

The Memorialization of Marginalized Communities:

Three Case Studies in Memorials of Trauma in the United States

Martha Berkheimer

Departmental Honors Thesis

Dr. Jay Harrison

24 April 2022

Introduction:

Memorials have existed throughout history as a way for societies to remember their past using public space. A memorial is the physical representation of a memory, in many cases specifically a collective memory. Memorials provide a structure for people to project their memories onto and represent the way that memories are stored in the human consciousness.¹ Memorials are also representative of community, whether it be local, ethnic, or national. Memorials and monuments alike address many issues that are interwoven into a nation, such as the way that Civil War Monuments are representative of the idea of national pride, along with racism, and cultural identity.² A longstanding issue with memorials in the twenty-first century is representation of communities and nationhood, specifically the exclusion of marginalized communities from representation within the realm of national memorials.

In order to understand the implications of excluding marginalized identities from national monuments, one must first understand the concept of community and nationhood. A nation is a complicated idea and one that is not easily defined. Benedict Anderson in his book, *Imagined Communities*, argues that a nation is nothing more than an “imagined political community.”³ Nothing other than shared politics and government connects a group of people within a nation. Anderson argues that a nation is an imagined community because the members of a nation will never know all of their fellow members, but in their imagination, they share common experiences with the other people within the nation. In fact, Anderson argues, all communities

¹ David Gobel and Daves Rossel, “Introduction” in *Commemoration in America*, ed. David Gobel and Daves Rossel (Charlottesville; University of Virginia Press, 2013), ebook.

² Thomas J. Brown, “Introduction,” *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration* (University of South Carolina; Bedford/St. Marten’s Press, 2004), 1-2.

³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Thetford Press Limited, 1983), 14.

larger than a family village are imagined because it is impossible for every member to truly know each other and have a personal connection.⁴ If national memorials are supposed to represent, or at the very least resonate with, an entire nation, and a nation is an imagined community made up of many different groups of people, then how can someone designing a memorial truly reach the entirety of their intended audience? Within the United States alone there is a myriad of different ethnic, racial, religious, and socioeconomic groups that would all fall under the scope of the national community, and because of this, certain communities will always be left out. Oftentimes it is marginalized communities that are left out of the narrative.

Within the scope of memorials of trauma in the United States, there are varying levels of representation for marginalized groups and their narratives. However, before one can understand the importance of trauma memorials and their representation, one must first understand the phenomenon of collective trauma and generational trauma. Collective trauma refers to damage done to the structure of social life by straining the bonds that a community has with each other. This feeling of disconnect can be caused by one catastrophic event, or many traumatic experiences piled on top of each other, and the legacy of these events make it difficult for the group to feel like they can rely on each other.⁵ The Holocaust is usually cited as one of the most prominent examples of collective trauma because it most notoriously effected the collective of Europeans Jews, although there were many other communities persecuted by the Nazis, and irreversibly damaged the social structure of Jewish communities in Germany and surrounding countries. The Nazis, over a period of nearly fifteen years, systematically segregated and murdered Jewish people, traumatizing the entire community for multiple generations.

⁴ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 15.

⁵ Kai Erikson, "Notes on Trauma and Community," *American Imago* 48, no. 4 (1991): 460.

The theory of intergenerational transmission of trauma is relatively new and controversial among modern psychologists. Intergenerational trauma can be defined as trauma that is experienced by one's ancestors and then passed down through offspring. A study done by Mihaela Minulescu in Romania concluded that the traumatic events of previous generations can affect the psyche of subsequent generations as the following generations must live with the emotional repercussions of trauma experienced by their ancestors.⁶ For example, many studies show that the generational trauma of having to experience racism from white people in the United States has been passed down through generations of black and indigenous people. Scholars in racial justice along with psychologists who study epigenetics agree that the impact of white supremacy over hundreds of years in the United States has caused physiological and psychological effects of people of color that can only be defined as trauma being carried through generations.⁷ Intergeneration and collective trauma both reside within communities at the margins of society. Trauma itself is the body's way of coping with an overwhelming event, and the communities that are least represented in a society are likely to have the most instances of intergenerational and collective trauma.

Memorials are a way for communities to display their trauma in the hope that they will not forget their past and prevent tragedies in the future. National memorials display tragic events at the national community scales and are supposed to resonate with the entire nation, however, a nation is an imagined community, and it is impossible to represent the plethora of smaller communities within the nation. Unfortunately, it is often the stories of people most effected by

⁶ Mihaela Minulescu, "Approaching Trans-Generational Trauma in Analytical Psychotherapy," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 217 (February 2016): 1117.

⁷ Shannon Sullivan, "Inheriting Racist Disparities in Health: Epigenetics and the Transgenerational Effects of White Racism," *Critical Philosophy of Race* 1, no. 2 (2013): 190-192.

tragedies that are left out of the common narrative. Three memorials in the United States that vary in who and how different communities are represented are, the Johnstown Flood National Memorial in Pennsylvania, the National September 11th Memorial and Museum at Ground Zero in New York City, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama. Each of these memorials are meant to represent different communities in the United States and vastly differ in the ways they choose to represent these communities. The only common denominator for each of these memorials is that they commemorate trauma. The Johnstown Flood National Memorial commemorate a natural disaster that devastated a small factory community, the National September 11th Memorial commemorates the tragedy of the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11th, 2001, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice commemorates the trauma that Black Americans have been subjected to throughout the history of the United States.

While these memorials are not representative of every marginalized group in the United States, they do provide a glimpse into the way that marginalized groups are commemorated within the national memory. They are also not representative of the new ways that communities are choosing to commemorate their history, like gay pride parades or moments of silence for victims of mass shootings. These memorials are all physical manifestations of traumatic events which seek to take something as intangible as trauma and turn it into a site that people can visit and visit and pay their respects. These memorials, and other like them, are also used to set in stone how our society wants to remember tragedies and have the power to challenge common narratives if the creators choose to do so. In this way, it can be a dangerous and disruptive job to

create memorials.⁸ For example, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, designed by Maya Lin, was heavily criticized because it deviated from the typical design of a war memorial for the time and challenged traditional ideas of how tragedy in war should be commemorated.⁹ The three memorials outlined in this paper were groundbreaking in their own ways while also being representative of common trends during their times of creation, and each memorial addresses issues within marginalized groups of very different ways, with the Johnstown Flood National Memorial and the National September 11th Memorial commemorating single events in history and how people were affected by them, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice commemorating specifically the experiences of Black Americans and their struggles.

⁸ Michalinos Zembylas and Zvi Bekerman, "Education and the Dangerous Memories of Historical Trauma: Narratives of Pain, Narratives of Hope," *Curriculum Inquiry* 38, no. 2 (2008): 127.

⁹ Robin Wagner-Pacifici, and Barry Schwartz, "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past," *American Journal of Sociology* 97, no. 2 (1991): 394.

Chapter 1: The Johnstown Flood

Part 1: The History of Johnstown and South Fork

Located in southwest Pennsylvania and connected to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, Johnstown known as the quintessential American town in the nineteenth century. Founded by Swiss German immigrants in the early nineteenth century as a small early industrial town, Johnstown's location was prime for production and transportation of goods throughout Pennsylvania. Johnstown and its surrounding areas were known for iron production, even at one point being known as the "barbed-wired capital of the United States." The most prominent company in the area was called Cambria Iron Works, and they owned 40,000 acres of land where locals would mine coal, iron, and limestone.¹⁰ Johnstown was developing to be one of the great American industrial towns of the nineteenth century, with tens of the thousands of people living in the area and most of the population being affiliated with mining in the area.

After the Civil War ended and the western United States became more accessible to the east, Johnstown prospered and the population in the area boomed. The town grew into what people imagine when they think of the true industrial town, with smoke filling the town and the sound of clashing metal rumbling through the streets. An industrial town was nothing without its product, and Johnstown lived and breathed ironwork and the Cambria Iron Company. Ironwork was extremely dangerous, and people in Johnstown worked in horrendous conditions, with thirteen-hour work shifts and the fear of molten metal causing deadly accidents. Most workers were lucky if they made ten dollars in a week, and the smell of metal and smoke surrounded

¹⁰ *The Johnstown Flood: The True Story of One of the Most Devastating Disasters in American History* (Charles River Editors: 2014), eBook.

them constantly.¹¹ There was no escape from work or the Cambria Iron Company, and the working class of Johnstown had no escape from their dangerous labor.

Like many early twentieth century industrial towns, social and economic status defined one's place within the community in Johnstown. Wealthier residents often lived on higher ground to avoid flooding from the rivers, while the poor industrial workers often lived on lower ground in crowded clusters of houses.¹² There is not much of information written about the experiences of women in the industrial labor force of Johnstown, but many industrial towns used women for factory work. Oftentimes the whole family took part in the work, which made it possible for women to form their own communities as well.

Industrial laborers were a group at the margins of society, made up of many other smaller marginalized communities. Because these communities often had little to no protection under the law, they had to form their own social hierarchies to offer each other support. For example, female factory workers passed the time with group friendship and maintaining vibrant social lives. That way, when their bosses did something to compromise their individual liberty, like lowering wages or extending work hours, they had other women to talk to with common experiences to offer support.¹³ These types of social groups and community support extended to other marginalized groups as well, such as immigrants and people of color. While these types of groups dynamics were often positive and helped people bond, the reason they had to exist was because people at the top of the social hierarchy, like company owners and rich people in town, did not protect the people at the bottom of society, and often exploited them. These types of

¹¹ David McCullough, "The Sky Was Red" in *The Johnstown Flood: The Incredible Story Behind One of the Most Devastating Disasters America Has Ever Known* (New York, Simon and Schuster: 1968), eBook, 24.

