CHAPTER 5
COMMEMORATING

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in New York, the police cordoned off Manhattan below 14th Street. The nearest location for people to gather was Union Square at 14th and Broadway and that is where they went, clustering in small groups, speaking softly, playing music, praying and holding vigil. Many brought flowers and other items they had made or bought. They lit candles and many wrote comments on large sheets of paper spread out on the pavement expressing their sorrow and calling for love, peace, and forgiveness. Later in the Fall, people visited the sidewalk on Church Street adjacent to St Paul's Chapel when it became the location closest to the World Trade Center site accessible to the public. Again they left tributes, wrote on sheets of canvas attached to the Chapel's fence, signed a guest book the chapel staff had provided, and studied the tributes and comments others had left.

In 2002, the Port Authority installed a "viewing fence" along the sidewalk on Church Street at the edge of the World Trade Center site. This became the closest and also the most managed place to visit, to leave tributes (despite notices prohibiting this) and to hold anniversary events. Some of those events were purely commemorative, such as reading the names of all those who died; some were political, such as demonstrators claiming that the attack was a US government conspiracy. Then on September 11, 2011, a permanent, formal memorial was dedicated at an internationally televised ceremony commemorating the 10th anniversary of the attack. Since then a great many people from around the world, including 4.5 million in the first year, have visited the memorial and the museum that opened in 2014, again leaving tributes. Now that visitor rules and regulations posted at the memorial prohibit "Expressive activity that has the effect, intent or propensity to draw a crowd, except by permission," it is unlikely that politically oriented events will occur.

This brief history reveals several key commemorative activities common to memorials, be they temporary or permanent: visiting, bringing tributes, expressing responses to the event and to related issues, interacting with others and holding ceremonies. The history also suggests varying degrees of agency and choice people have at different kinds of memorials. The greatest amount of freedom is at immediate, informal memorials that visitors create themselves where expression can readily extend to the political; the least degree of freedom is at formal memorials. In most cases, the tributes people leave there and the collective ceremonies that take place there are consistent with the memorial's intended meaning, but sometimes that meaning is extended to other related topics, appropriated for other kinds of events, or resisted.

VISITING, BRINGING TRIBUTES

Visiting a site designated and designed for remembering is probably the most frequent commemorative activity a memorial supports, particularly for those who intentionally seek it out as a place to honor, to grieve or to pay their respects. And so the visit takes on the character of a pilgrimage—a journey to a sacred place—even when only an obscure marker identifies the site or when there is no memorial at all. Other kinds of visits may occur by chance as people come upon a memorial unexpectedly or when the memorial is a favored tourist destination. But in those situations the memorial still offers a commemorative place to visit and, once there, to experience and to engage in other commemorative activities. A formal, permanent memorial can take many years to build. In the interim, people fulfill the need to visit a location that bears a meaningful connection to what is being remembered in other ways.

Immediately after a sudden loss of life that occurs in a public location, be it one or two people who died or a much larger number, those who have a personal relationship to those who died and others are drawn to the site of the tragedy. Possibly people need to see where it happened, to leave a tribute or to join others who have similar feelings of sorrow. In addition, the physical location where loved ones were last alive holds great resonance. So friends and relatives may go to the site of a fatal traffic accident and many will go to school and university campuses where shootings have occurred. When a wall collapsed on a public sidewalk in Melbourne, people immediately began bringing tributes to the site. Many people go to the precise location where a well-known person was killed—to the front of the Dakota Apartments, where John Lennon was murdered, or to Malchei Israel Square in Tel Aviv, where Itzhak Rabin was assassinated.

If the site of the death is not accessible, people go instead to a nearby public space, as they went to Union Square on September 11. So many mourners gathered in front of the Dakota Apartment building after John Lennon's death that his wife asked them to come the following Sunday for ten minutes of commemorative silence in a location across the street in Central Park. The site eventually became the Strawberry Fields Memorial honoring John Lennon. After the bombing of three Underground trains and a bus on July 7, 2005 in London, mourners went to King's Cross Station, the originating station for all three trains, to Russell Square, close to one of the bombed trains, and to St Pancras Church near the bombed bus. Over and over again, urban public spaces become sites of pilgrimage and mourning. Sometimes so many people come and so many tributes are left that police need to erect barricades to control the crowds or to protect the growing accumulations of flowers.

The tribute people most often bring is flowers, following an ancient tradition of bringing flowers to cemeteries. Bouquets of flowers, still wrapped in plastic, often with a card attached accumulated in great waves outside Kensington Palace, the home of Princess Diana, after her death. Similar mounds of bouquets were brought to King's Cross Station after the July 7 bombings. Candles, cards, notes and letters are also common. Other offerings may have particular meaning for those being remembered, like the running shoes and caps at the site of the Boston Marathon bombing demonstrate. A tradition may develop at a particular site: after the 1995 terrorist bombing in Oklahoma City, visitors left hundreds of

bracelets inscribed with the words "What would Jesus do?" (Doss 2002). They also left hundreds of crosses, many made by hand from twigs and other scrap materials (Jorgensen-Earp and Lanzilotti 1998). While religious themes dominated in Oklahoma City and in Littleton, Colorado, where high school students were killed, in New York after September 11, 2011, strong patriotic sentiments were expressed and in Union Square calls for peace and love seemed to be the dominant themes. Strings of hand-folded origami paper cranes, a Japanese tradition that has come to symbolize peace, graced several memorials in London and New York.

To leave their tributes, people often make ingenious use of what is already there. Fences serve as good vertical scaffolding for attaching items. Large flat surfaces are useful as well, because contributions can accumulate in various arrangements on the ground, writing can be done on the flat surface and groups of people can gather. People often make ingenious use of physical elements they find. At Union Square, openings of drainpipes became perfect places for single candles, as were the long narrow surfaces of concrete traffic barriers (Franck and Paxson 2007). All kinds of vertical elements in the landscape can serve as focal points and scaffolds for display. In Union Square, lamp posts and the statue of George Washington became focal points for radiating collections of candles and artifacts and for wrapping with the US flag.

