Memorial mania: public feeling in America

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1 STATUE MANIA TO MEMORIAL MANIA

Scope of the Subject

"The notion of the monument as memorial or commemorative public event has witnessed a triumphal return," cultural critic Andreas Huyssen observed in the mid-1990s. Reflecting on the "current obsession with memory" and what he called a "memory boom," Huyssen commented on the "surprising" contemporary resurgence of "the monument and the memorial as major modes of aesthetic, historical, and spatial expression."[1]

No American city better embodies these conditions of memorial mania than the nation's capital. Washington has seen a glut of built and proposed memorials in the past few decades, all approved by Congress and each managed by the National Capital Planning Commission, the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, the National Park Service, and / or fifteen other federal agencies claiming some degree of control over the city's built environment.[2] Since 1995, the following memorials have been dedicated in Washington: the Pentagon Memorial (2008), Air Force Memorial (2006), National World War II Memorial (2004), George Mason Memorial (2002), Tomas G. Masaryk Memorial (2002), National Japanese American Memorial (2000), Mahatma Gandhi Memorial (1999), African American Civil War Memorial (1998), Women in Military Service for America Memorial (1997), Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (1997), Korean War Veterans Memorial (1995), and Lockerbie Memorial Cairn (1995).[3] In 2007, President George W. Bush dedicated the Victims of Communism Memorial, located just a few blocks from the U.S. Capitol (fig 1.1). Orchestrated by Heritage Foundation fellow Lee Edwards, the $950,000 memorial consists of a small plaza centerpieced by a ten-foot bronze called the *Goddess of Democracy*, a replica of the Statue of Liberty erected by Chinese student dissidents in Tiananmen Square in 1989.[4]

More memorials destined for the nation's capitol—all similarly authorized by Congress—include the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial, Benjamin Banneker Memorial (commemorating an eighteenth-

1.1. Thomas Marsh, Victims of Communism Memorial, Washington, D.C., dedicated 2007. (Courtesy of Heather Bowling.)

century African American scientist), and Adams Memorial (a memorial to the second and sixth presidents of the United States and their wives). The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial, Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial, Monument to the Victims of the Ukrainian Famine-Genocide of 1932–1933, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial (see fig. 6.3, p. 320) are also on the lineup.

In 1986, worried that too many memorials might "get in one another's way, competing for attention among themselves and against the land-

scaped beauty of the Mall," Congress passed the National Commemorative Works Act, aimed at "severely restricting" the numbers of memorials intended for the nation's capitol. Yet legislative management of public commemoration is offset by countless constituent demands for national recognition. The act's rather sweeping mandate, after all, is to promote commemorative works that evoke "the memory of an individual, group, event, or other significant element of American history."[5] That covers a lot of territory.

Memorial mania is not just a federal issue, of course. In her study of monuments and memory in Lowell, Massachusetts, Martha Norkunas documented some 252 memorials erected in that northeastern textile town since the mid-nineteenth century. More than 65 were erected in the last two decades of the twentieth century.[6]

This dramatic increase in memorial numbers is explained in part by expanded understanding of commemoration itself. American memorials are as protean today as their American patrons and publics, and range from multi-acred properties like the National September 11 Memorial & Museum at the World Trade Center to single monuments like the David Berger National Memorial in Beachwood, Ohio, an abstract sculpture dedicated to an American athlete killed during terrorist attacks at the 1972 Munich Olympics. From permanent memorials intended as timeless national fixtures to temporary shrines erected at the sites of school shootings and car accidents, contemporary kinds of commemoration include plaques, parks, cairns, quilts (the NAMES Project Foundation AIDS Memorial Quilt), trees (the seven oaks planted at the Johnson Space Center in tribute to the crew of the *Columbia* space shuttle), and Web sites (there are thousands of online memorials to the victims of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the Virginia Tech shootings, among others).

By extension, today's "obsession with memory" and memorials is grounded in a vastly expanded U.S. demographic and in heightened expectations of rights and representation among the nation's increasingly diverse publics. As the following overview details, memorial mania is contextualized by a highly successful public art industry, burgeoning interests in "memory studies" and "living" or experiencing history, and shifting understanding of American national identity. In particular, memorial mania embodies the affective dimensions—the structures of public feeling—that characterize contemporary life. And as Huyssen alludes in his comments on the "triumphal return" of commemoration, today's memory boom has precedence in an earlier historical moment when monuments and notions of the monumental similarly dominated public art and public culture.

STATUE MANIA

Today's memorial mania parallels the "statue mania" that gripped nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Americans and Europeans alike. In France, historian Maurice Agulhon explains, "statueomania" was especially realized in countless memorials to "Marianne," a feminized symbol of revolution and liberty. Determined to unite the French body politic around a consensual national mythology, Third Republic patriots unleashed an army of Marianne memorials in public squares throughout France in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. They also stirred a "patriotic fervor" for laudatory statues of local and national French figures from Louis Pasteur and Denis Diderot to Berlioz, Danton, and Voltaire. In 1870, there were fewer than a dozen statues of "great men" in Paris; by 1914, there were over 150. Statue mania, the monumental impulse of France's Third Republic, was "an inherent feature of modern urbanism and liberal and secular society," Agulhon remarks, and the parallel processes of forging the modern French nation-state and raising statues were seen as one and the same.[7]

Statue mania erupted in the United States from the 1870s to the 1920s for similar reasons. After the divisiveness of the Civil War, countless American cities and towns vied for statues (and other symbolic markers) that helped reimagine what Benedict Anderson terms the "affective bonds of nationalism."[8] Statues not only embellished the postbellum public landscape but encouraged passionate and consensual understandings of nationhood. Frederick MacMonnies's Pioneer Monument (1911) in Denver, Colorado, for example, a multi-tiered fountain featuring an equestrian statue of Kit Carson and other figures labeled "The Hunter," "The Prospector," and "Pioneer Mother and Child," promoted a national history defined by manifest destiny, American exceptionalism, Anglo-Saxon supremacy, and heteronormative family values (fig. 1.2). Commissioned by a Denver real estate outfit as a tribute to Colorado's first territorial governor, MacMonnies's original design featured a statue of a naked Indian on horseback, "his palm extended in a gesture of peace." But Denver newspapers angrily objected, contending that Colorado "has no love for the savage redskin" and that the sculptor's decision to depict a Native American was a "sad mistake."[9] MacMonnies revised his plans, substituting a fully-clothed figure of Kit Carson for the Indian, and the $72,000 monument was dedicated in Denver's Civic Center Park in a ceremony attended by some ten thousand people.

Likenesses of American explorers, inventors, statesmen, and soldiers were commonly commissioned in the era of statue mania, as were "great men" valorized by different Anglo-European ethnic groups. Baltimore,

1.2. Frederick MacMonnies, Pioneer Monument, Denver, Colorado, dedicated 1911. (Courtesy of the Denver Public Library, Western History Collection [call no. MCC-1631].)

nicknamed "the Monumental City" in the early nineteenth century, was dotted with memorials to men ranging from George Washington and Edgar Allen Poe to Thomas Wildey (founder of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows in North America) and John Mifflin Hood (president of the Western Maryland Railway). Cleveland's Cultural Gardens, a narrow strip of urban parkland first developed in the 1910s, was outfitted with statues, busts, and plaques commemorating the city's Czech, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, and Russian literary and musical legends. Staking their own claims to America's historical memory, civic groups elsewhere erected memorials to founding fathers like Leif Erikkson (sculpted by Anne Whitney for the cities of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Needham, Massachusetts in 1887), Thaddeus Kosciusko (Boston, 1899; West Point, 1913), Giuseppe Garibaldi (New York, 1888), and Sam Houston (Houston, 1924).

Christopher Columbus was statue mania's most popular "great man." As early as 1849, Missouri senator Thomas Hart Benton proposed that the forthcoming transcontinental railroad be commemorated by a colossal statue of Columbus "hewn from a granite mass or a peak on the Rocky Mountains . . . pointing with outstretched arm to the western horizon, and saying to the flying passengers—'There is the East; there is India.'"[10] (Although never built, Benton's grandiose scheme surely sparked Gutzon Borglum's similarly ostentatious interest in carving memorials like Stone Mountain and Mount Rushmore.) Hundreds of other Columbus monuments, statues, busts, and fountains were built in other cities, including Baltimore, Boston, Brooklyn, Chicago, Columbus, New Haven, New York, Peoria, Providence, Sacramento, Scranton, St. Louis, and Willimantic, all of them honoring the four hundredth anniversary of the Italian explorer's "discovery" of America. In 1912, Lorado Taft's Columbus Memorial Fountain was erected in front of Washington's Union Station, and dedicated in an elaborate civic ceremonhy that the *New York Times* said was "second only to the inauguration of a President" (fig. 1.3). Over 150,000 spectators listened to an address by President William Howard Taft and watched a parade of 15,000 troops, 2,000 cars, 50,000 Knights of Columbus, and numerous floats depicting notable moments in Columbus's life.[11]

Statue mania was not unique to the nation's white ethnics: postbellum black communities were also deeply engaged in what the *Washington Bee*, an African American weekly, called "monument fever" in 1889. Local and national drives (not all of them successful) to erect memorials to African Americans such as William C. Nell, Crispus Attucks (honored with a statue in Boston Common in 1888), Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass (Rochester, New York, 1899), Harriet Tubman (Auburn, New York, 1914),

1.3. Lorado Taft, Columbus Memorial Fountain, Washington, D.C., dedicated 1912. (Photo by the author.)

and John Mercer Langston were frequently covered in the *Bee*. The newspaper's editor, W. Calvin Chase, was an avid memorial enthusiast who as early as 1883 had pushed for a monument that would honor black Civil War veterans and "be erected at government expense in the nation's capital."[12] While a bill to support it was introduced in Congress a few years later, such a monument would not be built until 1998, when the African American Civil War Memorial, featuring Ed Hamilton's *Spirit of Freedom* was dedicated in Washington (see fig. 4.28, on p. 231).