¹² David McCullough, "The Sky Was Red" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 28.

¹³ Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Wage Earning Women: Industrial Work and Family Life in the United States, 1900-1930* (New York, Oxford University Press: 1979), 64-65.

power dynamics and inequality were also exhibited in Johnstown, when one of the most catastrophic, yet preventable, disasters occurred on May 31st, 1889, when the South Fork dam broke, releasing a tidal wave amount of water onto the people of Johnstown.

Fourteen miles north of industrial Johnstown was South Fork, Pennsylvania, where the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club bought land to be used as a summer waterfront retreat, with some notable guests being Andrew Carnegie and Robert Pitcairn.¹⁴ The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club was a premier, private summer resort located halfway between Johnstown and the Allegheny Range. South Fork itself was much smaller than Johnstown, with a population of about 1,500. The town was decorated with beautiful rivers and mountains to the west, and families walked along with streets with elaborate Victorian style clothes and servants trailing behind them. Visitors to the town would hire drivers to take them up the hill to the dammed lake and the waterfront lodge, and on the weekends, drivers could be seen taking people up the hill back and forth all day. From the town's perspective, the South Fork Dam looked to be in ruins, like a 72-foot wall of decaying rocks. There were cracks with wild grass growing between them, and in all likelihood, there were leaks and other signs of decay that went unnoticed by the owners of the hunting club. The juxtaposition of South Fork and Johnstown was stark. The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club was literally on a hill 450 feet above Johnstown, where miners and laborers barely made enough money to survive, while millionaires travelled to South Fork Lake as a summer getaway.¹⁵ The wealth disparity between the two towns would only become more apparent after the South Fork Dam collapsed in 1889.

¹⁴ Charles River Editors, *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook.

¹⁵ David McCullough, "The Sky Was Red" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 45.

By spring of 1889, the resort was nearly ten years old and still in almost perfect condition. The waterfront was covered with flower beds, the buildings were painted with bright colors, and the wealthy guests decorated the landscape.¹⁶ Things were normal and going well for the hunting club until the last few days of May 1889, when a storm circulated in the Midwest and headed in the direction of Pennsylvania. The rain began in Cambria County, Pennsylvania on the 30th of May, and was said to have fallen in sheets rather than droplets, a torrential force that no one had ever seen. In some areas of western Pennsylvania, there was up to an inch of rain falling each hour for seven hours straight. Before long, every river and creek in the area was overflowing with water and flooding surrounding areas. The rain continued through the 31st of May, with some areas getting over eight inches of rain total. The storm of 1889 produced to most floods that Pennsylvania had ever encountered since Europeans had inhabited it.¹⁷ Not only was this the worst storm encountered in written Pennsylvania history, but it was also one of the deadliest incidents to ever occur in the state, and its destruction would have social, political, and environmental consequences to last decades.

After two days of heavy rainfall in South Fork, residents worried that the dam would break. People Johnstown began moving out of their houses and evacuating the town on their own accord, some people tried to find high ground, and others were not yet aware of the danger coming for them. The rivers were estimated to be rising about a foot an hour, and residents quickly realized that something needed to be done to protect the people in downtown Johnstown. One of these residents was Horace Rose, who had lived in Johnstown most of his life, and had

¹⁶ David McCullough, "The Sky Was Red" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 18.

¹⁷ John Bach McMaster, and Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer. "The Johnstown Flood." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 57, no. 3 (1933): 211-212.

seen many floods pass through the town. Rose was a wealthy man, wealthy enough to afford a horse and buggy, and he decided on the morning of the 31st to use his buggy to help people evacuate from their flooded homes. At this time, other property owners in Johnstown still assumed this was just a severe flood that at the most would be a mess to clean up. Rose, however, knew that something was wrong. He had never seen Main Street flooded before, and he grew worried that the situation could become deadly.¹⁸ Water rose significantly in Johnstown between noon and 1:00pm on the 31st of May and would continue to rise throughout the day. In South Fork, the manager of the hunting had laborers attempt to dig a ditch in the southwest direction from the dam in an attempt to redirect the water and keep the dam from overflowing. However, these attempts were futile, and water still to flow over the dam and the rivers continued to rise. Eyewitness accounts differ on the exact time that the dam failed, but most suggest that it happened around 3:00pm on the 31st of May.¹⁹ Once the dam broke, the real chaos unleashed, and it was only a matter of time before the water made its way to Johnstown.

Sometime in the afternoon before the dam broke, Johnstown received a telegram from Robert Pitcairn in Pittsburgh that simply read, “South Fork Dam is liable to break: notify the people of Johnstown to prepare for the worst.”²⁰ The operator who received the telegram looked at the paper, saw that it was about the dam, and simply ignored it. He had seen such messages before and thought it comical to assume this time would be any different. No one from the telegram office spread the warning to the town, nor did anyone forward the message to the central part of town.²¹ This was a town full of people who had always been considered

¹⁸ David McCullough, “There’s a Man Came from the Lake” in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 92.

¹⁹ Uldis Kaktins, Carrie Davis Todd, Stephanie Wojno, and Neil Coleman. “Revisiting the Timing and Events Leading to and Causing the Johnstown Flood of 1889.” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 80, no. 3 (2013): 335–63.

²⁰ David McCullough, “There’s a Man Came from the Lake” in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 100.

²¹ David McCullough, “There’s a Man Came from the Lake” in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 100.

disposable. Miners, factory workers, laborers, and their families, whose lives had always been under the influence and control of the elite, like the people who stayed at the South Fork Hunting and Fishing Lodge. It is horrifying, but not surprising that the news of their impending doom did not reach the citizens of Johnstown, and the situation merely highlights the lived experiences of many industrial workers in the nineteenth century before socialist and workers' rights movements took hold in the United States working class.

It would be an understatement to say that the flood caused by the South Fork Dam's failure was catastrophic. It was 4:00pm when the water from the dam reached Johnstown and emergency alarm sounded. Immediately people's homes were washed away, and anyone standing outside when the 40 mile per hour current of water and debris reached them was killed instantly. People crawled on top of debris to escape drowning, some people hid on the upper stories of their home in hopes that their house would survive, but many of these efforts were futile. The only structure to survive was the Stone Bridge, which quickly became a wall of debris from the town and a death trap for those washed away by the flood.²² The death toll was said to be the highest number in United States history until the twentieth century.²³ However, there was never an official number of deaths recorded by any government entity, and any number that was given was likely inaccurately estimating the number to be about 2,000, when in actuality the death toll was much more likely to be 3,000 or more.²⁴ Something still up for debate among historians is whether or not the Johnstown Flood could have been prevented, or at the very least if the failure of the South Fork Dam could have been prevented.

²² Charles River Editors, "Chapter 5: The Cry of Distress" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook.

²³ Uldis Kaktins et al, "Revisiting the Timing and Events Leading to and Causing the Johnstown Flood of 1889," 335.

²⁴ "Frequently Asked Questions," Learn About the Park, Johnstown Flood National Memorial Pennsylvania, <https://www.nps.gov/jofl/faqs.htm>.

Part 2: The Johnstown Flood Memorial and How We Remember Tragedy

Many people remember the Johnstown Flood as a natural disaster, like an act of God that humans had no control over, however historical evidence about the structure of the South Fork Dam and the economy of South Fork would prove otherwise. There were many factors that contributed to the failure of the South Fork Dam, and most of those factors were unnatural and could be blamed on the wealthy individuals at the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, which resided on the lake created by the dam. The news of the flood travelled quickly to Pittsburgh, where rumors began circulating about the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club and talk about all the members of the club were alive and unharmed, unlike the thousands of dead and injured citizens of Johnstown. There was talk of lawsuits against individuals in charge of dam maintenance at the club as well as the club's shareholders, and overall people who heard about the disaster felt that the citizens of Johnstown deserved justice.

One lawyer from Pittsburgh wrote a piece in the *World* that stated, "I predict there will be legal suits and possible criminal indictments as a result of this catastrophe. I have been told that the South Fork Club has been repeatedly warned of the unsafety of its dam, and it comes from good authority..."²⁵ This lawyer along with many people in the area surrounding Johnstown were horrified by what had occurred, and the narrative surrounding the event was very much in favor of the survivors and the victims and against the millionaires who vacationed in South Fork. The bitterness would continue as the club was found guilty of causing the dam failure due to negligence. The dam had been lazily constructed, having undergone several incomplete repairs in the years leading to its destruction, and there is no evidence that the dam had never been

²⁵ David McCullough, "Our Misery is the Work of Man" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 269.

thoroughly inspected.²⁶ The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club ultimately was never held accountable for the atrocities that occurred on May 31st, 1889, although the residents in the surrounding areas still blame them for dam breaking. There is also some speculation that documents and communications that would have held the hunting club accountable were destroyed or thrown out when the club's lawyers moved offices in 1917.²⁷ After the news subsided and time went on after the flood, the only people still affected by it were the Johnstown residents, many of whom were homeless. The South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club was remembered as an exclusive resort visited only by the wealthy elite, and the controversy surrounding the owners' negligence of the dam would continue into the twenty-first century.²⁸

Seventy-five years after the Johnstown Flood disaster occurred, the national park service created the Johnstown Flood National Memorial.²⁹ There are two sites that are part of the Johnstown Flood National Memorial. They are the ruins of the South Fork Dam, the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, and what remains of the South Fork Lakebed, and the other site is the Johnstown Flood Museum owned by the Johnstown Area Heritage Association. The South Fork area functions more as a historic park comparable to Harper's Ferry, where people can walk around and look at the dam itself and gain a better understanding for the scope of the disaster. Although Harper's Ferry does not commemorate one single traumatic event, the layout of both sites is very similar, with open spaces and natural scenery that accompany plaques and visitor's centers with contextual information. There is also a visitors center in South Fork where people can watch videos and learn more about the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club. The

²⁶ David McCullough, "Our Misery is the Work of Man" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 275.