What may start with one or two items can quickly become a dense collection of offerings that can be quite homogeneous in kind, as with the hundreds of bouquets left in memory of Princess Diana. Or items may vary greatly in shape, size and color and collections can have an eclectic, jumbled appearance. But they are rarely chaotic since contributors tend to follow an overall pattern, making them "folk assemblages" (Santino 2004) or "unmediated folk art assemblages" (Grider 2001). After the July 7 bombings in London, visitors successively laid their bouquets to form a circular arrangement on the lawn of Russell Square (Plate 5.1). Sometimes the pattern has symbolic meaning, such as the candles at Israel Square that formed the Star of David or the peace symbol. Many visitors conscientiously avoid covering someone else's writing with their own unless another custom is established: after the assassination of Itzhak Rabin, messages were pasted or written on top of each other, creating what appeared to be an intentional layering and collaging of texts (Engler 1999).

Some citizens take on the role of "curator"—removing dead flowers and burned-out candles or rearranging items, maintaining mementoes, or providing new sheets of paper or canvas for visitors to write on. Curators may be relatives and friends of those who died, as in Oklahoma City (Doss 2002). They may censure or edit. One contributor to a September 11 memorial in New York, with the assent of others present, removed an obscene statement about Osama bin Laden. At the Columbine High School commemorative site, the father of one of the victims removed two of the 15 crosses that a carpenter from Illinois had installed, because they were in memory of the two students responsible for the killings (ibid.).

If people continue to visit a site over weeks and months, a structure already there may come to serve as scaffolding for people to continue to leave tributes, or those with responsibility for maintaining the space may install an interim structure. In both circumstances the structure is very often a fence to which people can easily attach their tributes. In Oklahoma City, families, friends, survivors, rescuers and others often visited what became known as the Memory Fence, a chain link construction fence preventing people from entering the site of destruction. The team of a baseball coach who was killed in the bombing would visit after a

game and leave a ball in his memory. Rescue workers, having a different connection to the event, wrote messages describing what the event meant to them and sometimes left gloves and hard hats. The wrought iron fence around St Paul's Chapel, a block from the World Trade Center on Wall Street, served a similar function over several months with the support of the chapel's staff.

In 2002, when people could access Church Street, the eastern boundary of the World Trade Center site, the viewing fence that the Port Authority had installed along the full length of the site on Church Street held panels displaying a history of the World Trade Center in text and images and the names of all those who died. The vertical surface of the fence and its open weave accommodated the attachment of flowers, photographs and other items. On the first anniversary, luxurious wreaths from many organizations and embassies were placed along the fence, wreaths that might well be seen at permanent memorials recently visited by dignitaries. Those managing a space may anticipate the emergence of an informal memorial and provide an installation to accommodate and protect informal tributes from the very beginning. In Melbourne, in 2013, a brick wall surrounding a construction site suddenly collapsed onto the sidewalk and killed three passers-by. The company managing the construction site quickly erected a shelter for commemorative offerings adjacent to the sidewalk, with wooden racks to hold bouquets of flowers and a roof (Plate 5.2). Thus, mourners' offerings did not spread across the sidewalk or onto the replacement fencing.

The site of a death in public space can retain significance over time and may be continuously marked as relatives, friends and others visit the site and maintain a long-term informal memorial. In 2009, a small boy called Zachary was killed while crossing the street in Berkeley, California. The stop sign and the small traffic circle where the accident occurred immediately became an informal memorial with notes, toys and photographs and chalk for people to write with. Over the months the memorial was updated with seasonally related tributes and then a letter from Zachary's father describing his own recent graduation from college. In 2010, an artist wrapped the pole in a knitted sheath and someone mounted an official-looking sign naming the place "Zachary's Corner." Flowers and other items continue to be left, often to recognize the passage of seasons and holidays (Plate 5.3).

Often sites retain collective and personal significance over many years, regardless of how they are marked. In 1911, 146 workers, mostly young immigrant women, died in a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York. The fire made headlines across the country and spurred the adoption of significant fire safety measures in building codes and fire and safety regulations in workplaces. The building remains, now a historic landmark, owned by New York University. A plaque on an exterior wall marks the site of the fire. On each anniversary since the 50th one, the university has participated in ceremonies led by labor unions and the New York Fire and Police Departments. In recent years, the ceremony has started with a march down Broadway. Volunteers carry 146 poles, each bearing a symbolic shirtwaist and the name of a victim (Figure 5.1). Some participants are relatives of those who died.

A collective pilgrimage may also be a one-time event and can include a ritual marking of a site. In New York in 2014, two organizations, Families for Safe Streets and Right of Way, led a pilgrimage by bicycle, traveling 60 miles, to visit 12 places where bicyclists or pedestrians had been killed by vehicles. At each location, they painted a stencil dedicated to that victim. In each of these two cases, the

Figure 5.1 Volunteers carry shirtwaists and photographs in annual ceremony commemorating victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911, New York
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

pilgrimage is both a commemoration of lives lost and a means of raising awareness of the problems that lead to the deaths: poor working conditions and insufficient safety measures, which continue today worldwide; and the need to increase the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in New York.