Thousands of war memorials erected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries paid tribute to America's soldier dead and reified a national ideology of militarism and masculinity. Most were produced by a burgeoning commercial monument industry that provided mass-produced memorials to muncipalities all over the country. In the fifty years following the Civil War, for example, northern and southern cities purchased "standing soldier" statues of Union or Confederate warriors: common soldiers, generally lone infantrymen, standing on top of stone columns and grasping a rifle. Selecting stock examples from catalogues published by companies like the Armes Foundry in Chicopee, Massachusetts, or the Muldoon Monument Company in Louisville, Kentucky. Civic associations such as the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War and the United Daughters of the Confederacy paid anywhere from $1,000 to $10,000 for the Civil War statue of their choice. In 1870, the Colored Women's Lincoln Aid Society of Philadelphia laid the cornerstone for a proposed $2,000 "monument to those [black soldiers and sailors] who fell fighting to perpetuate our glorious Union."[13]

In the early 1900s, many U.S. cities purchased stock statues of Spanish American War soldiers, called "hiker statues" after the animated march of American troops up Cuba's San Juan Hill. In the 1920s, they spent their civic dollars on "fighting doughboy" memorials depicting rifle-thrusting World War I infantrymen seemingly lifted from the European trenches of the western front.[14] Ernest Moore Viquesney, who made funerary monuments for commercial firms in Georgia and Indiana, was one of several American sculptors who designed World War I memorials and produced hundreds of fighting doughboy statues for cities ranging from North Canaan, Connecticut, to Beaver, Utah (fig. 1.4). Each of Viquesney's bronzes, which cost $2,000 to $5,000 and were called *Spirit of the American Doughboy*, featured a seven-foot soldier boldly striding through a no-man's-land of barbed wire and shelled tree stumps, hoisting a bayonet in one hand and a grenade in the other. Capitalizing on their popular appeal during the era of statue mania, Viquesney also marketed $6 fighting doughboy statuettes ("endorsed and recommended by the National Memorial Committee of The American Legion"), desk lamps, and candlesticks.[15]

Other cities boasted the individually commissioned and much more expensive memorials of sculptors such as MacMonnies, Taft, Daniel Chester French, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens—professional artists who saw themselves as the cultural custodians of American taste and viewed their statues as ways to educate the public about "official" and hence appropriate national histories and ideals. As John Bodnar argues, "Official culture relies on 'dogmatic formalism' and the restatement of reality in

1.4. Ernest Moore Viquesney, *Spirit of the American Doughboy*, Greencastle, Indiana, dedicated 1920. (Courtesy of Cindy O'Dell.)

ideal rather than complex or ambiguous terms . . . Cultural leaders, usually grounded in institutional and professional structures, envisioned a nation of dutiful and united citizens . . . and never tired of using commemoration to restate what they thought the social order and citizen behavior should be."[16] Statues played a vital role in championing collective national ideals, as did a widespread public culture of national anthems, holidays, festivals, and fairs.

French's *The Concord Minuteman*, for example, a life-sized bronze of an alert Yankee farmer ready to do battle with the British at a moment's notice, was unveiled in 1875 in Concord, Massachusetts, at a Revolutionary War centennial celebration (fig. 1.5). A replica was displayed a year later at Philadelphia's Centennial Exhibition, a world's fair attended by some ten million people who saw, among other memorials, the gigantic arm of the Statue of Liberty, a gift from France that would be dedicated in New York in 1886. The Pledge of Allegiance, a ritualistic act of fealty to the U.S. flag ("and the Republic for which it stands") was written in 1893. It was popularized that year at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago,

1.5. Daniel Chester French, *The Concord Minuteman*, Concord, Massachusetts, dedicated 1875. (Photo by the author.) More than one million people visit the Minute Man National Historical Park each year.

a world's fair that while ostensibly a tribute to Christopher Columbus was mostly a monumental spectacle of renewed national self-confidence and a proclamation of America's late nineteenth-century technological innovations, cultural ambitions, and global economic leadership.

These commemorative cultures aimed at evoking intimate, emotional, and authentic ties between different American publics and the United States, encouraging an affective allegiance to the nation that would be as

strong and as sacred as that extended to family, region, religion, and/or ethnic and racial group. Naming practices—such as listing the names of the nine thousand Cuyahoga County residents who served in the Civil War on the walls of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument (Cleveland, Ohio, 1894)—were further employed to generate shared feelings of nationalism.[17]

Statue mania was symptomatic of turn-of-the-twentieth-century anxieties about national unity, anxieties unleashed by the rapid advance of modernism, immigration, and mass culture. Cultural efforts to assuage those anxieties included, among other things, reordering the nation's urban landscapes. From New York to Cleveland to San Diego, urban America was revamped in an idealized "City Beautiful" aesthetic that appropriated Greco-Roman and other styles in order to evoke Progressive Era political ideals. Grand boulevards, spacious squares, and manicured parks were centerpieced by oversized statues—like Denver's Pioneer Monument—that promoted "official" cultural perceptions of national values and virtues as they simultaneously belied the sociopolitical frictions that mandated their making in the first place. Many newly revised urban spaces became the staging grounds for highly ritualized civic festivals like "The Pageant and Masque of St. Louis" (1914), which was performed in St. Louis's Forest Park by a 7,500 person cast and viewed by an audience of some 350,000 people. Featuring costumed processions of American ethnics and newly naturalized citizens, these carefully choreographed "Dramas of Democracy" rarely critiqued the terms of civic inclusion or how and why "other" Americans were often excluded from national subjectivity (like much of St. Louis's African American population).[18] Similar sorts of social, political, and cultural anxieties undergird memorial mania today.

Likewise, a century ago the nation's proliferation of public monuments—and public commemoration in general—was seen on "manic" terms as a worrisome problem of irrational emotional zeal and material excess. "The country's gone pageant mad," one reporter observed in 1912.[19] This was not a uniquely American condition. In the mid-nineteenth century, the British press voiced concerns about "monument mania" following feverish plans to memorialize prime minister Sir Robert Peel, who died in 1850.[20] Prior to the 1800s, "mania" was mostly understood as a synonym of "furious madness," as a chronic collapse of reason and self-control and the appearance, instead, of generally deranged behavior. In the nineteenth century, however, "mania" became more broadly understood as a "primary disorder of affect" or as an emotionally driven (if also physically presented) illness.[21] Used as a

psychological diagnosis for various forms of addiction, including alcoholism and sex (for example, dipsomania and nymphomania), "mania" was also typically understood as the manifestation of social and cultural excess—hence, statue mania.

In France, increasing anxiety—and outright hostility—about statue mania prompted one journalist to declare, "as concerns the many commemorative statues, I would like to state the same as Marat once did—I need 300,000 heads." In 1911, Paris's Municipal Council took the "remarkable step," noted the *New York Times*, of stopping its statue mania "epidemic" by banning any new statues, busts, and bas-reliefs for the next ten years, "no matter what may be the claims to immortality of the candidates for honors."[22]

As statue mania spread, *Leslie's Weekly*, one of the major illustrated weekly magazines at the time, complained that the United States was "being covered with monuments . . . which are, in many cases, absolute deformities, designed in utter defiance of every principle of good taste, and lacking every element of appropriateness." (The magazine later called Cleveland's Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument one of the nation's most "inartistic public monuments.") In 1919, the *American Magazine of Art* bemoaned "the plague of war memorials now sweeping over the land." The editors despondently concluded, "Must we suffer not only war but also the commemoration of war?"[23]

Problems of poor craftsmanship, indifferent placement, civic congestion, hyper-commercialism, and general public irrelevence prompted this criticism of statue mania. Writers at the *New York Herald*, for example, took issue with the "painful lack of originality" conveyed by the "entirely spectacular" statuary displayed at the Columbian Exposition. Protesting that there was "hardly an American idea" among the Chicago fair's many memorials, reporters gleefully maligned the Greco-Roman conceit of statues like French's sixty-five-foot sculpture *The Republic*: a gilded goddess clothed in a toga crowned with a laurel wreath and holding a staff topped by a liberty cap in one hand and a globe topped by an eagle in the other (fig. 1.6). Critics were especially impatient with MacMonnies's overblown Columbian Fountain, a cluttered sculptural display that was effusively—maniacally—decorated with prancing seahorses, plunging dolphins, playful putti, and other allegorical froufrou. Such sculptors were admonished to "unbend for awhile from the commercial and monumental attitude in which they have stood so long."[24]

Statue mania backlash was furthered by growing weariness with old-fashioned art styles (especially at a moment of nascent modernism) and heavy-handed proselytizing by art elites who overestimated the

1.6. Daniel Chester French, *The Republic*, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, Illinois, 1893. Destroyed. (Photograph reproduced courtesy of the Chicago History Museum [ICHI-29874].)

