the role monuments play in memorializing historical events. Erika Doss argues, “contemporary American memorials embody the feelings of particular publics at particular historical monuments and frame cultural narratives about self-identity and national purpose.”³² They display histories that respective Americans have chosen to remember at certain moments in time.³³ Every monument is considered a memorial, but not all memorials are monuments. Memorials can include museums, plaques, cemeteries, books, movies, and different kinds of art. Monuments provide different meanings to historians and to the public. Doss makes it clear in her argument that monuments involve the collective memory of all Americans. Judith Dupré does agree with Doss on the point that memorials do change over time, but she finds that they change due to the perspectives of those who were overlooked at one time in history instead of the entire American perspective. The group that has been overlooked demand to be

³¹ *Memory and History: Understanding Memory as Source and Subject*, edited by Joan Tumblety (New York: Routledge, 2013), 57.

³² Erika Doss, *Memorial Mania: Public Feeling in America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), 59.

³³ Doss, *Memorial Mania*, 60.

recognized after the fact and they want the rest of society to acknowledge their previous negative and, at many times, racist attitudes.³⁴ Both of these women look at specific memorials and relate them to their theories and perspectives on why memorials are so important in American culture.

Peter Gardella, a professor of World Religions, argues a different concept of the importance of memorials in societies than the other authors. He finds that the importance of memorials to Americans can be compared to a kind of religion. He calls this “religion” the American civil religion. He finds that it goes beyond patriotism and nationalism. This argument includes monuments, texts, images, behaviors, and values.³⁵ He also argues that there are four values that dominate this civil religion. They include “personal freedom (often called liberty), political democracy, world peace, and cultural (including religious, racial, ethnic, and gender) tolerance.”³⁶ He finds that these four values are included in every monument he analyzes.

Gardella recognizes that America is not the only nation with a civil religion that contains these values. However, it may be the strongest and most elaborate. He believes the reason for this is the weakness that stems from having a lack of common culture. Gardella argues, “Because Americans have no natural, common culture, but use a borrowed language and live on land recently taken from other

³⁴ Judith Dupré, *Monuments: America's History in Art and Memory* (New York: Random House, 2007), 12.

³⁵ Peter Gardella, *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

³⁶ Gardella, *American Civil Religion*, 3.

nations, the United States needs a civil religion more.”³⁷ These are the reasons, he argues, that Americans put such importance on each memorial, especially the ones related to wars. Americans need to feel a common bond and identity. Wars can capture common identities and values that are worth remembering.

War memorials serve many purposes for a society and its collective memory. Wars are such devastating experiences that society feels the need to create memorials to heal, mourn, and honor the individuals that sacrificed their lives. They are also used to understand experiences that had consequences too complex or tragic to comprehend. Although Americans have been commemorating war through monuments and different kinds of memorials for hundreds of years, Kirk Savage argues that World War I increased the necessity for Americans to have war memorials because of the massive death rates and total involvement. It was, in all aspects, the “Great” War.

Savage finds that most of the war memorials in America were what he called “victim” monuments before World War I. Though the word victim stirs up ideas of weakness, Savage finds the monuments that were erected in the nineteenth and early twentieth century honored the dead in a heroic sacrifice, not as actual victims. Those honored were usually higher ranked officers, not the common soldier.³⁸ As the years continued, the “victim” monuments changed in meaning and became the “disaster” memorial. The memorials brought the massive scale of death to life

³⁷ Peter Gardella, *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 6.

³⁸ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 237.

because they began to put every individual that died on the monument.³⁹ By the early twentieth century, individual names were now being displayed on memorials. The first was the First Division monument in Washington, D.C. that commemorates all the soldiers from Washington, D.C. that fought in World War I.

Other historians have found that the society in the aftermath of World War I placed a great importance on commemorating the war for a purpose. R.J. Wilson analyzed the specific memorials in New York City. He found that there were many controversies among different organizations and art commissions to find the right “spirit of remembrance.” Themes of unity, liberty, “one nation,” and “one hundred percent Americanism” were all chosen by these organizations to be represented in these memorials.⁴⁰ These themes were picked because the post-war era in New York saw an increase in widespread violence due to politics and race. Wilson writes, “The desire to use war memorials to evoke a stable and unified nation was pressing across the United States and especially in New York.”⁴¹ This was just the beginning of the struggle for what kind of “story” or purpose war memorials were going to convey that continues up to and beyond present time. The memorials that show this struggle in collective memory and national memory are the Marine Corps War Memorial, the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, Korean War Veteran’s Memorial, the National World II Memorial, and recent creations of memorials to the tragedies that occurred on September 11th, 2001 in New York City. The Lincoln Memorial and the

³⁹ Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington, D.C., the National Mall, and the Transformation of the Memorial Landscape*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 239.

⁴⁰ R.J. Wilson, “Remembering and Forgetting the Great War in New York City,” *First World War Studies* Vol. 3 (2012), 87-106.

⁴¹ Wilson, “Remembering and Forgetting the Great War in New York City,” 96.

Gettysburg National Military Park are also examined to present similar architectural styles between the memorials in the early 1900s.

Chapter 2: Monuments Created Before the Vietnam War

The next chapter describes the war memorials that were constructed before the Vietnam War. The memorial primarily focused on is the Marine Corps Memorial, also known as the Iwo Jima Memorial. The Lincoln Memorial and the Gettysburg National Military Park are also analyzed due to their similar style that represents grand patriotic symbolism. The third chapter focuses solely on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and how it changed the style and symbolism of war memorials in the United States. The fourth and last chapter then describes the memorials that were created after the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. These include the Korean War Veteran's Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, and the 9/11 Memorial in New York City. These memorials convey the way the Vietnam memorial changed public history in meaning, significance, and design.

The descriptions of the Marine Corps Memorial include words such as triumphant, large, and real. When I visited this memorial in person, I agreed with all of those opinions. It was much larger in person than I had ever imagined it to be. It was a complete shock and it took my breath away. The location in Arlington Cemetery enhances the mood of the memorial. As you drive to get to the memorial, you pass many of the gravestones of the men and women who have died protecting the United States. The mood is solemn, yet filled with pride. As I walked closer to the memorial from our parking space, the waving American flag is visible before the details of the statue, causing an emotional response that is filled with honor and pride for the patriotic ideals on which American was founded. You forget every criticism you have with the government and negative opinions of previous wars that

Americans have participated in. This is due to the fact that World War II is set apart from most of the other wars in American history in the eyes of the public.

The distinction of World War II from the later wars in the 20th and 21st centuries includes the fact that there was a concrete reason for Americans to get involved in this war and this reason was on the right path morally. American soldiers were not only responding to an attack on Pearl Harbor and the deaths of thousands, but they were also trying to save the victims who were dying in the concentration camps that were a part of the Holocaust. To the American people, then and now, the reasons for entering this war were clear and justified. Henceforth, the memorialization of this war could also be clear, justified, and would not be subject to controversy.

When my father and I arrived, only one or two people were at the memorial with us on the warm summer afternoon. The few people there visited alone. It seemed like they were on a walk or run and stopped to admire or remember those who had fallen. I found it surprising that there were not many visitors at this memorial, but it is situated farther from the cluster of other memorials in the Mall in the heart of Washington, D.C. Tourists have to drive out of their way to visit and most seem to prioritize visiting the gravestones in Arlington Cemetery first, then walking to the memorial during the journey through the cemetery. Those who do come across this memorial are not disappointed. Despite its different location from the cluster of memorials in Washington, D.C., this statue does get attention during different celebrations and events. One of these events includes the Marine Corps Marathon. The memorial is the finish line of this event.

My father, who served in the Navy, ran in this marathon and recalls the moment he finished the race, looking directly at the statue of the men hoisting the American flag into the air. He felt like he was a part of something much bigger than a marathon. My father continued his praise of this memorial, stating that it was his favorite because of the emotions it imparts. The experience of being part of a group of servicemen was fully represented by the statues raising the flag. Reading each event listed on the base of the memorial, the number of events the Marine Corps was involved in astonished me and I felt gratitude towards those individuals.

This chapter will explain the imparted emotions visitors feel in the presence of the memorials that represent victory and American ideals. The Marine Corps Memorial provoked the statement Nixon made about how it represents the hopes and dreams of Americans and will stand as a declaration for the American philosophy. Before the 1950s and the controversy of the Korean and Vietnam wars, this was the general acknowledgment of the war history in America because of their undisputed military success. These memorials represent that public and collective memory for future generations.

Memory is defined as the process of remembering something that has been learned. Memory and the act of remembering seem like very personal and individual aspects of the human experience. However, in recent years, historians have found a connection between history, the subject, and memory. History does not just involve facts, dates, and names of people. It involves the way these events and people are remembered, as well. This is especially important in the topic of wars. American history is defined by involvement in wars because of the consequences of death,

changes in society and politics, and the healing process that follows. These different consequences of wars affect the culture and society completely. This can be seen in the aftermath of the Civil War during Reconstruction and the “culture of domesticity” after World War II.