Formal memorials offer mourners and others a permanent place to visit, to remember and to grieve, early on and as the years pass. One Saturday morning in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, the National AIDS Memorial Grove of trees and a stone plaza is silent and empty. Then a young girl comes skipping down the path toward the circular plaza. Behind her a couple and a young man proceed more slowly. Before the girl reaches the plaza, she climbs up on a boulder, stands there, and jumps from one rock to another. The couple and the young man come into the plaza, still walking slowly and silently. They move to the far side where, bending over, the woman studies the names arranged on the surface of the plaza. Once she has located the name she is seeking, she lays a bouquet of carnations above it (Figure 5.2). She takes a picture of the name and the bouquet. She calls the young girl over and the young man takes a picture of the group—the couple and the young girl standing next to the name. As the others move to different parts of the memorial and to a bench, the woman stands by the name, silent, looking down at the names and the bouquet. When they leave together, the bouquet of carnations remains, animating the stone setting and the grove, indicating that someone had been here. It is not surprising to see bouquets and wreaths at memorials to fairly recent events, or after an anniversary of the event. What is more surprising is to see tributes at memorials to events that occurred in the distant past: a single rose at the Monument to the Boston Massacre of 1770 or on a stone seat of the Salem Witch Trials Memorial dedicated to one of the young women hanged in 1692. One cannot help but wonder who left the rose and whether it was a descendant of that long-ago victim.

Figure 5.2 Visiting the Circle of Friends, National Aids Memorial Grove, San Francisco
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

The small group in the Memorial Grove—possibly the family of someone who died of AIDS—is able to visit a memorial where that person's name is inscribed, to mourn and to pay tribute in that space and to capture their visit there in a photograph. And so people make similar pilgrimages to formal memorials in many cities that often include visiting the name of the person they are remembering, much as they might visit a grave in a cemetery and following similar rituals. This opportunity is particularly important when access to a grave is not possible because the person's remains are in a distant location or because they could never be found. In Frankfurt, the Memorial Wall at the Neuer Börneplatz Memorial (Hirsch, Lorch and Wandel, 1996) shows the names of the nearly 12,000 Jewish residents of Frankfurt who were deported and murdered in concentration camps between 1933 and 1945. The name, dates of birth and death and deportation destination of each person appear in raised letters on individual steel blocks attached to the wall that encloses the Old Jewish Cemetery. Following the Jewish tradition of placing a stone on a grave to leave a sign that someone has visited, people put small pieces of crushed basalt from the adjacent path on top of the blocks (Figure 5.3).

Sometimes visiting a name is a more elaborate process. After the two World Wars, the remains of Australian soldiers who died abroad were not brought home and so memorials in Australia took on a great significance to families and friends, even several generations later. At the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, those who wish to do so can find the name of anyone from Victoria who served in World War I by visiting the ambulatory next to the Sanctuary and seeking help from staff. All 114,000 names are hand-written in delicate calligraphy on parchment paper in notebooks encased in glass vitrines. The staff member unlocks the relevant vitrine and locates the name in question, with great care, and wearing gloves. In the

Figure 5.3 Memorial Wall, Neuer Börneplatz Memorial Site, Frankfurt, Hirsch, Lorch and Wandel, 1996
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2014.

quiet, dimly lit space visitors study the name carefully. They can photograph it, but, given the delicacy of the paper, they are not allowed to touch it. At the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, visitors locate a name by consulting one of the directories located at each end of the path next to the wall. Once found, visitors touch the name if it is within reach, which most are. They may well photograph the name or have someone take a photograph of them framing the name. Sometimes they make a rubbing of the name (Figure 5.4); often they leave a tribute at the foot of the wall.

For some relatives and friends, visiting the name of a loved one at the National September 11 Memorial in New York must substitute for visiting a grave because no remains were found. The rituals are similar to those at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial: touching the name, making a rubbing, photographing it and leaving a tribute. Visitors use the ample blank surface surrounding each name to place a flower or to tape a photograph or a note. They take advantage of the depth of the letters cut into the parapet to insert flowers, insignia, or tightly rolled pieces of paper (see Figure 2.9).

At many recent memorials to victims of terrorist acts in the US, friends and relatives can visit what serves as an individual memorial, dedicated to a single victim, within the larger collective space of similar markers as at the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. When there is sufficient space around each marker, family members can gather around it with some separation from other visitors and mourners, as they do at the individual chairs in the Oklahoma City Memorial where Marita Sturken (2007) observed that children sometimes sit on these chairs while adults sit on the grass lawn.

One distinct group of visitors to memorials is foreign dignitaries during official publicized visits. A formal route into the memorial or a ceremonial flight of stairs allows the visit to become a procession that ends with laying a wreath in a designated location. After doing so, the dignitaries bow their heads and then stand silently as they are photographed. A suitable setting for such wreath-laying ceremonies was once important in the design of memorials. The long processional path and stairs up to the sanctuary at the Soviet War Memorial in Treptower Park in Berlin and the large expanse of open space below were well suited to visits by Soviet dignitaries.

In contrast, memorials such the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin were not designed to accommodate this kind of formalized commemorative activity. There is no obvious place at that memorial for an official to lay a wreath and no area large enough for even a small group to stand together. This may be one reason that during ceremonial visits to Berlin on occasions related to observance of the Holocaust, a more spatially accommodating memorial is chosen: the Track 17 Memorial at the Grunewald railway station, the station from which thousands of Jewish residents of Berlin were transported to concentration camps in the east. For example, on Holocaust Memorial Day in 2010, the 65th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp, Israeli President Shimon Peres joined German President Horst Koehler and a delegation of Holocaust survivors to lay wreaths at Track 17 (Moore 2010).

