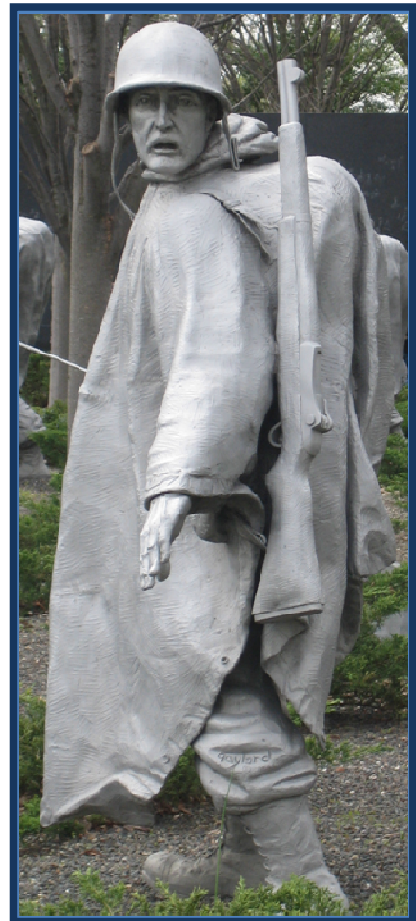
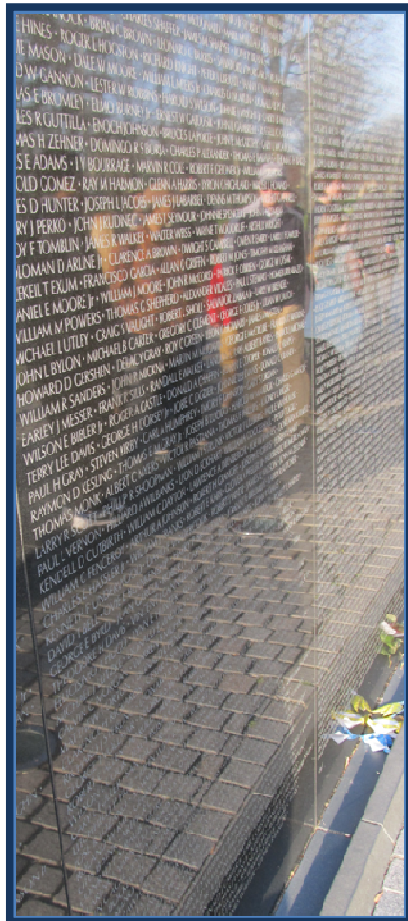
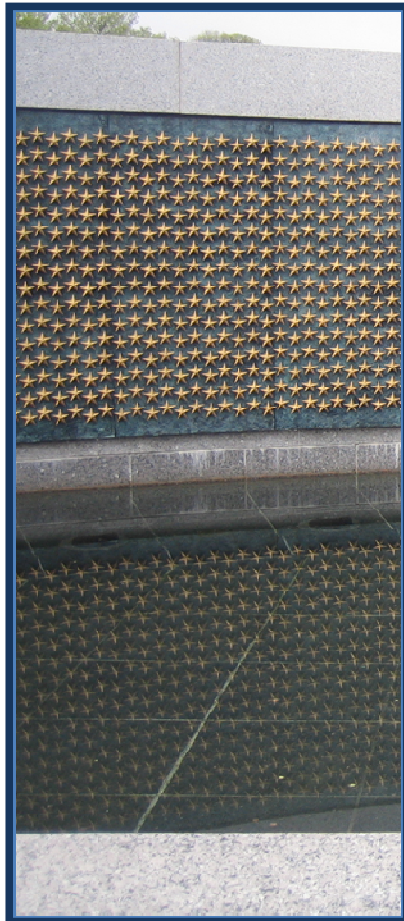


The Good, the Bad, and the Forgotten: U.S. Veterans and the Mall Memorial Movement



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1. Introduction

On the National Mall

On May 27, 2012 a crowd gathered on the National Mall for *PBS's 23rd National Memorial Day Concert*. Well-known bands and vocalists, among them Daughtry, Trace Adkins, and Natalie Cole, joined the National Symphony Orchestra in a salute to those who served in America's wars. In addition, notable actors, such as Selma Blair, Ellen Burstyn, and Dennis Franz, depicted stories from veterans who suffered from war traumas, and from family members who have lost someone to war. As the voice-over opened the concert he said: "Tonight we gather together in remembrance of our American heroes, all those who have fought, and those who died for our country."¹ The voice continued to list all the participating artists while on the screen images appeared from the National Mall's architecture; it included the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument as examples of Washington's national symbols. However, most of the footage in this opening theme featured the veterans' memorials in the city: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and the World War II Memorial. Viewed by many across the United States, and even internationally, it is hard to imagine Memorial Day without the concert, or without images of these three memorials as a backdrop for the national remembrance of veterans' experiences during war. However, although Memorial Day has existed since the Civil War, this event on the National Mall, as well as the war memorials themselves, only began to find their place in Washington during the 1980's.

In his book on the memorial landscape art historian Kirk Savage chronicles how, since the 1800s, Washington became the center of a movement to create monuments in the

¹ *National Memorial Day Concert*, Thirteen, (Newark, NJ: WNET, May 27, 2012).

United States. Despite frequent opposition to their existence they have rapidly grown in number since 1800, and Washington is therefore now the “monumental core of the nation,” with the National Mall – where the most important ones are located - as a center that “defines national experience.”² When one looks at its iconic memorials and the large numbers of visitors they draw every year, it is easy to conclude that American Studies scholar Udo J. Hebel is correct when he calls the National Mall “the heart of U.S.-American civil religion,” and says that it is the prime location for the representation of American memory and history.³

As a result, scholars have written extensively on the Mall’s place in American society. According to Hebel, the fact that the United States was a “New World” caused it to establish many sites of memory to urge the formation of a unified nation.⁴ He feels monuments and memorials are a part of that tradition, and have, together with publicly accessible archives and museums, been present in the country since its inception.⁵ The creation of these emblems of national memory constitutes a site of constant debate because different groups have gained a voice in American society over the years, and they call for their stories to be represented in this national space. The way Hebel defines public memory in the United States as tied to the formation of a “New World” suggests that the United States is exceptional. It is uncertain if that is truly the case; however, what can be concluded is that

² Kirk Savage, *Monument Wars: Washington D.C., the National Mall and the Transformation of the National Memorial Landscape* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 4.

³ Udo J. Hebel, “Sites of Memory in U.S.-American Histories and Cultures,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, eds. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 55.

⁴ Hebel, “Sites of Memory,” 47.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

the country debates its public memory in a prominent way, and that groups that call for a monument on the D.C. Mall are a prime example of this discussion.

The memorials on the National Mall represent the foundation of the nation through its presidential icons; for example, the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. The Lincoln Memorial is arguably one of the most famous memorials in the city. The memorial and the neighboring Reflecting Pool were dedicated in 1922; these two elements greatly contributed to the Mall's characteristic open space. Surrounding the Lincoln Memorial's open space today are the three war memorials that commemorate subsequent wars in American History. In front of the Lincoln Memorial and the Reflecting Pool there is the World War II Memorial, to its west is the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and to the east the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. These three national war memorials are a product of the final part of the twentieth century; sponsors created them for the Mall in a rapid fashion. In addition, they created them in reverse order to the one the wars took place in: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 1982; the Korean War Veterans Memorial opened in 1995; and the World War II Memorial only found its permanent place on the D.C. Mall in 2004.

Because they are in such a prominent location, these memorials have become national symbols for each war. The *National Memorial Day Concert* uses these public works to show America's wars; correspondingly, there is hardly a book on the Vietnam, Korean and Second World War in American history that does not include a photograph of the memorials somewhere on the cover or on the inside. It is evident that these monuments are created in a highly politicized space; they are built in a space that scholars, politicians, architects, and the general public have appointed the central location for expression and debate of American national identity. It is therefore not surprising that the memorials found their way

into scholarly works. Historian John Bodnar compares the young war memorials to the older works on the Mall; for example, the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument. He argues that both the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial change the outlook of the Mall because they counter the images of the “powerful statesmen who were devoted to the nation” with depictions of those who suffered at the hands of the nation.⁶ All three memorials therefore include elements that display the suffering of America’s veterans: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial depicts the ones who died through a list of their names, the Korean War Veterans Memorial shows weariness of veterans on the faces of its nineteen statues, and the World War II Memorial represents those who died through a wall of gold stars. They are therefore indeed different from the structures present on the Mall, who focus on famous figures in American history that have shaped the country; not on the experiences of the ordinary Americans who fought in its name.

However, there are multiple sides to each of the three memorials both in the way they look, and the way scholars see them. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial includes a black granite wall that lists all the names of the soldiers that fell during combat, but at the same time there is also an American flag and two statues at the memorial’s entrance. The first statue is called the Hart statue, and shows three veterans in combat gear. The second statue is the Vietnam Women’s Memorial; it shows three women helping a wounded soldier. A substantial amount of information is available on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; the entire process of formation, dedication and the public’s response is well documented by scholars, who often consider the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as a turning point in America’s

⁶ John Bodnar, “Saving Private Ryan and Postwar Memory in America,” *The American Historical Review* 106.3 (2001): 807 – 808.

memorial tradition. For instance, cultural memory scholar Marita Sturken has argued that the fact that there was no consent over the Vietnam War created a new type of memorial; namely, one that did not take a stand on the politics or the outcome of the war, but one that took the experiences of U.S. veterans as its focus.⁷ American Studies scholar Kristin Ann Hass researched the formation of the memorial extensively, and writes that the impulse that visitors have to leave items at the Vietnam wall has individualized the way war is remembered in the United States because the memorial allowed every citizen to commemorate their personal feelings and experiences associated with the Vietnam War, and eventually with war in general.⁸

The Korean War Veterans Memorial shows nineteen statues that walk towards a commemorative plaza that includes an American flag. Alongside the statues runs a granite wall that depicts service personnel from the war, on the other side there is a curb that dedicates all the countries that fought in this U.N. mission. There is less information available on this memorial. Several scholars have noted that the war itself has frequently been left out of American public memory. Among them is history scholar Judith Keene, who researched the lost memory of the Korean War in American society, and argues that the dedication of the memorial in 1995 marked an end to 45 years of a forgotten war.⁹ Sociologists Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayma have presented the most thorough investigation of the creation of the memorial to date with their research into the archives of

⁷ Marita Sturken, "The Wall, the Screen, and the Image: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial," *Representations* 35 (1991): 136.

⁸ Kristin Ann Hass, *Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 2.

⁹ Judith Keene, "Lost to Public Commemoration: American Veterans of the 'Forgotten' Korean War," *Journal of Social History* (2011): 1095.

the American Battle Monuments Commission, and feel that the memorial represents sacrifices made for the nation, but also has a theme of patriotism.¹⁰

The World War II Memorial stands in the center of the Mall. Of the three memorials, this edifice looks more similar to the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument through the use of classic elements, and its white marble color. It features a large plaza that has the Rainbow Pool as its center, and is surrounded by 56 columns and two arches marked “Atlantic” and “Pacific.” The memorial can be entered from the northern, southern, and eastern, part. On the west side there is a wall that includes over 4000 golden stars to represent the soldiers that died during the war. Several scholars have written about the fact that this large structure is on the Mall’s central axes. Barbara Biesecker studies rhetoric and communication in the 20th century, and she writes that the decision to locate the memorial in the center of the National Mall appears “symptomatic of the pivotal ideological role WWII has begun to play in U.S. public culture in the present.”¹¹ However, as will be shown in this thesis, the decision to locate this memorial in the center of the National Mall generated a substantial amount of controversy. In addition, art historian Erika Doss noticed the rapid creation of the veterans memorials when she says that it seems as though the United States has been engaged in “memorial mania” for the past few decades. Regarding the World War II Memorial she says that it is an example of the need to say thank you to the World War II

¹⁰ Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayma, “Commemoration and the Politics of Recognition: The Korean War Veterans Memorial,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 42.6 (1999): 962.

¹¹ Barbara A. Biesecker, “Remembering World War II: The Rhetoric and Politics of National Commemoration at the Turn of the 21st Century,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88.4 (2002): 396.

generation; this became “a popular, and urgent, commemorative project in contemporary America” because World War II veterans in the 1990’s were dying by the minute.¹²

Even though there is a vast amount of information available on each individual monument, scholars have yet to make an elaborate comparison of the three national memorials and their processes of creation. At the first glance these memorials seem different, and the reasons for their creation also different. However, they share a similarity in the fact that they are all national memorials that seek to commemorate all the American veterans of the wars of the second half of the twentieth century, and that they mainly focus on veterans’ experiences. Naturally these experiences were different for each war, and each war also has a different history and memory to which its memorial responds. For instance, America’s role in World War II had always been celebrated by those at home, and through works such as Tom Brokaw’s *The Greatest Generation* came to be known as “the Good War.” Opposing this memory is the Vietnam War, where U.S. presence divided American society for years, and led to prominent protest. If World War II was the good war in the public’s eye, then Vietnam was obviously “the Bad War.” In between those two the Korean War lingers as one that did not stir American society in a positive or a negative way; a war that was overshadowed by the wars that preceded and followed it. The Korean War therefore remained “the Forgotten War” until the call for a memorial began in the 1980’s. Although “Good,” “Bad,” and “Forgotten” are stereotypical labels, they do illustrate how every war came with its own public memory.

In addition, the social and political circumstances that led to the call for a national memorial were not similar for the three memorials. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was

¹² Erika Doss, “War, memory, and the public mediation of affect: The National World War II Memorial and American imperialism,” *Memory Studies* 1.2 (2008): 230.

created right after the events of the war itself, whereas both the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the World War II Memorial were created many years after the facts. The veterans that called for a memorial to Vietnam hoped to find a way to mend the controversy of the Vietnam War by building a memorial that focused on soldiers' experiences in the war; not on the political and ideological reasons of the war. The veterans of the Korean War wanted a memorial to honor and remember their service. The veterans of World War II had received recognition throughout history in the shape of living memorials, and with traditional memorials such as the Iwo Jima Memorial; however, eventually they desired a new kind of public commemoration: a national memorial similar to the Vietnam and Korean War memorials they saw built and dedicated on the Mall.

The order of the creation of the memorials is important, because it shows that their processes of formation influence each other. Kirk Savage in his book on the National Mall comes the closest to a comparison when he calls the Vietnam Veterans Memorial the nation's first and only true war memorial, and says that the healing purpose of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial led directly to the creation of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and World War II Memorial.¹³ His remark shows an important similarity between the three war memorials: they were created *by* and *for* the veterans, and not to historicize or symbolize a period in American history. They are part of a movement that engaged subsequent veteran communities in America to commemorate their own war. A thorough investigation of these veteran communities and their efforts to create a war memorial will tell us something about U.S. society in the late 20th century, and the processes of war commemoration that lie

¹³ Savage, *Memorial Wars*, 281.

beneath the creation of these permanent symbols on the national landscape; symbols that are today frequently featured in events and works to remember America's wars.

How to Build a Memorial

At the onset of this project, it is important to acknowledge that the perception of a memorial is not fixed after its creation. For instance, visitors interact with it, and these people change overtime while the memorial still remains. An example is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which was controversial when it was dedicated. This changed when not only veterans, but also visitors began to leave items at the wall to commemorate their personal stories of war and loss. This is illustrative of the fact that the meaning of a memorial after its dedication can change, and that it becomes dependent on different events and people than the ones that led to its formation. To keep the scope of this project manageable, the research will therefore mainly focus on the events leading up to the formation of each of the three memorials, and will describe events after the dedication only if relevant to the current project.

Memorials represent an interesting field of research; they are often created in a completely different society than the one in which the events it seeks to commemorate took place. They therefore reflect on the past through the present, and can show us something about the present as well. According to Kirk Savage, a memorial can never be completely free from the politics at the time, because its subject matter always has to prove worthy of recognition in the public area.¹⁴ Of course this proof becomes even more mandatory when one tries to build something on a space as prominent to the United States as the National Mall. As a result, the first question that comes to mind when studying the

¹⁴ Ibid., 283.

creation of monuments is not only what war they commemorate, but what society seeks to commemorate the war. Why were these war memorials build in the latter part of the 20th century? Why were they not built earlier? What political and social forces underlie their formation?

According to John Bodnar, “the shaping of a past worthy of public commemoration in the present is contested and involves a struggle for supremacy between advocates of various political ideas and sentiments.”¹⁵ He argues that an investigation of the building of a memorial to the past can reveal the power relations of the present. Therefore, we must first answer several practical questions in order to find out how a memorial came into being. This starts with noting which institutions and organizations were involved in the approval process of the memorial. There are several important political institutions involved in memorial formation besides Congress, the body that approves the initial proposal for a war memorial. The others include the reviewing bodies that have to approve the memorial’s design and location on the National Mall. This job falls on two commissions: the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) and the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). The NCPC reviews large building projects in the capital and the areas surrounding the capital; among these projects are also the national memorials.¹⁶ The members of the NCPC include the Mayor of Washington D.C., and leaders of planning commissions in Congress. In addition, the chairman and five additional members are citizens appointed by the President or the

¹⁵ John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 15.

¹⁶ The National Capital Planning Commission, “About Us,” http://www.ncpc.gov/ncpc/Main%28T%29/About_Us%28tr%29/AboutUs.html (accessed June 25, 2012).

D.C. Mayor.¹⁷ When the CFA was established in 1910 its main job was to approve the addition of art and monuments in the capital.¹⁸ The commission's job today has expanded; it now is involved in the approval for design and locations of national monuments within the United States and international.¹⁹ Because it is the commission specifically focused on art and commemoration on federal land, the CFA meetings are usually the first place where memorial plans are presented. As such, it appears to have been more involved in the approval process of the three memorials than the NCPC. What is important to note is that the CFA's members are architects and artists; its chairman during the approval processes of the three war memorials was John Carter Brown III, the director of the National Gallery of Art.²⁰ In this thesis it will be shown that the CFA's commission members, as architects and artists, shaped certain features of the designs and their location. The final political body that plays a role in the approval process is the National Park Service (NPS), as a representative of the Secretary of Interior. NPS manages all national parks, including the National Mall, and is a bureau of the Secretary of the Interior. One of its roles therefore is to advise the Secretary of the Interior for the final approval of a building permit if the NCPC and the CFA both approve a memorial design.²¹

¹⁷ The National Capital Planning Commission, "About Us."

¹⁸ U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, "Federal and District Government Projects," <http://www.cfa.gov/federal/index.html> (accessed June 25, 2012).

¹⁹ U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, "Federal and District Government Projects."

²⁰ U.S. Commission of Fine Arts, "Members of the Commission of Fine Arts," <http://www.cfa.gov/about/bios/index.html> (accessed June 25, 2012).

²¹ National Park Service, "About Us," <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/index.htm> (accessed June 25, 2012).

Involved in the creation of the World War II Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial, but not in the creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). The commission is a body of the executive branch, and has been responsible for commemoration of the sacrifices of the U.S. Armed Forces since 1923, mostly by creating and maintaining cemeteries and memorials abroad.²² It organized design competitions and fundraising for the two war memorials. It will be discussed that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was a unique case where Congress allowed a private organization, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, to oversee the designing and fundraising.

In addition to the political institutions guiding the process, the people in society itself that seek to build the memorial are also important to take into consideration. For instance, which groups spoke out in favor of the memorial, and where did it draw its finances from? It will be shown that highly publicized events such as Watergate, the Iranian Hostage Crisis, Desert Storm, the 50th anniversary of the Second World War, and the attacks on September 11, all played a role in the establishment of the memorials, and also in raising public support and funding for the projects.