²⁷ "Frequently Asked Questions," Learn About the Park, Johnstown Flood National Memorial Pennsylvania, <https://www.nps.gov/jofl/faqs.htm>.

²⁸ David McCullough, "Our Misery is the Work of Man" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 277-278.

²⁹ "National Parks and Monuments (Table)." 2021. *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Edition*, March 1–11.

Johnstown Flood Museum focuses more on the impact of the flood on the people on Johnstown and what the devastation looked like.³⁰ The memorial site struggled for a long time to be inclusive of the differing accounts of what happened on the day of the flood, especially because of the lawsuits and reputation of the South Fork Hunting Club after the disaster. However, the Johnstown Flood National Memorial is still an adequate example of how memorial sites use nature and different types of spaces to convey different points of view after such a traumatic event.

South Fork Dam, Johnstown Flood National Memorial, Johnstown PA.
<https://www.nps.gov/jofl/learn/historyculture/the-south-fork-dam.htm>.



³⁰ “Lake View Visitor Center,” Johnstown Flood National Memorial Pennsylvania,
<https://www.nps.gov/jofl/planyourvisit/lake-view-visitor-center.htm>.

Memorializing a traumatic events requires a basic understanding of how the event is remembered by the community most affected by it. Many survivors were left with lifelong trauma, and what we would now most likely diagnose as Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. One survivor named Victor Heiser, who would eventually become a physician, details his own accounts of the disaster by saying, “For years thereafter I was visited by recurring dreams in which I lived over and over again that fearful experience of hanging with my fingernails dug deep into the water softened shingles, knowing that in the end I must let go.”³¹ He then goes on to tell the story of his survival, which came at the cost of the mother and father’s lives. Trauma is not something that can understood without the stories of those who have endured it, and the Johnstown Flood Museum located in Johnstown takes great care memorializing those experiences, which was not always the case at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial, which for a time focused on the history of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club.

The Johnstown Flood National Memorial Park is comprised of the main building that once was the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, former cottages and clubhouses from the hunting club, the remains of the South Fork Dam, and the South Fork Lakebed, which is currently the site of a rehabilitation project to revitalize the ecosystem in the area. There is also a visitors center which houses a permanent exhibit about the Johnstown Flood. The exhibit includes information about the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, along with the South Fork Dam, and story of the flood itself, which culminates in a room that has an artistic rendition of the chaos and destruction of the flood. The piece spans the entire ceiling of the room, and includes trees, destroyed houses, and human figures. The ceiling is meant to be comparable to the pictures

³¹ “Flood Survivor Victor Heiser’s Story,” “Just Short of Eternity,” Johnstown Flood Museum, https://www.jaha.org/edu/flood/rebuild/survivor_stories/victor_heiser.html.

of the aftermath of the flood and resembles the testimony of the survivors. During the summer, there are tours that take visitors all over the park, including one that follows the path of the flood into Johnstown.³² The park website only mentions the Johnstown Flood Museum once, and indicates that the museum is where people should go seeking information surrounding the history of Johnstown and the people who lived there.

At the Johnstown Flood National Memorial Park located in South Fork, Charles Guggenheim produced a documentary that would be played for the public within in the visitors center of the park. The film tells the history of the South Fork Dam and details the events that led to its failure. The film uses period costumes and dramatic reenactments to give the viewer a summary of the people involved the dam's maintenance and some of the prominent figures who stayed at the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club. The film culminates in a dramatic reenactment of the flood itself and ends with photos of the disaster at Johnstown.³³ There are many issues with the way this film represents the Johnstown Flood, the largest of which is that the documentary focuses more on the prominent figures of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club rather than highlighting the stories of the survivors of the flood or the devastating impact on Johnstown itself. Video presentations at historic sites can be extremely helpful at giving the public a lens to direct their empathy. However, when a film about a traumatic event only represents the narratives of the elite, the people most affected by the disaster become shrouded by the overarching historical narrative. Many of the citizens of Johnstown were also on the margins of society, with some being immigrants and nearly all of them being ironworkers, factory workers, and laborers. There were Poles, Germans, Russians, Swedes, Hungarians, and

³² "The Dam is Becoming Dangerous and May Go!" Johnstown Flood National Memorial Pennsylvania, <https://www.nps.gov/jofl/index.htm>.

³³ Perry K. Blatz, review of "The Johnstown Flood: The True Story of One of the Most Devastating Disasters in American History" by Charles Guggenheim, *The Public Historian* 14, no. 3 (1992): 171–73.

many other ethnic groups that worked as industrial laborers. Many of the workers lived in small pine-board houses and were very poor even by the standards of the time, however the community was close-knit, and the people took care of each other.³⁴ None of these groups are represented within the documentary, and their stories are overshadowed in many aspects of the Johnstown Flood National Memorial Park site.



“The Johnstown Flood,” From exhibit in the Visitor Center at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial, Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Photo by Jim Cheney, UncoveringPA, 2016.

Most of the representation of the citizens of Johnstown are not at the national park, but at the Johnstown Flood Museum in Johnstown itself. This may seem obvious to some people, but the South Fork portion of the memorial site is supposed to memorialize the overall events of the flood, which undoubtedly includes the narratives of the citizens of Johnstown. The visitor center includes some narratives from the survivors in Johnstown, along with a replica of the morgue book, however, the photographs and displays overwhelmingly center the narrative in South Fork, more specifically on the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club.³⁵ One may argue that since the Johnstown Flood Memorial exhibits an array of narratives, including the firsthand account of

³⁴ David McCullough, *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 25.

³⁵ “Park Sign and Inside Visitor Center,” Photo Gallery, Johnstown Flood National Memorial, <https://www.nps.gov/media/photo/gallery.htm?pg=3680709&id=66938B35-155D-451F-672457C388AA473C>.

survivor Victor Heiser, and many visual representations of the flood's catastrophe, that the memorial site did its job. It could also be argued, however, that the site lacks context. It is important to understand why this tragedy happened, particularly why the people of Johnstown were vulnerable to this, and why they never got justice.

Johnstown Flood Museum, Johnstown PA. <https://www.jaha.org/attractions/johnstown-flood-museum/visitor-information/online-tour/>



In the months following the Johnstown Flood, newspapers and public institutions became very sympathetic toward the members of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, which is a drastic contrast the public reaction immediately following the flood, which was one of anger and resentment toward the wealthy club members. Newspapers almost never specifically named club members, and this was most likely because some of these club members owned the press. For

example, Calvin Wells, a prominent club member, owned the *Press*, a newspaper in Pittsburgh.³⁶ This specific anecdote alone highlights the power disparity between the people in South Fork and the residents of Johnstown. These ideas and the cover up of South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club's blame for the devastation of the flood still reflect the way we tell the story today. Yes, we may vilify the hunting club more now than in the past, but the story is still centered on them and their story. The Johnstown Flood National Memorial does display the negligence and privilege of the club members, but in the process of conceptualizing their responsibility for the disaster, the memorial lacks context for how and why the citizens of the Johnstown were particularly vulnerable to a disaster like this.

The Johnstown Flood National Memorial succeeds as a memorial in many ways. The site is honest about the responsibility the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club had in the disaster, and the site allows patrons to visualize and conceptualize in their minds the true extent of the disaster by being seeing how large the dam was, how close Johnstown was, and even how extravagant the hunting club was. Viewers are able to understand how disastrous and traumatic the event was for the victims and survivors, and that kind of empathy is important to people to feel. The only true issue with the site is its lack of context about the types of people who lived in Johnstown, and how their lower-class status made them particularly vulnerable to the negligence of the rich. For years after the flood, saloons in working class neighborhoods across the country posted signs saying, "PLEASE DO NOT SPIT ON THE FLOOR, REMEMBER THE JOHNSTOWN FLOOD," while the former club members used the media to cover up their role in the disaster.³⁷ More than anything, the destruction of the Johnstown Flood was preventable

³⁶ David McCullough, "Our Misery is the Work of Man" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 280.

³⁷ David McCullough, "Our Misery is the Work of Man" in *The Johnstown Flood*, eBook, 300.

and easily interpreted as the rich neglecting to protect the poor from this atrocity. The citizens of Johnstown had individual lives and stories that deserved to be represented within the memorial alongside the stories from South Fork. When memorials of trauma exclude the struggles of marginalized people from the narrative of the tragedy, there is no way the memorial can possibly be representative of the people who endured the tragedy.

Chapter 2: The National 9/11 Memorial and Museum

Part 1: 9/11 and the Erasure of the Undocumented Worker Experience

September 11th, 2001 is one of the most significant dates in modern American History. According to the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum, the events of 9/11 went as follows; on the morning of September 11th, nineteen members of the terrorist group Al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial airplanes, sending two of them into the Twin Towers in New York City, and one into the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The fourth plane landed in a field in Pennsylvania after the passengers found out that their flight was hijacked, and they attacked the Al-Qaeda members who were flying that plane. Around 3,000 people died, making 9/11 the largest loss of life caused by a foreign attack in the United States.³⁸ To most Americans, September 11th is a date shrouded in tragedy. Anyone who can remember the attacks can usually point out what they were doing that day, where they were, and how they found out, making September 11th a tragedy not only for the loss of life, but for the collective trauma that Americans experienced when they realized they were not safe from foreign attacks.

The issue with recounting the events from 9/11 is that the narrative immediately following the events is shrouded in the sense of patriotism and nationalism that took over American culture as a result of the collective trauma people experienced. There was a growing feeling that the United States needed someone to blame for what happened, and in most cases, people turned to blaming Muslims because Al-Qaeda was an extremist Islamic organization. Statistics show a drastic increase in Muslim discrimination in the United States in the days, months, and years following September 11th. In a study done by the 2014 Council on American-

³⁸ "September 11th Attack Timeline," The 9/11 Memorial and Museum, <https://timeline.911memorial.org/#FrontPage>.