Memorials are constructed after the war is over and when the healing process is taking place. The construction on the memorial can begin several years after the end of the war or immediately after. At either time, the process of creating the memorial will bring up feelings of loss, honor, remembrance of the individuals lost and the reasons for the involvement in the war. Understandably, the motives for the United States entering into a war leads to the emotions and opinions Americans have when the memorial is opened to the public. For example, Americans entered World War II after the attack on Pearl Harbor to protect the country from further attacks. They were viewed as the heroes, bringing ideals of freedom and goodness to the Europeans who were being oppressed by the Nazi rule. Consequently, World War II is a moment of triumph in American history and is celebrated in that manner. Memorials celebrating this event display the triumph and power of the American people. This war completely set America apart from other countries and their military powers due to its victories in major wars.

One of the first memorials built honoring World War II was the Marine Corps War Memorial in 1954. This memorial was based on the photograph taken by Joe Rosenthal at the Battle of Iwo Jima on February 23, 1945. The photograph was extremely popular with the public and it won the Pulitzer Prize for Photography. Just a month after the photograph was taken, ideas of making this photograph into a

memorial were on many minds. In March 1945, the *San Francisco Chronicle* stated, “We do not believe that because Joe Rosenthal made a great picture a great piece of sculpture necessarily will ensue. But without inspiration there can be no great memorial art.”⁴² Eventually, this photograph was used by Felix de Weldon to produce that memorial that now stands in Arlington Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. The Marines paid for the entire memorial by their own donations. The total cost came to about \$850,000. This is significant because Marines and veterans were so passionate to have this memorial made that they donated money out of their own pockets. It also could be a source of pride for the Marines that they were able to procure enough funds to produce such a magnificent memorial that is very relevant in American history and popular among tourists.

The American flag is the first object that catches the eye during the walk towards the Marine Corps Memorial. This flag is displayed on this memorial twenty-four hours a day due to a proclamation President John F. Kennedy made in 1961. As your gaze travels down the flagpole, you view the bronze figures of the six soldiers raising the flag on a rocky terrain. These elements rest on a black granite base, which holds inscriptions and different events and dates. On the west side of the memorial, the inscription is, “Uncommon Valor Was A Common Virtue” - “Semper Fidelis,” while on the East side it reads, “In Honor and Memory Of The Men Of The United States Marine Corps Who Have Given Their Lives To Their Country Since 10 November 1775.”⁴³ The care and detail Felix de Weldon put into every feature of the statues was evident. The soldiers’ faces were individual, each showing a different

⁴² “Wants Memorial Like Flag Photo,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 18th, 1945.

⁴³ See Appendix Pictures #1 & #2.

emotion. The exhaustion in some faces and the determination in others can be seen distinctly.

Felix de Weldon did make some changes when he sculpted the images from the photograph. He moved the figures closer together to make it more compact. He also had to change the proportions of the men, making the hands and helmets bigger and raising their arms, so they would look more aesthetically pleasing to the viewers who would be looking up at it.⁴⁴ The base of the memorial contains the dates of every significant event in the Marine Corps history, honoring the old and new members since 1775. The events that are displayed on the base of the memorial display events that famously involved the Marine Corps, like World War I, the Battle of Iwo Jima, World War II, and the Korean War. However, it also lists dates and conflicts that are less known in American history, yet these Marines still risked their lives.

A few examples of these events include altercations in Tripoli (1801-1805), pursuits and revolts in Haiti (1915-1934), and occupations in Santo Domingo (1916-1924). The events in Tripoli were a part of the First Barbary War, which is also known as Tripolitan War. This war was fought between Americans and Muslim states in Northwestern Africa and began because of President Jefferson's refusal to reimburse the requested payment the leader of Tripoli demanded. Although many Americans were taken hostage during these battles, the war in its entirety was beneficial because it showed that the American Marine Corps and Navy could fight and achieve goals abroad.

⁴⁴ The Associated Press, "Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated," *New York Times*, November 11th, 1954.

The Marines were placed in Haiti more for occupational measures, rather than a war, to protect American corporations due to the rapid change in leadership in Haiti. There were many revolts during this time period and the Marines helped control these revolts. There were many negative consequences on the Haitian people from this occupation, but it does show an example of the variety of events the Marines have been involved in. The events in Santo Domingo were similar to that of the occupation in Haiti. It was one of the many occupations in Latin America by the American military during that time. This particular occupation began due to Dominican Republic's Secretary of War seizing power from the previous president by threatening bombings and attacks. These three examples of events that are etched on the memorial not only display the overall involvement of the Marine Corps, but it also shows how powerful the ideals and high opinions of World War II can overshadow other moments in American history where the morals of the American government were not as clear.

The American government occupied Haiti for purely selfish reasons that affected their own economic and corporate interests. These motives are similar in Santo Domingo, as well. Although this memorial does represent the history of the Marine Corps, it is commonly associated with World War II because of the original photograph it is based on. It is contradicting to see these events on a memorial that represents the qualities Vice President Nixon believed represented the ideal of what America was and continually wants to achieve. However, these contradictions are overshadowed by the context of World War II and the emotions and pride associated with it. Although an observer can clearly see the inscriptions of events

like the occupation in Haiti and the Korean War, the positive aspects of the American essence override most of the negative or disappointing factors of the American government and America. This displays how powerful a memorial can be in shaping the memory of a country's past, especially its involvement in wars both domestic and international.

The photograph is an image of six marines raising a flag after the battle, the second flag that was raised that day. The six marines were Ira Hayes, Franklin Sousley, Michael Strank, Rene Gagnon, John Bradley, and Harlon Block. Sousley, Strank, and Blok did not survive the war. Joe Rosenthal, an Associated Press staff photographer, was with them on assignment. Rosenthal stated, "They wouldn't let me carry a gun (he wears glasses with lenses a half inch thick), but I can pack my camera right with the boys in the front lines and show they're fighting."⁴⁵ Two of his brothers were in the Army and he wanted to contribute in any way he could. In the field of photography, he was able to witness some of the bloodiest fighting in Iwo Jima and memorialize these soldiers.⁴⁶ He came home "humble, he said, before the gallantry of the marines."⁴⁷ On the picture, Rosenthal reflects, "After looking at it, I think it is a good picture. I think it reflects credit on the marines. It symbolizes their gallant action. That was the toughest fight they ever had."⁴⁸ He understood that he was not to be celebrated for taking the photograph; the attention needed to be on all of those who fought and died for their country with complete bravery.

⁴⁵ "Photographer Wins Praise for War Job," *New York Times*, Feb 25th, 1945.

⁴⁶ "Camera Man Hails Iwo Jima Marines: Rosenthal Turns Acclaim of his Flag-Raising Picture to Tribute to our Fighter," *New York Times*, March 18th, 1945.

⁴⁷ "Camera Man Hails Iwo Jima Marines," March 18th, 1945.

⁴⁸ "Camera Man Hails Iwo Jima Marines," March 18th, 1945.

The Marine Corps War Memorial was dedicated on November 10, 1954, one day before Veteran's Day. On this day, Vice President Richard Nixon acknowledged it as "a symbol of the hopes and dreams of all Americans."⁴⁹ The three surviving flag-raisers and family members of the deceased were among the 5,000 spectators that came out for the dedication. The American flag was raised as a part of the memorial, acknowledging not only the photograph, but also the fact that it represents the entire Marine Corps. Vice President Nixon continued to state that the monument "will stand as a testimonial to the freedom-loving philosophy of Americans who he said get into foreign battles not because "we want land or peoples or concessions but because all we want is peace and freedom."⁵⁰ This was not only the symbol of the memorial, but also the representation of American wars at that point in history.

Memorials that displayed the triumph and pride of the United States, like the Marine Corps War Memorial, were very common before the Korean and Vietnam Wars. One of these elaborate memorials is the Lincoln Memorial. Although this is not a war memorial, President Lincoln does represent one of the key figures in the Civil War and is a representative of that time period. The Lincoln Memorial depicts a certain message about Lincoln. Peter Gardella writes that the American collective memory, or American civil religion as he calls it, expressed through the building, inscriptions, and the statue itself demands "that freedom and democracy must be protected and advanced, even at the cost of death. But such a death may confer

⁴⁹ The Associated Press, "Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated," *New York Times*, November 11th, 1954.

⁵⁰ "Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated," November 11th, 1954.

immortality.”⁵¹ Individuals can interpret the meaning of the statue or memorial at any time in history. This interpretation displays the collective memory of the nation at the time. Sociologist Jackie Hogan views the memorial as “the veneration of Lincoln.”⁵² She writes, “The Lincoln birthplace and the Lincoln Memorial are modeled on ancient Greek temples dedicated to the gods and goddesses. Their gleaming white stone, Doric columns, and steep ascents announce to visitors that they are entering sacred space.”⁵³ She sees this memorial as the “ideal” view of Lincoln being portrayed to the public, the image many Americans still hold in regard to this president.