A second question that is important in the study of the creation of a memorial is: what aspects of the war does the memorial focuses on? Kirk Savage points out that the monuments and memorials on the D.C. Mall have the unique power to materialize stories.²³ By this he means that memorials are able to take personal or political stories of the war, and subsequently put them in a view for all of the public to see and interpret. However,

²² American Battle Monuments Commission, "The Commission," <http://www.abmc.gov/commission/index.php> (accessed June 25, 2012).

²³ Savage, *Monument Wars*, 4.

historian Brian Ladd argues that monuments are always highly selective about which parts of a history they choose to bring to the forefront, and that they encourage us to “remember some things and forget others.”²⁴ This concurs with memory scholar Ann Rigney’s argument that monuments, even though they appear to portray a memory out in the open, can by their fixed presence also mark “the beginning of amnesia” of parts of history.²⁵ It is therefore important to ask what happens when substantial time has passed between the creation of the memorial and the events it seeks to commemorate. In addition, a memorial can not only cause amnesia; it can also tell a completely different story. An example is the number of deaths that is listed on the Korean War Veterans Memorial, 54,246. The death toll seems similar to the 57,939 of dead and MIA soldiers edged into the Vietnam wall; however, it will be shown that the Korean War Veterans Memorial sponsors made use of a broader definition of battle death than the Vietnam Veterans Memorial did. One reason for this was that it was a way to emphasize that the experiences of soldiers in the Korean War had been similar or even harsher than for those in the Vietnam War.

Besides the events and people that are a focus of the public work, the difference between a monument and a memorial is also important to establish the meaning of a memorial. The terms monument and memorial often occur alongside one another, and are sometimes interchanged. Sturken has described memorials as a way to “never forget” an event or a person; they are usually an embodiment of grief and a way to remember the dead. In contrast, monuments commonly are “so we shall always remember,” and mark a

²⁴ Brian Ladd, *The Ghosts of Berlin : Confronting German history in the Urban Landscape* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 11.

²⁵ Ann Rigney, “The Dynamics of Remembrance: Texts Between Monumentality and Morphing,” in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, eds. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 345.

victorious event or person.²⁶ All three war edifices discussed in this project are defined as memorials, and all three of them are made for and by veterans of the wars that they represent. Sturken's definition of a memorial suggests that the dead should be prominently featured, and that grief is a theme that underlies the memorial. However, whereas the Vietnam Veterans Memorial at a first glance holds itself to this definition, the Korean War Veterans Memorial and World War II Memorial immediately strike as memorials that are more similar to Sturken's definition of a monument, because of their effort to celebrate all those who served. Professor of Anthropology Michael Rowlands addresses this problem when he argues that the distinction between a memorial and a monument is not as clear-cut, and that memorials can change in meaning during the process of creation, or after the mourning of the victims has passed.²⁷ Moreover, in all three memorials Sturken's definition of a monument starts to blend with the memorial. There are commemorations of veterans' service, and even inclusion of the homefront, which is a mix created by the politics of the time in which each memorial was formed. It will be shown that all three are a combination of memorial and monument, and that the balance for the three memorials differs for each of them.

Naturally representation is always associated with political questions. One could for instance ask why civilian casualties do not deserve recognition on the D.C. Mall. In Europe and Australia, national war memorials often do not solely focus on veterans. In the United Kingdom in 2007, the Armed Forces Memorial was dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to honor the men and women in the Armed Forces who died

²⁶ Sturken, "The Wall, the Screen, and the Image," 120.

²⁷ Michael Rowlands, "Trauma, Memory and Memorials," *British Journal of Psychotherapy* 15 (1998): 54.

while serving the United Kingdom. It is described to be “the first national memorial dedicated to the men and women of the United Kingdom Armed Forces (Regular and Reserve) killed on duty or as a result of terrorist action since the Second World War.”²⁸ However, it is part of the bigger National Memorial Arboretum, which is much more inclusive and honors all citizens who have died, served, or suffered for their country, not solely veterans. The Australian War Memorial takes the shape of a museum, which seeks to interpret the sacrifice of Australians who have died in wars across the world, and to educate the people about their experiences.²⁹ In the Netherlands, the veterans of war are mostly remembered at the yearly Remembrance of the Dead on May 4th. In this annual event in Amsterdam the Dutch gather on Dam Square (de Dam), where the National Monument (Nationaal Monument) stands as a tribute to the Dutch and international soldiers that died during wars and peace keeping missions since the Second World War. Although the memorial was built in the 1950’s to remember all the Dutch that died during the Second World War, through the annual remembrances it is now seen as a memorial that stands as a tribute to all victims of war, national and international.³⁰

These national memorials of war seem more inclusive and less specific than the three memorials we find on the National Mall. What is also noticeable about these examples is that when these memorials do focus on veterans, they feature those who died

²⁸ Veterans UK, “Armed Forces Memorial,” <http://www.veterans-uk.info/afm/index.htm> (accessed June 10, 2012).

²⁹ Australian War Memorial, “About the Australian War Memorial,” <http://www.awm.gov.au/about/> (accessed June 15, 2012).

³⁰ Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei, “Amsterdam, Nationaal Monument op de Dam,” http://www.4en5mei.nl/herinneren/oorlogsmonumenten/monumenten_zoeken/oorlogsmonument/1621 (accessed June 15, 2012).

prominently, but pay less attention to celebrating the ones who have served throughout the years.

The three veterans memorials are hardly the only war memorials in the country. Across from the Roosevelt Memorial Bridge is Arlington National cemetery; this well-known location includes a plethora of memorials to remember lives lost in war. There is for instance the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that commemorates the soldiers that died, but were never identified.³¹ Furthermore, the national cemetery includes monuments that list the names or represent those who died in America's individual wars, and a 142 trees are the so-called "living memorials" donated by organizations or family members to memorialize smaller groups.³² In addition, near the cemetery grounds there is the famous United States Marine Corps Memorial, also known as the Iwo Jima Memorial. This memorial honors all Marines that gave their lives in service of the United States, and is a sculpture of Joe Rosenthal's iconic photograph of Marines raising the American flag on Iwo Jima.³³ Again an important difference between the many war memorials at Arlington cemetery, and the three that lie in the heart of the nation's capital can be seen: the memorials on the Mall do not commemorate groups or branches of service that lost their lives in wars; they commemorate all U.S. veterans that *served* and *died* in a particular war.

³¹ Arlington National Cemetery, "The Tomb of the Unknowns," <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/TombOfUnknowns.aspx> (accessed June 25, 2012).

³² Arlington National Cemetery, "Monuments and Memorials," <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/VisitorInformation/MonumentMemorials.aspx> (accessed June 25, 2012).

³³ National Park Service, "U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial: History & Culture," <http://www.nps.gov/gwmp/usmcwmhistory.htm> (accessed June 25, 2012).

That this combination between a “monument” and “memorial” is uncommon is also evident when one looks at the memorials the ABMC currently manages. It has 24 American military cemeteries and 25 memorials across the globe and under its wing.³⁴ Its main memorials and cemeteries are for soldiers that died in the First and Second World War. There are the large American cemeteries in Flanders Fields, Somme, and Normandy, to name a few. Furthermore, the ABMC takes care of memorials for the fallen soldiers across the globe, and a few in America, of which the East Coast Memorial to World War II in New York is the most prominent one.³⁵ A look at the memorials and monuments the commission lists on its website makes the veterans memorials stand out once more, as many of them are classic structures that are either memorials to the ones that are lost, or monuments to those who served in America’s wars; they are not a combination of both.³⁶

As can be drawn from the discussion above, a plethora of forces influence the creation of a memorial. Memorials are not only made to honor the men who served in a particular war; they also prove a battleground for establishing the meaning of said war, and, because they are on the Mall, also place the wars into the story of the American nation. As a result, their creation and design is important and worthy of public and political debate. Consequently, it is not solely the soldiers that fought in a war that decide the meaning of a memorial: politicians, the general public, the media, and special interest groups all play a role in establishing the memorial and its meaning. By documenting what people were behind the formation and dedication of the monument, we can look behind the symbol and

³⁴ American Battle Monuments Commission, “Welcome!”
<http://www.abmc.gov/home.php> (accessed June 25, 2012).

³⁵ American Battle Monuments Commission, “Memorials,”
<http://www.abmc.gov/memorials/memorials.php> (accessed June 25, 2012).

³⁶ American Battle Monuments Commission, “Memorials.”

see that commemoration of a war is a complex process that intertwines not only with the war to be remembered and its veterans, but also tells us something about the society that sets out to build such a memorial, and the institutions of their collective memory and identity.

This thesis will show that the U.S. veteran became a national symbol because of the events and the depiction of the Vietnam War, and that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial marked the beginning of a veteran memorial movement. This movement influenced the subsequent creation of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the World War II Memorial in multiple ways. Not only did the Vietnam Veterans Memorial designate that the veteran should be the focus of each memorial, but it also created a design to respond to, and influenced the agencies responsible for overseeing the processes of memorial creation. In order to establish this, the history of the building of each memorial will be discussed from the moment the first initiative is made up to the point where it is dedicated, examining why U.S. society decided to build a war memorial at this point in time, and what issues were raised during the process of creating a national symbol.

Primary sources draw from the news archives of Lexis Nexis, among them articles from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times*. The *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times* throughout the years have covered the development of their city extensively, and offer a wide variety of articles analyzing the status of the D.C. Mall. The *New York Times* offers national news coverage of the subject. In addition, information is taken from the Smithsonian Institution, the National Park Service, the Library of Congress and the Congressional Legislative Database THOMAS. Furthermore, scholarly works from multiple disciplines on the memory of each war, and the legacy of its memorials are included. The memory of the war at the time the movement for a particular memorial

came about will, for the most part, be assessed through works of popular culture. This analysis will mainly feature movies and television shows, including *The Deer Hunter*, *Coming Home*, *M*A*S*H*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, and *Saving Private Ryan*. Popular culture is chosen because the persons advocating for a memorial often referred to these well-known works when they argued for their cause.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial's process of creation differs from the other two because it was much shorter, and it also started relatively soon after its war had ended. The first chapter about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial therefore focuses on the circumstances of the Vietnam War, and how they led to the formation of a memorial in a short period of time. The subsequent chapters are on the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the World War II Memorial. Because their approval processes took longer to begin, and to end, the focus of these chapters will include sections about why these wars were not commemorated earlier, and why their approval processes took such a long time.

The veterans memorial movement in Washington D.C. was a unique phenomenon in American history that energized veteran groups to stand up and fight for recognition of their war on the National Mall, a piece of land that in American politics, history and architecture always constitutes a battlefield. The first to enter into this domestic war were the Vietnam veterans.

2. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial has become a central case in memory studies; its so-called “wall that heals” received 4 million visitors in 2011, which makes it the most visited war memorial of the three (the World War II Memorial in 2011 was visited by 3.7 million people, and the Korean War Veterans Memorial by 3 million).³⁷ Although the other monuments have unique stories to tell, this memorial in particular has caught the attention of scholars. Whereas the World War II Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial only have one or two books and a handful of articles devoted to the creation of the individual monument, someone who researches the Vietnam Veterans Memorial can draw from a wide variety of scholarly work. Examples include Kristin Ann Hass’s book *Carried to the Wall*, Scott J. Wilbur’s *Vietnam Veterans since the War*, and Marita Sturken’s *Representations* article “The Wall, the Screen, and the Image.”

It is evident that the memorial has made an impact on American society. The question begs how it became so influential, especially since the war it commemorates was one Americans simply wanted to forget. Perhaps Marita Sturken is correct when she claims that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has become a symbol of healing for the experiences of the Vietnam War, and that it has shaped the way the war has been viewed and historicized.³⁸ The necessity for healing can be attributed to the national struggle to come to a unified conclusion on a war that divided American society during the turbulent times of the sixties and seventies. In addition, the memorial was a way to give the war a place in

³⁷ National Park Service, National Park Service Public Use Statistics Office, “National Capital Parks Central Reports,” <http://www.nature.nps.gov/stats/park.cfm> (accessed June 15, 2012).

³⁸ Sturken, “The Wall, the Screen, and the Image,” 118.

American history, and maybe even to draw something positive from it. This chapter will show that the only way for Americans to come together on the subject of the war was to reflect on the individual experiences of the veterans, and that this is reflected in the memorial.

What is striking about the movement towards the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is that it started relatively soon after the war's end. The first call for a memorial was in the late seventies, and the memorial was dedicated on November 11, 1982; not even a decade after the controversial war ended. This chapter will therefore start with a brief summary of American society during the years of the Vietnam War. Subsequent discussion will focus on the resurgence of the Vietnam War in American popular culture by analyzing two movies that have the Vietnam War as their main subject: *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter*. These movies are illustrative of the renewed interest for the veteran in American society, which aided the efforts to build and shape a memorial on the D.C. Mall. The final part of the chapter discusses the effort to build the memorial.

The Divided Society

The sixties in American society were a chaotic time, or, as historian David Burner puts it, a period where “restraints of all sorts shattered.”³⁹ Stories about the Civil Rights Movement, protests against the Vietnam War, and political assassinations, dominated the news; so much happened during this decade that many Americans at some point must have felt as if the entire country was about to go up in flames. The onset of antiwar protest can be attributed in part to the changes in American society since the Second World War. The baby boom that followed the war had created a new group of young Americans ready to

³⁹ David Burner, *Making Peace with the Sixties* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 5.

pursue higher education. In the sixties the student population was the highest it had ever been (by the end of the decade nearly half of Americans that were of student age had attended college).⁴⁰ Furthermore, to deal with the rapid increase, universities hired recent graduates to replace retiring faculty members as instructors. Burner explains that the new composition of both young students and faculty members made the university system more democratic; therefore, it created an opportunity for political activism to come about at campuses.⁴¹ As a result, in the sixties campuses across America would be the first to hold demonstrations against the Vietnam War. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) was a group based on university campuses that became one of the most influential student activist groups in the mid-sixties. The organization had about 15,000 members in 1963, but because of the increased intensity of the Civil Rights Movement, and Lyndon B. Johnson's decision to expand the Vietnam War, the group drew more members.⁴² Notwithstanding the ideals of part of the student population that joined the protests, Burner writes that the fact that the escalation of the war brought with the risk of being drafted also inspired many students to join the protest of the Vietnam War.⁴³ The SDS drew a considerable amount of members with its organization of the first teach-in on the government's involvement in Vietnam at the University of Michigan in March 1965. The concept of a forum on the U.S. presence in Vietnam became highly popular; by the end of the month thirty additional campuses had held their own teach-ins to protest the war.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Burner, *Making Peace with the Sixties*, 136.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Burner, 155.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 156.

Burner describes how the number war protests began to spread from the campuses across the country, but that it only began to draw significant amounts of new advocates after the Tet Offensive in 1968.⁴⁵ Although the United States repulsed this Vietcong attack, historian Gary R. Hess says that it was a significant political victory for the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese because the American public considered the fact that after years of battle the enemy could still put up such a fight a sign that the war was unwinnable.⁴⁶ What contributed significantly to this grim vision was that many Americans now owned a television and were able to witness reporters in Vietnam cover the war. U.S. historian Mitchell K. Hall studied the popular culture and news media at the time of the Vietnam War, and writes that news media tried to give an objective account of what happened during the war, and therefore they allowed themselves to be more critical of the policies of the government than they had been during earlier war efforts.⁴⁷ An important example is well-respected reporter Walter Cronkite. Millions of Americans watched at home as he said in a CBS news broadcast from Vietnam that the Tet Offensive showed that the war would end in an unsatisfying stalemate and that “the only rational way out then will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could.”⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Ibid., 208.

⁴⁶ Gary R. Hess, *Vietnam: Explaining America's Lost War* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2009), 155.

⁴⁷ Mitchell K. Hall, *Crossroads: American Popular Culture and the Vietnam Generation* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 100 – 101.

⁴⁸ Walter Cronkite, "We Are Mired in Stalemate," February 27, 1968, www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/learning_history/vietnam/cronkite.cfm (accessed April 27, 2012).

On the other hand, it is very important to realize that although war protesters were very vocal and prominent in media, there was also, as the new President Nixon in 1969 referred to, a “Silent Majority” of people that believed the war a just cause: the way to stop communist aggression.⁴⁹ Nixon’s promise that he would end the war with a sense of dignity, and that he would restore the law on the streets after the chaos of the preceding period drew a considerable amount of votes, and he became the next President.⁵⁰ Naturally, the so-called silent majority that had voted Nixon into the White House did not catch as much attention from news media as the vocal student protesters. Nevertheless, there was a substantial amount of people that felt no sympathy for the antiwar movement and supported the efforts of the soldiers in Vietnam.

One example that illustrates the divisiveness in American society over the war is the Mai Lai massacre. In 1969, *Time* and *Life* magazine published photographs that showed more than 500 innocent Vietnamese slain by the American soldiers of the Charlie Company unit. The photos shocked and stirred the nation; hearings were held to get to the bottom of what had happened, and gained a lot of publicity.⁵¹ American Studies scholar Bernd Greiner describes that in an interview, conducted on the *Walter Cronkite Show* by Mike Wallace, one perpetrator acknowledged that he had not only killed men, women, and children, but

⁴⁹ Watergate.info, “Nixon’s Address to the Nation on the Vietnam War, November 3, 1969,” <http://watergate.info/nixon/silent-majority-speech-1969.shtml> (accessed June 15, 2012).

⁵⁰ Hess, *Vietnam*, 179.

⁵¹ Bark Goodman, *My Lai* (2010), from Public Broadcasting System, *American Experience*, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/mylai/player/> (accessed April 20, 2012).

also babies.⁵² This quote became central to an antiwar poster that portrayed the acts of American soldiers as barbaric.⁵³

However, Journalism scholar Claude Cookman writes that although the images were widely spread, several Americans believed them to be a fraud created by the anti-war movement.⁵⁴ In addition, the conviction of the perpetrating Lieutenant William Calley in 1971 was highly controversial, and led to mass protests across the country from people who felt he should not have been convicted at all.⁵⁵ It was as if part of the country did not want to accept that American soldiers could be able of such horrifying acts. Their views are expressed by a song performed by Terry Nelson and C-Company, called 'The Battle Hymn of Lt. Calley', which in its lyrics stated that he was an honorable soldier who was made out to be a villain:

My name is William Calley, I'm a soldier of this land
I've tried to do my duty and to gain the upper hand
But they've made me out a villain
They have stamped me with a brand
As we go marching on
I'm just another soldier from the shores of U.S.A.
Forgotten on a battlefield ten thousand miles away
While life goes on as usual from New York to Santa Fe
As we go marching on.⁵⁶

⁵² Bernd Greiner, *War Without Fronts: The USA in Vietnam*, trans. Anne Wyburnd and Victoria Fern (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 1-2.

⁵³ *And Babies...* Museum of Modern Art. New York. Webmuseum.
http://www.moma.org/collection/object.php?object_id=7272 (accessed April 20, 2012).

⁵⁴ Claude Cookman, "An American Atrocity: The Mai Lai Massacre Concretized in a Victim's Face," *Journal of American History* (2007): 159.

⁵⁵ Cookman, "An American Atrocity," 161.

⁵⁶ Julian Wilson and James M. Smith, "Battle Hymn of Lt. Calley," Terry Nelson and C-Company, Plantation Records, PL-73 711-1466, 1971, 7-inch.