unifying capacity of public monuments. As Michele Bogart argues in her discussion of the "protracted negotiations" that ensued over a memorial to Samuel J. Tilden (finally dedicated in New York's Riverside Park in 1926 after several decades of debate), "the fact that certain turn-of-the-century groups took commemorative statues seriously and succeeded in placing some of them on public property is proof of neither consensus nor success."[25] Assumptions about appropriate standards of cultural taste and monolithic accounts of American history typically failed to reckon with other, more diverse and dynamic visions of the nation and were increasingly challenged as the twentieth century unfolded. In 1925, for example, American sculptor Janet Scudder, who began her career making allegorical statues like *Nymph of the Wabash* for the Indiana Pavilion at the Columbian Exposition, pointedly condemned the "obsession with male egotism that is ruining every city in the United States." As Scudder protested, the nation was overrun "with rows of hideous statues of men-men-men—each one uglier than the other—standing, sitting, riding horseback—every one of them pompously convinced that he is decorating the landscape!"[26]

Statue mania was eventually defeated by the temporal politics of American memory. However much they were meant as timeless vessels of permanent national values and beliefs, turn-of-the-twentieth-century public statues embodied presentist ideals and interests that became irrelevant and even irreconcilable in later decades. Wandering through America in the 1960s and 1970s, photographer Lee Friedlander shot hundreds of statue mania's bronze and marble offspring: the sculptures, fountains, obelisks, shrines, and plaques that were installed—and often abandoned—in the nation's parks, squares, cemeteries, and public streets (fig. 1.7). Compiled in the oversized volume *The American Monument* (1976), Friedlander's sardonic photographs of statue mania's founding fathers, U.S. presidents, American soldiers, Sons of Liberty, and volunteer firemen reflect on the fleeting faith that Americans place in the stuff of historical memory, revealing the neglect of posterity and the litter of modernity.[27]

By the 1920s, statue mania was seen as a crisis of emotional excess, a troubling public spectacle of intemperate affect. Comparable criticism about memorial mania is voiced today, especially by those who are alarmed by the proliferation of statues, sculptures, monuments, memorials, and other kinds of commemoration that occupy (or are scheduled to occupy) the nation's capital. Anxieties about how America's burgeoning memorial culture can be managed and how its affective excess can be controlled are common. Worries that memorial mania signals the nation's emotional unraveling are rife.

[To view this image, refer to the print version of this title.]

1.7. Lee Friedlander, "Doughboy, Stamford, Connecticut," 1973. Gelatin silver print. (© Lee Friedlander. Courtesy of the Fraenkel Gallery, San Francisco.)

PUBLIC ART/PUBLIC RIGHTS

Much of today's memorial mania relates to the recent mushrooming of the public art industry—"the fastest-growing industry in the United States," art critic Grace Glueck speculated in 1982. With the advent of Percent for Art ordinances in multiple American cities and states, whereby certain percentages of capital construction costs are dedicated to public art, millions of dollars have funded thousands of public art projects across the country.[28] Supported by local and state art agencies, national organizations, degree-granting programs (at the University of Southern California and the University of Washington, among other schools), and a growing body of artists, architects, and designers specifically attuned to the rules and regulations of the field, public art has become ever more visible and professionalized in America. Its visibility rests especially on its "functional utility": since the 1970s, as Miwon Kwon explains, public art has been charged with generating a sense of "place-bound identity" and lending an aura of distinction and authenticity to the nation's increasingly homogenous and indifferent public spaces.[29] Occasional arguments for the sheer existence of "art" in America are countered by presumptions of public art's civic and social responsibilities, and its efficacy

1.8. Alexander Calder, *La Grande Vitesse*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, dedicated 1969. (Courtesy of Jennifer Geigel Mikulay.)

as symbolic capital. Contemporary public sculptures that fail to generate some sense of spatial and/or social relevance are snidely dismissed as "plop art."

The expectation that today's public art "stand" for something stems from its origins in an earlier memorial culture. Long before Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* (1969; fig. 1.8) was installed in Grand Rapids, Michigan, to broker modernist sophistication and engender civic identity, American cities were liberally sprinkled with the pragmatic stuff of statue mania. In 1905, for example, lumber baron Benjamin Franklin Ferguson bequested $1 million for the "erection and maintenance of enduring statuary and monuments, in the whole or in part of stone, granite, or bronze, in the parks, along the boulevards, or in other public places within the City of Chicago, Illinois, commemorating worthy men or women of America or important events in American history."[30] For over a century, the Ferguson Fund has financed numerous statues and monuments in Chicago. The Art Institute features Lorado Taft's *Fountain of the Great Lakes* (1913), an allegorical concoction of five comely ladies dribbling water from giant seashells. The University of Chicago hosts Henry Moore's *Nuclear Energy* (1967), a twelve-foot bronze monolith erected on the site of the school's former Stagg Field Stadium (under

which the first controlled nuclear chain reaction took place in 1942). More recent sculptures, such as Isamu Noguchi's *Fountains* (1976), Louise Bourgeois' *Helping Hands* (1996) in Jane Addams Memorial Park, and a commemorative statue of Haitian-born fur trader Jean Baptiste Pointe du Sable by Martin Puryear that is planned for DuSable Park, suggest the relative indistinction between memorials and public art. Indeed, in 1957, Ferguson's will was subject to legal wrangling over the suggested ambiguity of the words "statuary" and "monuments" when fund administrators at the Art Institute petitioned to bankroll not just public sculptures but a new wing for the art museum to be called the "Ferguson Memorial."[31]

In the early years of the public art industry, the 1960s to the 1980s, many of its champions struggled to distinguish public art from the memorials and monuments of statue mania. "Public art isn't a hero on a horse anymore," Arlene Raven asserted. "The bronze memorial, the most enduring public art form of the past century, gave way to large-scale abstract sculpture that flooded the public domain in the United States when the National Endowment for the Arts launched its art-in-public-places program in the 1960s." Likewise, promoting a "new vision for public art" in the 1983 exhibition Beyond the Monument, curator Gary Garrels wrote:

> Until very recently public art and the monument were closely linked terms, with one essentially implying the other. The notion of public art, almost without exception,would call forth an image exemplified by a traditional stone or bronze statue of a hero or by a geometric welded steel abstraction . . . a number of artists increasingly have challenged these ideas and forms . . . there has been a movement toward art which invites active participation, which becomes a functional part of the environment, and which claims purposes inclusive of, but not limited to, aesthetic or formal issues.[32]

Writer Douglas McGill similarly described the "new public art" as "art plus function, whether the function is to provide a place to sit for lunch, to provide water drainage, to mark an important historical date, or to enhance and direct a viewer's perceptions."[33]

Yet even as they made these distinctions, such writers implied the similarities and continuities between the "new" public art and seemingly old-fashioned memorials: McGill's description of the commemorative function of public art is, at base level, the definition of a civic monument. Whether figurative or abstract in style, public art and public memorials both take as their subject what Rosalind Krauss describes as "the public, conventional nature of what might be called cultural space."[34] Public needs, public participation, and public response are their shared tenets.

Similarly expected to perform on utilitarian terms and funded from the same sources, whether private monies or Percent for Art dollars, public art and public memorials are practically synonymous.

Both are also ubiquitous today because American demands for the symbolic expression of particular concerns have never been stronger. As demonstrated again and again, contemporary conflicts over public art are typically linked to localized struggles over cultural, social, and economic authority in the public sphere; as Rosalyn Deutsche argues, public space is "inseparable from the conflictual and uneven social relations that structure specific societies at specific historical moments." By extension, heated civic debates over public art styles, subjects, and costs correspond to the public's perceptions of representation, or the lack thereof.[35]

Of course, as Michael Warner argues, the notion of the "public" is itself highly unstable: "No one really inhabits the general public. This is true not only because it is by definition general but also because everyone brings to such a category the particularities from which she has to abstract herself in consuming this discourse."[36] Thus, while the concept of the "public" is and always has been a naturalizing (and normalizing) construction of American national identity, "being" a public depends on the shared assumptions of its participants, or would-be participants, that *they* comprise the public sphere and are therefore entitled to its rights and privileges.

Consequently, one explanation for today's memorial mania is the sense of entitlement, or "ownership," that pervades today's public sphere: increasingly, self-interest groups view the nation's memorials as the direct extension of their particular causes. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, a $48 million project designed by Lawrence Halprin and dedicated in Washington, D.C., in 1997, is a prime example. Shortly after the 7.5-acre memorial opened, Congress, responding to the demands of the National Organization on Disability, passed a joint resolution requiring that the site visibly depict the thirty-second U.S. president's physical handicap. In 2001, a bronze sculpture of FDR in a wheelchair was placed at the memorial's entrance, where people gather before beginning their journey through its four "rooms" (symbolizing the four terms of Roosevelt's presidency). Placed at ground level and looking, as Sally Stein observes, "less definitive than diminutive," the sculpture is the source of innumerable photo ops, as visitors pretend to push the president's wheelchair (fig. 1.9).[37]

Stricken in 1921 with a paralytic illness believed to be polio, Roosevelt himself downplayed and disguised his impairment, believing that its social perception as a disability would negatively shape his public image and limit his political abilities. Only a few photographs show him

1.9. Robert Graham, statue of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Washington, D.C., statue dedicated 2001. (Courtesy of Heather Bowling.)

in a wheelchair and FDR went to great lengths to refigure himself as a healthy, competent, and powerful presidential body.[38] Sculptor Neil Estern conveys this commanding figure in his oversized statue of FDR in the memorial's third room, which depicts the president wrapped in a long military cape, seated on a high-backed armchair equipped with small casters (one of which can be seen at the back of the sculpture), and attended by his faithful dog Fala (fig. 1.10).