Certainly the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe does serve as a pilgrimage site, as apparent in the laying of roses on individual stelae, particularly on anniversaries such as Holocaust Memorial Day. In 2013, it did serve as a place of pilgrimage for a 75th anniversary observance of *Kristallnacht*, the night in 1938

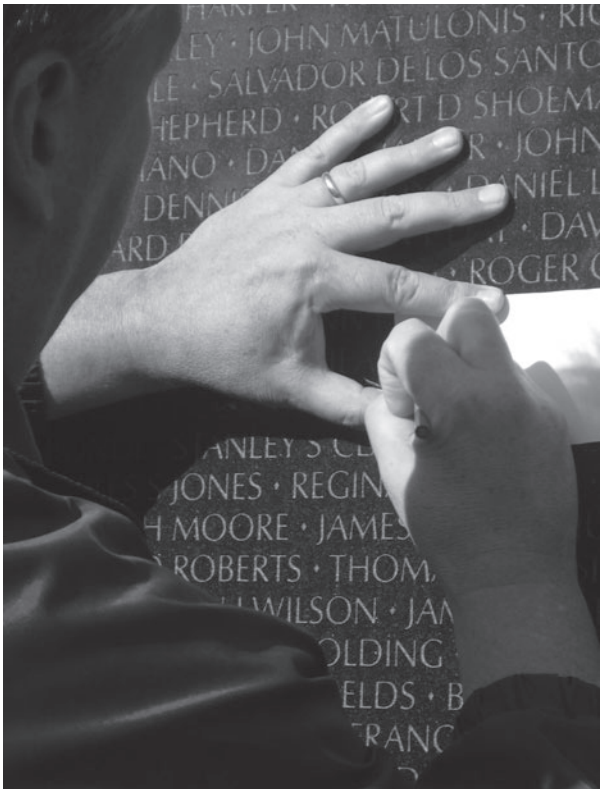

Figure 5.4 Making a rubbing at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Washington
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

when the Nazis coordinated the destruction of synagogues and Jewish businesses in Germany and Austria. Two hundred rabbis from the Conference of European Rabbis, meeting in Berlin for the first time, held a candle-lighting ceremony at the Brandenburg Gate with traditional songs and then marched, with the candles, to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. A video shows the Brandenburg Gate brightly lit and the memorial shrouded in darkness. A group of rabbis is seen singing and listening to the Torah being read as they gathered around one low stele where they placed their candles (Jewish Link 2013).

A great many people who visit memorials do not have a personal connection to its subject matter and are not there in any official capacity. Many are quiet and reflective, reading texts inscribed on the memorial with great care, bending over to study what is below eye level, including notes and photographs left by others and touching the names inscribed. These visitors may pose for photographs and take many photographs themselves, and they may also bring flowers or other tributes. They walk through the memorial slowly and with care; they may ask questions of memorial staff and volunteers. They may talk with others in their group about the memorial. They too seem to be on a pilgrimage. The quiet voices, solemnity and attentiveness of those visitors contrast with the behavior of others who treat the memorial as one stop on a varied itinerary of tourist destinations. Their louder, more animated behavior and their tendency to talk on cell phones and engage in livelier and more nonchalant activities can be disturbing to those who consider and treat the memorial as sacred space.

EXPRESSING, INTERACTING

Bringing tributes to a memorial is an expressive act, as are ritual visits and ceremonial events. Once at the memorial, visitors have opportunities to pursue other kinds of expression: to convey their response to tragic events through writing and drawing, to interact with other visitors, to share common experiences or concerns and to encounter others who may hold decidedly different opinions from their own.

At informal memorials people express their feelings and beliefs about the event through drawings, which may convey strong symbolism (Figure 5.5) and, more frequently, through writing. The outpouring of hand-written texts at informal memorials suggests that writing is the most immediate and most common overtly expressive, lasting response to tragic events. The content of the messages likely varies with the nature of the event and the attitudes of those who write in response to it. In Oklahoma City, many expressed their belief that the bombing was a warning to those who do not believe in Christ or whose beliefs have lapsed (Linenthal 1998). Malchei Israel Square, where Itzhak Rabin was assassinated, had already been the site of many peace rallies, and after the assassination many wrote about their political opinions and their desire for peace on walls of the adjacent city hall (Engler 1999).

At informal and interim memorials throughout New York, volunteers hung canvases on fences and spread rolls of paper out on paved surfaces, encouraging visitors to write. Contributors expressed strong sentiments about freedom, democracy and the resilience of New York and the nation and they often invoked God and religion. Strong and opposing opinions appeared about what the next step should be. A large white sheet spread out on steps at Union Square read: "Racism is not the answer. War is not Progress. But PEACE is POSSIBLE" (Franck and Paxson 2007). People's comments often suggested that they were responding to previous comments. On a canvas at Washington Square Park, one person wrote in black, "NEVER FORGET." Below it, in blue, someone else added, "NEVER FORGIVE," The "NEVER" in this phrase received considerable attention: it was crossed out in black and then a commentator added, in brown, an arrow pointing to a new inscription of the word "NEVER". Another canvas was densely filled with comments calling for peace and love, clustered around peace symbols and, in large letters, "LOVE LIFE LIVE LOVE." Inside the letter O of the first LOVE, someone wrote what might have been "KILL THE BASTARDS" but the last word had been crossed out (Plate 5.4). Elsewhere on the canvas the following statement appeared: "Well, I can hear you. Everyone can hear you. And the people who destroyed these buildings will hear from us real soon …" Some of the comments were signed but most were not.

In reflecting on the proliferation of writing at informal memorials in New York after September 11, Beatrice Fraenkel comments:

> The fact that millions of people wrote "God bless America" or "We will always remember," or just signed posters invites one to reflect that what counts is not so much the messages as the mere fact of writing. A striking feature of shrines constructed after catastrophes is often the sheer quantity of written messages displayed rather than the literary quality of those writings.
>
> (2011: 231)