The song reached 37th place on the Billboard 100, it is illustrative of the fact that in the country there was certainly an increase of political pressure on President Nixon to act in Lieutenant Calley's behalf. According to Cookman, after the verdict the White House received over 5,000 telegrams, most asking for a pardon of Calley.⁵⁷ These pleas apparently struck a chord with the President, as he transferred Calley from prison to house arrest, where he was eventually pardoned after 3.5 years.⁵⁸

The antiwar movement drew from the My Lai Massacre the argument that Americans were perpetrating war crimes in Vietnam. Figurehead of the antiwar movement in the seventies was actress Jane Fonda. Historian Andreas Etges discusses her public image throughout the years, and says that Fonda tried to encourage soldiers to speak out against the war through antiwar entertainment shows.⁵⁹ In addition, in February of 1971, she helped to organize a forum in Detroit where Vietnam veterans could come together to discuss war crimes committed during their service in Asia.⁶⁰ She was joined for this forum by the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), an organization of Vietnam veterans that condemned the war, formed in 1967. One of the VVAW most prominent members was later Senator and Presidential candidate John Kerry. In 1971 he testified on the Detroit forum in front of the United States Committee on Foreign Relations on behalf of The Vietnam Veterans Against the War, and said:

⁵⁷ Cookman, "An American Atrocity," 161.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Andreas Etges, "Hanoi Jane, Vietnam Memory, and Emotions," in *Emotions in American History: An International Assessment* ed. Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2010), 94 – 95.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

I would like to talk on behalf of all those veterans and say that several months ago in Detroit we had an investigation at which over 150 honorably discharged, and many very highly decorated, veterans testified to war crimes committed in Southeast Asia. These were not isolated incidents but crimes committed on a day-to-day basis with the full awareness of officers at all levels of command. It is impossible to describe to you exactly what did happen in Detroit -- the emotions in the room and the feelings of the men who were reliving their experiences in Vietnam. They relived the absolute horror of what this country, in a sense, made them do.⁶¹

Thus the argument that soldiers committed atrocities in Vietnam, and that the Vietnam population suffered as a result, became an important way to protest against the war. Fonda took her protest against America's involvement in Vietnam directly into the war zone with her visit to North Vietnam in 1972. However, she did not draw a lot of sympathy for her cause in the United States because she went on Radio Hanoi and called U.S. soldiers and leaders "war criminals."⁶² She also described in a broadcast that she had met seven POWs in Hanoi and said that the soldiers looked like they had been treated well, and that some even wanted her to tell their family members to join the antiwar protest.⁶³ Obviously, because the soldiers were prisoners of the North Vietnamese, they could not speak freely; therefore, it was unable to check if their words were true. Nevertheless, Americans at home judged Fonda for her broadcasts in enemy territory, and felt she was a traitor.⁶⁴ By far the most controversial event of Fonda's visit was when she was filmed and photographed on a Northern Vietnamese Army aircraft gun, one that could have been used to shoot down

⁶¹ John Kerry, "Testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, April 23, 1971," available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/psources/ps_against.html (accessed June 15, 2012).

⁶² Etges, "Hanoi Jane," 96.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

American planes. These photographs shocked and outraged Americans at home, and her homecoming was greeted by a stream of criticism from the American press, who gave her the everlasting nickname “Hanoi Jane.”⁶⁵ According to Women Studies scholar Katherine Kinney, Jane Fonda’s “Hanoi Jane” is a symbol for a traitor to the United States. Kinney argues that this image of Fonda is based on rumors and misunderstandings, but that it has remained in use up to this day, especially among Vietnam veterans.⁶⁶ For instance, Etges writes that veterans’ stands on the Mall today still sell stickers like: “Jane: Call Home 1-800-Hanoi.”⁶⁷ However, in the seventies, she was an important voice of antiwar protest impossible to ignore.

Pictures of the atrocity in My Lai and the controversy over Calley’s trial raised public awareness of the horrors of the Vietnam War, but at the same time split the country even more as protesters used its images to express how Vietnam was a bad war, and war supporters used it to show how protesters tried to turn the war into a bad war.

Another effect of the Vietnam War on American society was that its drawn-out length led to a decline of the public’s trust in the U.S. government. Many felt the war was being grossly mismanaged by government and the high officers of the military, and that the home front was misinformed. In his call for negotiations Walter Cronkite showed television’s new tendency to take a more critical stance towards government statement, when he said: “We have been too often disappointed by the optimism of the American leaders, both in Vietnam and Washington, to have faith any longer in the silver linings they

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Katherine Kinney, “Hanoi Jane and the Editing of the 1960’s,” *Women’s Studies* 32 (2003): 73.

⁶⁷ Etges, “Hanoi Jane,” 92 – 93.

find in the darkest clouds.”⁶⁸ Whereas Cronkite shielded his criticism of the war under the banner of the government’s naïve optimism, the Pentagon Papers, published in 1971, certainly enhanced the view that the government had not been honest with the American public regarding its war policy. President Nixon would come to face his own political scandal in 1974 when he had to resign because of the Watergate affair. Without a doubt this had an incredibly negative effect on the American public’s view of politics. According to Humanities scholar Philip Jenkins, after Watergate, many viewed the American government negatively, and more attention was paid to corruption in a national effort of Americans to clean up their politics and institutions.⁶⁹

Before he left office in 1974, Nixon had already steadily decreased the number of troops as part of his ‘Vietnamization’ plan, and the Americans left Vietnam in 1973. The North Vietnamese broke the earlier established peace agreement, and Saigon fell on April 30, 1975. Vietnam’s reunion under a communist flag made Americans painfully aware that the American government had now lost its first war.⁷⁰

Soldier’s Homecoming

As can be expected, the divisive nature of the war effort affected the way soldiers were received when they came back to the United States. There are several stories regarding veterans’ homecoming, portrayed in the years after the war by news media and by the veterans themselves, that declare that the American people did not respect the service of the American soldiers. The experiences that are often mentioned in support of

⁶⁸ Cronkite, “Mired in Stalemate.”

⁶⁹ Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 48 – 49.

⁷⁰ Hess, *Vietnam*, 200 – 203.

this view are stories of mistreatment, neglect, and misunderstanding. In many of those stories there are references to the fact that the Vietnam veterans did not receive the kind of homecoming parades that veterans that came home from World War II had. Marita Sturken explains this situation when she points out that an important difference between the two groups of veterans is that those of the Vietnam War came back to America in phases, and not all at once like the World War II veterans.⁷¹ As a result, they did not receive a massive homecoming celebration; throughout the decade the war went on the soldiers that came home received all kinds of responses, depending on where and when they came home.

However, no matter what location a veteran landed, there is no doubt that he saw the ongoing protests against the war, and national news coverage and public outrage over events such as the My Lai massacre. Some veterans therefore began to feel as though the public blamed them for the lost war. It is interesting to see that these stories of disrespect only came out years later when the veteran movement became more vocal and called for recognition. In one article in May of 1978, three years after the war's end, a group of veterans blamed American society for projecting their struggle with the Vietnam War on the veterans. For instance, Vietnam veteran Joseph Zengerle said: "When I entered and dropped my bags, it was dead quiet on the airplane. Everybody was in there in civilian clothes. They just looked at me. I walked down the aisle to my seat and nobody talked to me. Nobody even smiled at me."⁷² Some even described their experiences as hostile. One by veteran Sid Smith is particularly disturbing: "When I came home in 1967 an Army dude had just been shot and killed by some protester when he got off the plane. Can you believe it? He made it

⁷¹ Sturken, "The Wall, the Image, and the Screen," 130.

⁷² Thomas Morgan, "Memorial Day Services, Activities Planned in Area; Veterans Ask Vietnam War Remembrance; Veterans Urge Look at Lessons Of Vietnam War," *Washington Post*, May 28, 1978.

through all the hell of the war and then was killed when he came *home*. When I got off that plane I had a pistol in my pocket. I was as scared as I'd ever been in Nam.”⁷³

Scholars have argued that Smith and Zengerle's stories were the exception rather than the rule. Nevertheless, according to attorney and historian Eric T. Dean Jr., the constant discussion of hostile homecomings held after the Vietnam War in the seventies and eighties led to a stereotype in the country of the traumatized veteran, who received an awful treatment after he came home from a hellish war.⁷⁴ Dean is certainly correct when he says that these stories have a powerful presence in American memory of the Vietnam veteran. Even during the 2012 *National Memorial Day Concert* this narrative came forward again; Dennis Franz depicted the story of Vietnam veteran Larry Michaelis, and said: “A women walked up to me at the airport, spit on me, and called me a baby killer. That put me right back in the war zone. I wasn't just fighting the VC (Vietcong), I was in a battle in my own country. We were hated, protested against. We hadn't done anything but our jobs, but we were blamed for everything.”⁷⁵

Dennis Franz's monologue continues with the veteran's Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, which eventually led him to wind up on the street. As Franz ends the monologue, he stresses that Americans need to be aware of homeless veterans who suffer from war trauma, and are unable to hold a steady job because of it. This represents the another narrative often associated with the Vietnam veteran's homecoming: that they were neglected. For instance, Sturken has said that many wounded ended up in VA hospitals that

⁷³ William Broyles, “Remembering a War We Want to Forget,” *Newsweek*, November 22, 1982.

⁷⁴ Eric T. Dean Jr., “The Myth of the Troubled and Scorned Veteran,” *Journal of American Studies* 26 (1992): 59.

⁷⁵ *National Memorial Day Concert*.

were frequently underfunded.⁷⁶ This is, unfortunately, not an issue solely relevant to the Vietnam War. It appears to come up throughout veterans' history. In 2004, *Christian Science Monitor* wrote that the VA was unable to provide for healthcare for the 33,000 veterans returning from Afghanistan.⁷⁷ Moreover, the American Legion today is still asking for more funding for the VA hospitals.⁷⁸ A depiction of this made its way into the 1978 movie *Coming Home*; here the main characters work at a VA hospital and their pleas for more funding are ignored by the people on the outside.⁷⁹

As for Vietnam in particular, the public's initial response to all that had happened was not to argue about right and wrong, as had been done throughout the country during the years of the war. Contradictory, the public's inclination was to not to speak of the war at all. Sturken writes that for the most part, veterans were expected to gradually make their way back into society and not to mention their experiences, as many sought to move on from the divisiveness of the war.⁸⁰ Veterans of the Vietnam War addressed why it was difficult to simply pick up their old lives after their return. In April 1982, staff writer Alice Bonner wrote a background piece for *The Washington Post*, and said that for veterans it was difficult to come home into society not only just because the war was unmentionable in American society, but also because they had a difficulty to reconnect to domestic life after what they had been through, and the bonds they had formed with their buddies in the

⁷⁶ Sturken, "The Wall, the Image, and the Screen," 130.

⁷⁷ Alexandra Marks, "Vets Return, But Not Always With Healthcare," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 10, 2004.

⁷⁸ The American Legion, "The Department of Veterans Affairs Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request," <http://www.legion.org/legislative/testimony/162728/departments-veterans-affairs-fiscal-year-2013-budget-request> (accessed June 25, 2012).

⁷⁹ *Coming Home*, DVD, directed by Hal Ashby, Beverley Hills, CA: MGM, 2002.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

battlefield.⁸¹ Director of the Veterans Center Donald Gooding stressed this difficulty in Bonner's article when he said: "When we were... in Vietnam, the guys in your unit, you automatically became very close to, because you depended on each other for your life, whereas back in the States there is no situation that warrants that type of relationship." In addition, a veteran lamented that it was impossible to explain to anyone what happened to him in the war to his family at home, and that he often felt he did not belong in America, but in Vietnam.⁸² This inability to communicate or reconnect to American society is again not unique to Vietnam veterans, but they were the first group of veterans that gained national attention by talking about these experiences. In addition, movies such as *The Deer Hunter* and *Coming Home* depicted the difficulties of reentering U.S. veterans in a way that had not been done before.

Popular Culture and the Vietnam War

Similar to the public, Hollywood did not discuss the Vietnam War in the movies that came out immediately after 1975. Maureen Orth of *Newsweek* gave a reason for this in 1977 when she said that "nobody wants to see America's worst national nightmare replayed."⁸³ However, after an initial three year period of silence, the Vietnam War quickly returned to audiences with a bang, when several influential Vietnam movies came to the big screen.

There is no doubt that Francis Ford Coppola's decision in 1976 to create a movie on the Vietnam War generated a substantial amount of interest; at the time he was already

⁸¹ Alice Bonner, "Vietnam Veterans: Rebuilding the Battlefield Bond," *Washington Post*, April 14, 1982.

⁸² Bonner, "Vietnam Vets."

⁸³ Maureen Orth, "Watching the 'Apocalypse'," *Newsweek*, June 13, 1977.

considered a wildly successful director for his movies *Godfather* (1972) and *Godfather II* (1974). The filming of *Apocalypse Now* started in 1976 on the Philippines, and Coppola himself said that he knew he was taking a risk because many people told him that the public was not ready yet for a war movie.⁸⁴ The movie was a gamble, but because of Coppola's influence, one that brought about multiple commitments to other Vietnam movies.⁸⁵ What Orth describes about the process of making the movie makes it seem as though the crew itself was living a nightmare, with a director who struggled every day with veterans' stories and how to write the ending, while he lost 60 pounds during the process, and its main actor Martin Sheen suffering a heart attack during filming.⁸⁶

The plot of the movie, an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, is well-known, and will thus only be shortly recapped here. It tells the story of a Captain Willard (Martin Sheen), who is sent on a mission by his superiors to assassinate Colonel Walter Kurtz (Marlon Brando).⁸⁷ Kurtz allegedly has lost his mind and now lives in the jungles of Cambodia. During his travels on the river in Cambodia, Willard encounters atrocities and insanity that seems reminiscent of the atrocities of the Mai Lai Massacre, images that support the view that the Vietnam War was mad, and that it left its soldiers utterly traumatized. Certainly Willard himself suffers from all he experiences; by the time he reaches Kurtz's compound little human is left in him. For the movie's climax at the compound, production designer Dean Tavoularis created, to the point of madness, a

⁸⁴ David Gelman, "Vietnam Marches Home," *Newsweek*, February 13, 1978.

⁸⁵ Gelman, "Vietnam Marches Home."

⁸⁶ Orth, "Watching the 'Apocalypse'."

⁸⁷ *Apocalypse Now: Redux*, DVD, directed by Francis Ford Coppola, Santa Monica, CA: Lionsgate, 2010.

grotesque temple of blood and skulls.⁸⁸ As Willard kills Kurtz and he utters his last words: “the horror, the horror,” the nearly three hours of this movie leave the viewer with the feeling that the Vietnam War was mad, and subsequently inspired madness in its soldiers.

Whereas *Apocalypse Now* is a movie that mainly deals with the experiences of the war, earlier movies focused on how the veteran came home from war. Among the first of these movies were *Coming Home* (1978) and *The Deer Hunter* (1978). In the 1979 both Vietnam movies took home major prizes at the Academy Awards. *The Deer Hunter* won best picture and best director. In addition, Christopher Walken received the Oscar for best supporting actor for his portrayal of *The Deer Hunter*’s Nick. *Coming Home*’s Jane Fonda and Jon Voight won best actress and best actor. There are remarkable similarities in the way these two movies handle the Vietnam war and the veterans. First, a political discussion on the war is hard to find, probably because the preceding years of divisiveness made questions of right and wrong difficult to tread, and better left unasked, or to linger under the surface. Second, the politicians and high-ranking officers are not main characters in either movie. The Watergate scandal and the lost war had, according to Jenkins, caused a very antagonistic attitude towards anything political in the ‘70s.⁸⁹ American Studies scholars John Carlos Rowe and Rick Berg claim that anything political involved in the Vietnam War mainly portrayed the government as the perpetrator of crimes, and the American public and veterans as the innocent victims of a politics that treated them without respect.⁹⁰ Finally, what can be noted about the movies is that they do not deal with the Vietnamese victims.

⁸⁸ Orth, “Watching the ‘Apocalypse’.”

⁸⁹ Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares*, 48-49.

⁹⁰ John Carlos Rowe and Rick Berg, “Introduction,” in *The Vietnam War and American Culture*, eds. John Carlos Rowe and Rick Berg, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 10.

Rowe and Berg write, in the introduction to their anthology of American popular culture of the Vietnam War, that the need to take the focus away from Vietnamese suffering and to place it on the American soldiers as part of a national trauma in American culture is a way to silence the discussion of whether the United States was not actually behaving like an imperialist during the war.⁹¹ To them it is a way to dodge the question if the war in Vietnam was right or wrong. However, what seems more likely is that it is a way to gain wide interest from the American people because the movies take their own country's veterans as the subject.

In both movies, the war is simply there and, similar to the way it's depicted in *Apocalypse Now*, it is an all-consuming, often grotesque endeavor that leaves men wounded, traumatized, or mad. Both movies describe a Vietnam veteran's experience during wartime and his homecoming. Whereas *Coming Home* is a movie about how veterans can recover, and we never actually see the war, *The Deer Hunter* is about how veterans become traumatized, and how some can never recover from it.

Coming Home

Coming Home is a movie by Hal Ashby, and it is a story about Sally Hyde (Jane Fonda), who finds new independence when her husband goes to Vietnam as a captain. She starts to work at a veterans' hospital and meets Luke (Jon Voight), a cynical veteran who has lost the feeling in both his legs. Although the affair between Luke and Sally, and Sally's emancipation, take up much of the storyline, the other part focuses on the veterans in and around the VA hospital. For her protests and the events in North Vietnam, Fonda gained a lot of attention in the national media, and many veterans that are portrayed in this movie

⁹¹ Rowe, *The Vietnam War*, 2.

would have resented her, and called her a traitor. The choice to include Fonda in any movie about the Vietnam War seems political; however, Etges rightly calls the movie Fonda's "first indirect attempt at public reconciliation" because it surprisingly steers clear from analysis of the war, and instead focuses on the experiences of the veterans.⁹²

Of both movies, *Coming Home* deals the most directly with question of a right and wrong war. In the opening scene of the movie, several veterans discuss their reasons for going to war, and they all seem to agree that the Vietnam war was a mistake. What follows is not a discussion on why the war was wrong, but how this fact affected the soldiers, as one of them cries out: "How many guys you know can make the reality and say 'what I did was wrong, and all this other shit was wrong,' and still be able to live with themselves because they're cripple for the rest of their lives?"⁹³

The movie's real focus is on how difficult it is for veterans to come home. The first time the audience sees Luke he uses crutches to angrily push forward his hospital bed, and he frequently behaves like a wild animal. During the movie he only slowly comes back into society, and out of the Vietnam War. In a way the veterans at the hospital, including Luke, initially seem reminiscent of the patients from *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, and are absolutely unable to cope with what happened to them over in Vietnam. In addition, the veterans appear to be left out of society, and neglected. Sally finds that the patients in the VA hospital are suffering from their traumas, that the staff is heavily underfunded, and that nobody on the outside seems to care. It is a feeling that is portrayed effectively by the use of 'Out of Time' from the Rolling Stones as its theme song. The song plays as the opening

⁹² Etges, "Hanoi Jane," 99.