Yet this statue was deemed inadequate by disability activists who

1.10. Neil Estern, *FDR and Fala*, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, dedicated 1997. This statue of FDR is almost nine feet tall. (Courtesy of Heather Bowling.)

insisted that Roosevelt's memorial more blatantly commemorate their own interests. Theirs were not the only claims to symbolic representation—and erasure—at the site: antismoking lobbyists succeeded in eliminating any references to FDR's cigarette habit, and animal-rights groups managed to suppress the inclusion of a fox stole in a statue of Eleanor Roosevelt, who stands alone and furless in an isolated niche of the memorial's fourth room. All of these claims and, in fact, the entire memorial ignore the president's own preferences regarding his public commemoration. As Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter related in a 1961 issue of *Atlantic Monthly*, FDR never wanted an elaborate or conspicuous memorial and left plans for only a modest block of stone no bigger than his desk and "without any ornamentation," to be placed in front of the National Archives Building.[39]

Efforts to control the symbolic terms of national commemoration extend from a broader emphasis on citizen rights in America. Writing about current understandings of citizenship, Michael Schudson traces the growth of "rights consciousness" in the wake of the civil rights movement, as American courts and legislatures became increasingly attuned to the obligations of law and government regarding the claims of

individuals. Today's model of citizenship is more rights-oriented—for example, the activism of the disability rights movement—and today's public sphere has become a "playing field of citizenship" where rights are asserted and claimed. Importantly, this "triumph of democratic sensibilities" has vastly expanded understandings of American citizenship and nationalism: of who counts as an American today, and of what causes are now deemed constitutionally fundamental to the nation—such as civil rights. Yet, Schudson cautions, rights consciousness also "legitimates individual and group egoism and emphasizes at every turn the individual, self-gratification over self-discipline, the economic over the moral, the short term over the long term, the personal over the social." As Halprin observed of the congressionally mandated inclusion of the additional sculpture of FDR in the memorial he designed: "Special interest groups were able to override thoughtful processes and established procedures. The results dilute the art and send equivocal messages to the future."[40]

Memorial mania is shaped by individual impulses and factional grievances, by special interest claims for esteem and recognition, and by efforts to symbolize and enshrine the particular issues and aspirations of diverse and often stratified publics. Today, the pace of commemoration has quickened, and the number of memorials has escalated, because growing numbers of Americans view *public art* as a particularly powerful vehicle of visibility and authority. Their preference for memorials, as opposed to monuments, further clarifies contemporary understandings of public commemoration.

MEMORIAL VERSUS MONUMENT

Art historian Horst Janson explained that the traditional Western monument falls into three categories: the funerary monument, the monument to historical events or ideas (for example, "Liberty"), and the monument to great men. In terms of style, the traditional monument was typically figurative and vertical, placed high on a pedestal that mediated between the physical site it dominated and the symbolic capital it embodied.[41] Intended as permanent fixtures in distinctive spatial and social landscapes, and thus usually made of enduring materials like marble, granite, or bronze, monuments were meant to perform specific didactic functions. As Alois Riegl put it in his classic 1903 essay "The Modern Cult of Monuments," "A monument in its oldest and most original sense is a human creation, erected for the specific purpose of keeping single human deeds or events (or a combination thereof) alive in the minds of future generations." The purpose of the monument, echoes Françoise Choay, was essentially affective: "It is not simply a question of informing, of calling

to mind a neutral bit of information, but rather of stirring up, through the emotions, a living memory." Consequently, Eric Hobsbawm observes, monuments became central to the construction of shared national ideologies and identities by operating as "open-air museum[s] of natural history as seen through great men." Their "function as social magnets," Marvin Trachtenberg asserts in his discussion of the Statue of Liberty, was a crucial means of transmitting "communal emotions."[42]

Distinctions between monuments and memorials are tenuous: if monuments have traditionally functioned to commemorate great men and moments, memorials—in the public culture context discussed here—have similarly served to remember and honor the subjects they address. Both monuments and memorials are memory aids: materialist modes of privileging particular histories and values. Some scholars argue for their difference: Marita Sturken explains that "monuments are a means to honor the past, whereas memorials focus specifically on paying tribute to the dead." Wilbur Zelinsky finds that monuments "verge close to sacredness, not unlike the temples, shrines, and historic landmarks with which they are often associated," whereas memorials are more multivalent entities like "parks, gardens, forests, bridges, auditorea, stadia, highways, benches, government buildings, and institutions of every description."[43]

In the United States today, the terms "monument" and "memorial" are used interchangeably. Monuments can be massive stone obelisks like the one on the National Mall, or figurative sculptures like the Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond (see fig. 0.16, p. 12). Monuments are also federally managed parks such as the Muir Woods National Monument north of San Francisco and the Devil's Tower National Monument in Wyoming (designated America's first national monument by President Teddy Roosevelt in 1906). Likewise, memorials include national parks like the Coronado National Memorial in Arizona, and figurative projects like the Cuarto Centenario Memorial in Albuquerque (2005), a multistatue narrative of Spanish conquistador Juan de Oñate's trek through the Southwest in the late sixteenth century (see figs. 6.18–6.19, pp. 357, 358). Memorials also denote national days of remembrance (Memorial Day), sports arenas (the Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena), libraries (the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library in Washington, D.C.), hospitals (Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore), and highways (Jane Addams Memorial Tollway, Illinois).

Despite their interchangeability, the word "memorial" is used more often and has greater cachet today than "monument." Almost all of America's recent commemorative projects are called memorials, not monuments: consider the Pentagon Memorial, Victims of Communism Memorial, Na-

tional World War II Memorial, Oklahoma City National Memorial, New England Holocaust Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and Korean War Veterans Memorial. As Maya Lin, who designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. (1982; see fig. 3.6, p. 128) and the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery (1989; see fig. 0.6, p. 4), remarks: "I consider the work I do memorials, not monuments; in fact I've often thought of them as anti-monuments." Or as architect James Ingo Freed commented on his design for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, situated on the National Mall and near the Washington Monument:"I choose to call it a memorial and not a monument because monuments celebrate things. Here there is no celebration. Also, monuments tend to be too unified, too unitary, restricting different possibilities of readings and interpretations. So 'memorial' seems to be better."[44]

As Freed observes, disengagement from the word "monument" relates in part to perceptions of its "monolithic" character. Today, in an American scene especially disposed to individuals and special interests and focused on self-expression and personal feeling, the traditional monument's invocation of a "unitary" mass ethos may seem oppressive and exclusionary. These critiques are not particularly new: discussions of the inadequacy and even impossibility of the traditional monument were frequent throughout the twentieth century among historians, critics, and artists responding to the compromised polemics of statue mania and eager to advance seemingly more authentic forms of modern art. In the late 1930s, Lewis Mumford argued that monuments were completely out of sync with modern times: "The notion of a modern monument is veritably a contradiction in terms. If it is a monument, it is not modern, and if it is not modern, it cannot be a monument." Forty years later, Rosalind Krauss dismissed "the logic of the monument" amidst the apparent triumph of modern and contemporary sculpture's "functionally placeless and largely self-referential" conditions.[45] Photographers like Lee Friedlander found monuments similarly passé.

Some raised objections in terms of their perceived stylistic deficiencies. In 1958, when he chaired a jury to select a monument at the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp (a public competition in which 685 sculptors and architects from 36 countries participated), British sculptor Henry Moore questioned the "almost insoluble" problem of making "a monument to crime and ugliness, to murder and to horror." After reviewing the 426 proposals, he wrote, "Is it in fact possible to create a work of art that can express the emotions engendered by Auschwitz? It is my conviction that a very great sculptor—a new Michelangelo or a new Rodin—might conceivably have achieved this. The

odds against such a design turning up among the many *maquettes* submitted were always enormous. And none did." Moore could not imagine his own style of modernist representation memorializing the horrors of the Holocaust. Nor, apparently, could he and other members of the jury convince the memorial organizers (an international group of Auschwitz-Birkenau survivors) of the value of Polish architect Oskar Hansen's more radical proposal to pave the grounds of the former death camp with a long black road—a proposal that Moore termed "exceptionally brilliant." Cutting diagonally across the ignoble landscape, Hansen's horizontal design challenged the very notion of the traditionally vertical and figurative monument-on-a-pedestal with its "open form" aesthetic.[46] Earlier, in 1949, Theodor Adorno had similarly questioned the possibility of any art or poetry after Auschwitz, worried that whatever its stylistic tendencies, emotional entreaties to pleasure or to beauty risked redeeming and thereby affirming—or commemorating—the conditions and values that had manufactured the Holocaust to begin with.[47]

Shared perceptions of the symbolic collapse of multiple cultural conventions, including lyric poetry, narrative styles of painting, and figurative monuments, were prevalent in the years during and after World War II. Apprehensions about whether any kind of representational art could adequately express the horrors of the war and anxieties about the hubris of even attempting to do so were widely shared. As one *New York Times* journalist pleaded in 1943: "No! No victory arches! It's all too terrible a disaster to make into a public emblem. Half the world mad to kill and the rest of the world struggling to recover civilization . . . No memorial arches shall keep us reminded." The editor of *Pencil Points*, an architectural journal, asked his wartime readers how best to remind "future generations about the common men who died in the cause of human freedom. Can it be done by 'monuments'? We think not . . . Let there be memorial parks and playgrounds and schools and community buildings . . . Let whatever we do have a truly social purpose and a practical social result." Likewise, in a 1945 essay in *Atlantic Monthly*, architect Joseph Hudnut declared, "Build no monument, but a civilization fit for free men. Build something that is simple and considered, useful to the community."[48]

World War II *was* commemorated in America—despite claims to the contrary by the backers of the National World War II Memorial, dedicated in Washington in 2004. But as Andrew Shanken explains, from the mid-1940s through the 1950s, the war was mostly commemorated via "living memorials": "useful" public buildings and social spaces like libraries, auditoriums, hospitals, swimming pools, and parks that included the

word "memorial" in their names and typically displayed bronze plaques listing the nation's soldier dead.[49] In 1948, for example, Omaha's Memorial Park, a 65-acre site with a golf course, was dedicated to the men and women of Nebraska who died in the war. In 1950, the University of Wyoming's War Memorial Stadium ("The War") opened, a living memorial to Wyoming's World War II soldier dead and veterans. In 1953, the University of Colorado's Memorial Center was dedicated to the state's wartime servicemen. However much it changed in design and purpose, memorial making continued in post–World War II America: neither modern artists nor architects, and certainly not the American public, abandoned commemoration. Even Adorno, who questioned the efficacy of traditional aesthetic styles and conventions, enjoined postwar artists to pioneer new modes and new concepts of creativity.