Islamic Relations, researchers found that 83% of Muslim children between the ages of 11 and 18 felt unsafe revealing their Muslim identity at school.³⁹ Although Muslims in the United States experienced the largest rise in discrimination after the attacks on September 11th, there were also many other minority groups that were affected by the attitudes of racism and xenophobia that followed. Laws were put into place that made it significantly harder for people to immigrate to the United States or seek asylum and people who already lived in the United States but were undocumented were also at a greater risk for deportation and detention. The point of these laws was to protect the United States from “terrorist activity.” The issue with that, though, is that terrorism is not easily defined, which made it easy for government officials to subjectively decide what is and is not suspicious “terrorist” activity.⁴⁰ The rise in strict immigration laws coincided with a rise in undocumented workers coming to the United States to work, especially from Mexico. In September of 2003, the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits, and Security Act was proposed, which would have allowed undocumented migrants who worked in agriculture to legally stay in the United States if they worked a certain number of hours and met other specific criteria. This law was never passed, though, and many undocumented migrant workers faced deportation and detention if they were caught, even if they had lived in the United States for years.⁴¹

There have also been growing levels of extreme fundamentalist beliefs in the United States that create a narrative where undocumented immigrants are taking jobs from U.S. citizens and therefore ruining the economy by sending their money to other countries. This narrative is

³⁹ Randa Elbih, “Uncovering the Lopsided Dialectic of 9/11 and the War on Terror,” *Counterpoints* 360 (2018): 1-2.

⁴⁰ Deepa Iyer and Jayesh M. Rathod, “9/11 and Immigration Law and Policy.” *GPSolo* 29, no. 1 (2012): 62-63.

⁴¹ Emma Aguila, Alisher R. Akhmedjonov, Ricardo Basurto-Davila, Krishna B. Kumar, Sarah Kups, and Howard J. Shatz. “Immigration Policies and Proposals During the 2000s.” In *United States and Mexico: Ties That Bind, Issues That Divide* (RAND Corporation, 2012), 138-139.

based on entirely false information and is often propelled by far-right politicians, most notably former president Donald Trump. There are also many politicians that support an influx in immigration because of the positive impacts it can have on the economy. The issue is that in most discussions about how the United States should handle immigration, the experiences of the immigrants themselves are rarely considered.⁴² This erasure of immigrant's experiences and the political tensions surrounding the social status of undocumented individuals directly translates to whether or not they are fully represented in our national consciousness and collective memory.

After the terrorist attacks on 9/11, thousands of people came to the aid of the individuals who were at Ground Zero, where the Twin Towers once stood, and the Pentagon. The military, firefighters, police officers, and volunteers came to their aid and assisted in a massive cleanup effort. Among the people who were lost in the aftermath of the attacks on the Twin Towers and the clean-up efforts were many undocumented Mexican migrants, and most of them were never accounted for in official data of the death toll or in media coverage after the attacks. This is partly because the families of undocumented migrants, in many cases, did not want to report their family member missing because of the fear that they may be deported or arrested. There was also the issue that if a person was undocumented, there were sometimes no official record of them working in the World Trade Center, which meant that the government would not have even known to look for them. This phenomenon highlights the way that undocumented migrants exist outside of public consciousness, especially in moments of tragedy.⁴³ There are very few studies done on the undocumented migrants who died on 9/11 or were negatively impacted by 9/11. This is partly because government bureaucracy makes it very difficult for undocumented people to

⁴² Khalid Koser, *International Migration* (Oxford University Press, 2016), 89-91.

⁴³ Alexandra Delano and Benjamin Nienass, "Invisible Victims: Undocumented Migrants in the Aftermath of 9/11" *Politics and Society* 42, No. 3 (2014), 402-403.

gain citizenship, and because without citizenship documentation people are not able to access government benefits and assistance.

In the years following 9/11, some undocumented individuals did come forward with their experiences of working in the World Trade Center and spoke out about the people they knew who died during the attacks, though very few news outlets have covered their stories. One man named Sekou Siby, who worked in the World Trade Center in 2001 did an interview with NPR for the 20-year anniversary of 9/11 in September of 2021. Siby was one of many undocumented cooks who worked in the restaurant in the World Trade Center. Siby remarked that there was a transcultural community among the undocumented workers, most of whom had little to no support outside of their close-knit circle of family and friends. When reminiscing on his experiences working undocumented, Siby said, “This is the reality of an immigrant. You have to be invisible in order to exist. Being out there, it's just exposing yourself. Especially when you are not solid.”⁴⁴ Siby switched shifts with a coworker on September 11th and his coworker was never found. Siby spent the days following the attacks searching hospitals in the area for his coworkers and he did not find anyone. Eventually families came forward to organizations who serve immigrant communities, such as Asociacion Tepeyac de New York, a group that specializes in protecting the social welfare of undocumented Latino communities in New York.⁴⁵ Tepeyac was contacted by people whose loved ones worked low-wage jobs either in or around the World Trade Center on 9/11, and eventually compiled a list of 700 missing individuals. These were 700 people who were never included in the official missing persons list after the attacks, and people

⁴⁴ Jasmine Garsd, “Families Of Undocumented Immigrants Lost On 9/11 Continue To Search For Closure,” *NPR*, September 10th, 2021, [9/11 Undocumented Immigrants Who Worked At The Twin Towers Remain Missing : NPR](#).

⁴⁵ “Mission Statement,” Asociacion Tepeyac de New York, [Hispanic Federation: Member Agencies](#).

who were never searched for because federal bureaucracy prevented their family and friends from filing missing persons reports.⁴⁶ The number of missing undocumented people counted by Tapeyac was not the only statistic being uncovered in the wake of 9/11, many other organizations that support undocumented workers began developing lists of individuals who have not been accounted for in the years following the attacks.

Norberto Terrazas, the head of the department of consular protection at the Mexican Consulate in New York during 9/11, reported receiving over 2,000 calls from people reporting missing family members the days following the attack. After extensive research and interviewing union workers in the area, Terrazas was able to confirm that there were at least five undocumented victims working in the restaurant in the World Trade Center, but there were ten victims whose families were never able to confirm that they were at the World Trade Center on 9/11. This situation represents one of the major reasons that undocumented people are included in the official death toll for 9/11, which is that undocumented people spend a significant amount of time trying to hide from being arrested and deported, meaning that they often do not have a paper trail or DNA records. The lack of acknowledgement of the undocumented migrants who passed away on 9/11 meant that families were never given compensation or relief grants for their loss, and they were never given the closure of knowing how their family member died.⁴⁷ Undocumented people are one of the most at-risk demographics in the United States for poverty, imprisonment, and discrimination. The fact that it was so difficult for even a few families to have the death of their loved one accounted for by the United States Government signals a larger issue in the way that our culture chooses to remember tragedy.

⁴⁶ Garsd, "Families of Undocumented Immigrants."

⁴⁷ Delano and Nienass, "Invisible Victims," 403-404.

The fact that the United States Government and American media never included undocumented people in missing persons lists or death counts from 9/11 is representative of American attitudes toward undocumented people and the erasure of their stories. The National 9/11 Memorial and Museum also excludes undocumented people from their list of names, which is unsurprising considering the lack of initiative by the U.S. in finding and identifying these people immediately after the disaster, and because undocumented families were so scared of deportation that they never reported their missing family member until official searches were over. Undocumented people are a growing demographic in this country, and if the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum is supposed to be a representation of the people that were affected by 9/11, then undocumented people have a place in their list of names and the narratives presented there.

Part 2: The National 9/11 Memorial and Museum

The National 9/11 Memorial and Museum in New York City is the foremost public institution dedicated to interpreting and commemorating the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001, and the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 that killed six people. The memorial's mission as stated on its website is to connect with the survivors and families of victims of the attacks and provide the public with ongoing education to keep the memory of the attacks alive.⁴⁸ The website also provides supplementary information about the attacks, such as a timeline of the events of 9/11, lesson plans, and digital exhibitions.

⁴⁸ "Home Page," The 9/11 Memorial and Museum, <https://www.911memorial.org/>.

Before the memorial was constructed, there was heavy debate over how 9/11 should be commemorated. Almost immediately after the attacks took place there were people who were discussing how something as terrible as 9/11 could ever sensitively be commemorated, which would be especially difficult considering the national reaction to the terrorist attacks. There were some people who thought making a memorial on the site of Ground Zero was insensitive, that bringing people to the site where the tragedy took place would be making light of a horrible memory. There were many people who wanted to make sure that first responders got their own separate memorial. Some people feared that the memorial would be too political, either leaning too far left or too far right on the political spectrum. Muslim communities also wanted their own memorial to commemorate the struggles they faced from the resulting xenophobia after the attacks.⁴⁹ Eventually, Michael Arad's design was selected as the official plan for the memorial site at Ground Zero, with a heavy emphasis on the theme of absence. After years of careful planning and consideration, the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum was opened in 2014, thirteen years after the attacks.

The planners wanted the memorial to be a reflection of public sentiment and emotion. Survivors and family members of the deceased were contacted, and Arad, along with his team, strove to create a memorial space that represented a strewn apart collective memory of tragedy, with pieces that acknowledge the wide array of struggle people faced because of 9/11. Despite all of their efforts, though, there were still many people were underrepresented or erased from the narrative altogether, especially undocumented people. Rather than being a memorial space that represents the fragmented memory of 9/11 in America, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum presents

⁴⁹ Erika Doss, "Remembering 9/11: Memorials and Cultural Memory," *OAH Magazine of History* 25, no. 3 (2011): 28.

a one-sided monolithic story.⁵⁰ The narrative presented at the memorial is a symptom of the patriotic and nationalistic sentiment that permeated in the United States after 9/11 and fueled the erasure of undocumented people from the national collective memory.