The Lincoln Memorial is one of the grandest memorials for any one human being, let alone a United States president. Congress passed several bills for the commission of this monument, so this memorial was federally funded. World War I recently ended with a victory for Allied-powers and it seemed to be a prosperous, celebratory time for the nation. Northern newspapers praised both the monument itself and its dedication. *The New York Times* describes the memorial as “magnificent and compelling in its purity of line and simplicity.”⁵⁴ It also calls the monument a “white marble shrine with its massive Doric columns.”⁵⁵ This shrine was not only to the president, but also to the Americans who fought and died in the war under this

⁵¹ Peter Gardella, *American Civil Religion: What Americans Hold Sacred* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 231.

⁵² Jackie Hogan, *Lincoln, Inc.: Selling the Sixteenth President in Contemporary America* (Plymouth, U.K.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011), 121.

⁵³ Hogan, *Lincoln, Inc.*, 121.

⁵⁴ “Harding Dedicated Lincoln Memorial; Blue and Gray Join; President Moved by Presence of Veterans of Both Armies to Emphasize Unity,” *The New York Times*, May 30th, 1922.

⁵⁵ “Harding Dedicated Lincoln Memorial,” *The New York Times*, May 30th, 1922.

beloved president. It also displays the American ideals of freedom for any individual.

Grand memorials that commemorate the Civil War continue with the Gettysburg National Military Park. This is the location of the bloodiest battle on American soil. About 11,000 soldiers were killed, 29,000 wounded, and 10,000 were captured or missing during this one battle on July 1st, 1863 through July 3rd, 1863 that was the turning point of the war.⁵⁶ Since this massive battle, the land around the area has been preserved for memorialization and was visited by thousands of people before it became a national park. Several statues and different kinds of memorials have been created since 1863, making it one of the most expansive memorials for a single event. One of the different memorials included the graves of fallen soldiers in the National Cemetery. There are about 11,000 soldiers laid to rest here, 3,500 of them died during the Civil War. This makes this memorial a much more sacred place because it is the burial site for many soldiers. Some of these graves are organized around the Soldier's National Monument, which was the first monument erected in Gettysburg, while the first memorial was a small stone set on the place of a certain colonel's death. This statue includes the figure of Lady Liberty holding a sword and a wreath. Surrounding the figure of Lady Liberty are four other figures that are supposed to represent War, History, Peace, and Plenty.⁵⁷ These statues, along with the collection of statues throughout the grounds, comprise an outdoor museum throughout the battlefield.

⁵⁶ Judith Dupré, *Monuments: America's History in Art and Memory* (New York: Random House, 2007), 32.

⁵⁷ Dupré, *Monuments*, 36.

The designers of the outdoor museum at Gettysburg faced some hesitation when deciding the kinds of memorials and statues to be placed within it due to the animosity between the Union and the Confederacy. For about fifty years, Gettysburg only held representations of the Union side of the war because they were the victors. This one-sided representation lasted until the erection of “The Lee” statue. This statue of Robert E. Lee was significant because other memorials followed suit, but it wasn’t until 1982 when the South was represented in Gettysburg in full.⁵⁸ This entire battlefield houses memorials that tell the story not only of this specific battle, but also of the Civil War. It represents one of the most expansive memorials in the United States.

These three different memorials completely represent the statement Richard Nixon made on the dedication of the Marine Corps Memorial. They are physical forms of the epitomized American ideology. They symbolize victory and the romanticism of war in these generations through their structure that not only makes the ground seem sacred, but also exudes prominence in their vast size. These depictions are still seen through historical cinema and other forms of public history, especially in ones relating to the earlier wars that display America’s victorious history in pursuit of freedom. Although these different elements do show negative consequences of war, like death, they make it seem more heroic than the real pain that comes from it. These memorials epitomize the idea that America was the honorable nation that fought for freedom, not selfish or economic gain. The grandiose-like structures changed in both meaning and appearance after the Korean

⁵⁸ Judith Dupré, *Monuments: America’s History in Art and Memory* (New York: Random House, 2007), 40.

and Vietnam Wars due to the controversy of the wars and the debatable reasons for entering. The American public's reaction was split, one side supporting the war and the other side very anti-war. This response makes it clear that any type of memorial for the Vietnam War would contain many differences in opinion.

Chapter 3: The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, also known as the Wall, is not a large, opulent statue that catches your attention as you walk towards it. It is discreet because it looks like it is in the ground, cutting into the grass. Despite its lack of opulence, it is still startling. It is a completely different style of memorial because of the lack of sculpted figures. As you walk along the pathway that continues around the Mall, past the Lincoln Memorial, the first thing you see is a wall of black slate.⁵⁹ As my dad and I walked closer to the Wall, we started to see the individual names etched into the black slate.⁶⁰ This list of names is the list of people who died in the Vietnam War. The immense amount of names is startling and disheartening. They completely fill the entirety of the wall. The mood around the memorial was very somber, with people touching the wall at a specific name, memorializing a loved one through touch. There were not many people at this memorial when I arrived. There were far more at the Lincoln Memorial, a more popular, less controversial monument.

Another striking feature of the Wall is the number of objects that are placed directly in front of the names. These objects range from teddy bears to personal letters and pictures. Each of these objects is meant for one of the individual names. They are from later generations still trying to connect and share their lives with the person they have lost. Although my dad found the names of the dead the most striking and noticeable because he identified with the men, I found that the objects were more emotionally stirring and memorable. The gifts that were clearly from

⁵⁹ See Appendix Picture #3

⁶⁰ See Appendix Picture #4.

children made the names on the Wall relatable because you could see a bit of their personality through the objects left.

This chapter will examine the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, the controversies surrounding both the war and the memorial design, and the reactions of veterans and the American public to this more abstract design. The design of this memorial is so different than others before it because there were no statues of soldiers. There was not romanticism of war through a large image. This memorial only displays the negative consequences of a war while being apolitical. This memorial completely strays from Nixon's statement of the representation of American ideology. There is no sense of patriotism or American pride. Instead, there is a sense of sadness from the sheer number of deaths displayed on the black wall. The wall starts at a lower point and gradually ascends out of the ground, reaching a peak, and then gradually goes back towards the ground. It does, in fact, look like a cut or a gash in the ground.

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial contains two other elements along with Wall. One of these elements includes a statue called The Three Soldiers, also known as The Three Servicemen. This statue is situated off to the side of the Wall. Visitors can see it before reaching the Wall if they are walking from the Lincoln Memorial or the Korean War Memorial. This statue is bronze with the figures of three young soldiers in uniform.⁶¹ Each of their uniforms is different to represent the Army and the Marine Corps that fought in the Vietnam War. This part of the memorial is clearly different and out of place compared to the Wall. It is noticeable that this statue was not part of the original design Maya Lin had in mind.

⁶¹ See Appendix Picture #5.

The second added element to the original Wall is the Vietnam Women's Memorial. It was created in 1993, about ten years after the original monument was dedicated. This is probably due to the fact that women were not at the forefront of conversation and memorialization in this war. This memorial is to the south of the Wall on the opposite side of the grass area in its own area surrounded by trees. This memorial was created to memorialize the women, who were usually nurses, who participated in this war. This occupation is displayed through the statue of the three women who are helping a wounded soldier.⁶² This part of the memorial is so separate from the Wall that it just feels like it is on its own. It is so secluded from the other memorials that most people are unaware that it is there or even exists, unless they are searching for it specifically. It is interesting that the two parts of the memorial that were created to appease some veterans and members of the public are not as popular as the original.

The Vietnam Veteran's Memorial was the first memorial created for the Vietnam War. American troops entered Vietnam in 1961 even though the conflict had begun in 1955. American troops stayed in this war until 1973 when troops started to leave, and on April 30, 1975, the war was officially over. However, the end of this war was very different than the conclusion of other wars in American history, besides the Korean War. The American troops did not achieve their goal of stopping Communism in Vietnam. The entirety of the war seemed to be a stalemate without any good consequences coming out of it. After about six years of being in the war, almost half of the American public was against the involvement.

⁶² See Appendix Picture #6.

Different groups of Americans stood strongly against the Vietnam War for many reasons. The anti-war movement was becoming more popular with the younger generations because they were the ones being drafted into the war they did not want to fight. They also did not understand the reasons America was actually involved in the war. It was in a country people knew very little about in a conflict that seemed to have nothing to do with America. In other wars, like World War II, the reason for entering was to help end a holocaust and to retaliate against a Japanese attack on American soil. None of these elements were taking place in Vietnam's conflict. The culture at the time was also leaning towards a peace movement. As more people started voicing their opinions against the war, the more attention the movement received.

Another reason the Vietnam War was receiving such negative attention was the amount of war crimes the public was hearing about through the different forms of media. These included different massacres and violence by American troops on the Vietnamese people. Hearing these different instances, many Americans concluded that there would not be any productive outcomes from the war. They also did not support the soldiers who did not seem to represent the morality that older generations were used to. Many Americans were ashamed of the involvement and the soldiers that were risking their lives.