⁹³ "Opening," *Coming Home*.

credits role and we see the crippled veterans move about the hospital. Jagger's words immediately set the mood:

You don't know what's going on
 You've been away for far too long
 You can't come back and think you are still mine
 You're out of touch, my baby
 My poor discarded baby
 I said, baby, baby, baby, you're out of time.⁹⁴

Luke is the main voice of veterans' protest in the movie, but his actions do not derive from his political views, but from the viewpoint that the war was not worth the effort because of what it did to him and his buddies in the VA hospital. The one war protest Luke actually orchestrates (chaining himself to the gate of the recruitment agency) is elicited by the suicide of a veteran friend in the hospital. In the final minutes of the movie Luke has found his way back into society, and he speaks in front of a high school class, who now have the choice if they want to enlist, and says:

I know some of you guys are going to look at the uniformed man and you're going to remember all the films, and you're going to think about the glory of other wars and think about some vague patriotic feeling and go off and fight this turkey too. (...) I'm here to tell you that I have killed for my country or whatever. And I don't feel good about it. Because there's not enough reason, man. To feel a person die in your hands or to see your best buddy get blown away. I'm here to tell you, it's a lousy thing, man. I don't see any reason for it.⁹⁵

Luke's quote shows the essence of the movie: that the Vietnam War significantly damaged the veteran. As he says himself, Luke went to the Vietnam war with an idealistic notion of fighting for his country. However, his experiences in the Vietnam war have led him to believe that whatever feelings of patriotism he may have had about the Vietnam war, that they are now unable to balance out his own traumatic experiences. To him, subsequent

⁹⁴ Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, "Out of Time," Rolling Stones, *Aftermath*, Decca LK/SKL 4786, 1966, 7 inch.

⁹⁵ "Closing Scene," *Coming Home*

generations should not be put through it anymore, because of the damage it does to the individual person.

The Deer Hunter

Michael Cimino's three-hour film *The Deer Hunter* is about a small town Russian immigrant community in Clairton, Pennsylvania, that is turned upside down when three of its members, Michael (Robert DeNiro), Nick (Christopher Walken) and Steven (John Savage) go off to fight in the Vietnam War.⁹⁶ In the first hour, the movie builds up the tight and safe environment of the Clairton community; a place where men work hard and subsequently go to the bar to sing songs like "Can't Take My Eyes Off You." The cheerful and traditional mood of the town is only increased by the elaborate depiction of Steven's traditional wedding. As a farewell event, the men and their friends go into the mountains to hunt deer together. As he distances himself from the other party members, Michael tells Nick that "a deer has to be taken with one shot," and proceeds to actually kill a deer with one bullet only a few minutes later. After this the men go on a victory drive back to Clairton, where Nick tells Michael that he loves Clairton, and makes him promise that if anything were to happen to him, Michael will bring him home.

From this point on the film moves abruptly into Vietnam. The first images include how a Vietnamese soldier, who has just thrown a grenade down a shelter full of innocent South Vietnamese, is torched by Michael's flamethrower. Michael later is reunited with Nick and Steve; he barely recognizes them because his experiences in the war have already made the Clairton days seem like a distant past. When a group of North Vietnamese catches the three soldiers, the one shot of the deer hunt becomes part of one of the most controversial

⁹⁶ *The Deer Hunter*, DVD, directed by Michael Cimino, Los Angeles, CA, 1998.

scenes in the movie when the Vietnamese force their American prisoners to play Russian roulette against each other. Michael, Nick, and Stevie all shoot a gun at their head at least once while the North Vietnamese laugh at their expense. Nick and Michael eventually risk their lives by taking turns at roulette until they are sure that the next three chambers all hold bullets, and they are then able to make their escape.

The characters deal with this disturbing experience in their separate ways when they leave Vietnam, but all three handle it alone. Nick loses his mind; he becomes a professional Russian roulette player in Saigon. The money he makes he sends to Steven, who is in a VA hospital for physical injuries. Steven shuts his wife and the rest of the world out of his life, because after what he went through he becomes too frightened to deal with anything. Michael's homecoming to Clairton can best be described as awkward; he can't bring it upon himself to go to his welcome home party, or even to talk to the people in the supermarket. He has lost his ability to connect to the people in the community after all that has happened to him. This movie thus not only depicts what veterans encountered in the Vietnam War, but also that how it caused veterans to disconnect on many levels. When Michael comes to Saigon to find Nick after he has been missing for a year, he does not recognize him. As they face off in a mad Russian roulette against each other, Michael tries to convince Nick to stop the game and to come home. When he receives no response, he asks him if he remembers the mountains where they went hunting. This causes Nicky to smile and say: "one shot", before he lifts the gun up to lose his final game of Russian roulette; he becomes one of the disconnected veterans who can never come home again.

After this there is Nicky's funeral in Clairton, which is every bit as traditional as the wedding in the beginning, except that the characters that were so untroubled then are now burdened by everything that has happened. They come to the same bar where they

celebrated their deer hunt in the beginning, and the scene is marked by the tension that nothing is being said, and that nothing can be said. One community member starts humming the bars of 'God Bless America', and slowly, but surely, the others join in until they are all singing together. When the song is over they toast to Nick, and the movie ends on a note that seems more positive than the previous scenes, but one that is at the same time highly ambiguous. For the ending to *The Deer Hunter* has been interpreted in different ways. Roger Ebert wrote in a review for *The Chicago Sun Times* : "I do want to observe that the lyrics of 'God Bless America' have never before seemed to me to contain such an infinity of possible meanings, some tragic, some unspeakably sad, some few still defiantly hopeful."⁹⁷ Jenkins claims that the song is used in patriotic fashion; a representation of the movie's sympathy towards the American cause.⁹⁸ However, the way the song is used does not come off as mere patriotism. What appears to be the most important aspect to the song is that they all sing it together, and that it for a moment is able to connect them again. It is a song from they have undoubtedly sung with pride throughout their lives, attached to the thought of the American meritocratic dream they lived at the beginning of the movie. Because of all the madness of war that has raged through the community, the song in the final scene sounds hollow, perhaps even ironic, but it is still uplifting in the fact that they can all relate to it. What this movie is really about then is a feeling of community; how connection to others might be the only way one can pull through after horrible experiences, and how difficult it is for a veteran, but also for the home front, to regain that connection after the experiences of the Vietnam War.

⁹⁷ Roger Ebert, "The Deer Hunter," *Chicago Sun Times*, March 9, 1979, <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19790309/REVIEWS/903090301/1023> (accessed May 10, 2012).

⁹⁸ Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares*, 105.

Movement Towards a Memorial

Movies such as *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter* show that the Vietnam veteran became part of national conversation again. The public's discussion of the Vietnam War went from political controversy and silence, to a discussion on the individual experiences of the Americans that fought in it. In the years that followed papers noted the increased attention to the Vietnam veteran. For instance, in 1979 an editorial of the *Washington Post* called for more attention to Vietnam veterans, and said that "the public has meanwhile had the opportunity to have its consciousness of the travails of veterans raised, or created, by several Hollywood movies."⁹⁹ In an op-ed piece Veterans Administration director Max Cleland wrote: "The Vietnam veteran has recently been the focus of several highly publicized books and movies. I hope this signals a desire by the American public to take a fresh look at those who served in that war."¹⁰⁰

Veterans themselves also became more vocal than they had been during and immediately after the Vietnam War. In 1978, the Vietnam Veterans of America was formed; its leader, Bobby Muller, held a speech in June of 1980 where he encouraged members to stand up for their rights in American society when he said:

People tend to look on us as a burden. I say, forget it! Look on us as a resource. Look on us as survivors. Look on us as those who have learned at a terrible price the wisdom and the lessons that our experience has given us. We've got the strength. We've got the knowledge. We've got the caring. Let's go out and get it, folks.¹⁰¹

President Carter also acknowledged the Vietnam veteran when he said at Arlington Cemetery, on Veterans Day 1978, that the veterans "were no less brave because our nation

⁹⁹ "Memorial Day," *Washington Post*, May 28, 1979.

¹⁰⁰ Max Cleland, "A Tale of Two Veterans," *Washington Post*, May 28, 1979.

¹⁰¹ Philip Geyelin, "Vietnam Vets Will Not Go Away," *Washington Post*, June 5, 1980.

was divided about that war, they were not welcomed back as other heroes have been, but often ignored as though their presence among us was an awkward reminder of the anguish that accompanied that war at home.”¹⁰² At that point, veteran groups and politicians made suggestions for a Vietnam Memorial yearly, but there was never one that received approval from the National Park Service. It seems that it was only until the Vietnam veterans became part of a national discussion that politicians began to put a memorial for this group at the top of their agendas.¹⁰³

Necessary for the movement to come about as well were the efforts of Jan C. Scruggs. Scruggs had served in the United States Army in the Vietnam War in 1969 until he was and went home. He proceeded to finish his graduate studies in psychology at American University.¹⁰⁴ *The Deer Hunter's* grim depiction of a community hurt by the Vietnam War inspired him; he said that after seeing the movie he could not sleep, and memories of Vietnam and all the friends he lost came back to him. The next morning he woke up having conceived the idea to create a memorial that would include all the names of the soldiers killed, so no one would forget them.¹⁰⁵ He felt veterans needed a place to go to, in order to heal from tragic events of the past. In addition, he believed the country was deeply affected by the Vietnam War, and he hoped that a memorial might bring about a step in national

¹⁰² Brooks Jackson, *Associated Press*, November 11, 1978.

¹⁰³ Paul Hodge, “Monuments; Space for Statues is Scarce; From the Mall to Lafayette Park... The Space for New Statues is Overbooked,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 1979.

¹⁰⁴ Josh Halpren, “The Wall That Heals,” *American University News*, March 30, 2011 <http://www.american.edu/cas/news/jan-scruggs-vietnam-veterans-memorial-fund.cfm> (accessed June 15, 2012).

¹⁰⁵ Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman, “The Statue near the Wall: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Art of Remembering,” *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 1 (1987): 8.

healing, as he said: “The whole idea behind this is a societal acknowledgement of the sacrifices and a national reconciliation after the war.”¹⁰⁶ According to Scruggs, the memorial would have to be a place where one could go to whether one had been for or against the war. His intention was therefore to build a monument that commemorated only the veterans; a monument free from the politics and politicians of the war itself.¹⁰⁷ Thus, similar to the movies previously discussed, the focus on the suffering of the veterans was a way to bind the different factions of American society together, and to help them to move on. He established the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Foundation (VVMF) in April 1979 to raise money from the public because he wanted as little political influence on the memorial as possible.¹⁰⁸

Congressional Approval and Location

The easy approval process for the memorial the VVMF encountered in Congress demonstrates the popularity of the memorial idea; the Senate passed the bill for a Vietnam Veterans Memorial on April 30, 1980, with all 100 Senators as sponsors.¹⁰⁹ The site of the memorial did become a point of discussion in the legislative process. The VVMF made a case for Constitution Gardens because it was a prominent location near the Lincoln Memorial. This choice seems surprising, because as Kirk Savage said, the Lincoln Memorial had, since

¹⁰⁶ Jan Scruggs, interview by Vietnam magazine, *Historynet.com*, December 7, 2009. <http://www.historynet.com/interview-with-jan-scruggs-vietnam-veterans-memorial-fund.htm> (accessed April 17, 2012).

¹⁰⁷ Mike Feinsilber, *Associated Press*, July 3, 1979.

¹⁰⁸ Hass, *Carried to the Wall*, 10-11.

¹⁰⁹ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, “Bill Summary & Status 96th Congress (1979 – 1980) S.J.RES.119,” <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d096:S.J.RES.119:@@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

the sixties, become a place known for public protest, and more specifically, antiwar protest.¹¹⁰ VVMF member Robert Doubek explained that the VVMF had chosen the site of mass protest on purpose because the fact that it would now be the location of a memorial to the war marked reconciliation.¹¹¹ However, the two approval bodies, the CFA and the NPS, objected to this notion. The NPS was reluctant because it wanted to keep the site free from memorials; the CFA felt that to pick the site in Congress and bypass the expertise of the reviewing committees would set a dangerous precedent where memorials ran the risk of being built in inappropriate spaces.¹¹² Their objections were heard in the House when it added an amendment to the resolution that the Senate had passed; it changed the wording of the proposed legislature from “two acres of public land in the Constitution Gardens” to “two acres of public land in West Potomac Park in the District of Columbia.”¹¹³ The bill detailed that pending the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, the CFA, and the NCPC, the preferred site was Constitution Gardens; therefore, it now included the reviewing bodies in the process of site selection.¹¹⁴ It appears that this was everything that the commissions had aimed for; they made no further objections to the selected location.

On July 1, 1980, President Carter signed into law S.J.RES.119, and authorized the creation of a national Vietnam Veterans Memorial through the funds of the VVMF. While he signed the bill, President Carter said that he felt that the American attitude towards

¹¹⁰ Savage, *Monument Wars*, 252.

¹¹¹ Ward Sinclair, “Vietnam Memorial: Another Symbol of Frustration for Vets,” *Washington Post*, May 26, 1980.

¹¹² Paul Hodge, “Planning Snags Delay Action on New Memorials,” *Washington Post*, February 14, 1980.

¹¹³ Sinclair, “Vietnam Memorial: Another Symbol of Frustration for Vets.”

¹¹⁴ THOMAS, “S.J.RES.119.”

veterans had changed for the better because the initial silence surrounding the war had now made way for recognition of those who served in it.¹¹⁵ It is unique that the VVMF was appointed as the group responsible for the establishment of the memorial, and not a governmental agency such as the ABMC. We will later see that other private organizations would not receive the same amount of trust from Congress, and that the responsibility for both the Korean and World War II Memorial was placed in the hands of the ABMC. In addition, Congress further streamlined the approval process when it ordered that every step in the memorial process had to be approved by the NPS, the CFA, and the NCPC.¹¹⁶

Fundraising

Raising money for the memorial initial proved more difficult than raising political support. After the VVMF's formation in 1979, the organization immediately wrote to veterans organizations to collect the necessary funds for the memorial; at the time they estimated the costs at 1 to 2 million dollars.¹¹⁷ The organization wanted its funds to come from public money for the same reason that it did not want the involvement of the federal building commission ABMC: they saw the memorial as a social object that would bring the people together and heal the divisiveness of the war; consequently, they wanted as little federal involvement as possible.¹¹⁸ Scruggs initially thought that he could raise money effortlessly through veterans organizations; however, a few months later, in July of 1979, he had to admit that it did not come so easy when his campaign had gathered a mere 188.50

¹¹⁵ Bernard Weinraub, "Carter Hails Veterans of Vietnam in Signing Bill For Memorial," *New York Times*, July 2, 1980.

¹¹⁶ THOMAS, "S.J.RES.119."

¹¹⁷ Washington Dateline, *Associated Press*, May 26, 1979.

¹¹⁸ Feinsilber, *Associated Press*, July 3, 1979.

dollars at that point.¹¹⁹ With new techniques, which included direct-mail appeals on Veterans and Memorial days, in 1980, the VVMF had raised \$ 850,000 of the 3.5 million it now considered necessary by early 1981. This was still quite modest, for the fund had been in existence since 1979.¹²⁰

Sociologist Wilbur J. Scott argues that the Iranian Hostage helped to raise awareness amongst and for the Vietnam veterans. The hero's welcome the hostages received when they arrived in D.C. on January 26, 1981 angered several Vietnam veterans; the public outpour of support for the hostages reminded them that they never received such a homecoming after their years of active service.¹²¹ Wilbur is certainly correct when he argues that the attention for the hostages did not go unnoticed among Vietnam veterans. For instance, at a 1981 parade of Vietnam veterans organized to protest the veterans' treatment at the time of homecoming, Vietnam Veterans Against the War leader Ron Kovic said that: "If we use the word 'hero,' we should use it for the 55,000 Americans who died in Vietnam. I think the word hero is used too lightly. It is time Americans welcome home our hostages from our folly in Southeast Asia."¹²² This kind of criticism was covered in the media, and throughout the rest of the year donations to the VVMF came in more readily.¹²³ Most of the money probably came from veterans; for example, the largest veteran

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Paul Hodge, "An Unpopular War; A Lasting Memorial; A Memorial to Those Who Died in Vietnam," *Washington Post*, February 12, 1981.

¹²¹ Wilbur J. Scott, *Vietnam Veterans Since the War: The Politics of PTSD, Agent Orange, and the National Memorial*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2004), 132 – 137.

¹²² Iver Peterson, "Vietnam Veterans Parade in Shadow of 52 Hostages," *New York Times*, February 1, 1981.

¹²³ Wilbur J. Scott, *Vietnam Veterans Since the War: The Politics of PTSD, Agent Orange, and the National Memorial*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 2004), 132 – 137.

organization, American Legion, raised 1 million dollars for the project. By early 1982 the Legion's donation put the fund at the 7 million dollars it now deemed necessary for construction; this was certainly a remarkable increase from the 850,000 dollars the fund had gathered in the previous year.¹²⁴

The Competition

In an editorial dated May 18, 1981, the *New York Times* discussed how the Vietnam War era had made it much more difficult to design a monument:

The uniforms change, the heroes sit or stand or occasionally ride a horse, but the message remains the same: a noble cause well served. Nowadays, though, patriotism is a complicated matter. Ideas about heroism, or art, for that matter, are no longer what they were before Vietnam. And there is certainly no consensus yet about what cause might have been served by the Vietnam War.¹²⁵

What the editorial claims is that the Vietnam War was difficult to commemorate because no one agreed on the war's outcome; therefore, it was impossible to choose a traditional narrative of victory, patriotism, or heroism. On the other hand, the VVMF already had a strong vision on what elements of the Vietnam War should be dedicated. On Veterans Day 1980 the VVMF wrote out the largest public design competition ever to be held for a memorial. Previous competitions for memorials were only open to architects and professionals; this competition was open to everyone. Scruggs said that the fund chose an open design as a way to involve more people.¹²⁶

In its demands the fund said that the memorial should:

¹²⁴ Francis X. Clines and Bernard Weinraub, "Briefing," *New York Times*, January 27, 1982.

¹²⁵ "Remembering Vietnam" *New York Times*, May 18, 1981.

¹²⁶ Maggie Lewis, "Vietnam War Memorial: 'Violence Healed Over By Time'," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 6, 1981.

1. Be reflective and contemplative in character.
2. Harmonize with the proposed site at Constitution Gardens.
3. Contain the names of those who had died in the conflict or who were still missing.
4. Make no political statement about the war.¹²⁷

In these demands again becomes visible the absence of ideology and politics from the war's memorial, and its focus on the individual veteran that suffered.

The 1421 contestants that submitted a design stayed anonymous when the judges reviewed gathered to pick a winner; this ensured that they could make an objective decision. On May 7, 1981, the jury announced that the unanimous winner was the design by 21-year old Yale architecture student Maya Lin.¹²⁸ Lin's design was for an undergraduate class on funerary architecture. Ironically, when she submitted her vision for the memorial to her professor she only received a B. The professor subsequently entered his own design into the contest but he won no prize.¹²⁹

When she designed the monument Lin purposefully did not read about the events of the Vietnam war; instead, she focused on the commemoration of the soldiers only. Because she was only 21 years old, Maya Lin when she grew up never knew much about the Vietnam War. Her design for the memorial was therefore inspired by a feeling she had during a visit to the memorial's proposed site at Constitution Gardens. When she saw the field of grass, she said:

I had a simple impulse to cut into the earth. I imagined taking a knife and cutting into the earth, opening it up, an initial violence and pain that in time would heal. The grass would grow back, but the initial cut would remain a pure flat surface in the

¹²⁷ Hass, *Carried to the Wall*, 13.

¹²⁸ Scott, *Vietnam Veterans Since the War*, 138.