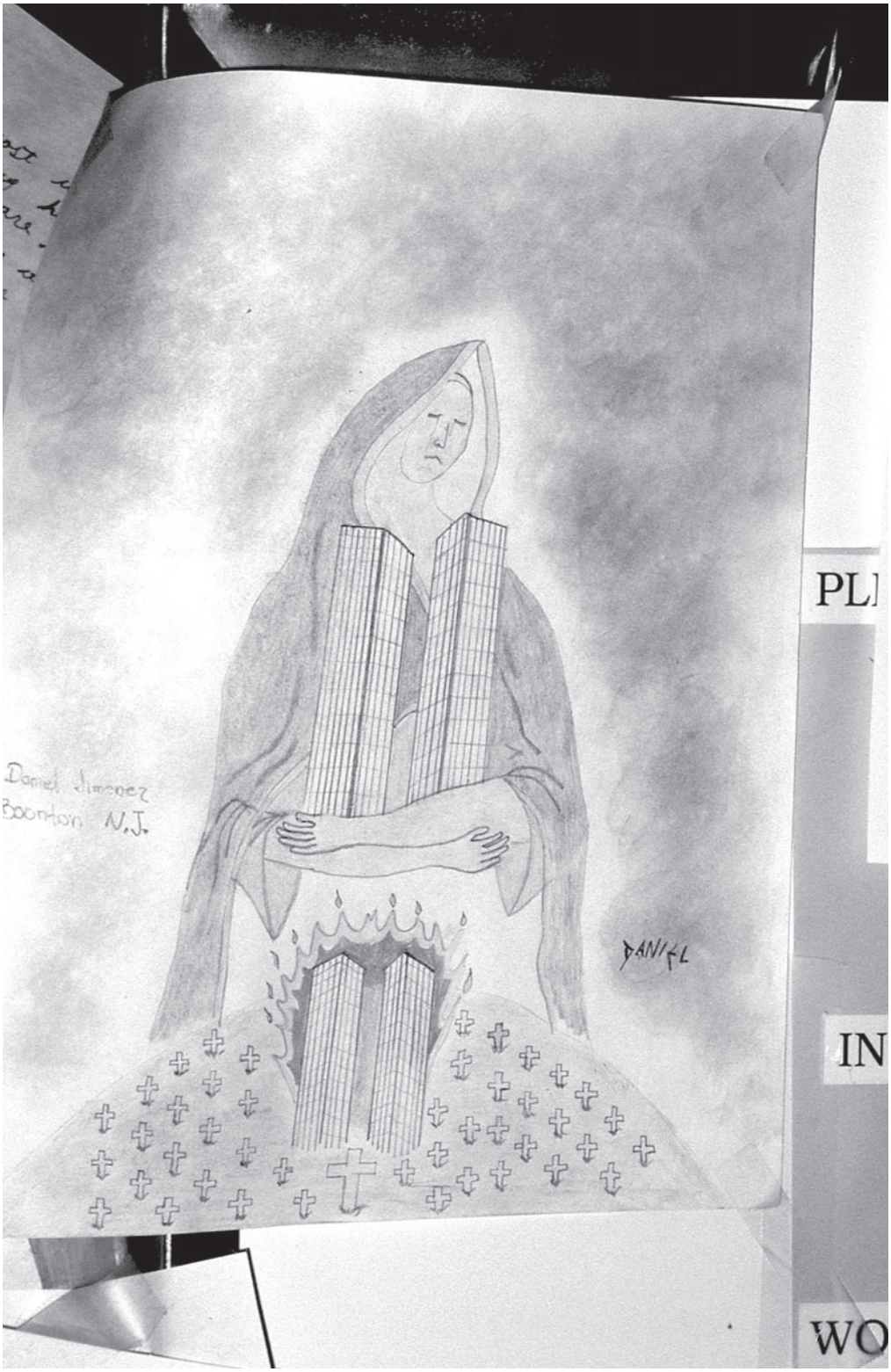

Figure 5.5 Drawing posted at an informal memorial in New York after September 11
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2001.

Temporary and interim memorials offer a public forum for people to air their views about the commemorated event and also to reflect on its wider personal and social significance. A sudden taking of life generates strong emotional and often political responses; people need not only to grieve but also to draw meaning, even lessons, from the event. What happened may rouse long-brewing ideas and concerns. Gathering at a memorial site, talking with others and writing down one's thoughts to be read by others all provide outlets for expressing those concerns. The precise location of Rabin's assassination, on a square which had already been the site of peace rallies, became not just a kind of altar, but also a platform for expressing political opinions and desires for peace and for holding meetings and political debates (Engler 1999). In Oklahoma City, many visitors wrote exhortations about non-violence and conspiracies and about what may seem like issues unrelated to the attack—abortion, and the belief that the bombing was a warning to atheists and agnostics (Linenthal 1998). As the New York example illustrates, commemorative messages within a temporary memorial may stimulate other written responses, so that the memorial both supports and displays a dialogue, including outright disagreements. Such disagreements may also occur in person. At the interim memorial on Church Street, on anniversaries of September 11, groups pronouncing that the attack had been a US government conspiracy received questions and objections from other visitors, with groups engaging in lively conversation.

Informal memorials provide opportunities for a wide range of people to express opinions and raw emotions without the need for sophisticated language or technology for formal presentations. The presence of these opinions at sites of mourning gives them a degree of seriousness they might not have in other locations (Haney et al. 1997). Individuals and groups who may otherwise be silent have a chance to "speak" publicly and to draw upon various ways of doing so. The availability of a range of figurative styles of expression—symbols, artifacts and drawing as well as written language—allows a wider variety of people to participate, particularly those who are more comfortable with these modes of communication than with calm, controlled writing or speaking. Children and adults can write in their native language. They do not need to worry about how correct their language is. It is this wider range of speech styles that Iris Marion Young (1997) recommends for a "communicative democracy," and that Nancy Fraser (1997) endorses for free expression in the public sphere. The freedom of speech that informal memorials potentially offer is somewhat contingent on the wider political context in which they arise. In repressive, authoritarian regimes, informal memorials of any duration will generally be forbidden, especially when they carry political messages or any information critical of the government.

The first step at informal memorials seems to be the placing of tributes, but once they are thus physically marked, the sites become places of vigils and other ritual activities. At Union Square, people played musical instruments, sang, chanted, and joined candlelight vigils and prayer groups. During a peace rally on the night immediately following the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, thousands gathered in the open space of Malchei Israel Square and many people, particularly the young, remained, lighting candles and keeping vigil. One week later, on the day marking the conclusion of the customary Jewish mourning period, a memorial rally was held (Azaryahu 1996). On the day after the shootings at Littleton High School in Colorado, a prayer meeting was held for local students in Clement Park, and over the following weeks prayer and worship services, candlelight vigils and readings from the Bible were held near the informal memorial (Doss 2002).