The idea for creating a memorial for the Vietnam War started with Jan Scruggs, a veteran rifleman in the 199th Light Infantry Brigade for the Army in Vietnam. He reportedly got the idea after watching the movie *Deer Hunter*. It was during this film that he realized that the public needed to learn the names of the

individuals who died and went through this traumatic experience. As he developed the project more, he realized he wanted a memorial that was built without the aid of any government money; it was to be paid by the people. At the time, he truly believed that people would be so enthusiastic about the memorial that they would raise too much money. This belief was naïve and there was only a small influx of money when the idea was made known to the public.⁶³

The main reason he wanted a memorial to this war was for a positive recognition from the American public towards him and his fellow veterans. He explains that when he and his fellow veterans came back from Vietnam they were not heroes. This was completely unexpected because they knew the stories of the World War II veterans coming home with massive celebrations, parades, and honor. He writes, "You also came home alone, with no sense of completion. You were safe, yet the killing continued. You might write a few letters to friends, but you lost touch."⁶⁴ They were welcomed home with people calling them murderers, even ten years after the war was over. These are the reasons why these veterans bonded together to try to get the memorial they felt they deserved. Scruggs and other veterans came together to form the VVMF, also known as Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, which is a nonprofit organization in 1979.

Scruggs states that he thought there would be two principle problems that the VVMF would face throughout the process of creating a Vietnam War memorial: the anti-war movement and the Washington bureaucracy. However, these problems

⁶³ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 7-8.

⁶⁴ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 11.

did not turn out to be significant at the beginning of the development. The first big problem turned out to be the location of the memorial. The first suggested location was unacceptable. It was an “out-of-the-way place” that was not near the Mall or any other memorial. To get the recognition the veterans felt they deserved, Scruggs and his fellow volunteers went around the federal bureaucracy and talked to government officials on their own, especially ones who were veterans themselves. The new spot selected was the one where it was eventually placed, which is adjacent to the Lincoln Memorial in the middle of the Mall. No one could ignore this memorial, like they did the war. They found that the symbolism was perfect for their cause.⁶⁵ However, the veterans needed a bill to get passed to access the two acres of land they wanted.

The second major problem the VVMF faced was raising enough money for the project. One suggestion was to get money through the defense contractors that had profited from the Vietnam War taking place. The negative side of this donation was the opinion of some veterans viewing this as “blood money,” but many felt that it “had been their blood.”⁶⁶ These defense contractors did not donate as much money as they hoped so they turned to fellow veterans. Vietnam veterans began to rally around the idea of the memorial. One supporter of the memorial who gave money to the foundation wrote in a letter, “We hope that this memorial will stand to honor our veterans, but also will stand as a warning for those old men who even

⁶⁵ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 15-16.

⁶⁶ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 21.

now are trying to drag us into another useless war.”⁶⁷ This “useless war” this supporter talks about is the Cold War. Many wanted the memorial not only to honor the bravery of the soldiers in the Vietnam War, but to also serve a purpose for present and future generations to learn from American history.

Due to the increasing support from veterans and grieving families, a mailing petition was created to receive donations for the memorial in 1979. This petition raised about \$120,000 and it was the most successful mailing petition to date. However, this was around the same time when the anti-war movement started to raise their opinions about the memorial. Many questioned if this process was taking place one generation too soon, even Scruggs. It was only 48 months after the end of the war that this plan was taking shape. Despite these concerns, the veterans received the land from a bill passed in the Senate with the support of several senators in April 1980. The House of Representatives was more of an obstacle than the Senate was. Many Democrats opposed the memorial because they thought it implied that the Carter administration had not done enough for the Vietnam veterans. Another concern was that it would be very expensive to maintain through tax dollars. The bill did pass on Memorial Day in 1980, but with some compromises on the amount of land given to the veterans.⁶⁸

After the veterans received the land, the two main problems were the design of the memorial and the fundraising. Scruggs and the rest of the VVMF decided to choose the designer through a competition because it “would fit in with the

⁶⁷ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 22.

⁶⁸ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 21-36.

American spirit of solving problems through fair and open contest.” They had to choose a jury that would decide the winning entry. The jury was to be a group of individuals at the top of their respective fields in architecture and landscape, not veterans. They wanted a group of professionals to decide what would best fit an apolitical memorial that served to heal. The competition received 1,421 entries and after about a weeklong process, Maya Lin’s design was chosen. Maya Lin submitted her design for a class project at Yale University. She was twenty-one years old at the time. When Scruggs initially saw the drawing of the design, he was confused and felt that it may be too advanced in design for the public. One element of the memorial did excite him. It had every name on it.⁶⁹ It did not memorialize war; it memorialized the ones who served.

Maya Lin never expected to win the contest. She felt that they would never accept her design because it clearly displayed the fact that war was sad.⁷⁰ It did not glamorize the soldier or the battlefield. It simply showed the harsh, individual consequences. She believed in the power of the name. Lin stated, “But on a personal level, I wanted to focus on the nature of accepting and coming to terms with a loved one’s death. Simple as it may be, I remember feeling that accepting a person’s death is the first step in being able to overcome that loss.”⁷¹ That was her goal for the memorial. It was not to please any government or express an opinion of the controversial war. It was meant to help the grieving process of those who had lost a loved one. The shape of the memorial and its location in the ground came from an

⁶⁹ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 50-65.

⁷⁰ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 66.

⁷¹ Maya Lin, “Making the Memorial,” *The New York Review of Books*, November 2nd, 2000.

idea that she wanted to cut the ground to represent a wound that would heal over time. It would also link the past and the present by pointing to the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.⁷²

Maya Lin was constantly in the public eye because of the constant critiques of her design.⁷³ Despite these negative remarks, funds for the memorial came in at a higher rate because families and veterans were just pleased that there would be a memorial. Scruggs stated the interpretations of the veterans.

The more they saw it, the more they liked it. Their interpretations were different, yet all somehow the same. The Memorial would always be a place where you could express love. It would remind the country that it could never escape responsibility for its actions. It would place the Vietnam veteran fully within the scope of American history.⁷⁴

The Commission of Fine Arts approved her design in 1981. Although this was a step forward in the process, disagreements between Lin and different members and supporters of the VVMF grew over the design. One major disagreement was on the chronology of the names of those who died. Some of the design groups and veterans wanted the names listed in alphabetical order so it was easier for friends and family to find the names on the wall. Lin fought this change because she believed that the time of death was significant to the visitors, making it more personal and emotionally compelling.⁷⁵ She eventually won that fight.

⁷² Maya Lin, "Making the Memorial," *The New York Review of Books*, November 2nd, 2000.

⁷³ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 76-77.

⁷⁴ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 75.

⁷⁵ Maya Lin, "Making the Memorial," *The New York Review of Books*, November 2nd, 2000.

The backlash over the design was prevalent in November and December of 1981.⁷⁶ The phrase “a black gash of shame” was a popular description of the memorial. Lin understood that there were negative responses, but due to her young age and inexperience in the workforce, she did not foresee it happening. She states, “I think ultimately that much of the negative response goes back to the very natural response to cover up or not acknowledge that which is painful or unpleasant.”⁷⁷ She believed that it wasn’t necessarily her design but the response to the war in general. These negative opinions were receiving attention from the media, but Jan Scruggs never faltered in his support for the design chosen. When he considered the criticisms the memorial received, he thought, “Even those who wanted glory had only pick a name at random. Who could deny the glory in a young man willing to risk-and give- his life for his country.”⁷⁸ Even though the design had his unwavering support, Scruggs and Lin had to make compromises for the building process to start in 1982. This compromise was for a statue to be added of soldiers and that the American flag needed to be added. Although Lin accepted this compromise, she would not go down without a fight.

On March 26, 1982, ground was finally broken on the site grounds for the Vietnam memorial. Scruggs and about 125 other veterans took turns shoveling the dirt to signal the beginning of construction. Bernard Weinraub, a reporter, witnessed this event, noting that many of the veterans were weeping. He quotes

⁷⁶ Jan C, Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 84.

⁷⁷ Maya Lin, “Making the Memorial,” *The New York Review of Books*, November 2nd, 2000.

⁷⁸ Jan C, Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 89.

Scruggs, ““Let this memorial begin the healing process and forever stand as a symbol of national unity.””⁷⁹ Weinraub also notes that controversy had already begun with the design. Some veterans and even members of Congress believed that the simple design resembles a tombstone that ignores the patriotism of the soldiers and didn’t have a positive declaration about the veterans.⁸⁰ However, one veteran at the ceremony did state, “We all know there’s no glory in war, only suffering.”⁸¹ His statement sums up the reason many veterans did approve of the design of the memorial; it shows the truth of the war and the experience the soldiers went through.

Four months after the groundbreaking Maya Lin made her objections known about the added statues. Her views on the addition of the three soldiers statues written by Frederick Hart in the *Washington Post* are clear. She states, “I can’t see how anyone of integrity can go around drawing mustaches on other people’s portraits.”⁸² She wanted to delay the dedication as long as possible so time would allow certain individuals to understand the memorial and accept that there was no need for an added statue.⁸³ Despite her efforts, the dedication was not delayed and the statue was created. The first of the panels of black stone with names on it arrived in Washington, D.C. in July. Families were able to do something unprecedented that nobody expected; they touched the stone. They were able to

⁷⁹ Bernard Weinraub, “Ground Broken in Capital for Memorial on Vietnam,” *New York Times*, March 27th, 1982.