¹²⁹ B. Drummond Ayres Jr., "Yale Senior, A Vietnam Memorial, and a Few Ironies," *New York Times*, June 29, 1981.

earth with a polished, mirrored surface, much like the surface on a geode when you cut it and polish the edge.¹³⁰

She said that she considered additions to her idea of a simple gash in the landscape, but that she felt that extra elements would subtract from the initial power of her inspiration. Consequently, Lin submitted her idea to have two long cuts of black reflecting granite stone in the grass of the National Mall. These two walls would list the names of the 57,939 dead and MIA soldiers, and start at the center where the two walls meet, with the left panel listing deaths from the beginning of the Vietnam war in July 1959, and the right panel beginning with the final death in May 1975. This would make the center of the monument a reflective place where the beginning and end of the Vietnam war would come together. Judges said that her impressive accompanying text made up more than half of the victory for her project. It opens as follows:

Walking through this park-like area, the memorial appears as a rift in the earth, a long, polished, black stone wall, emerging from and receding into the earth. Approaching the memorial, the ground slopes gently downward and the low walls emerging on either side, growing out of the earth, extend and converge at a point below and ahead. Walking into this grassy site contained by the walls of the memorial we can barely make out the carved names upon the memorial's walls. These names, seemingly infinite in number, convey the sense of overwhelming numbers, while unifying these individuals into a whole.¹³¹

On the jury were no veterans, only architects and sculptors, which is an interesting choice as to the VVMF's goal of including all of American society. Because the VVMF selected of a jury composed solely of professional designers, the winning submission was ensured to be one that would meet the demands of architects. Perhaps because of this, Maya Lin, as a young

¹³⁰ Maya Lin, "Making the Memorial," *New York Review of Books*, November 2, 2000.

¹³¹ Maya Lin, "Original Competition Submission," Digital film, Library of Congress, American Memory Digital Collection, <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/i?ammem/awhbib:@field%28NUMBER+@band%28cph+3g04915%29%29:displayType=1:m856sd=cph:m856sf=3g04915> (accessed April 20, 2012).

architecture student, could win. It begs the question whether a jury composed of veterans or the general public would have made the same decisions. The members of the jury were above the war, sort of speak; thus, they also made choices with an eye on which memorial would fit the Mall best, and not solely on which memorial dedicated the soldiers in the best possible way.¹³²

Unsurprisingly, architecture critics were, like the jury, overtly positive on the memorial's design. Renowned architecture critic Benjamin Forgey wrote in the *Washington Post*: "Those impressive, long black walls, set into the earth, are perfect. They will invite the viewer to walk down the hill. They will demand a response without dictating what it should be. They will insist simply that he reflect in some way upon the nature of the sacrifices made."¹³³ He reflects the opinion of the judges, who said that they chose a minimalist design to allow people to interpret in their own way. This is similar to what Lin says in her design statement, namely that: Brought to a sharp awareness of such a loss, it is up to each individual to resolve or come to terms with this loss.¹³⁴

Marita Sturken writes that the listing of the soldiers' names in chronological order of their death was initially protested by veterans; they feared that people would be unable to find the names of their lost family members. However, Sturken writes that the veterans changed their minds when they saw the names of the killed soldiers. They realized that alphabetically the list would turn those who died into mere statistics; more than 600 listed

¹³² Wolf Von Eckardt, "Of Heart & Mind; Vietnam War Memorial; The Serene Grace of The Vietnam Memorial," *Washington Post*, May 16, 1981.

¹³³ Benjamin Forgey, "Model of Simplicity, Another Look at the Memorial Model," *Washington Post*, November 14, 1981.

¹³⁴ Henry Allen, "Epitaph to Vietnam; Monument to the Forgotten; Memorial Design is Selected," *Washington Post*, May 7, 1981.

were named Smith, and there were sixteen men called James Jones.¹³⁵ Besides the question of the names, there was a striking lack of controversy when the VVMF unveiled the memorial's design. This would all change in the year to come. Maya Lin later said that "the distrust, the fact that no veterans had been on the jury, the unconventionality of the design and the designer, and a very radical requirement made by the Vietnam veterans to include all the names of those killed made it inevitable that the project would become controversial."¹³⁶ Not only did the makeup of the jury lead to discussion, the design started a fierce debate on how war was supposed to be commemorated in the United States, for the Vietnam Wall was the definition of a memorial in its focus on those who were lost, and now other groups sought to implement a monumental part as well.

The first notable protest came forward at the end of 1981, from Tom Carhart, a Vietnam veteran and a former volunteer for the VVMF. He tried to convince the CFA that the memorial should not be built because it represented "a black gash of sorrow." Carhart wished instead for something "white and traditional" to honor the soldiers.¹³⁷ His testimony to the CFA is summarized in an article for *The New York Times* dated October 24, 1981, where he is quoted to have said the following:

If this design is built, there will be a black wall 400 feet long, sunk 10 feet into the ground in the form of a V. The legs of this V will be directed toward, and form a triangle on the Mall with, the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial. These others are well-known edifices of white marble rising in massive splendor to honor great American heroes.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Sturken, "The Wall, the Image, and the Screen," 127.

¹³⁶ Lin, "Making the Memorial."

¹³⁷ Tom Carhart, "Insulting Vietnam Vets," *New York Times*, October 24, 1981.

¹³⁸ Carhart, "Insulting Vietnam Vets."

The fact that Carhart compares the memorial to the other monuments on the Mall reflects one of the reasons the memorial caused controversy: it was completely different from anything that had been placed on the Mall before. Philosopher Charles L. Griswold analyzes the monuments on the National Mall and concludes that the design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial differed from the other monuments because it lacked classical influences and a focus on American heroism. It is therefore understandable that Lin's design caused protest, because it was completely different from all the standards that had been set for the Mall memorials.¹³⁹ In addition, Carhart objects to the fact that the memorial is black; another difference from the other memorials on the Mall; a that color that to Carhart signified a loss and not an honorable tribute to the veterans' service.

Even though the memorial refrained from making political statements about right and wrong, its deviance from other memorials on the Mall made it seem to several conservative voices reminiscent of the anti-war movement. Benjamin Forgey therefore is correct when he writes that the fight for the memorial's design resembled the controversy over the meaning of the Vietnam War itself.¹⁴⁰ Carhart in his testimony certainly recalled the divisiveness of the Vietnam War in American society; he criticized the VVMF for its selection of jury members who had seen no service in the Vietnam War. He felt that this meant that their choice of design was inspired by the political war that raged through the country, and not by the experiences of those who fought in the actual war.¹⁴¹ He emphasized this when he said that "maybe black walls sunk into a trench would be an

¹³⁹ Charles L. Griswold, "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Washington Mall: Philosophical Thoughts on Political Iconography," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1986): 705-706.

¹⁴⁰ Benjamin Forgey, "A Mood is Built; Stillness and Force in the Vietnam Memorial," *Washington Post*, November 13, 1982.

¹⁴¹ Carhart, "Insulting Vietnam Vets."

appropriate statement of the political war in this country. But that is not the war whose veterans the fund has been authorized to memorialize.”¹⁴² James Webb, a Vietnam veteran who became a successful author with his novel *Fields of Fire*, was at the time a staff member of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, and he agreed with Carhart’s protest that the memorial was more of a reflection of the tensions at home. Webb said that he did not like the exclusion of traditional elements, such as the American flag, and he even predicted that the memorial would become a site for future war protestations, as it had been in the past.¹⁴³ Art critic Thom Wolfe even accused the memorial of being a symbol for the home protest movement, when he said the memorial was “a tribute to Jane Fonda” in a November 1982 article for *The Washington Post*.¹⁴⁴ Conservative voices from the *National Review* made a similar comment when they said that the V-shape of the memorial resembled the peace sign of the antiwar movement.¹⁴⁵

Carhart’s main objection to the committee, was not on that it was an emblem of the protest movement at home, or that it was different from all other monuments on the Mall; he protested that the jurors had chosen a design that focused on the 57,000 soldiers that had died, and not on the ones who had served honorably and returned to the United States. Carhart said: “The only underground memorial I know of is a tomb. Yes, we lost 57,000, but

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Phil McCombs, “Ground Broken for Shrine To Vietnam War Veterans; Reconciliation Keynotes ceremony,” *Washington Post*, March 27, 1982.

¹⁴⁴ Tom Wolfe, “Art Disputes War: The Battle of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” *Washington Post*, October 13, 1982.

¹⁴⁵ William Greider, “Memories That Shape Our Future; If Vietnam Is Behind Us, Why Are 300,000 Kids Dodging the Draft?” *Washington Post*, November 8, 1981.

what of the millions of us who rendered honorable service and came home?"¹⁴⁶ It was as if the Vietnam Memorial up to that point had been a true memorial up to that point, through its focus on grief and loss, and that now the monumental part of honoring those who served had to be implemented as well.

Although Carhart's remarks initially only led to an adamant affirmation of the strength of Lin's design from the architects of the CFA, from this point on there was more room for voices that criticized the memorial in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*.¹⁴⁷ Other veterans joined Carhart, and said that they also felt the design did not do justice to their service. Their calls became pervasive, and they forced the VVMF to call a press conference to address these charges; it promised that the memorial would include inscriptions to honor all those who fought in the war, not solely the ones who died.¹⁴⁸ This addition was not enough; the amount of criticism kept growing, and it seemed nearly impossible that someone on Capitol Hill would not begin to speak out as well. Besides Tom Carhart and James Webb, among the protesters was Texas billionaire Ross Perot. He was a man of considerable political influence, and one of the biggest contributors to the memorial fund, but he now had a group of veterans behind him who felt that the memorial was anti-heroic and anti-war.¹⁴⁹ A later news article in the *Washington Post* portrays Perot as a man who relentlessly pursued changes in the memorial after he was

¹⁴⁶ Carhart, "Insulting Vietnam Vets."

¹⁴⁷ Jack Eisen, "Commission Rejects Veteran's Protest, Reapproves Vietnam Memorial Design," *Washington Post*, October 14, 1981.

¹⁴⁸ Brad Knickerbocker, "Determined Viet Vets Won't Let Washington Forget," *Christian Science Monitor*, October 29, 1981.

¹⁴⁹ Leslie Phillips, "Wall: A test of wills // Perot reportedly fought Vietnam memorial as designed," *USA Today*, June 16, 1992.

disappointed by the initial design. When Perot understood that the basic design would not be changed, he pushed for additions to the memorial, and eventually got the ear of Secretary of the Interior James Watt.¹⁵⁰ Watt responded to Perot and other voices that wanted the memorial to look more similar to the traditional monuments on The Mall. He refused to give the VVMF a building permit unless it included elements that honored veterans' service in the war.¹⁵¹

The Monument Part

Scruggs reluctantly complied with Watt's roadblock, but he let it be known through the *New York Times* that he was frustrated that politicians could exert such an influence on a project that did not have any governmental money involved, and that the ones hurt were the parents who now had to wait longer before they could visit a memorial for the sons they lost in Vietnam.¹⁵² However, he had no choice but to compromise, since the memorial's location was still on federal land. In a negotiation between the VVMF and its opponents, including Perot, the fund decided that in order to advance the memorial's creation changes had to be made to the design.¹⁵³ The concession the VVMF made was to add a flagpole and a larger-than-life statue to the memorial; this would give the memorial a few elements of a traditional war monument as well. The change in design gained the approval of Secretary Watt. However, construction was still delayed because the additions had to be reviewed by

¹⁵⁰ John Mintz, "Perot's War, Viet Vets' Tombstone'; Memorial Modified After Bitter Fight," *Washington Post*, July 7, 1992.

¹⁵¹ Paul Hodge, "Vietnam Vets' Memorial May Begin in Two Weeks," *Washington Post*, February 19, 1982.

¹⁵² Clines, "Briefing."

¹⁵³ Mintz, "Perot's War."

the NCPC and the CFA.¹⁵⁴ The NCPC approved the changes on March 5, 1982, only under the condition that they would not interfere with the design the committee initially accepted.¹⁵⁵ The CFA approved the changes five days later, but said that a discussion should be held on the placement of the new elements.¹⁵⁶ Watt then gave the VVMF permission to start the building process with the location of the statue yet to be decided. In addition, Watt called for an inscription that would honor all 2.7 million soldiers that had fought in the Vietnam War with texts like “we are honored to have had the opportunity to serve under difficult circumstances.”¹⁵⁷ Although decisions still had to be made on the particulars of the additions, the compromises made finally allowed ground to be broken on March 27 of 1982. The set date for dedication was Veterans Day of the same year, and ceremonies were already being planned while the statue still had to be designed; it became clear that the statue would be added after the memorial was already dedicated.

For the addition of the statue, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund humored the group of protesters that felt that a jury of architects was unable to select a design that showed veterans’ experiences; as a result, it installed four Vietnam veterans to oversee the design.¹⁵⁸ This committee even included author James Webb.¹⁵⁹ The panel looked at the

¹⁵⁴ Benjamin Forgey, “Memorial Delayed, Vietnam Memorial to Be Reviewed,” *Washington Post*, February 27, 1982.

¹⁵⁵ Benjamin Forgey, “Vietnam Vet Memorial Action,” *Washington Post*, March 5, 1982.

¹⁵⁶ Benjamin Forgey, “Commission Acts on Vets Memorial Design,” *Washington Post*, March 10, 1982.

¹⁵⁷ Jean White, “Watt Okays a Memorial Plan; Site of Statue, Flagpole Still to be Decided; Watt Approves Memorial Plan With Changes,” *Washington Post*, March 12, 1982.

¹⁵⁸ Paul Goldberger, “Vietnam Memorial: Questions of Architecture; An Appraisal,” *New York Times*, October 7, 1982.

contestants who had entered designs for the memorial, and they chose third place winner Frederick Hart to sculpt the statue.¹⁶⁰ Hart said he wanted to make sure that the idea of the original design would remain intact, and that his sculpture would “evoke the experience of Vietnam veterans and pays proper tribute to their faithful service.”¹⁶¹ James Webb later called the struggle to change the design of the memorial “the nastiest thing I ever got involved with.” He explained that behind the scenes Scruggs and his VVMF fought any change they tried to make to the design, and that they had to press hard to have the statue show more than one soldier.¹⁶² The reason Webb wanted multiple soldiers was that he felt that an African American soldier should be represented as well.¹⁶³ This marks the one instant in the process where ethnic identification became important to the design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; in the next chapter it will be shown that this was an important debate for the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

Not all struggles went on outside the public debate, as Maya Lin fiercely protested Frederick Hart’s statue, and said that he undermined her design even before he had finished it, or decided where it should be placed. She allegedly said that Hart drew “mustaches on other people’s portraits.”¹⁶⁴ Both Scruggs and Hart tried to keep cool; Scruggs said that he

¹⁵⁹ Benjamin Forgey, “Hart’s Statue Unveiled; A Contrast of Bronze & Granite,” *Washington Post*, September 21, 1982.

¹⁶⁰ Kathryn Buxton, *Washington Post*, July 2, 1982.

¹⁶¹ Buxton.

¹⁶² Brad Lemley, “Never Give an Inch; James Webb’s Struggles With Pen and Sword,” *Washington Post*, December 8, 1985.

¹⁶³ Lemley, “Never Give an Inch.”

¹⁶⁴ Isabel Wilkerson, “Art War Erupts Over Vietnam Veterans Memorial,” *Washington Post*, July 8, 1982.

was happy with the compromise, and Hart said that: "It's not Maya Lin's memorial nor Frederick Hart's memorial. It's a memorial to, for and about the Vietnam veterans to be erected by the American people in spite of what art wars occur."¹⁶⁵ Maya Lin's protests could not stop the model of the sculpture from being unveiled in September of 1982. The model showed a realistic statue of three soldiers, one white, one African American, and one left purposefully ambiguous as to what ethnicity he possessed. The soldiers of the eventual statue look realistic, and wear military gear and artillery. Hart said that he liked how the realism would contrast and interplay with Lin's wall, and that it was also a way to put a human face on Lin's work.¹⁶⁶ A photograph of the statue as it looks today can be found in figure 1.

¹⁶⁵ Wilkerson, "Art War Erupts."

¹⁶⁶ Forgey, "Hart's Statue Unveiled."



Figure 1. The Hart statue in March 2011.

Not only does the statue put a face on the names on the wall, Karal Ann Marling and Robert Silberman of the Smithsonian American Art Museum say that the statue becomes all the more realistic because of Frederick Hart's attention to detail; for instance, the statue includes common items such as dog tags or a green towel that gained totem-like qualities for the soldiers that carried them. Besides the realistic approach, it is striking that the soldiers do not look mainly heroic, and are not on an elevated platform or abstracted. On the contrary, the soldiers rise only a few inches from the ground, and they look young and vulnerable. The true heroism, according to Hart himself, lies in the fact that even though they were frightened, they were still there fighting, and they were still there for each

other.¹⁶⁷ In this way the sculpture is very different from the traditional memorials Carhart feared that the wall would disrupt: no classic white marble, or narrative of patriotism and victory for the country comes forward; it has been exchanged for realism, and a focus on soldiers' individual experiences. Marling and Silberman feel that the statue represents young life "trembling on the brink of death."¹⁶⁸ The authors note that the eyes look tired and weary, and that it is this tired look that binds the three soldiers.¹⁶⁹ In figure 2 a close-up of the veterans' faces is shown. The authors are correct in noticing that the soldiers are joined together by the look in their eyes; it is the shared suffering of war and the forged bonds that we have seen represented in *The Deer Hunter* and *Coming Home*. We have seen in the movies that some of the veterans that share those tired eyes can never come home again. It is therefore fitting that the statue looks towards the wall where all who did not come home are listed.



Figure 2. A close-up of the veterans of the Hart statue

¹⁶⁷ Marling, "The Statue near the Wall," 17.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 19.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 18 – 19.

Accordingly, although the statue adds a traditional monumental element by honoring those who served, it does so in an unconventional way by commemorating what they experienced in Vietnam, and not the successful battles fought, or ideals of fighting for the country. Hart himself already felt the sculpture should not interfere with the wall, and the way he individualizes the sculptured soldiers and shows their emotions is therefore just as much a reflection of the need to focus on a veteran's experiences as Lin's wall is.

Nevertheless, not all agreed with Hart's concept, and the CFA held a public hearing on the new design. The VVMF defended the revisions; Maya Lin and the American Institute of Architects were on the other side, and pleaded to keep the design the way it was. Professional designers were mostly on the side of Maya Lin. Paul Goldberger, architecture critic for the *New York Times*, said that:

By commissioning the Hart sculpture and the flagpole, the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Fund seems intent on converting a superb design into something that speaks of heroism and of absolute moral certainty. But there can be no such literalism and no such certainty where Vietnam is concerned; to try to represent a period of anguish and complexity in our history with a simple statue of armed soldiers is to misunderstand all that has happened, and to suggest that no lessons have been learned at all from the experience of Vietnam.¹⁷⁰

Goldberger thus stresses that the uniqueness of the war warranted a unique design; therefore, nothing traditional should be added. In a piece *Washington Post* architecture expert Benjamin Forgey, called it a disastrous compromise, one that derived solely from the vocal protest of Tom Carhart, and had now made its way into Washington through a few influential people that had the ear of the Secretary.¹⁷¹ The comments of the critics are surprising considering the fact that Hart's soldiers look far from heroic, and that they do not appear to offer any form of absolute moral certainty. It therefore seems as though protest

¹⁷⁰ Goldberger, "Vietnam Memorial: Questions of Architecture."

¹⁷¹ Benjamin Forgey, "Monumental 'Absurdity'," *Washington Post*, March 6, 1982.

was mainly derived from the fact that a sculpture and a flag would be included at all, and not from the design of the sculpture. As for the protesters of Lin's original wall, it can be said that not only politicians were ambivalent about the wall's original design. For instance, veterans organizations, such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, agreed to the revised design; it suggests that the protest was not simply a conservative salute to glorify war, but that there were several veterans that felt that the design missed some additional elements too.¹⁷²

On October 13, the CFA approved the changed design. The flagpole and statue would be added; however, the commission changed its placement. The statue, instead of being placed above the apex of the memorial as initially proposed, would now be located near the entrance of the memorial. The CFA gave as its reason that to place the work too close to the wall would take from the original design.¹⁷³ It is not strange that the CFA would come down to the side of Maya Lin, as its members included architects, sculptors and painters, who probably looked at Maya Lin's design as a work of exquisite art. In addition, as architects, they could sympathize with the difficulties of having a strong vision for a design changed by external influences. The veterans and politicians, however, looked more at what aspects of the war should be represented, and both had ways to influence the process. The memorial would thus eventually become a blend of both a memorial to the veterans that died, and a monument to the ones that fought and came home, while it always stayed focused on veterans' experiences.