Many followed his lead. Isamu Noguchi proposed immense utopian earthworks like *Memorial to Man* (1947, also titled *Sculpture to be Seen From Mars)*, and collaborated with architect Edward Durell Stone in the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Park competition in Saint Louis.[50] Over 172 entries were received in the competition, which Eero Saarinen handily won with his design for Gateway Arch, dedicated in 1968. Other postwar memorial competitions were more fraught. In 1953, British sculptor Reg Butler, winner of the International Competition for a Monument to "The Unknown Political Prisoner," was broadly condemned for "insulting both taste and intelligence" with an avant-garde design that blended abstract and figurative elements. Butler competed against some 2,000 other proposals by artists from 52 nations (including American sculptors Alexander Calder, Naum Gabo, and Richard Lippold), and received a $12,500 prize for his design. But his highly publicized memorial, disparaged as "an emblem of Defeat" by John Berger (then writing as an art columnist for the *Daily Worker*) and "an emblem purged of pity and terror" by British writer and critic Herbert Read, was never built.[51] More successful was pop artist Claes Oldenburg, who has toyed with the metaphors of memorialization since the 1960s. Commemorating mundane things like electric plugs and clothespins in absurdly gargantuan public sculptures, Oldenburg pokes fun at the grand scale and celebratory symbolic authority of many memorials (fig. 1.11). His earliest work especially satirized the heroizing sensibilities of traditional monuments: *Proposed Monument for Park Avenue, New York: Good Humor Bar* (1965), featured a colossal sculpture of a melting ice cream bar plunked in the middle of one of Manhattan's main boulevards. Another design, *Proposed Colossal Monument to Replace the Washington Obelisk, Washington, D.C.: Scissors in Motion* (1967), featured a gigantic pair of red scissors whose blades slowly

1.11. Claes Oldenburg, *Batcolumn*, Chicago, Illinois, dedicated 1977. Cor-Ten steel painted gray. (Courtesy of Geoffrey Thrumston.)

opened during the course of a day and then slowly closed all night until dawn, when, Oldenburg wisecracked, they "joined, forming a structure like the obelisk, catching the sun's light at the tips."[52]

In the 1970s, the traditional monument was declared moribund; as Janson remarked, "I am the first to admit that the public monument, as a species, is dead today." Likewise, in 1973, architect James Wines announced, "The age of monuments . . . is finished and most attempts to perpetuate the tradition are pretentious and extraneous no matter how well conceived. We presently lack the cultural estate and unifying ideology necessary to lend any significance to these heroic icons."[53] Such declarations were, of course, greatly exaggerated and failed to recognize a major shift in American commemorative practices from the monument to the memorial, from "official" national narratives to the subjective symbolic expressions of multiple American publics. Further, they failed to recognize how modernist concepts, such as irony, ambivalence, interruption, and self-criticality were often situated within these new modes of memorialization. Public and artistic interests in commemoration never died.They did, however, shift in shape, subject, and style.

While Oldenburg, for example, cynically spoofed the traditional monument, he remained keenly attentive to memorialization itself. He wasn't alone: soon after he first imagined his "proposed colossal monuments" as "playful personal fantasies" in the mid-1960s, Oldenburg "became aware that practicing architects had taken some interest in the monuments" and wanted to realize them as public projects. When students at Cornell University estimated that one of his proposed monuments "would weigh 5,000,000 lbs., if concrete were used; and that the memorial would sink through the surface the way a pat of butter melts in a baked potato," Oldenburg was pushed to decide, as he later recalled, "whether I really want to convert my fantasy to real projects." He opted for conversion and soon multiple American (and European) cities began sporting Oldenburg-designed memorials like *Clothespin* (1976, Philadelphia), *Flashlight* (1981, Las Vegas), and *Free Stamp* (1991, Cleveland), all made of lighter metal materials. Oldenburg remained focused on the memorial as a form of critically engaged public expression, observing, "Proposing monuments is like composing with a city. For example, in Chicago I feel the Hancock building needs something to balance it; perhaps a heavy fireplug monument at the end of Navy Pier . . . many of my monuments reintroduce the idea of the monument as obstacle or disruption in the city."[54] The giant bat he made for Chicago is a prime example of this "disruptive" sensibility.

Oldenburg's first fully realized memorial was *Placid Civic Monument* (1967), a temporary project built in New York's Central Park (behind the

Metropolitan Museum of Art) for the citywide exhibition Sculpture in Environment. Made at a moment of gaining public protest against the Vietnam War, Oldenburg's monument consisted of a six-foot-long, three-foot-wide, three-foot-deep trench dug by professional gravediggers—who then refilled it three hours later. The pit clearly conveyed the artist's political views; as he remarked in his notebooks at the time, "Grave is a perfect (anti) war monument, like saying no more." *Placid Civic Monument* was also built within sight of an Egyptian obelisk nicknamed Cleopatra's Needle, a seventy-one-foot-high memorial (ca. 1500 BCE) that Oldenburg had played under as a child and considered "a great monument" as an adult.[55] Looted from Alexandria, the colossal monolith was gifted to the United States by the Khedive of Egypt after the opening of the Suez Canal in hopes of cultivating trade relations; it was erected in Central Park in 1881. Typical of the affective sensibilities of Gilded Age statue mania, over ten thousand New Yorkers attended the dedication ceremonies for the ancient memorial's reinstallation, during which U.S. secretary of state William Maxwell Evarts waxed eloquent about the obelisk as a trophy of conquest, an emblem of imperial power, and a cautionary symbol of national mortality:

> Who indeed can tell what our nation will do if any perversity is possible of realization; and yet this obelisk may ask us, "Can you expect to flourish forever? Can you expect wealth to accumulate and man not decay? Can you think that the soft folds of luxury are to wrap themselves closer and closer around this nation and the pith and vigor of its manhood know no decay? Can it creep over you and yet the nation know no decrepitude?" These are questions that may be answered in the time of the obelisk but not in ours.[56]

Whether or not Oldenburg was aware of Evarts's moralizing on the imperialist perils threatening the postbellum nation, his *Placid Civic Monument* was similarly intended as a contemporary critique of unexamined political loyalties and national malfeasance. Oldenburg's ephemeral civic grave simultaneously heeded and questioned the conventions of commemoration, including memorial practices surrounding death and mourning and uncontested assumptions of triumphal nationalism. Importantly, the ironic, ambivalent, and disruptive tenor of Oldenburg's antimonumental aesthetic, which embodies both traces of the traditional monument and its critical undermining, set the pace for many subsequent examples of public art and commemoration in America. From Oldenburg's own *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks* (1969; fig. 1.12), an antiwar memorial featuring a giant lipstick-like obelisk perched on top of an army tank, to Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the modern

1.12. Claes Oldenburg, *Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks*, Morse College, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 1969–1974. (Photo by Aaron Carico.)

American memorial is often equivocal, unresolved, and ambivalent. Its meaning is neither inherent nor eternal but *processual*—dependent on a variety of social relations and subject to the volatile intangibles of the nation's multiple publics and their fluctuating interests and feelings.

Following on the relational nature of works of art and how they are produced, experienced, and made meaningful, contemporary American commemoration is understood as a locus of organized human activity that produces visual and material bodies (memorials) that represent par-

ticular interests and symbolize certain claims. Memorials are bodies of feeling, cultural entities whose social, cultural, and political meanings are determined by the emotional states and needs of their audiences. Memorials also determine those felt states; as Teresa Brennan argued, the "transmission of affect" is unbounded.[57] As cultural bodies, memorials have particular life spans and biographies: few memorials possess constant or consistent meaning or create the same sort of public response that they did when they were first dedicated. Likewise, because they depend on the fluctuating interests and feelings of their public patrons, memorials have no stable or timeless agenda. Today, for example, victims are commemorated as often, if not more so, than heroes. And themes of irony, contradiction, and conflict—among the key tropes of modern cultural consciousness—typically guide contemporary commemoration.

There is no single style of public commemoration in today's America. Figurative memorials include the world's largest equestrian bronze, a controversial monument dedicated in El Paso in 2007 that was originally intended to honor Juan de Oñate (see fig. 6.20, p. 359).[58] Many memorials are realized in abstract and minimalist styles, most notably the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, New England Holocaust Memorial (see fig. 3.10, p. 136), and Oklahoma City National Memorial. Despite their stylistic differences, their general reliance on modernist aesthetics, and their embrace of contingent and even contradictory meaning, contemporary American memorials are as much engaged in the ideological concerns of national identity as were the representational monuments of statue mania a century ago. The terms of that identity, however, have changed considerably.