⁸⁰ Weinraub, “Ground Broken in Capital for Memorial on Vietnam,” *March 27th, 1982*.

⁸¹ Weinraub, “Ground Broken in Capital for Memorial on Vietnam,” *March 27th, 1982*.

⁸² Jan C, Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 121.

⁸³ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 75.

connect with the individual that died. At this point, Scruggs realized, “nobody can stop the dream now.”⁸⁴ The emotional reaction and healing just from the first panels were overwhelming and unstoppable. The additions seemed unnecessary just from the reaction of those close to the Vietnam War. They were more of a political addition to appease government officials than ones that would help heal, which was the goal of the memorial in the first place.

The dedication of the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial took place on November 13th, 1982, but the week before the dedication was marked with other ceremonies of celebration. Despite these celebrations that included visits from President Reagan, hundreds of veterans travelled to Washington, D.C. to visit the Wall before it was to be dedicated. They travelled in any way they could. Some walked hundreds of miles, others spent above their means. Most put their lives on hold for this moment. There were vets everywhere in Washington, D.C.⁸⁵ Francis X. Clines, a reporter, wrote, “They bore the slow grief of the Vietnam time and indulged in the simplest sort of human memorial, the act of touching stone, feeling the cold, stony texture of the engraved names of the dead that showed up by flashlight and in the wavering glow of matches struck in the dark.”⁸⁶ The act of touching the Wall meant more to many of these individuals than anyone would have thought. Veterans and surviving family members of those who died were able to connect with the loved ones in ways

⁸⁴ Jan C. Scruggs & Joel L. Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1985), 123.

⁸⁵ Scruggs & Swerdlow, *To Heal A Nation*, 139-143.

⁸⁶ Francis X. Clines, “Tribute to Vietnam Dead: Words, A Wall,” *New York Times*, November 11th, 1982.

they had not been able to do after their deaths. One of the veterans was quoted in the article saying, "You have to touch it. There's something about touching it."⁸⁷

Noticing the immense emotional responses to the Wall, Duncan Spencer and Lloyd Wolf spent the spring of 1984 to the late summer of 1985 interviewing and photographing individuals visiting. The individuals ranged from veterans, members of the anti-war movement, grieving family members, and people who were just visiting the area that did not have much interest. Their comments express the assortment of opinions Americans have to this controversial monument. A grieving mother, Magnolia Williams, found that she felt relief at the Wall. Her anxiety was gone looking at what she found was a beautiful memorial.⁸⁸ Mimi Robinson, a widower, stated, "In the beginning of the war I was glad Bruce wanted to go. He was very patriotic. But now, looking at the monument, it is the first one that calls war the way it is."⁸⁹ She witnessed the pain he went through when he was injured. She was a part of that experience that the memorial depicts, which is the true suffering of war.

There were different opinions of the interpretation of the Wall and the additions to it. Erica Fox, a visitor of the memorial, had a different opinion of the Wall. She liked the three-soldier statue better. She viewed the Wall as cold and lifeless, even creepy. Her reflection that is seen on the black granite made it too personal. She found that the statues conveyed more emotions that they did not want

⁸⁷ Francis X. Clines, "Tribute to Vietnam Dead: Words, A Cold Stone Wall," *New York Times*, November 11th, 1982.

⁸⁸ Duncan Spencer, *Facing the Wall: Americans at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 55.

⁸⁹ Spencer, *Facing the Wall*, 57.

to fight in Vietnam.⁹⁰ Along the same lines, John Paine explained his disapproval of monuments in general. He stated, "The American government puts up these monuments for people and then forgets about them, instead of doing things for the people that are still alive."⁹¹ He feels that the long-term benefits will not do as much as this momentary celebration for the veterans. However, some veterans were not even healing with the celebrations that surrounded the opening years of the dedication. Jeffrey Budzis, a veteran who fell onto some hard times after the war like many others, felt anger when he visited the memorial. He stated, "I know there are no enemies on the memorial, just names-it's perfectly safe. When I got close to it, I just got angry."⁹² It's anger at his country, the men who died, and the fear of the future he now has as consequence of the war. Despite some of these different initial reactions to the memorial, many were able to release their anger through the recognition of the parade and dedication.

The controversies, public reactions, and architectural design set this memorial apart from the ones created before it. The relationship between the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and ones like the Marine Corps Memorial is conflicting. They represent different aspects of war. The earlier ones portray the uncomplicated, idealistic form of war that evolves in the collective memory of the people after a victory. The Vietnam memorial represents the complicated, realistic side of war. The numbers of individual deaths that actually take place to achieve a goal are clearly

⁹⁰ Duncan Spencer, *Facing the Wall: Americans at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 67.

⁹¹ Spencer, *Facing the Wall*, 83.

⁹² Spencer, *Facing the Wall*, 93.

shown on the Wall. There is no glorifying the battles or soldiers on display and helps form a cautious memory.

The ideas surrounding the creation of the memorial and the reactions during the process differ from those seen from previous war memorials. The Marine Corps Memorial represented “the hopes and dreams of all Americans”⁹³ in the opinion of Richard Nixon and most of the audience. It will stand the test of time to represent the ideal generation and bring forth patriotic reactions, even in times of distress. The Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial strays from this Nixon quote. The ideas of peace and freedom do not exude from this memorial. It is meant to symbolize personal healing, loss, and the consequences of war. It represents the consequences of attaining democracy and freedom. The memorial will outlive the reactions from the Vietnam War to later generations. The lasting memory is different and defined by these elements of public history.

⁹³ The Associated Press, “Iwo Marine Memorial is Dedicated,” *New York Times*, November 11th, 1954.

Chapter 4: Memorials After Vietnam

The Korean War Veteran's Memorial was the most crowded memorial I visited in Washington, D.C. Many of these visitors were clearly veterans, proudly wearing hats and jackets that held medals and patches that let people know they fought in Korea. Although this was the most crowded memorial I had been to, it was also the most quiet. The veterans that were there with their spouses and other family members were in a reflective state, staring at the different elements with their faces filled with emotion, seemingly lost in the past. It was a face I had seen before when my grandfather showed me a picture of the memorial he has placed in their family room. The Korean War Veteran's Memorial was also had the most racially diverse visitors, many of which looked to be of Korean or Asian descent. This may be due to the fact that the memorial acknowledges the Korean side of the war, honoring those veterans from South Korea. The South Korean flag is displayed in front of the statues of the memorial, next to the larger American flag.

My grandfather fought in Korea, which made this memorial significant for me. When he showed me the picture he has of the statues covered in snow, he mentioned that this was the most realistic photograph he had ever seen of the soldiers' experience in Korea. It is no wonder that this memorial is popular among the veterans. It allows them to look at their past and remember the friends and fellow soldiers they lost. This shows how important memorials are, not only in the healing process, but also in bring different generations together to learn about history.

On the other hand, the National World War II Memorial was the most opulent war memorial my father and I saw on our trip in Washington, D.C. It also is the memorial that seems to symbolize the American ideals the country was founded on. Even if this war was not the one of the most successful wars in America's past, the memorial makes any visitor believe that it was fought for the right reasons and that America was not only victorious, but also the saviors of the entire war.

The memorial contained several different elements within the plaza. One element was a pool with a fountain in the middle. Many people were sitting in this area when I visited. They seemed as though they were quietly contemplating or talking amongst themselves. A wall on the opposite side of the official entrance contains 4,000 gold stars with a quote that states "Here We Mark The Price Of Freedom." Each star represents 100 lives lost, meaning 400,000 Americans lost their lives in this war.⁹⁴ This wall was the most significant element of the memorial to my father and I. The number of stars is staggering and then when you realize that just one of these stars represents 100 individuals, it makes it almost incomprehensible. This part of the memorial was also the place where the most people were gathered in a solemn manner. You realize the massive number of family members and ancestors that were affected by just one of these deaths. However, this memorial does help the healing process because you can visibly see the pride the nation has for these soldiers.

This chapter focuses on the memorials that were created after the creation of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and the controversy surrounding it. The reactions

⁹⁴ See Appendix Picture #9.

from the public and the officials had never been seen before and many were afraid to create memorials in this fashion again. This chapter will show how the design of memorials shifts back to the architecture seen in the memorials before the 1950s. These memorials include the Korean War Veteran's Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, and the 9/11 Memorial in New York City. Though these memorials tried to display the ideals Nixon's quote elaborated on, the public reaction was not as patriotic as before. This displays that the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial did change the American public's response to war memorials.

Aesthetically, many war memorials created after the Vietnam War were large and opulent, bringing back the earlier styles of statues of soldiers and expansive land areas. This was due to the fact that many Americans were losing faith in their government after the Vietnam War, shown by the increase of support in the anti-war movement. This war left the country divided and vulnerable. The conclusion of the war resulted in defeat, something Americans had not experienced before the Korean War. Loss was a new feeling to the American public and it brought doubt to government leadership and the ability of the military. Due to these negative responses, many government officials wanted Americans to shift their ideas of America to more positive emotions.