In order to fully understand how the 9/11 Memorial's lack of representation relates to the concept of patriotism, one must first understand the redefinition of patriotism in post-9/11 America. Patriotism can be defined simply as deep love and commitment to one's own country and differs from nationalism because it does not inherently denounce other nations. Historically, it is very common to see a rise in both patriotism and nationalism when a nation is under threat, and that is exactly why there was a statistical rise in both after 9/11.⁵¹ According to a study done in 2004 that assessed American attitudes toward patriotism and whether people thought patriotism inherently suppressed cultural diversity, American in the years following 9/11 believed that people should unite under American identity rather than cultural ties.⁵² The problem with this rhetoric is that in the wake of 9/11, this "unifying" American identity was often synonymous with the erasure of cultural diversity in the U.S., and gave way to the idea of America being a "colorblind society," which is reality was just a way to say that the United States refused to acknowledge the myriad of experiences from different groups of the margins of society.⁵³ It is revealed through its lack of representation of undocumented people that The National 9/11 Memorial was influenced by American patriotism post September 11th.

⁵⁰ Amy Sodaro, "The National September 11 Memorial Museum: 'To Bear Solemn Witness.'" In *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence* (Rutgers University Press, 2018), 143.

⁵¹ Qiong Li and Marilyn B. Brewer, "What Does It Mean to Be an American? Patriotism, Nationalism, and American Identity after 9/11," *Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2004): 729-730.

⁵² Li and Brewer, "What Does It Mean to be an American?" 737.

⁵³ Mathilde Roza, "'America under Attack': Unity and Division after 9/11," In *American Multiculturalism after 9/11: Transatlantic Perspectives*, edited by Derek Rubin and Jaap Verheul (Amsterdam University Press, 2009), 115.

The memorial and museum space takes up about a sixteen-acre area of land, with the memorial occupying half of that space. There are two parts to the memorial the Memorial Pools and the Memorial Glade. The Memorial Pools include twin reflecting pools that are both about half an acre in size, and bronze parapets surrounding them with the names of the nearly 3,000 individuals included in the death toll of 9/11 from the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, Flight 93, and the six individuals who died from the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993. The Memorial Glade is an area covered with trees, and in the center, there is a stone pathway flanked by large stone monoliths inlaid with steel from the World Trade Center. This area is dedicated specifically to the first responders, relief workers, and members of the Lower Manhattan Community who became ill or died from exposure to toxins from Ground Zero. In the Memorial Glade, there is also the Survivor Tree, which is a Callery pear tree that survived the attacks on 9/11. The 9/11 Museum is located inside the World Trade Center and includes exhibitions and collections materials that patrons can look at to learn more about the events of September 11th.⁵⁴ The 9/11 Memorial is meant to be a space of reflection and respect for the people whose lives were lost, which is especially apparent at the reflecting pools where they chose to list the victim's names. The 9/11 Memorial commemorates and represents the vast number of people who were affected by the attacks on September 11th, but inaccuracies in number of casualties and the lack of representation for undocumented people who were affected by 9/11 prevents the memorial from achieving its mission.

⁵⁴ "The Memorial," The 9/11 Memorial and Museum.

Survivor Tree, National
September 11th Memorial, New
York City.

<https://www.911memorial.org/learn/youth-and-families/activities-home/survivor-tree-leaves>.



The list of names carved onto the parapets surrounding the reflection pools at the 9/11 Memorial do not include names of any undocumented individuals. This was no oversight or mistake on the part of the designers of the memorial, who were aware that they were not accounting for undocumented individuals or homeless people in the final list of names. Michael Arad, the director of the 9/11 Memorial, contended that if the site were to create a list of names that could have any potential discrepancies, then the memorial would lose its credibility and become vulnerable to bad faith discourse. According to representative from the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, it was impossible for there to be any unknown or unaccounted for victims from 9/11 because anyone who was known or reported to be in or around the Twin Towers were accounted for.⁵⁵ This statement obviously does not take into account individuals who may have had no documentation of where they worked, or the people whose families were too scared to come forward because of the threat of deportation. There is an empty space at the end of the one of the panels at the reflection pools that is supposed to serve as a place for new names to be added once they are confirmed, and there have been names added to that list, but

⁵⁵ Delano and Nienass, "Invisible Victims," 412-413.

none of those individuals were undocumented immigrants.⁵⁶ The 9/11 Memorial made a very deliberate choice when deciding to include a list of names at the memorial. On the one hand, when a victim's loved one comes to visit the memorial, their loss is validated, and seeing the name of their loved one can help them heal from a devastating tragedy. On the other hand, someone whose loved one's death was never acknowledged by the memorial might immediately feel excluded from the narrative, knowing that their loved one is not being honored the same way other people are.

National September
11th Memorial, New
York City.
<https://www.911memorial.org/>.



Memorials are sites of subjective interpretation, sometimes they serve as a reflection of the common narrative about an event, and sometimes they serve to popularize a narrative about an event, and sometimes they do both at the same time, like the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. The 9/11 Memorial itself does not construct a narrative; it is simply a space meant for reflection, but the museum does push a singular narrative about the events of 9/11, one that is heavily influenced by patriotic sentiments popularized after September 11th that grew in the 2000s. Many aspects of the 9/11 Museum encourage people to connect with their own memories of 9/11 while they experience the official testimony of the events. During this process, patrons' memories become malleable, and their own experiences become interchangeable with the collective memory of the event, which makes it difficult for people who do not relate to narrative at the 9/11 Memorial to speak out or gain

⁵⁶ Delano and Nienass, "Invisible Victims," 413.

recognition.⁵⁷ This relates back to the careful curation of the list of names at the memorial, which intentionally excludes the names of undocumented people, along with any evidence that immigrant communities were effected by 9/11 at all, which is entirely inaccurate.

One of the artistic meanings behind the reflection pools is the idea of absence, specifically the absence of the towers that once stood there, along with the absence of all the people listed on the parapets who lost their lives. Arad was rightfully praised for his devotion to the concept of absence, but there is a level of hypocrisy to that idea that is difficult to ignore when considering the lack of representation of undocumented people. If this memorial is supposed to be the principal commemorative location for the attacks on September 11th, and people go to this location believing that this is the narrative they should trust, then the site is actively complicit in the erasure of the experiences of one of the most marginalized groups in the United States.⁵⁸ To put so much emphasis on a list of names that purposefully excludes entire groups is not inherently jingoistic, but the exclusion of immigrants from a space that memorializes 9/11, an event that led to extreme hatred toward immigrant communities in the United States, does reflect jingoistic attitudes that have become normalized in the collective memory of the attacks. The National 9/11 Memorial and Museum homogenizes the multitude of experiences from different groups in the wake of 9/11, and in the process erases the memory of the deaths of many undocumented people whose loved ones never got recognition after the attacks.

⁵⁷ Sarah Senk. "The Memory Exchange: Public Mourning at the National 9/11 Memorial Museum." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 48, No. 2 (2018), 257-258.

⁵⁸ Delano and Nienass, "Invisible Victims," 412.

Chapter 3: The National Memorial for Peace and Justice

Part 1: Remembering Lynching in the United States:

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, located in Montgomery, Alabama, is the United States' first memorial dedicated to the legacy of racial trauma suffered by Black Americans. Specifically, the memorial commemorates “the legacy of enslaved Black people, people terrorized by lynching, African Americans humiliated by racial segregation and Jim Crow, and people of color burdened with contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence.”⁵⁹ The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, also known colloquially as the National Lynching Memorial, is devoted entirely to remembering the injustices faced by Black Americans since 1619, when the first ship brought enslaved Africans to North America. The trauma faced by Black people in the United States has always been visible to the public, whether it be laws like the Fugitive Slave Act in the nineteenth century that made it possible for free Black people and runaway enslaved people to be kidnapped and sent to the south, or Jim Crow in the twentieth century that made it impossible for Black Americans to have the same public privileges as white people and made interracial mingling illegal. The trauma of systemic oppression is visible in everyday life, but many people choose to ignore it. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is a memorial that reminds people of the injustices against African Americans that have been ignored by white society and serves as a place of healing for Black Americans who have suffered from the trauma of systemic racism.

One of the major focal points of memorialization at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice is the commemoration of those who were killed by lynching. The Equal Justice Initiative

⁵⁹ The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Equal Justice Initiative, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

(EJI), the group responsible for the creation of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, wrote an entire report on the history of lynching in America, called “Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror,” which confronts how lynching began in the United States and the ways that it still affects society today. EJI defines lynching as “violent and public acts of torture” that traumatized Black people throughout American history.⁶⁰ Lynching is, and has always been, directly tied to slavery and white supremacy. During and after the Civil War, white Americans were distraught about the idea of the racial hierarchy in America being questioned, and brutally attacked free Black people because of it.⁶¹ After the Civil War, lynching was a way for white people to reclaim their power of the social hierarchy. Since the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 freed most enslaved people in the United States, white people knew that the power they had over their enslaved people would eventually go away, and they needed to find a way to keep up their system of production in the south. This anxiety during Reconstruction would lead to sharecropping and many laws that kept the racial hierarchy of the south in place post slavery.

The period of Reconstruction after the Civil War was a failure by the United States government. Although in the early stages of Reconstruction there were strides in the south toward more social and economic equality for newly freed Black people, such as electing Black officials into local, state, and federal governments and allocating plots of land to Black families, there quickly came push back from white government officials to put new laws into place that would limit the social standing of Black citizens. Andrew Johnson, who became president after Abraham Lincoln’s assassination in 1865, was a staunch believer in state’s rights, and in that

⁶⁰ Equal Justice Initiative, “Introduction,” in “Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror” 3rd Edition, 2017. <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.