Commemoration has been customarily viewed as the product of shared national beliefs. In the 1980s, architectural historian Spiro Kostof argued that public monuments "derive their authority from some unified vision—or its presumption," and earlier, James Wines stated that the age of monuments was "finished" because of the apparent lack of a "unifying ideology" during the divisive era of the Vietnam War.[59] To some degree, these premises stem from notions of collective memory advanced by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who argued that memory was mostly a social phenomenon, a dynamic agent that linked atomized individuals to communities and nations. "It is in society that people normally acquire their memories," Halbwachs wrote in 1925. "It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories." Halbwachs believed that certain collective memory "frameworks," like religion and nationalism, both reconstructed the past in terms of presentist social needs and helped maintain social continuity and equilib-

rium. He noted, "society tends to erase from its memory all that might separate individuals, or that might distance groups from each other."[60]

If helpful in terms of articulating memory's debt to the present and explaining how immediate sociopolitical concerns typically dictate the scope and shape of what is remembered, Halbwachs's emphasis on social unanimity does not completely account for the affective conditions of contemporary commemoration. Memorial mania does not rest on a coherent, collective, or even consensual ideological framework. Many contemporary memorials are marked by conflict, rupture, and loss and by a recognition among artists and audiences that memorials have the power to stir things up as much as smooth them out. Commemorative works like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Michael North observes, "achieve their aesthetic distinction and their emotional power from their political complexity" and "place their viewers in a public space that is articulated in terms of political controversy so that to view the piece is not simply to experience space but also to enter a debate."[61]

Memorial mania's discursive ambitions; its experientiality, irresolution and ambivalence; and its tendency to express social contradictions and historical traumas make it different from past modes of commemoration in America. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century monuments to heroic men and historic moments "were not meant to revive old struggles and debates," writes Kirk Savage, "but to put them to rest—to show how great men and their deeds had made the nation better and stronger. Commemoration was a process of condensing the moral lessons of history and fixing them in place for all time." Public monuments like Washington's obelisk (dedicated in 1885) and Lincoln's memorial (1922) "sought to purify the past of any continuing conflict that might disturb" a "carefully crafted national narrative" of historical progress, heroism, and confidence. Even occasional memorials to tragic episodes in that historical narrative reaffirmed themes of "noble self-sacrifice" and courageous masculinity: a memorial to the *Titanic*, for example, sculpted by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney and dedicated in Washington, D.C., in 1931, features a thirteen-foot statue of a partially clad male figure who resembles the crucified Christ. It includes this inscription: "To the brave men who perished in the wreck of the *Titanic*, April 15, 1912. They gave their lives that women and children might be saved."[62]

Representing a shared national consciousness, or the striving for one, statue mania embodied a seemingly shared faith in a unified national history. American memorial making at the turn of the twentieth century, much like the simultaneous emphasis in American public schools on memorizing speeches and oaths (such as the Gettysburg Address and the Pledge of Allegiance) and the dates of significant foundational mo-

ments (like the landing at Plymouth Rock in 1620 and the defeat at the Alamo in 1836), was rooted in consensual "allegiance to the past."[63] Statue mania's emphasis on great men, great moments, and great ideas demonstrated an allegedly collective commitment to a celebratory, monolithic, and mostly masculine national history.

Memorial mania, by contrast, is less convinced of a seamless—or shared—American historical narrative and is less engaged in collective understandings of a progressive American history. This is not a hard and fast rule, of course; the National World War II Memorial, for example, evokes a unified, triumphant, and romanticized American past. Importantly, too, notions of American nationalism have not been abandoned in today's memorial cultures but have been redefined to reflect particular assertions of entitlement. Contemporary American commemoration is increasingly disposed to individual memories and personal grievances, to representations of tragedy and trauma, and to the social and political agendas of a diffuse body of rights-bearing citizens.

MEMORY STUDIES

"Welcome to the memory industry," Kerwin Klein bids in a discussion of the swell of "memory studies" in academic scholarship and the influence of theorists and historians such as Halbwachs and Pierre Nora. The study of memory—the word comes from the Latin *memor*, meaning mindful—is fairly recent, originating in late nineteenth-century cognitive psychology and understood by Freud, for example, as the private agent of unconscious mental processes, as a tool that individuals could use to retrieve personal information from the past. Today, the study of memory "extends considerably beyond psychology," observes Barbie Zelizer, and is a salient feature of academic discourse in disciplines ranging from anthropology and mass communication to art history, cultural geography, and literary criticism. Likewise, incipient concepts of memory's essentially privatizing agency have shifted to considerations of its public performativity and, especially, to how acts of remembering are key to the formation and reformation of social identity. As Jay Winter remarks, today's "memory boom" is directly related to today's identity politics: to diverse social and political groups claiming voice and vying for representation in the public sphere.[64]

The past few decades have seen a burgeoning of theoretical, social, and cultural projects centered on memory, ranging from the publication of Nora's multivolume anthology *Les Lieux de mémoire* (*Realms of Memory*, 1984–1992), to heated psychotherapeutic and legal debates surrounding repressed and recovered memory.[65] Memory work today includes flour-

ishing popular interests in autobiography, memoirs, and genealogy, and growing public commemorations of the Holocaust in memorials, museums, and rituals of remembrance, such as ceremonies held in 2005 recalling the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau by Soviet troops on January 27, 1945. Memory today is defined by all sorts of cultural practices, material artifacts, and national narratives: from family reunions, Facebook, and scrapbooking to civic celebrations including Cinco de Mayo, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, and the Fourth of July. For many Americans, memory is defined by generational recollections of traumatic historical moments: JFK's assassination in 1963, the explosion of the *Challenger* space shuttle in 1986, the attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001. For others, memory is all about the self: many blogs, for example, practically function as self-memorials, as narcissistic recitations of the most banal details of their makers' daily lives.

Memory's montage of meaning—collective social ritual, redemptive agent, subaltern expression, vanitas, and/or identity politics—dominates contemporary cultural sensibilities. Memory seems to evade timeless categories, which helps to account for its broad appeal in a cultural climate where category challenging, and shifting, is the norm. Among other clichés, memory is valorized for refusing to "stand still"—for being elusive and unstable, open-ended and unresolved. It is further embraced as an active agent that is performative, personal, and presentist. Memory's contemporary dominance certainly stems from its material and visual presence. "Modern memory, is, above all, archival," Nora remarks. "It relies on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image." Or as Juliet Mitchell explains, "Memory comes into being only after the trace which marks it: there is no thing, no event, experience, feeling, to remember, there is only that present which an empty past brings into being."[66] It is no accident that an online resource of the Library of Congress that includes animated films, audio recordings, baseball cards, New Deal photographs, and panoramic maps, among other things, is organized in a huge directory (over seven million digital items) called "American Memory."

Memory's popular and academic appeal has a lot to do with recent perceptions of history's repugnance. "Our sudden fascination with memory," Klein observes, "goes hand in hand with postmodern reckonings of history as the marching black boot and of historical consciousness as an oppressive fiction. Memory can come to the fore in an age of historiographic crisis precisely because it figures as a therapeutic alternative to historical discourse."[67] Following this binary, history is condemned as hard, cold facts and monolithic master narratives, while memory is welcomed as the feelings of "real people"—especially those formerly ex-

cluded from grand historical projects. History is demonized as the remote and dusty past; memory is extolled as its immediate and intimate alternative. Memory, Nora contends, is "affective and magical," while history, "because it is an intellectual and secular production," is dispassionate "analysis and criticism." History, he adds, "is perpetually suspicious of memory" and is bent on "deforming and transforming it, penetrating and petrifying it."[68]

Obviously, these sorts of reductive distinctions depend on which, or whose, history and memory are under consideration. Both can be careless and capricious; neither is necessarily more authentic than the other. Paul Ricoeur insisted that memory was the "bedrock" of history and argued for reconsiderations of their reciprocity.[69] Indeed, contemporary concepts of memory and history are largely inseparable because of changed understandings of how knowledge and identity are acquired and understood on experiential and affective terms. While some forms of history are deemed suspicious, others are viewed with pleasure.

After interviewing several thousand Americans for a study of popular history in the mid-1990s, historians Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen found strong affective connections regarding the "presence of the past."[70] From high school reunions to heritage tourism, the history that is most meaningful to Americans today is personal and participatory and keyed to individual and family memories. For many Americans of color, history means shared experiences particular to race and ethnicity, including tribal and community traditions, the struggles of slavery and civil rights, and forced incarceration on federal reservations or in World War II internment camps.