The design of the Korean War Veteran's Memorial contains an area of 19 soldiers seemingly walking through Korea in a triangle formation. They could have been just coming from a fight or walking towards one because their stances seem like they are in the middle of a walk and they are wearing ponchos that signify the kind of weather they experienced. Each man has a different facial expression that

range from exhaustion to defeat to concern. Each of the soldiers also carries different weapons and devices used in wars like radios, guns, and ammunition.

This memorial contains several elements, making it very large and expansive. One of the elements is the formation of statues. Across from the statues is a pool, known as the "Reflecting Pool." The benches are set up around the pool where visitors are encouraged to sit and reflect on the amount of human loss that took place during this war. The amount of human loss is displayed around the pool, etched in stone. It not only includes the complete number of those who died, but those who are missing, too. The Reflecting Pool starts off very shallow and then gradually gets deeper. It is in the shape of a circle, but is cut off by a large piece of black granite slate. This slate extends past the soldiers and contains different quotes and murals. The murals contain images of real soldiers and various aspects of the war. There are about 2,400 etched images on the mural. The mural also contains the quote, "Freedom Is Not Free." This memorial fully acknowledges the loss of life and also celebrates the service of the soldiers. It is not completely devoid of war and fighting like the Wall and the statues of the soldiers bring back similar architecture of the memorials before the Vietnam War.

The design of the National World War II Memorial represents similar sentiments that the Korean War Veteran's Memorial does. This is seen through the different elements of the memorial, including two flagpoles displaying the American flag. An inscription on the flagpole reads, "Americans Came To Liberate, Not To Conquer, To Restore Freedom And To End Tyranny." Granite pillars with wreaths on each of them that represent the states and other U.S. territories surround the plaza.

In the middle of these pillar stands two arches. They represent the Atlantic and Pacific side of the war and the beams support American eagles that hold the victory laurel. This is to represent not only the victory of the war, but also the victory of the entire World War II generation. Engraved in these pavilions contains the quotes “Victory on Land,” Victory at Sea,” and “Victory in the Air.”⁹⁵

There are walls as you enter the plaza before the pillars that hold picture engravings of different war scenes. These include scenes of the soldiers getting ready to fight, like getting physical exams, taking the oath, and getting suited with their gear. It continues with iconic scenes known throughout the war, including fights and burying of the dead. These scenes also depict scenes from different countries abroad, like the front lines in Germany and Russia. The quotes lining the walls were famous ones that most Americans have been hearing their entire lives in History classes. One quote etched in the wall is by General Douglas MacArthur. He is talking about the end of the war and states, “Today The Guns Are Silent. A Great Tragedy Has Ended. A Great Victory Has Been Won. The Skies No Longer Rain Death- The Seas Bear Only Commerce- Men Everywhere Walk Upright In The Sunlight. The Entire World Is Quietly At Peace.” These scenes put the visitor in the mindset of a soldier and what they went through, which brings up feelings of support for those troops and the troops in the present. This memorial honors each of the different branches of the American military that served in World War II. They include the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Air Force, and the Coast Guard. It also attempts to honor each individual that died in this war. The middle of the plaza

⁹⁵ See Appendix Picture #7.

contains a pool, known at the Rainbow Pool, with jets of water streaming out of it.⁹⁶ The pool looks like it supposed to be reflective because it has benches surrounding it.

The design process of the Korean War Veteran's Memorial started with Eli Samuel Belil, a veteran of the Korean War in the Air Force. He has attempted to get the process started through networking since 1978. As one of the first leading forces of the campaign to get this monument started, he specifies that this was a war not a conflict or police action because 8,177 men are still missing in action, which is two-thirds more than those missing in Vietnam. He finds that his fellow veterans were not as vocal as the World War II veterans or Vietnam veterans because they felt as though they did not deserve the celebration and they did not have as much controversy surrounding them to draw enough attention.⁹⁷ The creation of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial brought out desires from the Korean War veterans for a memorial to display their sacrifices to the country, which had seemed to be forgotten. One veteran stated in a *New York Times* article, "To many in this country today, it is 'the forgotten war,' and I think that those of us who served back then are particularly to blame for that."⁹⁸ Like the Vietnam veterans, the Korean veterans faced an American people who were not willing to acknowledge the war they were in, even though it was not as hostile of a reception. The Vietnam War veterans got their memorial and the Korean War veterans felt they deserved the same, but the process seemed to be dragging for thirty-four years. Many believed that the drawn-

⁹⁶ See Appendix Picture #8.

⁹⁷ Albert J. Parisi, "In Pursuit of A Korean War Memorial," *New York Times*, July 10th, 1988.

⁹⁸ Albert J. Parisi, "Korean War: Memories but...: Korean Veterans Seek a Monument," *New York Times*, July 5th, 1987.

out process was due to the fact that the veterans didn't want to "make waves."⁹⁹

William L. Caubet, a veteran, stated, "There wasn't the same stigma attached to our years of service as that for those in Vietnam, and while it took 10 years to acknowledge the Vietnam veteran, the Korean veteran got lost in the shuffle."¹⁰⁰

After the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, the process of designing and creating memorials proved to be a more difficult and drawn-out process. This can be seen in the Korean War Veteran's Memorial. After a competition process to decide the architect of the memorial, the winning design came from four architects from State College, Pennsylvania. The original design was of thirty-eight soldiers marching to the American flag, a clearly different design than the Wall. The firm of Cooper-Lecky was then commissioned to build the memorial by the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board. The design was then shifted from the original design, causing several rejection reviews of the new design to take place.¹⁰¹ The advisory board obviously was trying to be much more cautious on this design process to avoid controversy. Finally, after about eight years of planning, the memorial was open to the public and dedicated on July 27, 1995.

The dedication of this particular memorial involved both the presence of the United States and South Korea. President Bill Clinton and President Kim Young-sam of South Korea both were there to celebrate this dedication. Thousands of veterans and their families also came to see the memorial. One veteran summed up the entire

⁹⁹ Albert J. Parisi, "Korean War: Memories but...: Korean Veterans Seek a Monument," *New York Times*, July 5th, 1987.

¹⁰⁰ Parisi, "Korean War," July 5th, 1987.

¹⁰¹ Barbara Gamarekian, "The Korean War Memorial: Another Review, Another No," *New York Times*, June 29th, 1991.

process by saying, "It's been a long time coming."¹⁰² These veterans finally felt like the U.S. government and its people recognized the Korean War as an actual war, which was validation for the experiences they went through. Although the memorial displays characteristics of memorials past, like the grandeur and the figures of the soldiers, the dedication President Clinton gave lacked words of pride and American nationalism. This memorial was more of an apology to the veterans for becoming "forgotten" in American history. Also, the American people were still not ready to commemorate and memorialize American principles when they still felt the distrust towards the government after Vietnam.

The beginning of the process for the creation of the National World War II Memorial was in 1987 when the idea was first proposed in Congress. In 1993, President Clinton signed a public law that allowed for the construction of the memorial in the selected site. He then dedicated the site in 1995. Janny Scott, a reporter for the *New York Times*, observed that any plans for a war monument seems to start a war within itself due to all the disagreements and delays in the design and construction process. This kind of process started with the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and has continued since.¹⁰³ The Commission of Fine Arts endorsed the memorial, but called for a reevaluation of the original design in July, saying the design by Frederich St. Florian looked like four rooms with blunt columns. It didn't fit what they wanted to portray this war as.¹⁰⁴ The commission also heard both supportive and negative opinions to this new memorial.

¹⁰² Todd S. Purdum, "War in Korea, Fast Receding, Gets Memorial," *New York Times*, July 28th, 1995.

¹⁰³ Janny Scott, "Planned War Memorial Sets Off Its Own Battle in Washington," *New York Times*, March 18th, 1997.

¹⁰⁴ "World War II Memorial Site is Back but Design is Not," *New York Times*, July 25th, 1997.

Representative Marcy Kaptur stated, “What could be more appropriate, as we stand at the crossroads of the 20th and 21st centuries than to dedicate a memorial on the Mall to our nation’s finest hour in the 20th century?”¹⁰⁵ She, among many other Americans, want not only to honor the World War II generation, but also to return to a time that seemed a bit more simple in terms of the government and wars. It was a time that was honorable.

Other government members have a more negative view. Senator Bob Kerry stated, “I believe it is too large. I believe it is too intrusive. I believe this is too hallowed a ground to build anything more on it.”¹⁰⁶ Kerry believed that the Mall was sacred as is and adding more opulent memorials would detract from the meaning, especially in the land between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. Ms. Dietsch, the editor-in-chief of the magazine *Architect*, completely agree with Kerry on his stance. Her objections are more idealistic. She finds that “the aim of the Washington Monument and Lincoln memorial was to remind Americans of the Union’s strength, not of the wars those two leader fought. She said that the open view between them symbolized American democracy and should be preserved.”¹⁰⁷ Although the World War II memorial would symbolize important events of American history, one memorial should not intrude on the meaning of another. The openness of the Mall is another element that brings power to the memorials and a reverent feel to the visitors. A memorial, especially as big as the one proposed, could ruin that unique landscape and the importance surrounding it.