¹⁷² Irvin Molotsky, "Changes Set in Viet Memorial" *New York Times*, October 14, 1982.

¹⁷³ Benjamin Forgey, "Vietnam Memorial Changes Clear Last Major Hurdle," *Washington Post*, October 14, 1982.

Dedication

On November 10, 1982, the VVMF-sponsored five day national salute to the Vietnam Veterans began. The idea was to give “a hero’s welcome to men who never got one.”¹⁷⁴ 250,000 veterans were expected to come. Among marches, concerts, vigils and celebrations, the highlight was undoubtedly the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Saturday, November 12th. Scruggs called the memorial a symbol of recognition of the veterans from the United States.¹⁷⁵ Editorials and critics focused on veterans finally getting their due because of the memorial. The *Washington Post* wrote: “It is impossible to stand in the proximate aura of this emotionally glowing place without feeling a flood of sadness and pride for those who died in Vietnam, and for those who served at their side.”¹⁷⁶ Benjamin Forgey commented: “All can take heart, I believe, from the fundamental fact of the memorial's existence. It is there, built of stone in an honored place, and it represents a necessary national gesture of respect for the people we asked to fight the war.” The comments on the memorial showed that society was finally able to come together on one issue of the Vietnam War: that its servicemen were to be recognized and respected.

15,000 Vietnam veterans eventually marched the streets of Washington to the site of the memorial to witness its dedication, and it was estimated that 150,000 people attended part of the ceremonies.¹⁷⁷ At the dedication for the memorial a letter from

¹⁷⁴ Lynn Rosellini, “Salute Opening for Vietnam Veterans,” *New York Times*, November 10, 1982.

¹⁷⁵ Caryle Murphy, “Reconciliation in Granite; and a 5-Day Salute to Vietnam Veterans,” *Washington Post*, November 7, 1982.

¹⁷⁶ “The Vietnam Memorial,” *Washington Post*, November 13, 1982.

¹⁷⁷ Philip M. Boffey, “Vietnam Veterans’ Parade a Belated Welcome Home,” *New York Times*, November 14, 1982.

Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger expressed the mood of the day, and described the memorial as a symbol of the country's renewed appreciation for the veterans when it stated: "When your country called, you came. When your country refused your honor, you remained silent. With time, our nation's wounds have healed. We have finally come to appreciate your sacrifices and to pay you your tribute you so richly deserve."¹⁷⁸ Although the veterans had organized for the parade and the memorial with their own money, Jan Scruggs still made use of the moment to speak to the crowd: "I know I speak for all Vietnam veterans when I say, 'Thank you, America, thank you for finally remembering us'."¹⁷⁹

Epilogue

In figure 3 a photograph shows the memorial as it looks today. Because it had a direct influence on the development of the World War II and Korean War Veterans memorial, it is important to discuss part of the public's reaction to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Jan Scruggs later said that he had expected the original design of the memorial to be a difficult sell to the public because he felt like the only ones who could picture it in all its wealth were the ones who "had spent their lives studying architecture."¹⁸⁰ What would happen then when the general public and the veterans had their chance to see the wall in reality?

¹⁷⁸ Phil McCombs and Neil Henry, "Veterans Honor the Fallen, Mark Reconciliation," *Washington Post*, November 14, 1982.

¹⁷⁹ Tome Morgenthau and Mary Lord, "Honoring Vietnam Veterans – At Last," *Newsweek*, November 22, 1982.

¹⁸⁰ Jan Scruggs, Interview.



Figure 3. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in March 2011.

Marita Sturken commented that any negative comments on Lin's original design vanished when the memorial was in place, and that visitors started to interact with it.¹⁸¹ Historian Patrick Hagopian focuses on the public's reactions after the dedication of the memorial; he describes how the visitors count was much higher than expected. As a result, the NPS had to quickly take action to preserve the Mall's grass, and added drainage and walkways to facilitate the large amount of visitors. This dramatically changed Lin's concept of a natural scar in the Mall that would be covered by grass. In addition, a locator was added to help people find the names of the ones who had died.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Sturken, "The Wall, the Image, and the Screen," 126.

¹⁸² Patrick Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2009), 349 – 357.

Lin imagined that visitors would walk past the wall and have a silent moment of reflection at the center, where the lists of the deaths from the beginning and the end of the war come together. However, after the monument was opened to the public people began to interact with the monument; they touched the granite, and took rubbings of the names on the wall.¹⁸³ Furthermore, people even started to leave messages and objects by the memorial. In the first months after dedication it served mostly as a message board between Vietnam veterans themselves, the first ones to visit the monument.¹⁸⁴ The tradition to leave messages by the monument became well known during the subsequent months, and common people too began to leave planned messages and objects. It is this interaction that the memorial has perhaps become best known for; there are extensive recordings of the objects visitors left by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The NPS began to categorize and save these objects at the end of 1984.¹⁸⁵ Hass writes how objects as varied as a can of beer, rubbings, zippo lighters, purple hearts, peace signs, campaign buttons, and even a glass door have been found by the monument.¹⁸⁶ The diversity of these items speaks to the individuality and interactivity of a visitor's experience at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The interaction of visitors with the wall, gave it the title: "the wall that heals." Ten years after its dedication it was the most visited memorial in the capital, drawing an annual 2.5 million people a year.¹⁸⁷ This shows that the wall became a treasured national icon.

¹⁸³ Hagopian, *The Vietnam War in American Memory*, 354.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 361.

¹⁸⁵ Hass, *Carried to the Wall*, 24.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 96 – 102.

¹⁸⁷ Susan Katz Keating, "Making their peace with the wall; After a decade, Vietnam veterans view memorial as part of healing," *Washington Times*, May 25, 1992.

It is also important to note is that calls for recognition did not stop with the dedication of Frederick Hart's statue in November of 1984. When Diane Carlson Evans, who had served in the Vietnam War as a nurse, looked at the Hart statue she felt a female figure was missing; it was as though women had not been in the war at all.

I was so struck by it, it took my breath away: There are no women in this statue! I felt so empty. I thought of all the women I had served with, and what they went through, especially in the emergency room, and doing triage. And I was beginning to realize the country really didn't know we were there . . . Vietnam was on TV, and there were all the Vietnam movies, but it was all about the men, and people didn't know we were there.¹⁸⁸

Thus the addition of a statue for the men that served triggered in Evans a will to have the female veterans recognized as well. She therefore began a campaign to get female veterans recognition in the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and after a long campaign the Vietnam Women's Memorial on November 11, 1993 (an image can be found in figure 4).¹⁸⁹

Subsequent chapters will show that the female veterans of the Vietnam War was only the first group of veterans that the memorial would inspire to call for recognition.

¹⁸⁸ Peter Perl, "A Matter of Honor," *Washington Post*, October 25, 1992.

¹⁸⁹ Cindy Loose, "'Our Place For Healing': Vietnam Women's Memorial Dedicated Amid Tears, Hugs," *Washington Post*, November 12, 1993.



Figure 4. The Vietnam Women's Memorial in March 2011.

Conclusion

American society in the sixties and seventies went through a rough patch. Antiwar protest began in America's colleges, only to become more vocal when the war dragged on. Especially after the Tet Offensive in 1968, aided by comments from TV reporters, part of the American people began to doubt the war effort. At the same time, there was also a large group of Americans that kept on supporting the war. When protesters called U.S. veterans babykillers after the pictures of My Lai were published, the other half sought to exonerate the perpetrator Lieutenant Calley. This example displays all the hallmarks of the divided society veterans came home to. It was a society that after years of public protests from college students and Jane Fonda, and the painful deception of the American government in

its management of the war, as well as the Watergate scandal, simply wanted to forget the war had ever existed.

However, after an initial silence the veterans became the center of attention again. The movies discussed show that an effective way to get both protesters, as well as the silent majority to the table, was to depict the experiences of the young draftees in Vietnam, as well as the difficulties they faced in coming back to the United States. It was in this spirit that Jan Scruggs sought to create the Vietnam Veterans Memorial: to show the individual costs of war as a way to bring the country together. Architects and artists, including the members of the CFA, recognized the strength of Maya Lin's design and defended it from the ones who protested its unusual form and focus on the fallen. What is important about the memorial is that it does not try to dictate any story of what happened during the Vietnam War. In none of the movies discussed is the American presence glorified, or lamented, and neither is it in the memorial. It is a memorial that derives a lot of its strength from the interaction with the visitor.

Although the addition of the Hart statue and Vietnam Women's Memorial ensures that the ones who served are also honored, the focus of the memorial is on the traumatizing experiences veterans faced, both in the wall and the statue. The Hart statue is not a glorifying account of the servicemen who returned. On the contrary, similar to the veterans of *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter*, the figures are men who are weary from all that they have seen. Even though Lin protested the addition of the statue, it does not disrupt her original design because Hart sought to create a statue that would interact with the wall, and because the CFA ensured that it was placed at a non-disruptive distance from it.

The afterlife of "the wall that heals" is stunning. Even this year, the Memorial Day Concert's website asked its visitors to contribute their stories of fallen soldiers on its virtual

“wall of remembrance.”¹⁹⁰ The public’s reaction to the wall suggests that the design by Maya Lin was groundbreaking, and offered such a strong way to deal with the Vietnam War that it was guaranteed to be built.

¹⁹⁰ National Memorial Day Concert, “The Wall of Remembrance,” 2012, <http://www.pbs.org/memorialdayconcert/stories/submit/> (accessed May 25, 2012).

3. The Korean War Veterans Memorial

The Korean War is, up to the point where this is becoming repetitive, designated “the Forgotten War.” Scholars such as Keene have noted that there has been a lack of memorialization of the war since its end in 1953, and that the war only truly became part of public memory again with the dedication of the memorial in 1995.¹⁹¹ This chapter will therefore first discuss why the Korean War faded from public memory, and continue with a discussion of the few works of popular culture made about the Korean War, before going into the process of the creation of the memorial.

Memories of the Korean War

For over thirty years at least three factors have caused the Korean War to be overlooked in collective memory: the war’s outcome, its relationship to the Vietnam War and World War II, and the Red Scare in the home front during the fifties. The National Museum of American History features a permanent exhibition, which is called *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War*. One of the panels, shown in figure 5, gives us an insightful overview of the exhibit: in between large spaces dedicated to World War II and the Vietnam War there is a small venue for the Cold War. This exemplifies military historian Paul Pierpaoli Jr.’s argument that the main reason that the Korean War has been overlooked is because it was caught in between the “good” and the “bad” war; in other words, it was caught in between World War II and the Vietnam War. Pierpaoli argues that because the event took place only five years after the end of the Second World War, it was bound to be consumed by the myths and memories that the earlier conflict still generated. In addition, the author claims that the Korean War came to be seen as a chapter in the transition from

¹⁹¹ Keene, “Lost to Public Commemoration,” 1095.

World War II into the Cold War.¹⁹² Perhaps even, as the Smithsonian exhibition suggests, the war was perceived as a small part of the Cold War; it therefore never came seen as a standalone event. The fact that the Korean War was never actually designated as a war, but as a U.N. police action certainly did not help matters. Furthermore, the war in Vietnam, which started only ten years after the Korean War, was quick to overshadow any experiences gained from the first test of the Truman Doctrine; it caused mass protests in American society, and was also presented more readily to the public through television.¹⁹³ In addition, the length and outcome of the Vietnam conflict, and its prominence in popular culture in the seventies and eighties also must have pushed stories of the Korean War to the background.

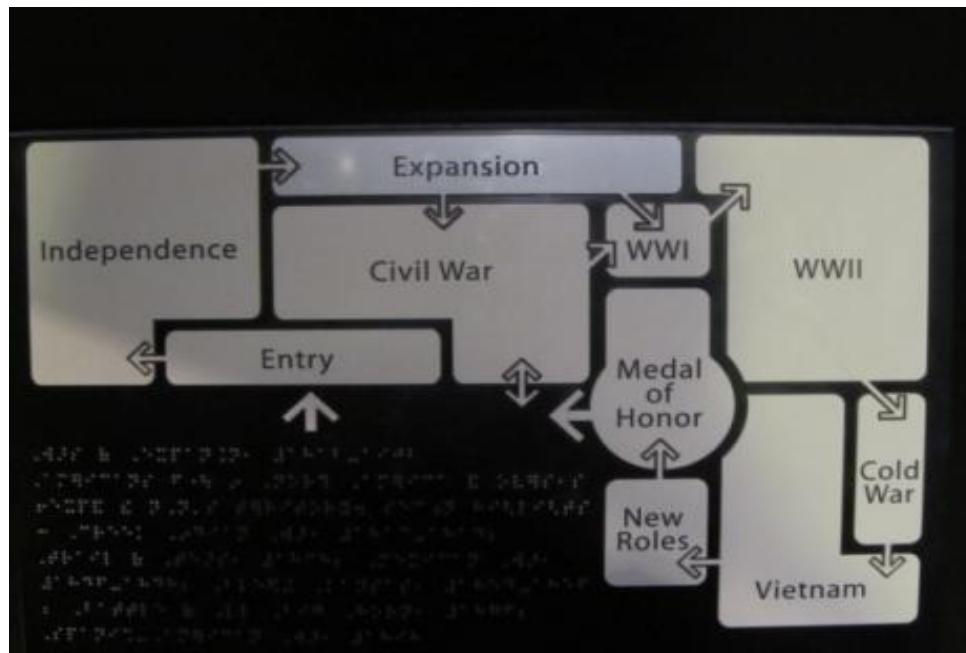


Figure 5. Panel from Museum of American History

¹⁹² Paul G. Pierpaoli Jr., "Beyond Collective Amnesia: A Korean War Retrospective," *International Social Science Review* 76 (2001): 92.

¹⁹³ Pierpaoli, "Beyond Collective Amnesia," 92.

What is interesting is that some Korean War veterans agreed with the notion that World War II was the big war, and that the Korean War only a small chapter in American history. One veteran, Ray Donnelly, has mentioned: "The World War II guys, they're the real heroes. I had a friend who spent five years in the jungles in New Guinea. My brothers-in-law had a ship shot out from under them. I spent one year. I wasn't about to go home and say, 'Hey look what I did.' I got home on Friday, went back to work on Monday."¹⁹⁴ His quote suggests another reason that Korean Veterans did not ask for memorials: the WWII generation had not asked for them either. At the ceremony for the groundbreaking of the Korean War Veterans Memorial veteran Bob Fulmer pondered his generation and said: "We're Depression-era children. We were brought up to see no evil, speak no evil, hear no evil - keep your mouth shut and go to work."¹⁹⁵ His remarks illustrate that the veterans of World War II and the Korean War were, for the most part, members of the same generation. The idea of part of the World War II generation was that after the times of the Depression public money should not be used to create statues in their name, but to create buildings and stadiums, the so-called "living memorials" - which will be further discussed in the next chapter. This idea not to ask for a memorial because money was needed elsewhere may have also been partly the view of the veterans of the Korean War, and a reason why the memorialization process would only get started once the Vietnam veterans, part of a completely different generation, had dedicated theirs.

¹⁹⁴ Carol M. Highsmith and Ted Landphair, *Forgotten No More: The Korean War Veterans Memorial Story* (Washington D.C.: Chelsea Publishing, 1995), 36.

¹⁹⁵ Rowan Scarborough, "Bush Remembers 'Our Forgotten War'," *Washington Times*, June 15, 1992.

In addition, the Korean War's nearness to World War II made sure that several veterans fought in both wars. The number of veterans that fought in the Korean War in comparison to the Second World War and the Vietnam War already reveals that one of the reasons that there was less attention to the veterans of the Korean War might be because there were simply less veterans in general. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 5.7 million veterans were in the Korean War, as opposed to 16.1 million in World War II, and 8.7 million in the Vietnam War.¹⁹⁶ With a veteran population that has always remained the smallest throughout the years, half the size of that of World War II, it may have been more difficult to gain attention to news media. Furthermore, data from the U.S. Census Bureau, shown in table 1, suggests that about 20 percent of the veterans that fought in the Korean War also fought in the Second World War, or went on to fight in the Vietnam War. The fact that several veterans served in multiple wars may have caused them to be less inclined to call for recognition of their service in Korea; they may have felt that their service was already recognized with the memorials created for the Second World War, or they identified with the events of the Vietnam War.

¹⁹⁶ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. *America's Wars*. Washington D.C., 2011: 1. http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf (accessed April 20, 2012)

	1960	1980	2000
Gulf War and Vietnam War	-	-	328,430
Only Vietnam War	-	7,374,663	7,616,627
Vietnam and Korean War	-	662,267	274,445
Vietnam era, Korean War, and World War II	-	-	160,854
Only Korean War	4,051,288	3,964,613	3,215,739
Korean War and World War II	803,287	788,652	384,139
Only World War II	13,042,489	10,696,714	5,171,644

Table 1. Veterans alive in the United States in 1960, 1980, and 2000.

For any veteran, coming home from a war is difficult, and, as was shown by Michael in *The Deer Hunter*, there are always unmentionable things that have happened that cannot be explained to the people who stayed in the United States. Of course this would cause anyone to remain silent about their service. However, there is an additional underlying reason that has caused Korean War veterans not to speak out for recognition in the first few years after their return. In 1951, President Truman's decision not to expand the war led to two years of talks on an armistice, and a blow to President Truman's popularity because America was now negotiating the outcome of a war of which many had anticipated would simply end in a victory for the United Nations coalition forces. The public felt as though the peace talks went on endlessly, and when an agreement was finally reached it "barely caused a stir back home," as Carol M. Highsmith and Ted Landphair, official biographers of the Korean War Veterans Memorial, note.¹⁹⁷ In addition, the activities of House of Un-American

¹⁹⁷ Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 30

Activities Committee (HUAC) drew attention away from the talks in Korea; the Second Red Scare created a suspicious society. Max Cleland's quote in 1979 that the Vietnam veterans were not seen as heroes when they came home, but that instead "they were considered co-conspirators in some terrible escapade,"¹⁹⁸ therefore could just as easily have been about the veterans of the Korean War. Whereas the Korean war was waged over communism, the returning veterans now came home to a society that felt that it had to fight a against communism at home; a society obsessed with who was a communist and who was not. In these tense times Americans looked suspicious at the veterans that had not led the Korean War to the expected victorious outcome; some were even seen as conspirators, especially the POWs.

Data from the Department of Veterans Affairs shows that with 7,140 soldiers captured the number of Korean POWs is, in relative comparison, lower than the number of servicemen that were captured in World War II (130,201).¹⁹⁹ Yet, according to historian Charles S. Young, even though all three wars featured POWs, the Korean POW was the only one who was suspected of collaborating with the enemy.²⁰⁰ That conditions in the war camps were harsh can be distilled from the fact that a third of the captured Americans died while they were incarcerated (2,701). This number is significantly lower for both the POWs

¹⁹⁸ Warren Brown, "Range of Intangibles Said Hurting Viet Vets the Most," *Washington Post*, May 29, 1978.