Today's "memory boom" reflects less an abandonment of history than a cultural shift toward public feeling as a source of knowledge. As Alfred Gell argued, "To see (or to know) is to be sensuously filled with that which is perceived, yielding to it, mirroring it—and hence imitating it bodily."[71] Consider the popularity of Civil War battle reenactments, where players dress, eat, and talk like long-dead Union and Confederate soldiers. Consider the popularity of "living" museums and interactive exhibitions, where audiences emulate historical persons and actions. At the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, for example, visitors carry identity cards of Holocaust victims and walk through a Nazi-era freight car. At the Sixth Floor Museum in Dallas, visitors can stand near the "sniper's nest" in the building's southeast corner, where Lee Harvey Oswald shot President John F. Kennedy. At the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, visitors walk into the rooming house bathroom where James Earl Ray fired at Martin Luther King, Jr. Across the street, they can peek inside the motel room where King died—and where his unmade bed and un-

washed dishes from his last meal are on display. As the museum's Web site notes, "the emotional focus of the museum and the historical climax of the exhibit is the Lorraine Motel, where Dr. King was assassinated. Dr. King's room can be viewed as it was on April 4, 1968."[72]

Interests in "experiencing" history, especially histories of trauma and tragedy, are faciliated by contemporary artists, architects, and memorial makers. As Maya Lin observes of her memorial aesthetic, "I don't make objects; I make places. I think that is very important—the places set a stage for experience and for understanding experience." Likewise, in his design for the FDR memorial, Lawrence Halprin explained that he "hoped to evoke as many emotions and approaches" as possible in commemorating Roosevelt's twelve-year presidency:

> No single image could capture the multiplicity of events, challenges, difficulties, and successes. No simple statement could adequately express the achievements. Somehow I needed to evoke in each visitor, through his or her experience of the Memorial, a deep and emotional understanding of how these years changed the lives of the people who lived through them. I wanted this Memorial to be an experiential history lesson that people could grasp on their own as they walked through it.[73]

Similarly, just a few months after 9/11, several New York architects, including Liz Diller, Rick Scofidio, and David Rockwell, designed a public viewing platform at the edge of Ground Zero, a temporary wooden stage where up to three hundred people at a time could survey the ruins of the World Trade Center. As New York mayor Rudy Guiliani said during the dedication ceremony held for this memorial platform, "This is hallowed ground, sacred ground. We decided to put up these platforms because there's been so much of an interest in seeing this site . . . This gives you all kinds of feelings of sorrow and then tremendous feelings of patriotism."[74]

As Alison Landsberg explains in her work on "prosthetic memory," new forms of public cultural memory informed by mass-mediated technologies enable anyone to personally experience the past, no matter how remote or distant.[75] The desire to do so—the desire to "experience" the Great Depression and the New Deal by walking through the various rooms of the FDR memorial, or to "live" the history of Jewish persecution and genocide in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, or to "feel" sorrow and patriotism while standing above the rubble of Ground Zero—stems from the affectively enlarged dimensions of contemporary American culture.

Today, sight alone, or just "seeing," is not considered sufficient in terms of how Americans make sense of themselves and the world. Sight

still reigns as the "sovereign" sense: some estimate that three-quarters of what we know comes from predominantly visual sources, and as Tom Mitchell observes, we live "in a culture dominated by pictures, visual simulations, stereotypes, illusions, copies, reproductions, imitations, and fantasies." But other sensual and affective domains constituting what Caroline Jones calls the "modernist sensorium" are also regarded, indeed demanded, as necessary pathways to knowledge, comprehension, and identity.[76] Their heightened relevance in memorial cultures relates in part to the complicated terms of visuality. After more than a century of modern mass media, multiple publics today are certainly aware of how visual images are the products of fluctuating sociopolitical conditions, and are wary of the crucial roles they play in representing and determining identity. Moreover, as "sensory historian" Mark M. Smith argues, "some phenomena—the aural dimensions of religious experience, the gustatory history of food, the role of smell in elaborating questions of race and class, the relevance of tactility in understanding the difference between freedom and slavery—cannot be understood through vision alone."[77] In contemporary America, felt experiences and public feelings, or an expanded economy of affect, are increasingly considered more genuine, and more substantial, in shaping contemporary understandings of self and nation.

Of course, as Joan Scott argues, discourses of experience are both illuminating and highly problematic: they give visibility to often marginalized historical subjects (women and people of color, for instance) but may also buffer these subjects from critique when "experience" is understood as "authenticity" and is thereby rendered beyond reproach in terms of critical analysis. By extension, experiencing history in a "living museum" may put audiences "in touch" with the past but it can never actually be the past, or their past. The solution, says Scott, is to "attend to the historical processes that, through discourse, position subjects and produce their experiences. It is not individuals who have experience, but subjects who are constituted through experience." Experience, she clarifies, "is at once always already an interpretation *and* is in need of interpretation."[78] Explaining, then, how and why contemporary Americans are drawn to experientially based memory practices, and how those practices help to define self and national forms of identity, is central to understanding memorial mania.

MEMORY NATION

Contemporary understandings of self and nation, like those of memory and history, are typically blurred and overlapping. As Rosenzweig and

Thelen observed, "Our respondents often made national stories personal, personal stories national, and formal settings for studying the past intimate."[79] This confounding of categories has had a striking effect on contemporary commemoration. If nineteenth-century statues were especially engaged in reimagining nationhood and promoting consensus, today's memorials represent a shift toward more subjective and personalized narratives. Yet contemporary memorials still serve as enabling agents of national identity. While there may be no single national paradigm or single style of national memorial, there are various efforts and positions—a kind of "critical re-membering"—that represent interests in defining, and redefining, the terms of national belonging.[80] Persistent anxieties about those terms help to account for the abundant forms and manic dimensions of contemporary commemoration.

Whether understood as "an imagined political community" (according to Benedict Anderson), as "a soul, a spiritual principle" (Ernest Renan), as "political movements seeking or exercising state power" (John Breuilly), or as "a large social group integrated not by one but by a combination of several kinds of objective relationships (economic, political, linguistic, cultural, religious, geographical, historical) and their subjective reflection in collective consciousness" (Miroslasv Hroch), notions of "the nation" are wide-ranging and, as Anderson notes, "notoriously difficult to define."[81] Generally shared, however, are understandings that the nation, as well as concepts of nationalism and national identity, are cultural constructions rather than timeless certainties, and that as such there is a profound difference between the idealized sociopolitical principle of "the nation" and its lived, felt, reality.

As an academic discipline especially engaged in critiquing the discrepancies between what the nation is and what it aspires to be (a "more perfect Union," for example), American studies aims to deconstruct the myths of American nationalism. Exposing the flaws within national paradigms of exceptionalism, egalitarianism, and autonomy, the field resists previously dominant models of "consensus"-based national identity and posits more expansive and often conflicted concepts attuned to multicultural and multivocal narratives.[82] Subsequently, some regard the very idea of national identity as retrograde, or as only the property of a political right disposed to discourses of moral superiority, religious fundamentalism, and unblinking patriotism. But we need to continue to take the nation seriously as a category of analysis. From the attacks of 9/11, which were perceived by the American government, the American media, and the American people as attacks on the nation, to President Barack Obama's postracial narrative of national unity, "the nation" remains a powerful and authoritative structure of belief. As Anthony Smith argues,

nationalism may be the "most compelling identity myth in the modern world."[83]

Because it is a historical, political, social, cultural, religious, and psychological construction, nationalism is also a highly *unstable* identity myth. While the basic components of the modern nation-state include political independence, centralized authority, military might, geographic consolidation, and the formation of a collective ideology, words like "contingency" and "contested" are also central to contemporary understandings of nationalism. Notions of the nation as a totality representing a unified and cohesive social subject are largely untenable; as Prasenjit Duara remarks, "nationalism is best seen as a relational identity" and continually shifting historical configuration constituted within a "fluid network of representations." National identities, he explains, arise when individual groups "mobilize particular representations of nation or community against other representations and, while doing so, appropriate the dispersed meanings and pasts as their own." That mobilization, adds Thomas Scheff, is inherently emotional and often stems from feelings of pride, shame, and anger. Emotions are the lifeblood of contemporary American politics, George E. Marcus argues, and the emotional agency of the nation's "sentimental citizens" profoundly impacts the course of democratic practice.[84]

Likewise, notions of nationalism are no longer confined to those of geographic place and space. If older concepts of "being" Japanese, Mexican, or American were rooted in the physical territories owned and occupied by Japan, Mexico, and the United States of America, understandings of national identity today are far more fluid. National identity is shaped as much by language, religion, ethnicity, and race as it is by the geographic coherence of a homeland, real or imagined. New global technologies and new forms of social organization (for example, transnational advocacy networks and nongovernmental organizations similarly challenge fixed notions of nationalism. And while neoliberalism—the reorganization of capitalism into economic and social policies that favor the privatization of public resources and promote corporate profits—is often described in terms of transnational globalization, it depends on the dynamic mix of collective identity, competition, and market protection that the nation-state provides.[85] The intently nationalistic focus of today's global sports contests, like the Olympics and the World Cup, are prime examples.

Nationalism's inconstancy contextualizes contemporary American memorials, explaining why certain American histories are privileged by public commemoration and others are not. It further articulates how cer-

tain representations of American identity dominate at certain moments in time, and in certain American landscapes.

Consider the dueling memorials of Crazy Horse and Mount Rushmore, both hacked out of mountains in the Black Hills of South Dakota (see figs. 6.14 and 6.15, pp. 344, 347). Rushmore, the colossal carving of the heads of four American presidents (Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Teddy Roosevelt), was dedicated in 1941. Crazy Horse, the representation of a nineteenth-century Lakota warrior, is a work in progress begun in 1948. Almost two million people visit Mount Rushmore each year, exploring its museums, walking its grounds, and attending its highly popular Evening Lighting Ceremony, which features a half-hour talk by National Park Service (NPS) rangers followed by a multicolored light-show projected on the side of the mountain. Simon Schama reminds us that Rushmore was designed by the racist, fascist, and sexist Gutzon Borglum, a sculptor who viewed his "National Shrine to Democracy" (his term) as a testimonial to white supremacy, manifest destiny, and American masculinity.[86] In addition to being a KKK member and a Mussolini fan, Borglum rebuffed a mid-1930s campaign to include Susan B. Anthony's visage on the mountain and similarly dismissed suggestions to showcase legendary American Western figures like Buffalo Bill Cody and Oglala Lakota Chief Red Cloud.