¹⁰⁵ “World War II Memorial Site is Back but Design is Not,” *New York Times*, July 25th, 1997.

¹⁰⁶ “World War II Memorial Site is Back but Design is Not,” July 25th, 1997.

¹⁰⁷ Janny Scott, “Planned War Memorial Sets Off Its Own Battle in Washington,” *New York Times*, March 18th, 1997.

One member of the opposition felt that marches on Washington would stop because there would not be any open space, which would impede on one of the most important assembly spaces in American history.¹⁰⁸

Despite these concerns, the process of designing the memorial continued for the designated space. Three years after the initial arguments and denials of the design for the monument, the design was finally approved in 2000. This was fifty-five years after the last battle was fought in World War II. St. Florian said the final design was made to look timeless, yet reflect past designs that were popular at the time the founding fathers were alive.¹⁰⁹ However, some supporters of this memorial taking its place at the Mall have some reservations about the design. One of these individuals, Hugh L. Carey, was very supportive and eager for the plans to go forward but mentioned that he felt the design of the memorial was missing something that Maya Lin's design created. He found it symbolized the level of bravery and dedication the soldiers had that this one did not portray because of its lack of simplicity. His reservations were pushed to the side because of the importance many felt to accelerate the process to make sure this war's veterans would be able to see the dedication. At this point in time, the veterans were dying at a rate of about 1,000 per day.¹¹⁰ Representative Marcy Kaptur stated, "It has taken twice as long to build this monument than it took to fight the war."¹¹¹ Kaptur's comment somewhat illuminates the absurdity of the drawn-out timeline, but it also

¹⁰⁸ Irvin Molotsky, "Design for World War II Memorial Awaits Review, With Detractors Vocal," *New York Times*, July 17th, 2000.

¹⁰⁹ Molotsky, "Design for World War II Memorial Awaits Review," July 17th, 2000.

¹¹⁰ Molotsky, "Design for World War II Memorial Awaits Review," July 17th, 2000.

¹¹¹ Irvin Molotsky, "Plans for World War II Memorial Launch Forward," *New York Times*, September 24th, 2000.

displays the importance of war memorials to the public, especially to the veterans. They want to make sure future generations remember them in a positive way and that their sacrifices and lives were important. The way these memorials portray the war will be one of the crucial elements Americans will use to learn about the particular war and the opinions Americans at the time had about it. Memorials shape the understanding of past events, which is why so much time is put into the process and why support and opposition of the design is important to acknowledge.

The initial date of completion for the memorial was set to be 2003, but it was finished in 2004 and dedicated on May 29th, 2004. There was an audience of over 100,000 people on that day. Veterans were able to visit the memorial a month earlier. According to many veterans, emotions of pride are mixed with sadness and disappointment over those who couldn't be in attendance, especially those who died during the long process.¹¹² Although the Marine Corps Memorial does honor a battle during World War II, it specifically honors only marines. The other thousands of soldiers that served patiently waited to be honored and many felt it was long overdue. The dedication was met with these similar emotions. President Bush, President Clinton, and President Bush, Sr. were there to honor these veterans. President Bush, the keynote speaker, stated, "They saved our country and thereby saved the liberty of mankind."¹¹³

This memorial, especially the inscriptions, can be closely linked with the Marine Corps Memorial and its dedication in 1954. It reflects the emotional

¹¹² Michael Janofsky, "War Memorial Provokes Mixed Emotions," *New York Times*, May 23rd, 2004.

¹¹³ Michael Janofsky, "Veterans Gather to Dedicate World War II Memorial," *New York Times*, May 30th, 2004.

response Nixon described for the Marine Corps Memorial when he stated that it stands to represent the freedom-loving ideology of Americans. President Bush used the same type of language in the World War II dedication 50 years later to guide the American public into remembering a time when it seemed that everything was clear, the opposite of what Americans were feeling in 2004. The attack of September 11th, 2001 and the subsequent war extracted confusion, fear, and uncertainty in the demeanor of the American people. Bringing back the opulent style for memorials that is seen before the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial could only help Americans support American ideals.

This grand style of architecture was not only expected, but also needed in the creation of a 9/11 memorial in New York City. Although the memorial is meant to memorialize a terrible event that took place on U.S. soil killing thousands, it also represents the war that started due to the attack. September 11th, 2001 and the subsequent days after led to some of the most patriotic times in the country, bringing individuals together to support and heal as one country. The final design of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum was opened to the public on September 11th, 2011. It is located precisely where the former towers of the World Trade Center stood, known as Ground Zero. It contains two waterfalls and reflecting pools that are within the footprints of the original Twin Towers. The names of every one of the 3,000 individuals who died from this event are inscribed on both of the pools. There is also a plaza around the pools, known as the Memorial Plaza that contains hundreds of trees and other eco-friendly elements. One particular tree, the Survivor Tree, is in this area. This tree was found in some of the rubble and was not

destroyed. It continues to live on in this space. There is a small clearing amongst the plaza called Memorial Glade that is meant for gatherings and important ceremonies. The space also includes a museum that holds photographs, artifacts, videos, and several oral histories that describe the different events of that day.

The progression to design a memorial began in 2003, just two years after the attack. The speed to create a memorial generated from the public's need to heal and remember those who lost their lives. A competition was set up to choose the design and they received about 5,200 entries, making it one of the largest design competitions. In comparison, this competition drew in three times more entries than the competition for the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. The payment for this memorial came from the World Trade Center Memorial Foundation, a foundation where groups and individuals could donate whatever amount they could. At this point in 2003, the foundation had more than \$600,000.¹¹⁴

The anonymous jury that chose the winning design for the competition took several months to make their decision. The decision was finally made in 2004 and the winner was Michael Arad, an unknown architect. This decision caused an immediate problem. Arad was a former Israeli soldier, a fact that brought many prejudice opinions forward from the American public. Many found he was also too inexperienced to handle this type of project and attention.¹¹⁵ Arad admitted his flaws in an interview with Ted Loos, a reporter for the *New York Times*. Arad stated, "When I started this project, I was a young architect. I was very apprehensive about

¹¹⁴ Edward Wyatt, "5,200 Designs Submitted for 9/11 Memorial," *New York Times*, July 18th, 2003.

¹¹⁵ Ted Loos, "Architect and 9/11 Memorial Both Evolved Over the Years," *New York Times*, September 4th, 2011.

any changes to the design.”¹¹⁶ There were many proposed changes to his original design. One design change was that he wanted visitors to be able to go underground to view galleries where the names would be held. This idea was changed due to financial and security concerns.

Another element Arad had to defend was the arrangement of names. Many members in the memorial construction team wanted to list the names of the dead randomly. Arad knew the importance arrangement of the names had on visitors, which is seen in the Wall design for the Vietnam Memorial, and thought it would be a significant aspect for the family members and visitors. He decided to fight for the concept of “meaningful adjacency,” which meant that the names of those who died would be close to the other names of people they knew or died close to. He finally got what he wanted after about a year of working out the locations. Due to these different negotiations, the construction of the memorial and museum was still not underway in 2006, two years after the design competition.¹¹⁷ Another obstacle that hampered the start of the construction development was the reactions from the victims’ families, which was negative in 2005.

The summer of 2005 brought protests from about 200 relatives of the victims from 9/11. Their main concern was adding a museum building coordinators named the International Freedom Center to ground zero along with the memorial. Their belief was that it would “dilute the purpose of the memorial and dishonor the

¹¹⁶ Ted Loos, “Architect and 9/11 Memorial Both Evolved Over the Years,” *New York Times*, September 4th, 2011.

¹¹⁷ Loos, “Architect and 9/11 Memorial Both Evolved Over the Years,” September 4th, 2011.

memory of their relatives.”¹¹⁸ The plans were to make the museum an educational and cultural center, but many felt that the focus would be taken away from the victims and would be placed towards political lectures against U.S. policy, both foreign and domestic. They argued that there should be no political affiliation at this memorial, an opinion that is very similar to that of many during the creation of the Vietnam memorial. Mayor Bloomberg and other officials supported the idea, saying that learning the history not only helps visitors understand why this event took place, but also to help build a better future.¹¹⁹ Rita Riches, mother of a firefighter who died in the towers, stated a different opinion. She said, “Three thousand people died on their way to work. That’s what this is about, nothing else. Absolutely nothing else.”¹²⁰ Like the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, she wanted it to be about the names, not the event. Even though the lavishness of the design brings American patriotic ideals to the surface, Rita Riches and many other just wanted to see the names of the ones they lost in an honorable and sacred place. The idea of the International Freedom Center was later changed to appease the public opinion and the museum now just houses artifacts, images, and stories from the day.

Five years after the standstill the memorial faced in 2006, the memorial was dedicated on the tenth anniversary of September 11th, 2001. This was after many years of people believing there was no way they could build a dedication that commemorates this tragedy in an appropriate manner.¹²¹ Marian Salzman, an

¹¹⁸ Janon Fisher, “Relatives Protest Plan for Museum at 9/11 Memorial Site,” *New York Times*, June 21st, 2005.