¹⁹⁹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Policy, Planning, and Preparedness, *American Prisoners (POWs) and Missing in Action (MIAs)*, by Robert E. Klein, Michael R. Wells, and Janet M. Somers (Washington D.C., April 2006) <http://www.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SpecialReports/POWCY054-12-06jsmwrFINAL2.doc> (accessed April 20, 2012).

²⁰⁰ Charles S. Young, "Missing Action: POW Films, Brainwashing, and the Korean War, 1954 – 1968," *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 18 (1998): 50.

of World War II and the Vietnam War, where respectively 14,072 and 65 (out of 725) POWs died.²⁰¹ Young says that that the circumstances of these camps forced POWs to cooperate with their captors.²⁰² However, the American public at home expected POW to “have stuck to name, rank and serial number,” not to talk under pressure, and certainly not to collaborate.²⁰³ They were therefore shocked when they heard American soldiers give anti-capitalist speeches on North Korean radio, or read articles by POWs that stated that the United States was responsible for the Korean War. Susan L. Carruthers studies the culture of war in the United States, and argues that people in the United States even began to fear that the Chinese had found a technique to turn American soldiers into communists, which they called “brainwashing.”²⁰⁴

Illustrative of the suspicion of POWs is the fact that when they came back to their homeland they were all subjected to extensive interviews by army psychologists and intelligence officers about their experiences in Korea; this was done in order to establish if they had indeed been turned to communism.²⁰⁵ It was a procedure fitting for the period of the 1950’s, where HUAC was at that time working on the Hollywood Blacklist. In light of the Second Red Scare, and stories of POWs collaborating, these interviews made perfect sense. According to a report from the Secretary of Defense Committee in 1955, 565 POWs were suspected of collaboration. The report gave examples and said that a typical case “involves

²⁰¹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *American Prisoners (POWs) and Missing in Action (MIAs)*.

²⁰² Young, “Missing Action,” 53.

²⁰³ Ibid., 54.

²⁰⁴ Susan L. Carruthers, “The Manchurian Candidate (1962) and the Cold War Brainwashing Scare,” *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television* 18 (1998): 80.

²⁰⁵ Keene, “Lost to Public Commemoration,” 1104.

an officer who is accused by 180 POWs of delivering anti-U.S. speeches, informing on fellow prisoners, hoarding food, teaching classes in communism, and ordering men to sign peace petitions. There is no evidence he suffered duress.”²⁰⁶ Not only the reports confirmed the suspicions of Americans that some POWs voluntarily collaborated with the enemy; when POWs were exchanged in 1953, 21 American soldiers shocked their fellow countrymen when they chose not to return to the United States, and ridiculed the army for trying to convince them that they should.²⁰⁷ The Defense Committee’s report in 1955 acknowledges that “few of these 21 were actual converts to communism.” However, perception of this action was a whole different thing. Judith Keene narrates how two soldiers who had not wanted to return, Edward M. Dickinson and Claude J. Batchelor, came to regret their decision to change their mind and return to the United States, for they were immediately arrested and accused of collaborating with the Chinese.²⁰⁸ Their trial and subsequent conviction received a significant amount of attention, and fed into the preexisting idea that POWs in Korea actively collaborated with the enemy, and that the soldiers had been indoctrinated by communism.²⁰⁹

In addition to coming home to an atmosphere of suspicion, the returning POWs were not eligible for back pay and pensions unless they had been cleared by the Army Board on Prisoner of War Collaboration. Enquiries by the FBI could go on for years and also involve

²⁰⁶ U.S. Department of Defense, Secretary of Defense Advisory Committee on Prisoners of War, *POW: The Fight Continues After the Battle* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Secretary of Defense, August 1955): 26, available from http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/POW-report.pdf (accessed May 20, 2012).

²⁰⁷ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *American Prisoners (POWs) and Missing in Action (MIAs)*.

²⁰⁸ Keene, “Lost to Public Commemoration,” 1101.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1102.

family members and friends.²¹⁰ On the basis of this information it can be argued that the returning veterans from Korea all faced at least one element of this climate of suspicion in America. Whether it was criticism and the general weariness of a war mired in stalemate, the media reports on unreliable American soldiers in Korea, or the public trials of POWs, the Korean War veterans were not welcomed back with open arms. As a result, it is highly probable that Korean War veterans chose not to put themselves into the spotlight at all; they preferred to remain silent about their war experiences out of a fear of becoming a part of the Red Scare circus. This is acknowledged by Pierpaoli, who says that McCarthyism caused the Korean War to become hyper-political, and created a politics and media whose sole focus was the Cold War.²¹¹ The war in Korea was a war against communism; thus, it was a battle for the American way of life. This made it impossible to speak out about the Korean War because everything had become was politicized in a highly anti-communist fashion. Pierpaoli argues that “the political climate unleashed by the war in Korea equated social reform, racial justice, and measured criticism with political subversion – if not outright treason.”²¹² It was therefore best to remain silent, especially considering the fact that this “war for the American way of life,” had ended in a disappointing stalemate.

Popular Culture of the Korean War

Movie reviewer Robert J. Lentz has created a filmography of Korean War movies, and discusses 91 English movies made about the conflict. He shows that there were multiple efforts to depict the Korean war; movies like *The Steel Helmet* and *Battle Zone* already came

²¹⁰ Ibid., 1105.

²¹¹ Pierpaoli, “Beyond Collective Amnesia,” 99.

²¹² Ibid., 93.

to American theaters in 1951.²¹³ However, as Lentz himself admits: “The majority of the Korean War films are of minor status.”²¹⁴ Today, only a limited amount of movies about the Korean conflict and its soldiers have the iconic status that war movies such as *Apocalypse Now*, *The Deer Hunter*, or *Saving Private Ryan* have. Lentz argues that this shows that both audiences, as well as filmmakers, were confused about the outcome of the Korean War.²¹⁵ This is in line with Judith Keene’s arguments; she believes that the main reason behind this lack of public memory of the war is the fact that there was no “consensual imagery” of what it should look like.²¹⁶ The war certainly seems more difficult to represent than the other two wars. Veterans of the Korean War were not seen as heroes; this view belonged to the soldiers of World War II. Furthermore, their story did not cast them in the role of victims of a divisive war, a part reserved for the Vietnam veterans. These two wars were easier to depict, because of the myths they generated, and because both wars had clear outcomes. The Korean War was neither a win nor a loss; it was a draw, and therefore much more difficult to portray and understand. It is therefore not surprising that Lentz concludes that most directors simply used the Korean War as a setting to say something about war in general, or that they tried to raise public support for the war effort when it was going on.²¹⁷ Thus, it is difficult to find well-known works that specifically focus on the Korean War, and that were remarkable enough to indefinitely remain part of public memory.

²¹³ Robert J. Lentz, *Korean War Filmography* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2003), 425.

²¹⁴ Lentz, *Korean War Filmography*, 1.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Keene, “Lost to Public Commemoration,” 1098.

²¹⁷ Lentz, *Korean War Filmography*, 431

Two movies that have reached a famous status, and are representations of the Korean War, are *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962) and *M*A*S*H* (1970). As discussed earlier, the presence of HUAC and the Red Scare did not allow for commentary on America's policies; thus, it must have been difficult to comment on the Korean War in public works as well. The influence of the Red Scare can be seen in the dates these movies came out: to make a movie that deals with the brainwash scare, or a dark comedy that discusses the weariness of war would have been unwise in the fifties, and at best the movie would have been banned, at worst its author and director would have been summoned to appear before HUAC.

The issues of POWs, collaboration, and the Red Scare come to the forefront in the *Manchurian Candidate*, directed by John Frankenheimer, released in 1962.²¹⁸ In this film, based on the same titled novel by Richard Condon, a group of soldiers is captured by enemy forces and taken to a secret location in Manchuria. The POWs are subsequently exposed to a special brainwash technique that makes them forget that they were ever there. This is all done by communist forces to condition one of them, Sergeant Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey), to be a murder weapon; after his brainwashing Shaw only needs to be shown the Queen of Diamonds and he will follow orders of any person who gives them. The soldiers are sent back to America, and are trained to believe that Shaw is the hero that saved them from a Chinese unit. To lend the story even more credibility, the communists condition his Captain, Bennett Marco (Frank Sinatra) to arrange for a Medal of Honor for Shaw on the day he comes home.

²¹⁸ *The Manchurian Candidate*, DVD, directed by John Frankenheimer, Beverly Hills, CA: MGM, 2004.

Besides the theme of POWs and brainwashing, a term made famous by the Korean War, another theme typical for the times of the Korean War can be found in the movie: McCarthyism. Shaw's stepfather Senator John Iselin (James Gregory) is an obvious representation of Senator Joe McCarthy, a man who walks into a press conference from the Secretary of Defense to accuse the Department that it has at least 207 communists working among them. He keeps changing this number when the press asks him about it, first to 104, and then to 275. The hysteria of the times are reflected in the fact that the news media immediately start to write about the accusations, and that Iselin's media prominence by the end of the movie even gets him nominated for the Vice Presidency. The mastermind behind the Senator's manipulation of the media is his wife Mrs. Iselin (Angela Lansbury), Shaw's mother. When the Senator asks his wife why they continue to change the alleged number of communists in the Defense department, she shows a bit of her manipulative powers when she says: "Are they (the journalists) saying 'Are there *any* communists in the Defense Department?' Of course not. They're saying '*How many* communists are there in the Defense Department?'" The further course of the movie only increases the view of her as a woman who will stop at nothing to make her husband the next President of the United States.

Captain Marco eventually discovers that Shaw has been brainwashed because he has recurring dreams where he sees the communists demonstrate Shaw as their new weapon. In these dreams, Marco sees Shaw murder his fellow comrade Ed Mavole, who apathetically allows this to happen, for he is brainwashed as well. It takes Marco about the entire movie, and a substantial body count by an unsuspecting Shaw, to discover that his dream was an actual memory, and that the Sergeant has been brainwashed to kill for the communists. Eventually the audience finds out, along with Marco, that Shaw's mother is behind the

entire conspiracy, and that she sets out to use her son to murder the Republican presidential candidate, at which point Senator Iselin would take over. Marco is eventually able to break Shaw's brainwash when he shows him an entire deck that is stocked only with Queen of Diamonds cards, and orders him that he is to never respond to them again. In a thrilling scene at the Republican convention, where Shaw is supposed to shoot the presidential candidate, the sergeant shoots and kills both Mr. and Mrs. Iselin, before he turns the gun on himself.

In conclusion, this movie certainly deals with veterans of the Korean War and the situation they came home to. However, more prominent are the anxieties and conspiracy theories of the fifties, reflected in the way the movie deals with the communist brainwashing of a POW, and McCarthyism, which is referred to as Iselinism. Thus, there is not a focus on the position of the veteran in this movie, but more of a focus on the Red Scare, and the absurdities of it.

The other work of popular culture that is often mentioned in the memory of the Korean War is the 1970 dark comedy film *M*A*S*H* and its subsequent long running CBS military comedy, which started in 1972, and ended its rare eleven season run in 1983. *M*A*S*H* focuses on the experiences of medical personnel during the Korean War.²¹⁹ It displays a disorganized MASH unit where surgeons and nurses, such as Hawkeye Pierce, Trapper Johns, Margaret O' Houlihan and Radar O'Reilly, kill their time in between intense operation sessions of the war wounded while they wait for the war's eventual end. One might think that the location of the movie and series, and the fact that the novel on which it was based was written by a veteran of the Korean war, would make *M*A*S*H* a definite

²¹⁹ *M*A*S*H**, DVD, directed by Robert Altman, Los Angeles, CA: 20th Century Fox, 2006.

representation of the events of the Korean War. However, the memory of Korea is not the main theme that drove the series and movie; TV and cinema scholar Rick Worland says that the major popularity of the series and movie can be attributed to the fact that they came out during the unpopular Vietnam War, and openly referenced the events of the war.²²⁰ Consequently, Korea in Worland's description merely offers a neutral location where issues of a more recent war could be discussed. In addition, the way the series later focused on veteran's experiences and emotional damage is a pattern reminiscent of Scruggs's initial idea for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It therefore seems as though *M*A*S*H* was more inspired by the events of Vietnam, than by the location it chose to tell its stories.

There are episodes that give the Korean War its due. For instance, in 'Are You Now Margaret?' the situation of the Red Scare is depicted when main character Margaret O'Houlihan is suspected of being a communist spy.²²¹ The stalemate of the Korean war is also featured; in the episode 'Give 'em Hell, Hawkeye', Hawkeye writes to President Truman and asks him to stop the war when he says: "I know you're thinking it's pretty stupid but no more so than peace talks that are all talk and no peace. I know there's a lot of heat in your kitchen Harry, but there's a bunch of tired people here who don't even know why they're here."²²²

In an article anticipating the *M*A*S*H* series finale in 1983, Tom Shales shows that for some Americans the series became the dominating contributor to their memory of the

²²⁰ Rick Worland, "The Other Living-Room War: Prime Time Combat Series, 1962 – 1975," *Journal of Film and Video* 50 (1998): 16.

²²¹ "Are You Now, Margaret?" September 24, 1979 episode of *M*A*S*H*, (CBS 1972 – 1983).

²²² "Give 'Em Hell Hawkeye," November 16, 1981 episode of *M*A*S*H*, (CBS 1972 – 1983).

Korean War. Shales said that the Korean War would end a second time with the TV finale, but that this end received a lot more attention than when the actual war ended. His argument for this difference in attention is telling: “That is because the Korean war was only a [three-year] war, and an undeclared one at that, but *M*A*S*H* over its years became many things to many people, in those intimate and shared ways that rare TV programs can.”²²³ The fact that the program aired long after the Korean War, and also stayed on the air a lot longer than images of the Korean war, caused many younger people who had not been present at the time of the actual war to take their cultural memory cues from *M*A*S*H*. Because there were few other popular works that were set in Korea, *M*A*S*H* was often mentioned in the debate for a war memorial as the only thing that people now remembered about the Korean War, and even as something that overshadowed the entire Korean War. William Norris, founder of the Korean War Veterans Association, said in 1985 that the war needed more attention in American society because “too many people think of Korea as the place where Hawkeye Pierce and other *M*A*S*H* characters cavorted.”²²⁴ The *New York Times* joined Norris’s side when it cheered the decision to create a war memorial in Washington, and stated in an editorial that the veterans had a right to feel ignored because “the closest thing they have to a monument is the *M*A*S*H* television series.”²²⁵

How ironic is it then that the first person to build a memorial to the Korean War is actually Hawkeye Pierce? On February 21, 1981 an episode titled ‘Depressing News’, showed how the unit accidentally receives a massive overload of 500,000 tongue

²²³ Tom Shales, “A Farewell to *M*A*S*H*; Behind and Beyond a Show Whose Glory Really Could Go on Forever,” *Washington Post*, February 28, 1983.

²²⁴ Nancy Scannell, “Korean Veterans Mark End of ‘Forgotten War’; Drive on to Win Approval for a Memorial,” *Washington Post*, July 28, 1985.

²²⁵ “The Missing Monument,” *New York Times*, November 11, 1988.

depressors. The affair elicits Hawkeye to say: “Tongue Depressors, Doctors, Soldiers, we’re all the same.”²²⁶ By this he means that the tongue depressors represent the expendability of the medical unit and the soldiers in Korea. His remarks only confirm that *M*A*S*H*, although it may have started as a comedy, also included serious subjects about the effects of war on the people and soldiers caught up in it. Hawkeye proceeds to use the tongue depressors to build a replica of the Washington Monument. As he creates the monument he says: “They sent us half a million of these things, which is monumental stupidity, so I’m building a monument to stupidity.”²²⁷ Hawkeye lists the names of the wounded that passed through the MASH on the tongue depressors. Although this type of commemoration seems reminiscent of the names on the wall of the Vietnam memorial, the design for this memorial was unveiled several months after the episode aired. It would be six years after the record-breaking *M*A*S*H* series finale in 1983 that the Korean War veterans would be able to have a design for a real memorial.

The Movement for the Korean War Veterans Memorial

Because of all the oppressing factors mentioned in the previous sections, it is surprising to read President Bush’s speech in the Rose Garden on June 14, 1989. As he announced the winning design for the memorial he said that he hoped that the memorial would “pay tribute to America’s uniformed sons and daughters who served during the Korean conflict and to recall an American victory that remains too little appreciated and too seldom understood.”²²⁸ We understand now why the Korean War faded into the

²²⁶ “Depressing News,” February 9, 1981 episode of *M*A*S*H**, (CBS 1972 – 1983).

²²⁷ “Depressing News,” *M*A*S*H**.

²²⁸ George H.W. Bush, “Remarks at the Ceremony for the Winning Design of the Korean War Memorial,” *Public Papers of the Presidents*, June 14, 1989.

background, but what made it come out of the shadows again, and why in the eighties? Moreover, why does the President suddenly describe a war that faded into the background as a bland stalemate as a victory?

At the groundbreaking of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Lew Pullen, a Pentagon lawyer who lost both legs in Vietnam, said that he felt ambivalent when he observed the ceremony because “there hasn't been any memorial for the Korean or World War II veterans.”²²⁹ According to Kirk Savage, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial raised the question why other veterans of U.S. wars in the twentieth century had not yet received the same recognition, and led to a quest of veterans’ groups to obtain a location to commemorate their war on the D.C. Mall.²³⁰ One of the most important triggers in a call for a memorial therefore was the public debate and eventual dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The decision for the Vietnam Memorial was made in 1980, and its design was approved in 1982, the same year it was dedicated. The Korean War Veterans Memorial was approved four years later in 1986, but the finalizing of the design would take until 1992. Its dedication occurred three years later in 1995.

Because of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial movement and the national discussion on commemoration of war and veterans, it became much easier for other veterans to tell their stories to the public than it had been during the fifties and the years that followed. Because both wars were subsequent chapters in the Cold War, it was not surprising that many supporters of the Korean War Veterans Memorial compared the two wars. Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayma have investigated the archives of the ABMC; specifically, its correspondence on the design and dedication of the Korean War Veterans Memorial. They

²²⁹ Phil McCombs, “Ground Broken for Shrine to Vietnam War Veterans.”

²³⁰ Savage, *Monument Wars*, 281.

write that a movement towards a memorial started in 1981 with the formation of the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial. The committee's desire to erect a national monument for the veterans came partly out of the frustration that the Vietnam War was "being commemorated before the Korean War even though it was fought later and less effectively."²³¹

The Korean War Veterans Memorial lists the number of the U.S. battle deaths as 54,246. In 2000, the Pentagon acknowledged that this number was actually too high because to the number of actual battle deaths in Korea, 33,600, all non-combatant deaths of U.S. military personnel *across the globe* were added. The Pentagon had been aware of this situation in the fifties, but continued to use the 54,000 because it had become the common statistic for the Korean War. It has remained in use since then, and therefore eventually ended up on the Korean War Veterans Memorial.²³² Data from the Department of Veterans affairs makes it evident that the names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial are based on the number of battle deaths and the non-combatant deaths, which add up to 58,220 names.²³³ The number of non-combatant deaths across the globe for the Vietnam War makes it evident that if it had been given the same treatment as the Korean War there would have been 32,000 additional names written on Maya Lin's wall.²³⁴

The different treatment of the death statistics points towards one of the main arguments supporters gave for the war memorial: the fact that the veterans of the Korean War had made a sacrifice similar to the Vietnam War, and that therefore they were

²³¹ Schwartz, "Commemoration," 952.

²³² Steve Vogel, "Death Miscount Etched Into History; American Fatalities Outside of Korea Included in War Toll," *Washington Post*, June 25, 2000.

²³³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *America's Wars*.