Today, the National Park Service—the major institutional body charged with shaping national identity through its management of America's national parks, memorials, monuments, and historic sites—downplays these details of Borglum's biography in favor of Mount Rushmore's sweeping national subjectivity. The opening paragraphs of the NPS's Mount Rushmore Web site intone:

> The sheer size of the mountain carving on Mount Rushmore evokes a sense of awe in those who view it. We are also amazed when we see ourselves in the faces of the presidents. The four presidents carved in stone represent all Americans. They represent our courage, dreams, freedom, and greatness.[87]

As such rhetoric suggests, the NPS sees Mount Rushmore as a symbol of collective American identity predicated on elite white male leadership (I am/we are George Washington). Meanwhile, about seventeen miles away, the equally bombastic Crazy Horse Memorial—a project begun by former Rushmore stone carver Korczak Ziolkowski and now visited by one million people a year—seemingly renegotiates that national narrative by heroizing a nineteenth-century Native American warrior. Yet both of these pretentious mountain memorials aggrandize the

"awe"-inspiring artistic and technological feats of their respective sculptors. Neither reckons with the audacity of carving up rocky peaks held sacred by American Indians or embracing manifest destiny, militarism, and masculinity as appropriate tropes of national allegiance and identity.

Memorials have long played central roles in shaping and defining understandings of America: the Washington Monument, Statue of Liberty, Lincoln Memorial, USS *Arizona* Memorial, Gateway Arch, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and National World War II Memorial are all symbolic markers of the nation. For Americans, the touristic experience of visiting them, whether as an obligatory civic exercise in middle school or while on family vacation, is a primary means of learning about and becoming an emotionally engaged member of the nation. American memorials help to create and celebrate an imaginary national citizen: the representative American, the "good" citizen that all American citizens aspire to become.

America's political leaders certainly see them this way, issuing passionate proclamations about their national importance and proudly accepting them "on behalf of the American people." During his terms as president, Bill Clinton dedicated eight national memorials and designated twenty-one national monuments, including the controversial 1.9-million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah. During his presidency, George W. Bush dedicated the Pentagon Memorial, National World War II Memorial, Air Force Memorial, National D-Day Memorial, and Victims of Communism Memorial. He also authorized the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument: a noncontinugous three-state memorial administered by the National Park Service (and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) that includes battlefields in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, military installations in Hawaii's Pearl Harbor and nearby Ford Island, and the Tule Lake Segregation Center National Historic Landmark in California, where thousands of Japanese Americans were relocated and incarcerated during the war.[88]

Yet memorials often occupy precarious positions in the national landscape—or so it seems in countless American movies in which memorials typically signal disaster. In *Planet of the Apes* (1968), the Statue of Liberty is buried in sand up to her midriff; in *Deep Impact* (1998), she is toppled by a tidal wave; in *Cloverfield* (2008), she winds up decapitated and dislocated on 42nd Street. In *Logan's Run* (1976), the Lincoln Memorial and the U.S. Capitol are found ruined and covered in vines by twenty-third-century futurists; in *Mars Attacks!* (1996), the Capitol is blown up by aliens. In *The Deadly Mantis* (1957), the Washington Monument is besieged by giant grasshoppers, and in *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1953),

the entire National Mall is mowed down by extraterrestrial invaders.[89] Mount Rushmore is another favorite target: destroyed by lasers in *Richie Rich* (1994), ruined by an earthquake in *10.5: Apocalypse* (2006), blown up by terrorist missiles in *The Peacekeeper* (1997), annihilated by Michael Moore (playing a suicide bomber) in *Team America: World Police* (2004), and defaced (or rather, refaced) in movies like *Superman II* (1980) and *Head of State* (2003).

Besides showcasing Hollywood's obsession with special effects, destroying national memorials on screen most obviously signifies national dystopia. Abandoned memorials are metaphors for an abandoned nation; vandalized memorials signify national instability and imminent collapse. Steeped in feelings of remorse and anger (best captured in Charlton Heston's tortured oration at the end of *Planet of the Apes*: "You maniacs! You blew it up. Damn you! Damn you all to hell!"), ruined national memorials symbolize anxieties about a ruined national body.

Memorial mania's affective conditions may call attention to those facets of American national identity gone awry, or bordering on ruin, or in need of revision. Nora argues that sites of memory "only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications."[90] Many American memorials are sites of reformation and transformation: spaces and places where history and identity are frequently reconsidered in order to cultivate, or revive, citizen identification with an inconstant nation. Many new memorials managed by the NPS, for example, focus on previously marginalized American subjects. The Manzanar National Historic Site (dedicated in 1992), located in an isolated desert valley in central California about 220 miles northeast of Los Angeles, commemorates the forced relocation and internment of Japanese Americans during World War II and calls attention to the tenuous nature of citizenship and civil liberties in America. The National AIDS Memorial Grove (1996), an affiliated area of the National Park Service in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, is a "dedicated space in the national public landscape where anyone who has been touched by AIDS can grieve openly without being stigmatized, can find comfort among others whose lives have been affected by AIDS and HIV, and can experience the feelings of renewal and hope inherent in nature."[91] The Indian Memorial at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (2003, see fig. 0.10, p. 5) pays tribute to the Native American victors of this 1876 battle and revises legendary accounts of "Custer's Last Stand" in American historical consciousness. Vastly expanded beyond statue mania's commemoration of great American men and grand national moments, memorial mania is steeped in the

continually evolving terms of American national identity, the experiential dynamics of today's "memory boom," and the affective conditions of contemporary American life.

MEMORIAL MANIA

Although new memorials are dedicated with surprising frequency, memorial mania itself has been curiously underexamined. Public art is the focus of many historical surveys, case studies, and theoretically engaged analyses on the social production of space, "new genre" paradigms, the rhetorics of display, cultural democracy, and issues of site-specificity.[92] The Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and Oklahoma City National Memorial are the subjects of recent monographs. Commemoration of the Holocaust, an extension of the voluminous discourse on the Holocaust itself, has generated numerous books, articles, and exhibition catalogues focused on issues of memory, history, representation, and redemption.[93] But missing from this historiography is a synthetic critique of contemporary American memorials that considers commemoration within the relational dynamics of physical space, social practice, cultural theory, national identity, and public feeling.

Modernist assumptions that once distinguished ideas from feelings—the basic binary of the Cartesian mind/body thesis—are increasingly challenged by new understandings of their synergism, of how cognition is embodied, sensate, interested, and invested; and emotions are, as Martha Nussbaum asserts, "upheavals of thought." Especially in the past few decades, many fields have developed methodologies and interpretive frameworks that assess public displays of emotion and explain how feelings like joy, grief, shame, and anger inform the making and meaning of particular cultures, societies, and nations.[94]

Historian Henry Rousso, for example, reflects on the felt conditions of collective memory in *The Vichy Syndrome* (1987), a study of Gaullist-inspired amnesia in France during and after World War II. Utilizing terms such as neurosis, obsession, repression, projection, and transmission to analyze a rich array of "memory vectors" including monuments, annual remembrance ceremonies, movies, public school textbooks, and personal testimonials from prisoners of war, members of the resistance, and concentration camp survivors, Rousso critiques the "tactical and emotional motives" that led the French to "falsify" their past.[95] Likewise, drawing on funerary inscriptions, poems, letters, and liturgical readings in her consideration of various medieval "emotional communities," Barbara Rosenwein posits a complex culture of affective bonds, systems of feeling, and emotional expressions that challenges understandings of

the Middle Ages as emotionally childlike (a basic presumption of modernist historiography). In *Feeling Italian: The Art of Ethnicity in America* (2005), Thomas J. Ferraro explains how "patterns of intelligent emotion and articulate gesture played out in Italian America." And in his study of greeting cards and American business culture circa 1840–1960, Barry Shank considers how "feeings of longing and desire" and strategies of "emotional eloquence" were shared (not separated) by private and public social spheres.[96]

As these and other writers argue, feelings and emotions are expressions and representations that are created, learned, and used by particular cultures and societies. We are not born in grief, we are not born ashamed; we learn how to feel, we learn how to be emotional. Emotions are among the tools that we use to manage and mediate our lives: conditions, styles, and forces that help to determine and explain our attitudes and behaviors. Contextualized by the shifting values and concerns of certain communities at certain times, emotions are varied and dynamic. Grasping their complex sociocultural circulation, as well as the sociopolitical implications of this "sensual turn," requires our empirical consideration, as Lauren Berlant recommends, of "what feelings are made out to mean; and which forces, meanings, and practices are magnetized by concepts of affect and emotion."[97]

As this book argues, contemporary American memorials embody the feelings of particular publics at particular historical moments, and frame cultural narratives about self identity and national purpose. Such narratives are especially relevant in today's so-called Prozac nation, a portrait that captures both the prevalence of emotional tensions in contemporary America and multiple efforts to manage those tensions. The explosion of interest in the psychological character of the American nation and the emotional states of its citizens, manifest in the prescriptive popularity of antidepressants and sexual enhancement drugs on the one hand, and memorial mania on the other, begs serious analysis. Emotions are hyperrealized in contemporary America. Understanding them calls for a critical pedagogy of public feelings—an emotional epistemology—which shrewdly considers how and why (and which) public feelings shape historical moments, concepts of citizenship, and understandings of self and national identity.

Does this critical focus argue "against" memorials or imply that their typically fraught circumstances are untenable? Not at all. The affective conditions of contemporary commemoration—and public culture in general—do not foreclose the possibilities of social and political transformation. Rather, feelings are cultivated and as such can be mobilized: affect has agency. Recognizing how affect can generate creative struc-

tural change, each chapter of *Memorial Mania* closes with the "affective possibilities" of public feelings, and a consideration of how public commemoration can be emotionally productive.

Memorials embody the histories and feelings that respective Americans choose to remember at particular moments. The public grief expressed at recent sites of tragedy and trauma, such as the shootings at Columbine High School in 1999, is one example of an emotional history deemed memorable by Americans today, and where *Memorial Mania* next turns.