⁶¹ EJI, “Secession and Emancipation,” “Lynching in America.”

spirit he left decisions about laws regarding race relations and reconstruction to individual southern states.⁶² The failure from the federal government to allocate land and resources to free Black people in the south led to a new era of economic dependence on plantations through sharecropping and meant that white landowners were able to seize back power in local governments and put laws into place that legalized public violence against Black people.⁶³ To this day Black people suffer from the failure of Reconstruction and the brutal reality of sharecropping, which, yet again, tied Black people in the south to white owned land. Sharecropping was a system wherein black families lived and labored on white-owned plantations in exchange for a share of the crops, which was often miniscule. Johnson was a major proponent of sharecropping because it was a way for the south to rebuild its economy without contributing resources to supporting the newly freed Black population. Johnson was also opposed to Black voting rights, and, when addressing congress in an annual speech, deemed Black people unworthy of the “privilege” of voting rights.⁶⁴

The rhetoric spewed by Andrew Johnson and other elected official of the nineteenth century, along with the nearly universal white belief that Black people were inferior and not deserving of an equal spot in society, place newly freed Black people at risk for targeted attacks from white vigilante mobs. Even in localities where governments were attempting to provide aid to Black people, there was an increasing level of violence among the general white population out of fear of losing their dominance in the social hierarchy. The most infamous among these groups was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), a white terrorist organization created by six Confederate

⁶² Joshua Horwitz and Casey Anderson, “The Civil War and Reconstruction” In *Guns, Democracy, and the Insurrectionist Idea* (Ann Arbor; University of Michigan Press, 2009), 122-124.

⁶³ Milfred C. Fierce, “Black Struggle for Land During Reconstruction,” *The Black Scholar* 5, no. 5 (1974), 17.

⁶⁴ EJI, “Secession and Emancipation,” “Lynching in America.”

veterans who have been responsible for countless lynchings across the United States, and who continue to oppress and terrorize Black people and racial minority groups today. In this post-Civil War era of Reconstruction and creation of the modern racial hierarchy, lynchings became more and more prevalent.

The KKK, formed in 1865, was made up of mostly wealthy, well-educated young men who often also had careers in local, state, and federal government. During the late nineteenth century, the KKK formed chapters across the United States with organized, strict hierarchies filled with powerful men. Because of this, lynching was not addressed by the government as a crime.⁶⁵ The volume of lynchings that occurred, especially in the south, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries can be partially blamed on the fact that lynchers were never convicted of a crime. There were laws in some southern states that prohibited lynching, but they were never enforced by the white government officials, making it practically legal for white people to lynch black people. Out of all the lynchings that occurred after the year 1900, only one percent resulted in a lyncher being convicted of a crime.⁶⁶

Lynching never went unnoticed, though, and Black Americans have always fought against the corrupt justice system that allowed it to happen. Journalists such as Ida B. Wells and T. Thomas Fortune helped refute the common belief that Black men were a danger to white women, which was a myth that white mobs used to justify public violence against Black people.⁶⁷ This work done by Black anti-lynching activists, along with the support of progressive white southerners, led to a dramatic decrease in lynching by the 1930s. Although, this did not mean that progressive white southerners were in support of equal rights, as they were often still

⁶⁵ EJI, "Secession and Emancipation," "Lynching in America."

⁶⁶ EJI, "Enabling an Era of Lynching," "Lynching in America."

⁶⁷ EJI, "Enabling an Era of Lynching," "Lynching in America."

in favor of segregation and maintaining racial hierarchy. In fact, lynching would continue to occur and be a topic of public conversation throughout the twentieth century and into the present day.

Lynching was and still is a heinous crime committed by white mobs, mostly in public spaces. Lynching is a demonstration of white power and social standing and is always meant to be a public display. Even today, stories of Black trauma are recounted in debates about civil rights, and the injustice faced by Black Americans are constantly on public display. One of the most well-known victims of lynching was Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old Black child who was lynched by a white mob after being accused of making a white woman uncomfortable. Emmett Till's murder has been well documented since it happened, and his body was even exhumed in 2005 after the FBI reopened the investigation into his murder. There was a significant amount of criticism following the FBI's decision to exhume his body, mostly because even after Till was dismembered and examined, nothing of significance about the case was achieved, and there was no justice to be had. The FBI intended to verify that the body truly did belong to Emmett Till, even though his mother had identified the body decades prior and objected to the exhumation.⁶⁸ This horrifying situation highlights how not only is lynching itself a public broadcast of racial terror, the memory of lynching is also public, and the victims and their families are never put to rest.

The Lynching Era left thousands of people dead and was even a catalyst for the mass migration of Black people from the south into northern cities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, lynching emerged as a series of violent attacks on newly freed Black

⁶⁸ Myisha Priest, "'The Nightmare Is Not Cured': Emmett Till and American Healing" *American Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2010): 1-3.

Americans as white southerners grappled with their newly questioned place in the racial hierarchy.⁶⁹ EJI states that “lynching—and other forms of racial terrorism—inflicted deep traumatic and psychological wounds on survivors, witnesses, family members, and the entire African American community.”⁷⁰ This is why it was so important to memorialize lynching and other acts of racial terrorism as a way for Black Americans to heal. The American South is plastered with monuments and memorials to the Confederacy, which is a symbol of white supremacy and a time when the enslavement of Black people was legal and supported by the government. Many of these monuments were erected during Jim Crow as a way to solidify white superiority in the south. With this context in mind, it becomes clear why there were no efforts to memorialize Black History. Healing can only happen when pain is acknowledged, and loss can be grieved. These reasons, along with many others, are why EJI created the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. In their report on lynching, EJI also considers how America’s racist history affects white people, and state that shielding white people from their history of participation in racial terror causes lack of empathy for victims today, and further perpetuates the racial divide between Black and white people. Memorials to Black History are also significant on the national scale by forcing governments to face systemic injustice in the public sphere, forcing them to, at the very least, acknowledge the history of Black trauma in their localities.⁷¹ The National Memorial for Peace and Justice is a stark contrast with many other memorials in the United States because it memorializes a group of people whose struggles were systemically erased, even though the injustices they faced were always exposed.

⁶⁹ EJI, “From ‘Popular Justice’ to Racial Terror,” “Lynching in America.”

⁷⁰ EJI, “Trauma and the Legacy of Lynching,” “Lynching in America.”

⁷¹ EJI, “Trauma and the Legacy of Lynching,” “Lynching in America.”

Part 2: Memorializing Racial Trauma

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice was first conceived in 2010 after staff at EJI began investigating acts of racial terror in the American South. After EJI created their report on lynching, they developed the idea for the memorial, which was intended as a place for people to go and reflect on the history of racism against Black people in the United States, and eventually opened to the public on April 26th, 2018. EJI partnered with artists such as Kwame Akoto-Banfo, whose sculpture on slavery is the first thing visitors see when they walk in. The memorial site is six acres, with sculptures and art throughout that are meant to represent racial terror. The site also has a memorial square with 800 six-foot monuments that represent the counties and states where lynchings have occurred. The names of the victims are engraved on the structures as a reminder for these localities to be held accountable.⁷² One aspect of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice that makes it especially unique is EJI's goal of placing identical monuments to the ones found at the memorial in the counties where lynching has occurred. This aspect of the project is part of a larger goal of making Black History and the history of lynching visible and unavoidable throughout the country.⁷³



National Memorial for Peace and Justice, Montgomery, Alabama. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/01/arts/design/national-memorial-for-peace-and-justice-montgomery-alabama.html>.

⁷² “The National Memorial for Peace and Justice,” Equal Justice Initiative, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

⁷³ “The National Memorial for Peace and Justice,” Equal Justice Initiative, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

The Legacy Museum, which commemorates the history of slavery and its ties to mass incarceration, is directly tied to the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Located less than a mile away from the memorial, the Legacy Museum is situated near one of the most prominent slave auction blocks and train stations used for human trafficking in the nineteenth century. The museum experience is directly tied to the memorial, as the museum gives important historical context to the messages delivered by the art and architecture of the memorial. According to their website, the museum “is an engine for education about the legacy of racial inequality and for the truth and reconciliation that leads to real solutions to contemporary problems.”⁷⁴

Since the National Memorial for Peace and Justice is a new memorial, having only been open four about four years, there have not been many scholarly articles written about the site, other than personal reviews, most of which have been positive. The consensus among many of the people who have visited the site is that it is grim, somber, and reflective. Viewers are struck by the center of the memorial, where the 800 steel columns hang with the names of lynching victims, along with some individuals simply being listed as unknown. An article by the New York Times the week the memorial opened described how Bryan Stevenson, the founder of EJI, took inspiration from the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin and the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg, having been influenced by the idea of a single memorial being able to encapsulate the sheer amount of bloodshed from lynching.⁷⁵ Many reviewers of the sight have noticed that the memorial has a very clear call to action, with that action being reparations and a revision of the common narrative around lynching and anti-black racism in the United States. This fact makes the memorial extremely unique because there is room to grow and a feeling that there is

⁷⁴ “The Legacy Museum: From Enslavement to Mass Incarceration,” EJI, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/museum>.