The widened sidewalk along Church Street, part of the interim memorial at the World Trade Center site, offered a kind of stage for unofficial September 11 anniversary events, such as a continuous reading of the names of all those who had died in the attack. Volunteers offered visitors a chance to make their own tributes such as making prints in paint of their hands or folding paper into origami cranes, a symbol of peace (Figure 5.6). As people engaged in making their tributes, they also engaged in conversation, so that expressing became the creation of a physical artifact and a verbal conversation. More politically oriented events were held as well, including a silent performance protesting the Iraq War (Figure 5.7).

Possibilities for expression are far more limited at formal memorials. Except for individual notes and letters that visitors leave, the writing present at such memorials is nearly always an official, designed feature of them. An exception is near the Yitzhak Rabin Memorial. A section of the wall surface of the city hall, adjacent to the memorial, has been set aside for ongoing graffiti writing; people also add their comments on other locations nearby (Engler 1999). Visitors read the texts of others and add their own. At the Harburg Monument Against Fascism, a sign invited visitors to write their names on the memorial with a stylus provided at the memorial. For their proposal for the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the same designers (Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz) imagined an entire memorial composed of what visitors would write. Visitors to the Memorial to Victims of Violence in Mexico City are also invited to write and draw on the memorial's surfaces (see Figure 2.12).

Opportunities for gathering and interacting with other visitors vary dramatically with the design of formal memorials. The site plan of the wall of names at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial makes visiting it a relatively solitary journey: one proceeds down the path alongside the wall and then back up. Visitors stop along the way to find a name, to make a rubbing of it or take a photograph, to leave an offering and to read the texts that others have left. There are conversations between people who have come together and people who are strangers to each other, though there is no room along this pathway for groups to gather or for ceremonies. Visitors consult with volunteers and Park Rangers on finding a name. At the base of the memorial, where the path flattens out, people linger longer, but there is no place to sit, to gather or to spend a longer period of time. On Veterans Day many offerings are left; many people study the names and the photographs and notes. One needs to negotiate one's way between them—a different kind of contact.

Visits to a memorial can also present opportunities to connect with other survivors of the commemorated events, and with other mourners. On a warm Saturday in June, the large World War II Memorial in Washington was filled with veterans and their families. Many wore uniforms, medals or ribbons. Some were in wheelchairs. They waited in lines and small groups on the two ramps that run alongside the 56 pillars, waiting their turn to be photographed in front of the pillar engraved with the name of their state or territory (Figure 5.8). As they waited, they introduced themselves to other veterans; there was a buzz of chatter. Below on the spacious plaza more veterans and relatives gathered, nearly filling the space; many sat on benches at the plaza's edge. There were more introductions, more hand shaking, more conversations and many more pictures.

On that summer day, the veterans and their friends and families transformed the memorial from a solemn space into a scene of lively interaction, friendship and warmth. Seeing the memorial empty a visitor might think that the

Figure 5.6 Making origami cranes at interim memorial at World Trade Center on an anniversary of the attack
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2007.

Figure 5.7 Silent demonstration against Iraq War at interim memorial at World Trade Center on September 11 anniversary
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2007.

Figure 5.8 Veterans from Wisconsin pose at the Wisconsin stanchion, National World War II Memorial, Friedrich St Florian, 2004
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

memorial is too grand and too imperial and might wonder why a US memorial to World War II looks so fascist. However, seeing it so fully occupied on a day of pilgrimage one notices how the garlanded pillars offer places for more local, precise identity within the collective, and for posing for photographs that affirm it, as well as how the plaza's plentiful seating allows people to spend time here comfortably, to meet others and to converse. Such large gatherings are rare, as they will be at any memorial, and are very likely to grow more infrequent as time passes.

The degree of interaction that takes place among visitors seems to vary both with the design of the memorial which may bring people together in certain locations rather than spreading them out, and with the density of people who are standing or sitting in one place for some period of time. In the US on National Police Officers Memorial Day, many friends and relatives of slain officers come to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington. They visit the names of the officers they have come to remember, which are inscribed on a low curved wall. The facing wall, low enough to sit on, offers them a place to remain for a while and conversations begin with other visitors who are grieving a similar loss (Figure 5.9). The narrowness of the passage between the two walls and the number of people who visit on this particular day offer many opportunities for conversation. So does a similar dense clustering of people along the parapets of the pools at the World Trade Center Memorial on anniversaries of September 11 as people come close to look into the pools and to touch the names. Here too visitors and mourners may engage in conversation, sometimes asking, "Where were you on September 11?"

Figure 5.9 Relatives and friends of police officers killed in the line of duty on National Police Officers Memorial Day, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, Washington, Davis Buckley, 1991
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

HOLDING CEREMONIES

Official, well-planned and carefully choreographed ceremonies may be the most symbolic, collective means of commemorating at formal memorials. The ceremonies are often held on special days set aside to honor soldiers (such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day in the US and Remembrance Day and Anzac Day in the UK, Australia and New Zealand), police officers who died in service or those who were killed in terrorist acts. These ceremonies offer opportunities for veterans, for those now in military or police service, and for friends and relatives of those who died to gather and to pay homage and, equally importantly, to see and talk with each other.