¹¹⁹ Fisher, “Relatives Protest Plan for Museum at 9/11 Memorial Site,” June 21st, 2005.

¹²⁰ Fisher, “Relatives Protest Plan for Museum at 9/11 Memorial Site,” June 21st, 2005.

¹²¹ Eliot Stuart, “Honoring Sept. 11 with Care,” *New York Times*, September 1st, 2011.

author and public relations manager, stated, “On one level, you want to convey a sense of empathy and sympathy and patriotism. On another level, there’s a belief that every milestone in American history has been turned into a marketing opportunity.”¹²² Despite these worries, the project was completed. About 10,000 family members and dignitaries were present at the dedication. One of the most powerful aspects of the memorial was the individual names etched into the sides of the reflecting pools. Robert D McFadden, a reporter for the *New York Times*, observed, “Amid the sounds of waterfalls, family members bent low to touch or kiss the names, and to weep. Many made paper tracings of the names, or inserted flowers or American flags into the crevices.”¹²³ This was a similar scene at the dedication of the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial.

The reactions of the memorial at the dedication not only display the gratification many people felt that the memorial was finished, but also demonstrated the still vivid emotions Americans, especially New Yorkers, still carry from the day of the attack. The healing process is definitely not over for many. The day of the dedication came after weeks of organized events that were both educational and memorializing. These were held across the country and even around the world. After several different moments of silence on the times the planes hit the different buildings, family members were able to read the names of the loved ones they lost. This was described as an “emotional catharsis.”¹²⁴ The day continued with speeches from President Obama, President Bush, and Laura Bush even recited

¹²² Eliot Stuart, “Honoring Sept. 11 with Care,” *New York Times*, September 1st, 2011.

¹²³ Robert D. McFadden, “After 10 Years, Names and Memories Echo: A Nation Reflects on 9/11, Loss and Resilience,” *New York Times*, September 12th, 2011.

¹²⁴ McFadden, “After 10 Years,” September 12th, 2011.

a letter written by Abraham Lincoln. This day the memorial became the new “national shrine.”¹²⁵ However, this day was not without its controversies.

Anger filled many of the New York firemen because of Mr. Bloomberg’s negation to invite a large portion of the first responders to the dedication. Many of the invites were focused on the family members. The emphasis on religion during the dedication also angered a number of people because it did not fully account for those with different or no religious beliefs. Finally, there was the great fear of a threat in security. This was due to the escalating amount of tips during the previous days that attacks were going to take place. Many serious security measures were taken at the dedication. However, any kind of attack did not take place and, despite some anger and complications, the day’s events smoothly went by.¹²⁶

The reactions to the entire memorial from the visitors in the first couple days of the opening were mostly positive and filled with gratitude. One spectator, Denny Freidenrich, compared it to John F. Kennedy’s burial site with the eternal flame in Arlington National Cemetery, stating, “Now it’s the endless cascade of water at the 9/11 Memorial pools in New York City. To this sixty-something father of three, both are heartbreaking; both are forever.”¹²⁷ This comparison to another memorial shows the connection and importance these memorials have within the public. Others agreed that it was an honorable dedication and an honorable memorial, but many left the dedication with a new sense of sadness, especially on the events of the

¹²⁵ Robert D. McFadden, “After 10 Years, Names and Memories Echo: A Nation Reflects on 9/11, Loss and Resilience,” *New York Times*, September 12th, 2011.

¹²⁶ McFadden, “After 10 Years,” September 12th, 2011.

¹²⁷ “After the Anniversary: Touched by 9/11,” *New York Times*, September 13th, 2011.

war that followed.¹²⁸ The nation came together during a time of tragedy, but questionable war tactics and politics marred the incredible loss and patriotism Americans felt.

Richard Nixon's quote during the dedication of the Marine Corps Memorial is relevant to the dedication of this memorial. The American ideology he felt through the statue is seen in this memorial not only through the different elements, but also through the reactions of the American public to both the date of the event and the date of the dedication. Americans came together on September 11th, 2001 in a way the nation had not done before. This again took place on the 10th anniversary with those emotions still prevalent. However, there is a difference in an aspect of his quote. He states that the Iwo Jima memorial should remind people of the fact that Americans will fight wars for freedom and democracy. Many would now disagree with that statement, especially after the complicated war that resulted from the attack. These complications are also seen in the Vietnam War and the Cold War. Americans now question the moral stance of the United States government.

As one of America's latest memorials, the 9/11 Memorial contains many different elements from each of the designs and the significance. The names etched on the base of the previous Twin Towers displays the new importance architects and the American public put on the individual names after the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. The criticism people had, especially over the museum element, also displays the affect the Vietnam Memorial had. The public is more willing to question the design of the memorial now than they did before Vietnam. Their opinions are

¹²⁸ "After the Anniversary: Touched by 9/11," *New York Times*, September 13th, 2011.

made known. The 9/11 Memorial also contained the same architectural elements seen both before and right after the Vietnam Memorial. There is a sense of grandeur and patriotism through the design between the aptly named Freedom Tower and the many American flags surrounding the area. As time continues to go on and the United States gets involved in more wars and conflicts, this transformation of memorials that is seen after the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial will only continue on this path.

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Appendix

(1)



(2)

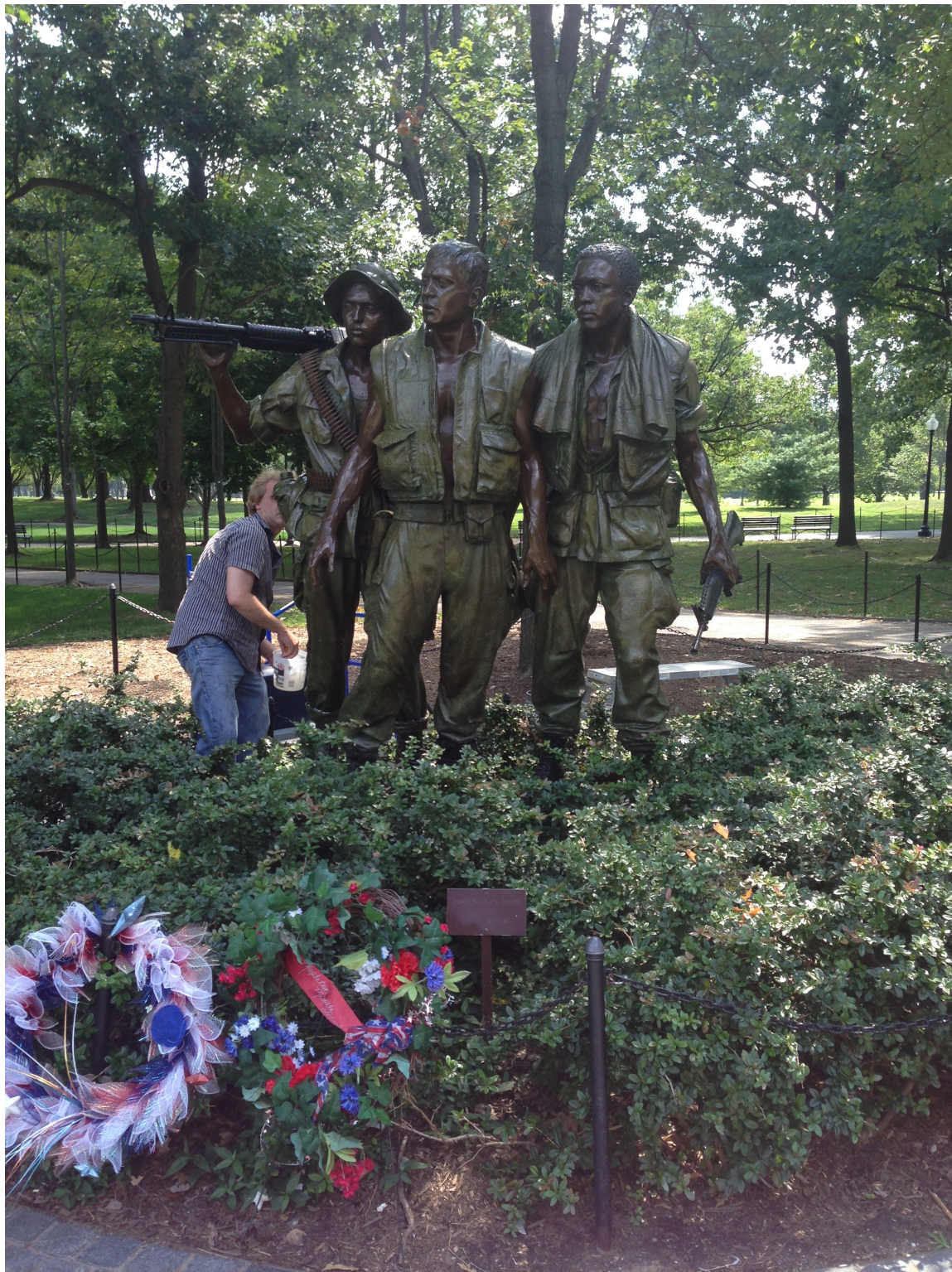


(3)





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(6)



(7)



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