⁷⁵ Campbell Robertson, “A Lynching Memorial is Opening. The Country Has Never Seen Anything Like It,” *The New York Times*, April 25th, 2018.

work to be done. The consensus among supporters of the memorial is that there is much to be learned from the site, and that the counties listed at the site with lynching victims should work with the National Memorial for Peace and Justice to put a memorial in their counties as well.⁷⁶

Along with positive feedback from the public, the memorial has faced tremendous criticism from local residents of Montgomery, most of whom are white. People have been interviewed on the streets about their feelings about the memorial, and some have said that they think it simply opens old wounds and focuses too much on discrimination and cruelty.⁷⁷ This argument usually comes from people who are defensive about difficult history and the ramifications of confronting a past where they could have contributed to the problem. Difficult history, though, is part of the reason we create memorials in the first place. It is very common for people to have adverse reactions to startling images of history or the graphic realities of systemic racism, but that does not mean that the institution is failing at representing unbiased history. It simply reflects the way that some people will resist violent realities.⁷⁸ It is also important to note that many of the criticisms of the memorial come from supporters of Confederate monuments in Alabama, which was a major topic of dispute at the time the memorial opened in 2018. For example, one of the people interviewed by *The Guardian* after the memorial opened was a member of the Alabama Sons of Confederate Veterans, and when asked about the memorial, he said “We have moved past it ... You don’t want to entice them and feed any fuel to the fire.”⁷⁹ This statement was most likely referencing anti-Confederate activists and EJI, who were pushing

⁷⁶ Marouf Hasian Jr., and Nicholas S. Paliewicz, “Taking the Reparatory Turn at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice,” *International Journal of Communication* vol. 14 (January 2020): 2229-2230.

⁷⁷ Sam Levin, “Lynching Memorial Leaves Some Quietly Seething: ‘Let Sleeping Dogs Lie,’” *The Guardian*, April 28th, 2018.

⁷⁸ Julia Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites* (Rowman and Littlefield; Maryland, 2016), ebook.

⁷⁹ Levin, “Lynching Memorial Leaves Some Quietly Seething,”

for the removal of Confederate monuments and promoting the National Memorial for Peace and Justice.

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice separates itself from other trauma memorials, such as the Johnstown Flood Memorial and the National September 11th Memorial, because its goal is a call to action, and the memorial does not only commemorate a period of time, but the plight of a large group of people in the United States who continue to face systemic racism and trauma to this day. One of the goals of the memorial is to spark conversation and make people uncomfortable with the United States' racist history. Bryan Stevenson argues that the only way for the United States to move on from its dark history is to bring it all to the forefront and have meaningful discussions about it and reflect. Reconciliation is another one of the major goals of the site, because the staff at EJI firmly believe that directly addressing racism will assist with race reconciliation.⁸⁰ The National Memorial for Peace and Justice does not address any previously unknown history. The defining characteristic of lynching was that it was public brutality, meaning that there was no way it could have been hidden. People simply chose to ignore it. Systemic racism, slavery, and mass incarceration are also extremely public acts of violence, while at the same time being mostly invisible to America's collective memory of the past. If someone reads a history of the United States, or even turns on the news today, they will be confronted with it, and if they are white, they have the option to ignore it. When someone visits the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, they do not have the option to ignore it, and white patrons are forced to consider the dark side of their own history.

⁸⁰ "The National Memorial for Peace and Justice," Equal Justice Initiative, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

EJI and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice seek to make the history of racism in the United States visible. Racism and violence toward Black people have always been something that society at large agrees to ignore, no matter how blatant the crimes have been. In order to spread awareness and challenge that invisibility, EJI works with communities across the nation to erect memorials to race-based violence. By doing this, EJI hopes to work toward an era of truth and hold institutions of power accountable through public outreach. Bryan Stevenson argues that memorials are a reflection of public perception and reflect what a society finds important.⁸¹

Through its efforts to confront the United States' difficult past, the National Memorial for Peace and Justice holds institutions of oppression accountable, while also creating an environment where people can heal from racial trauma. Because of politics and debates about interpretation of American history, many people forget that memorials, especially memorials of trauma, are supposed to be spaces of healing. Psychological, generational trauma is harm toward people who are powerless. In many cases, the best way to heal a person who feels powerless is to *empower* them.⁸² Black people in the United States were made powerless by systemic racism beginning with chattel slavery. Without economic or social support, Black people continue to face injustice from police violence, segregation, and prejudice in the government. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice creates a space where individuals are empowered to enact change in their own communities and understand the extent of race-based trauma in the United States, making it an ideal site for healing and remembrance.

⁸¹ "Community Remembrance Project," Equal Justice Initiative, <https://eji.org/projects/community-remembrance-project/>.

⁸² Mary Beth Faimon, "Ties That Bind: Remembering, Mourning, and Healing Historical Trauma," *American Indian Quarterly* 28, no. 1/2 (2004): 242.

Conclusion:

Memorials serve as a way for communities to create a visual way to represent a narrative. The Johnstown Flood Memorial, the National September 11th Memorial, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice each illustrate a narrative of trauma and address marginalized communities in different ways. Memorials both reflect and affect public consciousness and collective memory, which means that the way a memorial displays difficult history represents how the public remembers it and affects how people perceive it in the future. Societal hierarchies are heavily influenced by the way history is remembered, so if a memorial lacks representation of affected marginalized groups, then those groups will be ignored by the systems of power.

Recently there has been much debate on what should be remembered as it relates to Confederate monuments and memorials to the Confederacy. This debate does not publicly discuss the memorialization of trauma, but it helps one understand why representative interpretation at sites of public history is important. A monument or memorial on its own is not history, rather, it is a symbol of a group of people's values through the lens of memory.⁸³ Based on this idea, some may argue that monuments and memorials have little influence on who sees them because they are obviously a reflection of one group of people, not everyone. This would mean that monuments and memorials should only be judged individually, and if some are not inclusive or are inaccurate, then it is still history that should be preserved.⁸⁴ Memorials also serve as messages, though. When a person walks through Manhattan and sees the National September 11th Memorial, they are fully aware of how important that event was in American history, and when they see that list of names, they know those people were important. The same goes for the

⁸³ John J. Winberry, "'Lest We Forget': The Confederate Monument and the Southern Townscape," *Southeastern Geographer* 55, no. 1 (2015): 20.

⁸⁴ Winberry, "Lest We Forget," 28-29.

Johnstown Flood Memorial, which shows people how destructive the Johnstown Flood was, and helps people understand the events leading to it, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which teaches people the importance of understand Black history in the United States. When a person encounters a memorial to an important event, and they cannot identify or empathize with the victims of the tragedy, then the memorial fails as a space for healing.

Memory is not ubiquitous. There is no such thing as an entirely homogenous community, meaning there can never be a memorial that perfectly encapsulates the experiences of every person affected by an event. The goal of a memorial, though, is to take fragments of history and attempt to create a public consensus of an event to provide closure to all the groups affected. This is an art, not a science, and no one will ever be entirely happy with any historic site, but there are memorials that are better at representation of marginalized communities than others, such as the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, that entirely represents a marginalized group and focuses solely on the lived experiences and trauma of Black Americans.⁸⁵ The first lynching memorial in the United States was in Duluth, Minnesota, commemorating three black men who were falsely accused of raping a white woman and subsequently lynched in 1920. That memorial consists of several relief statues carved with quotes in a memorial park. That memorial, while not widely supported when it was erected, sparked a culture of conversation and a shared sense of community growth.⁸⁶ Both the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and the Lynching Memorial in Duluth are successful because they represent a group of people whose voices are largely excluded from common historical narratives, and even though they only

⁸⁵ Dora Apel, "Memorialization and Its Discontents: America's First Lynching Memorial," *The Mississippi Quarterly* 61, no. 1/2 (2008): 217.

⁸⁶ Apel, "Memorialization and Its Discontents," 217.

represent the experiences of one group of people, they succeed in fostering a sense of community and growth through representation.

Sometimes memorials cause controversy because of the history they represent difficult history. For example, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. sparked massive controversy because of its unorthodox design for a war memorial. Typically, throughout history, war memorials were strong symbols of bravery and triumph in the face of victory, or a representation of national solidarity in the face of defeat. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was neither of these things. The Vietnam War was largely unpopular war, and soldiers from Vietnam were never venerated in the same ways that soldiers from World War II were, for example. Vietnam was brutal, and ultimately the United States lost the war, which was already viewed negatively by the public to begin with. This made it very difficult to memorialize the people who died because Americans wanted to move on. Eventually, in 1978, Congress commissioned the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and it was opened in 1982. The memorial is comprised of two black granite walls set into the ground, filled with the over 50,000 names of the soldiers who died in Vietnam. Maya Lin, the designer of the memorial, purposefully left the memorial's vision up to individual interpretation, meaning there was no nationalistic symbolism or propaganda, and some folks were enraged by that.⁸⁷ The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is now widely considered a very successful memorial for commemorating the loss of life from Vietnam, and thousands of people visit the site every year. Maya Lin intentionally left the site up to the viewers' interpretations, which worked as a way for people to project their own thoughts and feelings onto the site.

⁸⁷ Robin Wagner-Pacifici, and Barry Schwartz "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past," *American Journal of Sociology* 97, no. 2 (1991): 393.

The intentions of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are comparable to those of the National September 11th Memorial, which was to provide a sea of names without context. In theory, the National September 11th Memorial could have been just as successful as Lin's Vietnam Memorial, the only issue is that commemorating civilian casualties from a terrorist attack is not the same as commemorating soldiers in a war. There are records of people who die in war and go missing, and there are not always records of people who die on the street from a terrorist attack. The sea of names was an excellent way to commemorate the deaths of people whose names were meticulously recorded, but it was not as successful for the September 11th Memorial, who consequently left individuals who lacked documentation out of the list.