Memorials accommodate ceremonial events in different ways, with greater and lesser ease. Some spatial memorials of a more traditional design seem tailor-made to host ceremonies. The large, paved spaces accommodate ceremonies very well with very little modification beyond adding chairs or a rostrum, particularly when elevated terraces can serve as platforms for speaking, such as the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne (see Figure 2.2). Here a wide, paved axial approach enables ceremonial parading or assembly of veterans, dignitaries, service personnel and even horses. The Shrine's steep staircase can be used to rank distinguish guests for official photographs or for displaying wreaths, and is also used for slow formal processions up to the inner sanctuary. Its broad landing makes an excellent stage. Wide, flat grass verges to either side of the axis accommodate formal audience seating as well as providing ample overflow space for the general public. In 1954, the reflecting pool, in front of the main building since the memorial's dedication in 1934, was removed to create a smaller cross-axial plaza, terminated by a World War II cenotaph and eternal flame, thereby accommodating a wider set of ceremonies to different events. The sanctuary in the Shrine hosts many smaller, more intimate events on most days of the year, sometimes more than one event per day. Indeed, by intention the memorial is preeminently a place both of ceremony and pilgrimage. Individual fighting units hold their ceremonies under the particular trees dedicated to them on the lawns of the Shrine where the Shrine staff set up a rostrum, a small sound system and folding chairs.

The Soviet War Memorial in Treptow also offers large expanses of paved space around its axial lawn, allowing a processional approach to the key commemorative element: a towering statue of a Soviet soldier, which stands above a tomb at the top of a long flight of steps. The design accommodates large crowds; the stairs choreograph a procession up to the tomb to lay wreaths. What is particularly notable about the ceremonies held at this memorial is how they reflected and demonstrated important political changes, some of them with historic significance (Stangl 2003). After the Soviets completed the memorial in 1949, every May 8, ceremonies were held to celebrate the Soviet Union's victory over Germany that occurred on that day in 1945. Early in the history of the memorial, this annual event was organized and managed by the Soviets with participation from German officials. Starting in 1950, however, the event became a means of recognizing and celebrating the new German Democratic Republic, which then took responsibility for the event, and the East German *Volkspolizei* took the place of the Soviet Honor Guard. In the 1950s, thousands of East Germans participated, carrying banners with slogans, walking in procession up the steps to the enclosed mausoleum beneath the statue to lay wreaths: "an act of obeisance to the Soviet Army" (ibid.:

228). In the 1960s, the event became purely commemorative and more modest. Then, in 1994, the memorial was the site of the formal withdrawal of all Russian soldiers from Germany. Russian President Boris Yeltsin and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl spoke from beneath the towering statue of the soldier while German and Russian soldiers stood at attention on the paths flanking the lawn below along with a few thousand spectators (Fesperman 1994). Wreath-laying ceremonies attended by Russian veterans, Russian and German dignitaries and many others are still held every May 8, and tens of thousands still visit the site on such occasions, some traveling from as far away as the former Soviet Union (Gabowitsch 2014).

Contemporary memorials are rarely, if ever, designed for the kind of formal, choreographed ceremonies held at Treptow, and they vary in how easily they can accommodate such events. The large paved area of the World War II Memorial in Washington offers a spacious hard surface for people to speak and for seating an audience. For the 2012 Veterans Day ceremony, rows of chairs were placed on the plaza immediately below the stairs at the memorial's main entrance on 17th Street. The audience faced the fountain in the middle of the plaza, the Remembrance Wall beyond and the Lincoln Memorial in the distance. That day, speakers stood at a rostrum facing the audience, their backs to the Remembrance Wall. The size and grandeur of the memorial seemed to dwarf the small group that gathered there (Figure 5.10).

When a memorial does not contain large expanses of hard-surface open space, efforts must be made to create a space that can be occupied adjacent to it. The Cenotaph in London, the preeminent memorial for commemorating military

Figure 5.10 Ceremony on Veterans Day, National World War II Memorial, Washington
Source: Karen A. Franck, 2012.

service and veterans in the UK, is a freestanding object in the center of Whitehall, the main street of the government precinct. One can safely view it from the sidewalk, but to reach it one must cross multiple traffic lanes and there is not much room to stand near it. This is not an easy place of pilgrimage, but several times a year it does become a place of ceremony. On those days, Whitehall is closed to traffic (Plate 5.5). To hold the National Service of Remembrance on Remembrance Sunday, the long, linear space of the street, flanking both sides of the monument and extending down to Westminster Abbey, provides ample room for dignitaries and the public to stand for the entire ceremony. No chairs are set up. First, the Queen and then other members of the royal family place wreaths on the narrow steps at the base of the monument, followed in careful, choreographed sequence by the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, other political leaders, and commissioners from each country in the Commonwealth. Aside from the two minutes of silence at 11 a.m., music is the predominant sound as the anthem and hymns are sung, military bands play and a choir sings. There is no speaking other than that of a clergyman and saying prayers. At the end of the ceremony, thousands of veterans pay their respects as they march along the spacious avenue past the Cenotaph. The closing of Whitehall to traffic and the performance of this solemn ceremony with its pomp and circumstance transform a secular space of busy traffic into a sacred one of solemn rituals. Other ceremonies are held at the Cenotaph in memory of other events, including the D-Day Landings, the Falklands War, and the first day of the Somme Offensive.

At the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, there is no large paved surface and no built element to serve as a stage. So on Veterans Day in 2012, a temporary stage was installed at the foot of the hill, close to the path along the wall, and chairs for the audience were placed in rows up the inclined lawn, defining an amphitheater. The audience faced the wall; the speakers faced the audience with their backs to the wall. That same week, the stage also served as the place for reading aloud every single name of those who died in the war, a ritual that has only taken place three times before. On neither occasion did anyone occupy the lawn above the wall, as many had done on the day the wall was dedicated.