Memorials do not exist in a vacuum. How a site uses context can drastically affect the way a viewer interprets the theme of the site. The Johnstown Flood National Memorial is first and foremost a historic site with experiential learning. Something that sets the Johnstown Flood National Memorial apart from other memorials is that it commemorates a disaster that was both preventable and caused by nature. This means that the memorial is difficult to interpret because the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club avoided any consequences, even though there is direct evidence that they never inspected the South Fork Dam. Another memorial that commemorates a complicated natural disaster is the New Orleans Katrina Memorial, which commemorates all the individuals who were negatively impacted by Hurricane Katrina and seeks to spread awareness for natural disaster preparedness. The memorial also commemorates the people whose bodies were never identified and given a proper burial.⁸⁸ The New Orleans Katrina Memorial is structured more like a standard memorial space, including stone monoliths with inscriptions and descriptions of the events of Hurricane Katrina. Both of these memorials can stand alone as

⁸⁸ "New Orleans Katrina Memorial," The Historical Marker Database, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=85824>.

reminders of the devastation of floods on vulnerable populations, but the context that typically the most vulnerable people to natural disasters are low-income would help viewers understand that these events do not happen to everyone, they typically happen to unprotected populations in our society. Hurricanes and floods may not discriminate based on class, gender, or race, but the consequences of these disasters and the placement of disenfranchised groups within society can make the consequences of these disasters even more detrimental. The most affected people from Hurricane Katrina were low-income women of color and immigrants.⁸⁹ The Johnstown Flood impacted a community full of immigrants and low-wage workers. Both of these disasters were accidental, with aspects of them being outside of human control, but certain factors were also preventable. If this context were included in the Johnstown Flood National Memorial, or any memorial that commemorates natural disasters, then perhaps the public focus could shift toward helping marginalized groups be less vulnerable to such deadly disasters.

Memorials have the power to shape people's beliefs. They represent the way that groups of people remember events from history and help shape a community's values. It is crucial that we take care to memorialize events as truthfully as possible so that our society can use those moments in time to grow. "Monuments and memorials can help transform our national landscape into a more honest reflection of the history of America and reflect a community's ongoing commitment to truth-telling."⁹⁰ The Johnstown Flood Memorial, the National September 11th Memorial, and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice each reflect different perspectives in the way the United States reckons with its history. The Johnstown Flood Memorial and the National September 11th Memorial each attempt to memorialize traumatic events without

⁸⁹Jean Ait Belkhir and Christiane Charlemaine, "Race, Gender and Class Lessons from Hurricane Katrina," *Race, Gender & Class* 14, no. 1/2 (2007): 122.

⁹⁰ "The National Memorial for Peace and Justice," EJI, <https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

including perspectives from vulnerable people, such as poor laborers and undocumented people. The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, on the other hand, chooses to confront atrocities head on, and addresses the way systemic oppression must be acknowledged in order to heal. The only way to reconcile with the truth of history is to include the voices of marginalized people at memorials and historic sites.

Bibliography

“Community Remembrance Project.” Equal Justice Initiative. <https://eji.org/projects/community-remembrance-project/>.

“Mission Statement.” Asociacion Tepeyac de New York, Hispanic Federation: Member Agencies.

“National Parks and Monuments (Table).” *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th Edition, March 1–11, 2021.

“New Orleans Katrina Memorial.” The Historical Marker Database. <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=85824>.

Aguila, Emma Alisher R. Akhmedjonov, Ricardo Basurto-Davila, Krishna B. Kumar, Sarah Kups, and Howard J. Shatz. “Immigration Policies and Proposals During the 2000s.” In *United States and Mexico: Ties That Bind, Issues That Divide* (RAND Corporation, 2012), 135-142.

Ait Belkhir, Jean and Christiane Charlemaine. “Race, Gender and Class Lessons from Hurricane Katrina.” *Race, Gender & Class* 14, no. 1/2 (2007): 120-152

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. London: Thetford Press Limited, 1983.

Apel, Dora. “Memorialization and Its Discontents: America’s First Lynching Memorial.” *The Mississippi Quarterly* 61, no. 1/2 (2008): 217.

Blatz, Perry K. Review of “The Johnstown Flood: The True Story of One of the Most Devastating Disasters in American History.” by Charles Guggenheim, *The Public Historian* 14, no. 3 (1992): 171–73.

- Brown, Thomas J. "Introduction," *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration*. University of South Carolina; Bedford/St. Marten's Press, 2004.
- C. Fierce, Milfred. "Black Struggle for Land During Reconstruction." *The Black Scholar* 5, no. 5 (1974), 13-18.
- Delano, Alexandra and Benjamin Nienass, "Invisible Victims: Undocumented Migrants in the Aftermath of 9/11" *Politics and Society* 42, No. 3 (2014), 400-421.
- Doss, Erika. "Remembering 9/11: Memorials and Cultural Memory." *OAH Magazine of History* 25, no. 3 (2011): 27-30.
- Elbih Randa. "Uncovering the Lopsided Dialectic of 9/11 and the War on Terror." *Counterpoints* 360 (2018): 1-6.
- Equal Justice Initiative. "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror" 3rd Edition, 2017. <https://lynchinginamerica.eji.org/report/>.
- Erikson, Kai. "Notes on Trauma and Community." *American Imago* 48, no. 4 (1991): 455-472.
- Faimon, Mary Beth. "Ties That Bind: Remembering, Mourning, and Healing Historical Trauma." *American Indian Quarterly* 28, no. 1/2 (2004): 238-251.
- Garsd, Jasmine. "Families Of Undocumented Immigrants Lost On 9/11 Continue To Search For Closure." NPR, September 10th, 2021. 9/11 Undocumented Immigrants Who Worked At The Twin Towers Remain Missing: NPR.
- Gobel, David and Daves Rossel. "Introduction" in *Commemoration in America*, ed. David Gobel and Daves Rossel. Charlottesville; University of Virginia Press, 2013. ebook.

- Hasian Jr., Marouf and Nicholas S. Paliewicz. "Taking the Reparatory Turn at the National Memorial for Peace and Justice." *International Journal of Communication* vol. 14 (January 2020): 2227-2230.
- Horwitz, Joshua and Casey Anderson. "The Civil War and Reconstruction" In *Guns, Democracy, and the Insurrectionist Idea*. University of Michigan Press, 2009.
- Iyer, Deepa and Jayesh M. Rathod. "9/11 and Immigration Law and Policy." *GPSolo* 29, no. 1 (2012): 62-63.
- John J. Winberry, "'Lest We Forget': The Confederate Monument and the Southern Townscape," *Southeastern Geographer* 55, no. 1 (2015): 19-31.
- Johnstown Flood Museum, Johnstown Area Heritage Association,
<https://www.jaha.org/attractions/johnstown-flood-museum/>.
- Johnstown Flood National Memorial, National Park Service,
<https://www.nps.gov/jofl/index.htm>.
- Julia Rose. *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites*. Rowman and Littlefield; Maryland, 2016. ebook.
- Kaktins, Uldis, Carrie Davis Todd, Stephanie Wojno, and Neil Coleman. "Revisiting the Timing and Events Leading to and Causing the Johnstown Flood of 1889." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 80, no. 3 (2013): 335-363.
- Koser, Khalid. *International Migration*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Levin, Sam. "Lynching Memorial Leaves Some Quietly Seething: 'Let Sleeping Dogs Lie.'" *The Guardian*, April 28th, 2018.

- Li, Qiong and Marilyn B. Brewer. "What Does It Mean to Be an American? Patriotism, Nationalism, and American Identity after 9/11." *Political Psychology* 25, no. 5 (2004): 727-739.
- McCullough, David. "The Sky Was Red" in *The Johnstown Flood: The Incredible Story Behind One of the Most Devastating Disasters America Has Ever Known*. New York, Simon, and Schuster, 1968. eBook
- McMaster, John Bach and Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer. "The Johnstown Flood." *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 57, no. 3 (1933): 209-243.
- Minulescu, Mihaela. "Approaching Trans-Generational Trauma in Analytical Psychotherapy." *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 217 (February 2016): 1112-1117.
- Priest, Myisha. "'The Nightmare Is Not Cured': Emmett Till and American Healing." *American Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (2010): 1-24.
- Robertson, Campbell. "A Lynching Memorial is Opening. The Country Has Never Seen Anything Like It." *The New York Times*, April 25th, 2018.
- Roza, Mathilde. "'America under Attack': Unity and Division after 9/11." In *American Multiculturalism after 9/11: Transatlantic Perspectives*, edited by Derek Rubin and Jaap Verheul. Amsterdam University Press, 2009.
- Senk, Sarah. "The Memory Exchange: Public Mourning at the National 9/11 Memorial Museum." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 48, No. 2 (2018), 254-276.

Sodaro, Amy. "The National September 11 Memorial Museum: 'To Bear Solemn Witness.'" In *Exhibiting Atrocity: Memorial Museums and the Politics of Past Violence*. Rutgers University Press, 2018.

Sullivan, Shannon. "Inheriting Racist Disparities in Health: Epigenetics and the Transgenerational Effects of White Racism." *Critical Philosophy of Race* 1, no. 2 (2013): 190-218.

Tentler, Leslie Woodcock. *Wage Earning Women: Industrial Work and Family Life in the United States, 1900-1930*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1979.

The 9/11 Memorial and Museum, <https://www.911memorial.org/>.

The Johnstown Flood: The True Story of One of the Most Devastating Disasters in American History. Charles River Editors, 2014. eBook.

The National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Equal Justice Initiative.
<https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/memorial>.

Wagner-Pacifici, Wagner and Barry Schwartz. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial: Commemorating a Difficult Past." *American Journal of Sociology* 97, no. 2 (1991): 376-420.

Zembylas, Michalinos and Zvi Bekerman. "Education and the Dangerous Memories of Historical Trauma: Narratives of Pain, Narratives of Hope." *Curriculum Inquiry* 38, no. 2 (2008): 125-154.