The National September 11 Memorial, like the Pentagon Memorial and the Oklahoma City Memorial, has no raised elements that might serve as a stage and no space that could choreograph a procession. This seems to be a recent trend in the design of large memorials. The plaza at the National September 11 Memorial is completely flat. It was spacious enough to accommodate a large crowd and a temporary stage for speakers for its dedication ceremony, and can presumably do so for subsequent anniversaries. Only people with invitations, primarily family members, could enter the memorial that day; others gathered on adjacent streets, listening to a broadcast of the ceremony. As on every previous anniversary of September 11, the name of each victim was read aloud, often with additional comments from family members who were reading the names. Other smaller September 11 memorials are also designed primarily for people to visit and not for ceremonies, but particular design features can provide a dramatic and hence suitable setting. At the Staten Island September 11 Memorial, the audience sits facing the memorial and, across the water, the site of the former Twin Towers and the new Freedom Tower (Plate 5.6). Dignitaries, speakers and those reading the names of residents of Staten Island who died all have their backs to that view. During the reading of names in 2014, one woman whose husband was a firefighter

killed attempting to rescue others introduced her son, now old enough to participate in that ritual. One realized then that, in a very visible, public manner, the annual ceremony marks the passing of time. The existence of a site and a ceremony allow this to happen.

The ceremonies described so far commemorate people and events that are generally consistent with the subject of the memorial, though the theme and details of the ceremonies may be modified over time to address changes in political regimes, as at the Soviet War Memorial in Berlin. Other times, however, a formal memorial will host a ceremony quite distinct in content and purpose from the subject of the memorial. A notable example is the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Materials documenting the planning and design of the Memorial make no mention of any intention to hold ceremonies here. They refer only to individual contemplative visits (Thomas 2002). Nonetheless the exterior space of the memorial is excellent for accommodating ceremonial events and large audiences. The wide landing at the top of the grand stairway and the mid-landing can serve as stages, while the audience can occupy the stairs, the platform at the foot of the stairs, the lawn beyond the platform and the full extent of the lawn adjacent to the Reflecting Pool. Speakers or performers face the audience while the statue of Lincoln appears behind them as a highly symbolic backdrop.

In 1939, when large auditoriums in Washington refused to host a performance by the famous black singer Marian Anderson, she performed at the Lincoln Memorial. From the 1940s onward the memorial served as the site for a series of Civil Rights demonstrations, including an anti-lynching rally in 1946 led by the singer Paul Robeson. The largest and best-known such demonstration was the August 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom when Martin Luther King spoke from the steps of the memorial. For that event, the statue of Lincoln was illuminated with floodlights so it could be easily photographed and seen by those watching the ceremony on TV (Sandage 1993). In 2013 on the 50th anniversary of the 1963 march, an anniversary ceremony was held at the memorial with attendees gathered on the full length of the lawns flanking the Reflecting Pool. National memorials are often the sites of politically oriented ceremonies that reaffirm national identities and relationships, or acknowledge official changes in such identities, as at Treptow. The series of eminently political Civil Rights demonstrations at the Lincoln Memorial are a rare example of creating new, albeit related political meanings for a memorial through ceremonial performances.

INVENTING COMMEMORATION

At various points in the past, people invented acts of commemoration now widely followed such as anniversary ceremonies, official visits to memorials by visiting dignitaries, and the leaving of wreaths and bouquets of flowers. Traditions that developed long ago, such as the creation of roadside memorials, have become much more frequent in recent years, more varied and installed in a great diversity of locations in public space. Making drawings or writing letters and poems to leave at formal and informal memorials are all creative acts. And what was first made or chosen as a tribute can set a tradition at one site or many. The first hand-made cross at the site of the bombing in Oklahoma City led to many more; the first teddy bear led to many more at many different sites.

Recently organizations, artists and members of the public at large have invented, from scratch, one-time and quite ingenious installations and events, many of which engage others in acts of commemoration. This inventiveness was apparent during the 10th anniversary of the attack on the World Trade Center. In Ocean Grove, New Jersey, a local radio station invited people to contribute shoes and fire fighter boots to create the Empty Shoe Memorial in the local public square. The 2,978 shoes and four pairs of fire fighter boots were then donated to the victims of a recent hurricane. The Bryant Park Corporation, which manages and funds the maintenance of Bryant Park on 42nd Street, arranged 2,753 café chairs in rows on the lawn, all facing south, toward the World Trade Center. The installation included an art project by Sheryl Oring: ten typists took down people's thoughts on the question: "What would you like the world to remember about 9/11?" on small sheets of paper. These were then included in an exhibition. Illegal Art, an artists' collective, invited people to walk the height of the tallest tower from 5th Avenue to 20th Street and to contribute their own thoughts. On the sidewalk, they marked off the number of each floor, leaving a notice to the public and a cup of chalk. The number of pieces of chalk equaled the number of people who perished in the towers.

People may also recognize possibilities that existing formal memorials offer for acts of remembering. Some of these may be unacceptable to authorities, such as the silent dancing that took place at night in the Jefferson Memorial in Washington to celebrate the president's birthday in 2011. Others may involve a kind of public caretaking. In 2013, to recognize the 25th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, groups of residents in Berlin polished the brass *Stolpersteine* that mark the residences where victims of the Holocaust once lived (Berry 2013). Another took place at the scale of the entire city, creating an installation and an event visible from the ground as well as from the sky, and a means for the public to participate. For the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, brothers Christopher and Marc Bauder created the *Lichtgrenze* (Border of Lights) that lined a 9-mile segment of the former location of the Berlin Wall, already permanently marked in many places by a double role of cobblestones in the pavement. For the three days of celebration, an estimated 8,000 illuminated, helium-filled, white balloons on 11-foot-high carbon rods formed this "wall." Christopher Bauder explained: "To contrast the massiveness and heaviness of this original monument, we were thinking of something light and ephemeral, something positive to attract people and then they can make of it what ever they like" (Edelbaum 2014). Members of the public signed up in advance and followed a carefully organized process of releasing the balloons at a set time on the final night. Before doing so they attached their own handwritten messages to them (ibid.).

Formal memorials are intended to be sites of commemorative acts; usually they are traditional and predictable. But tributes left at these memorials and at informal memorials show a creativity and inventiveness that are not always predictable, as do the variety of events created at memorials and in other public spaces. While memorials and public space generally offer possible platforms for commemoration, the public is inventive, increasingly eager and sometimes brave in making creative use of the possibilities they discover, as they often are in other appropriations of public space (Franck and Stevens 2007).