²³⁴ Ibid.

entitled to their own memorial as well. Director of the Pentagon's Korean War Commemorations Committee, Nels Running, said that the number also remained in use because the Korean veterans took pride in the fact that it was close to the 58,000 deaths listed for Vietnam; he said that the veterans felt that they served in a more "brutal war" because a similar number of soldiers fell in a shorter period of time.²³⁵ Korean War POW, Edward Fenton, illustrated this argument in 1987 when he said: "What most people don't realize is that we lost nearly 58,000 men in Vietnam during the course of 10 years. In Korea, the figure was 54,000 over three years. On those grounds alone, the memorial is long overdue."²³⁶ This only goes to show that the veteran, and his suffering, continued as a central theme from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Aid from Congress

This time the movement towards approval of the memorial started in 1981, when the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial Incorporated was created. It modeled its efforts after the VVMF, and its goal was therefore to get Congress to allot federal land for a privately funded memorial. In 1984 the organization had raised 400,000 dollars towards this goal, which was reasonable, especially considering the fact that no memorial plan had actually been approved yet.²³⁷ After several earlier proposals had not made the cut, Congress moved on the memorial in 1985 when multiple Senators and Congressmen introduced bills to get the work built. On May 22, Representative Stanford E.

²³⁵ Vogel, "Death Miscount Etched Into History"

²³⁶ Albert J. Parisi, "Korean War: Memories, But..." *New York Times*, July 5, 1987.

²³⁷ "Proposal Touches off Battle over Korean War Monument," *New York Times*, May 6, 1984.

Parris from Virginia introduced H.R. 2588, also known as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Act of 1985.²³⁸ Parris, himself a veteran of the Korean War, said when he introduced his bill:

It is incredible to note that there is not a memorial in the Nation's Capital to the veterans of the Korean War, the only group of war veterans not to be so honored. The disservice done to these fine Americans has been permitted to go unremedied for over 30 years, and I have introduced legislation to authorize the erection of a memorial.²³⁹

In his address he further stressed the impact of the war and the death of 54,000 veterans.²⁴⁰

Another argument for a memorial comes forward from his statement: that the Korean War was the only one whose veterans were not commemorated on the National Mall. It will be shown in the next chapter that many felt that World War II veterans was sufficiently commemorated by the Iwo Jima memorial and constant attention in popular culture to stories from the Second World War. With the Vietnam Veterans Memorial now commemorated on the Mall, Korean War veterans argued that they were the only ones left out.

Parris's bill sought federal funding of the memorial and would allow citizens to donate money for the memorial after its dedication to pay back any costs that the government made in the process of building, and to maintain the memorial after its dedication. The ABMC would be responsible for its establishment.²⁴¹ However, this differed from joint resolution S.J.RES.184 that Senator Jeremiah Denton introduced in the Senate on July 31; this bill authorized the Korean War Memorial Incorporated to establish

²³⁸ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 99th Congress (1985 – 1986) H.R.2588," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d099:H.R.2588:@@@D&summ2=m&> (accessed May 20, 2012).

²³⁹ "Required Reading; Time to Remember," *New York Times*, May 27, 1985.

²⁴⁰ "Required Reading," *New York Times*.

²⁴¹ Robert B. McNeil, *States News Service*, November 1, 1985.

the memorial on federal land, and therefore a creation process for the memorial similar to that of them of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.²⁴² Unfortunately, although the Korean War Memorial Incorporated had raised funds and attention for the memorial, and had gained Senator Denton's trust, there were reports of internal struggles in the organization. In addition, a *States News Service* article suggested that the organization had used underhand tactics to raise funds; for instance, it added a fake approval from President Ford on its fundraising letters, and associated well-known veterans with the organization without their permission. Furthermore, even though the organization had raised 650,000 dollars by the end of 1985, it had spent more than that on fundraising and administration.²⁴³ This information certainly would have made Senators and Congressmen doubt the organization's fund-raising skills and had them wonder if the memorial's building would not be better off paid for and regulated by the federal government. What many Senators seemed to agree on, then, was that a way should be found to let the memorial be funded by private donations, while keeping the project safely under the control of the ABMC; this would prevent the memorial from becoming associated with the internal conflicts and unchecked fundraising campaigns of the private organization.²⁴⁴

The bill that Congress eventually approved was H.R. 2205. Democratic Representative from New Jersey, James J. Florio, introduced this bill on April 24, 1985.²⁴⁵ It

²⁴² *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 99th Congress (1985 – 1986) S.J.RES.184," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d099:S.J.RES.184:@@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

²⁴³ McNeil, *States News Service*.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁵ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 99th Congress (1985 – 1986) H.R.2205," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d099:H.R.2205:@@@P> (accessed May 20, 2012).

placed the responsibility for the memorial's creation in the hands of the ABMC, and allotted 1 million dollars of federal funds for the project. The remainder of the money was to be raised through private and corporate donations.²⁴⁶ In a supportive gesture similar to the approval of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Act, the House passed the bill unanimously on November 6 of 1985. The Senate then took its time; it was another year before the bill went on from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to pass the Senate by voice vote on October 9, 1986.²⁴⁷ President Ronald Reagan then signed it into law on October 28, 1986. Five years after the Korean War Memorial Incorporated started its campaign, the memorial was approved, but the organization would no longer play any role in the upcoming process; it had been rejected in favor of the ABMC.

Schwartz and Bayma have argued that a sympathetic Congress and the support of the Reagan administration aided the approval process of the memorial.²⁴⁸ This seems probable when one looks at the considerable amount of influential veterans from various conflicts present in Congress at that time. Besides Stan Parris, Representative James Florio had served from 1955 - 1957.²⁴⁹ Jeremiah Denton of Alabama was a prisoner of war in the Vietnam War for seven years.²⁵⁰ The Republican Senate majority leader, Bob Dole, who became highly influential during the campaign for a World War II memorial, was heavily

²⁴⁶ Parisi, "Korean War: Memories, But..."

²⁴⁷ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "H.R.2205."

²⁴⁸ Schwartz, "Commemoration," 952.

²⁴⁹ *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Florio, James Joseph, (1937 -)," <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=F000215> (accessed May 15, 2012).

²⁵⁰ *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Denton, Jeremiah Andrew, Jr., (1924 -)," <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000259> (accessed May 15, 2012).

wounded in World War II and had received a Purple Heart for his service.²⁵¹ In addition, Vice President George Bush was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army during World War II.²⁵²

Location

The approval of the act opened doors for three major issues to be resolved: location, design, and fundraising. On July 20, 1987, President Ronald Reagan appointed twelve veterans to the newly created Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board (KWVMAB), to oversee the entirety of the design and site selection.²⁵³ This is notable because the final decision on a memorial design would be made by veterans, and not by a panel of architects as had been the case with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Its chairman became General Richard Stilwell, who had served in the army for 36 years.²⁵⁴ One member of the KWVMAB commented after the memorial's dedication that compared to the founding of the memorial the war had been "easy by contrast, because it took only thirty-eight months."²⁵⁵ Every step in the process up till then had already brought its own set of problems, and it was not about

²⁵¹ *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Dole, Robert Joseph, (1923 -)," <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=D000401> (accessed May 15, 2012).

²⁵² *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, "Bush, George Herbert Walker (1924 -)," <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=B001166> (accessed May 15, 2012).

²⁵³ *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, "Appointment of 12 Members of the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board, July 20, 1987." <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1987/072087c.htm> (accessed May 15, 2012).

²⁵⁴ *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, "Appointment."

²⁵⁵ Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 7.

to stop when the bill was passed by Congress: it would take another nine years before the monument could be dedicated.

Only four years after the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 1986 an article in the *Washington Post* discussed the growing numbers of memorial proposals and the limited availability of space in the District. It said that the number of memorials and memorial proposals had increased, and that Congress now struggled with questions of who would be allowed to have a memorial in D.C., and who would not.²⁵⁶ To deal with the increase a bill, proposed on March 11, 1986, set new standards and regulations to oversee the creation of memorials and monuments in the District of Columbia.²⁵⁷ Signed into law by President Reagan on November 14, 1986, the bill came to be known as the Commemorative Works Act. It detailed that works could only be established through an act of Congress, and that “only commemorative works of preeminent historical and lasting significance to the Nation” would be allowed on the most prominent spaces in Washington.²⁵⁸ In addition, the act streamlined the process of building a memorial because it ordered designers to first discuss their plans with the newly created National Capital Memorial Commission. The commission’s role was to recommend a site for a memorial; its members came from the NPS, the CFA, the NCPC and the D.C. mayor’s office.²⁵⁹ After the recommended site was approved by the CFA, NCPC, and the Secretary of the Interior, designers had to submit their

²⁵⁶ Sandra Evans, “A Monumental Task of Statuesque Proportions,” *Washington Post*, March 18, 1986.

²⁵⁷ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, “Bill Summary & Status 99th Congress (1985 – 1986) H.R.4378,” <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.99hr4378> (accessed April 15, 2012).

²⁵⁸ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, “H.R.4378.”

²⁵⁹ Rene M. Lynch, “3 Memorials Approved; Korea Vets, Women And Blacks Honored,” *Washington Post*, June 29, 1988.

design proposals to the three reviewing bodies.²⁶⁰ Furthermore, Congressional approval would be withdrawn if the memorial had not obtained a building permit and sufficient funding within five years of approval.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial was the first memorial where the process of finding a location, design approval and raising sufficient funds fell under the Commemorative Works Act. Whereas location would become the biggest issue for the World War II memorial, the 1988 decision to locate the Korean War Memorial in a part of Constitution Gardens, called Ash Woods, was remarkably uncontroversial. The memorial's location made it part of a triangle with the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Richard Stillwell did express his dislike of the location because it was near the horse stables of the NPS. In addition, Stillwell was insulted that the NPS's and NCPC's chairman, John Parsons, rejected the first choice of the KWVMAB - a site on the Eastern part of Constitution Gardens - because of a plan to build a visitors restaurant at the location. Stillwell said: "To be perfectly frank, we are somewhat unhappy that the site... is okay for a visitors restaurant but not for a memorial honoring 54,000 dead and the millions who fought for freedom in the Korean war."²⁶¹ Despite Stillwell's complaints, the Ash Woods site was the location that approved by the two commissions and Secretary of the Interior, Donald P. Hodel, on September 16, 1988.²⁶²

²⁶⁰ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "H.R.4378."

²⁶¹ Lynch, "3 Memorials Approved."

²⁶² "Korean War Memorial Will Rise on the Mall," *New York Times*, September 17, 1988.

Public Attention and Funding

There was a certain increase in attention to the Korean War from 1985 and onwards. The idea that the veterans had been forgotten began to feature in news paper stories; thus, this ensured that the war would be forgotten no more. In 1986, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Haynes Johnson coined the term “five paragraph war”, which he took from a woman who had checked the encyclopedia for information on U.S. wars and found that 26 pages were reserved for World War II, five for the Vietnam War, and only five paragraphs for the Korean War.²⁶³ The author noted that this was strange considering the fact that the death toll of Vietnam and Korea nearly equaled one another. The *New York Times* in 1988 cheered the decision to create a war memorial in Washington, and it lamented that the approval process had already taken such a long time. The editors hoped that the project would receive widespread public support and funding from now on.²⁶⁴ According to Pierpaoli, new scholarly works from the ‘80s and access to documents from Russia and China in the ‘90s turned the impression of Korea around.²⁶⁵ The *New York Times* in 1988 already noticed that new information on the war’s role in the Cold War made the Korean War more than just a police action with an ambiguous stalemate as its outcome.²⁶⁶ Over the years, Pierpaoli argues, the Korean War came to be seen as an actual war, and is today seen

²⁶³ Haynes Johnson, “The Five-Paragraph War,” *Washington Post*, July 29, 1987.

²⁶⁴ “The Missing Monument,” *New York Times*, November 11, 1988.

²⁶⁵ Pierpaoli, “Beyond Collective Amnesia,” 94.

²⁶⁶ Sarah Lyall, “Act of Appreciation Assuages Korean War Veterans,” *New York Times*, June 26, 1988.

as a turning point in the Cold War that still informs American-Asian foreign diplomacy to this day.²⁶⁷

All this public attention did not come one moment too soon, because a fundraising campaign was now necessary. The approval law designated that one million could come from federal funding if necessary, but additional money had to be raised from private organizations.²⁶⁸ The ABMC estimated it needed 6 million dollars, an amount similar to that of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.²⁶⁹ In addition, similar to the building permit, the Commemorative Works Act prescribed that the KWVMAB had to get its funds in order by the deadline of October 28, 1991.

The ABMC oversaw the effort of raising funds for the memorial. Notable is that its first major contribution of 1.7 million dollars came from the South Korean company Hyundai Motor America. The company recently listed the donation among examples that show that “Hyundai is committed to supporting projects, initiatives and activities that champion diversity, make a difference in communities across the country and contribute to the American cultural landscape.”²⁷⁰ Although it is not mentioned in this statement, the company would not have existed if South Korea if it had been conquered by North Korea, and their donation also can be seen as a way to convey a form of gratitude. (Later in this chapter, it will be discussed how the South Korean government promoted its companies to

²⁶⁷ Pierpaoli, “Beyond Collective Amnesia,” 94.

²⁶⁸ Jean Heller, “Honor pledges // Veteran Solicits Aid for Korean War Memorial,” *St. Petersburg Times*, July 7, 1988.

²⁶⁹ “The Missing Monument,” *New York Times*.

²⁷⁰ Hyundai Corporation, “HMMA Help Make a Permanent Memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,” *Hyundai Motor Social Contribution Newsletter* 31 (2011), <http://csr.hyundai.com/download/news/2011/en8.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2012).

contribute to the Korean War Veterans Memorial fund.) In addition, aid came from the Korean War's veterans. The Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) was formed in 1985, when attention for the memorial and the war began to grow. Its three goals were: to find POWs/MIAs who did not return, to raise awareness for the Korean War, and to raise money for a National Memorial.²⁷¹ Through its magazine *Graybeards*, it called upon veterans to donate to the project.

The ABMC also received a helping hand from the popular advice column *Dear Abby*. On Veterans Day 1988 the widely syndicated column featured a letter from KWVA member Kathleen Cronan Wyosnick. She had lost her husband to the war effort, and argued that the men who fought only had *M*A*S*H* to "remind people that we were there." She mentioned that Hyundai had already given money to the memorial "in gratitude", and asked Abby to help raise money so that the veterans would not be forgotten. Abby's response was short and supportive: "Dear Kathleen: I am sending my check today, and I hope readers will come through with contributions. If everyone who reads this sends \$1, we should have that memorial paid for in a matter of months. Readers?"²⁷² Reader response was overwhelming, and the column writer received a plethora of small donations which led up to the impressive amount of more than 350,000 dollars for the memorial.²⁷³ With the aid of the KWVA,

²⁷¹ Korean War Veterans Association, "Fact Sheet," *Graybeards* 6.4, 1991: 20, http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_91/gb_9104_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

²⁷² Abigail van Buren, "Korean War Vets Earned Memorial," *Chicago Tribune*, November 11, 1988.

²⁷³ Laurence Jolidon, "Dear Abby: Thank you. Sincerely, Korea vets," *USA Today*, June 14, 1989.

Hyundai and *Dear Abby* readers, in 1989, before the design competition was even organized, 3 million dollars had already been raised from private donations.²⁷⁴

Design Competition

The documents investigated by Schwartz and Bayma show that the KWVMAB certainly felt that the Korean War, unlike the Vietnam War, was a victorious war, and that the memorial should reflect gratitude for all those who had contributed to the victory; this was a very different point to convey than the earlier memorial.²⁷⁵ The open design competition guidelines the board published were therefore also different from its predecessor, although the veteran was still the central component. The board sought to recognize the veterans through statues that portrayed proud soldiers in “exquisite detail.” Although the request for exquisite detail certainly is similar to the way the Hart statue depicted the three Vietnam soldiers, the fact that the board asked for “proud” soldiers, shows that the tone of the memorial was very different; there was less of a focus on memorializing those veterans who died and suffered, in favor of depicting and showing appreciation for the ones who served. This can also be drawn from the demand that the American flag had to be prominently visible and that all who served should be represented.²⁷⁶

Out of 543 entries, the board of veterans approved one winner and two runners-up. The winners were architects from Penn State University, named Veronica Burns-Lucas, Don

²⁷⁴ Bernard E. Trainor and David E. Rosenbaum, “Washington Talk: Briefing; The Forgotten War,” *New York Times*, February 3, 1989.

²⁷⁵ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 952 – 953.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

Alvaro Leon, John Paul Lucas and Eliza Pennypacker Oberholzer, and they received a prize money of 20,000 dollars.²⁷⁷

The design received the unanimous support from the ABMC on June 13, 1989, and was unveiled to the public at the White House a day later.²⁷⁸ In an accompanying speech, President Bush's remarks showed the changed attitude towards the Korean War when he said that the war was a victory in which the line was held against aggression and totalitarianism. Furthermore, the President said that he looked forward to the day when this "lasting tribute to those who fought so bravely in a foreign land" would be dedicated.²⁷⁹ This illustrates that the Korean War was now not only remembered, it was also remembered as a victory.

In their design statement, the architects said that they wanted to focus their monument on the experiences of the common soldier. Furthermore, John Lucas said that patriotism was the primary narrative theme of the memorial, but that he hoped that visitors would reflect on the effects and conditions of war itself.²⁸⁰ The original design therefore contained 38 statues of foot soldiers who moved symbolically through the 38 months the war went on towards the American flag. The flag stood on a plaza surrounded by a 7-foot high wall with inscriptions that showed the history of the war.²⁸¹ In addition, on the wall the support of other groups and the United Nations was represented. Thus this wall, in

²⁷⁷ Benjamin Forgey, "Korea Memorial Design Chosen," *Washington Post*, June 2, 1989.

²⁷⁸ Benjamin Forgey, "Saluting the Korean War's Rank & File," *Washington Post*, June 15, 1989.

²⁷⁹ Bush, "Remarks."

²⁸⁰ Forgey, "Saluting the Korean War's Rank & File."

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*

opposition to the one from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, was one that included and celebrated the service of those who came home from the war.

Another difference from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was the educational effort of the design. The journey of the soldiers towards the flag and the depictions on the wall were a way to document the history of the war on the memorial. This is an interesting addition to the memorial that the original and final design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial did not have. However, the inclusion of the history of the war eventually became important to all three memorials. The World War II Memorial, as will be shown in the next chapter, struggled with the inclusion of a space for the history of the war throughout its approval process. In addition, the VVMF today seeks to create a Vietnam Veterans Memorial Center to help visitors to look beyond the names on the wall, and to teach them about the Vietnam War.²⁸²

Benjamin Forgey opened his 1989 comment on the design by stating that after a period in the fifties where few memorials were being built, the past decade had renewed the effort.²⁸³ To him the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had created a new kind of memorial: one that tried to merge abstract and symbolic elements with a specific site the National Mall.²⁸⁴ As such, Forgey criticized the design of the Korean War Veterans Memorial for not engaging with its location. It was surrounded too much with bushes and trees, Forgey argued, and this made the memorial an almost claustrophobic element in Ash Woods.²⁸⁵ In

²⁸² Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, "About the Education Center at The Wall," 2012, <http://www.buildthecenter.vvmf.org/pages/about> (accessed June 6, 2012).

²⁸³ Benjamin Forgey, "How Many More Memorials?; Korean Vets, Police Officers Designs Lead a Tight Commemorative Field," *Washington Post*, June 17, 1989.

²⁸⁴ Forgey, "How Many More Memorials?"

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

addition, he lamented the one-sided narrative of the memorial; he argued that the soldiers' movement towards the American flag made sure that the memorial told "a story of soldiers motivated by patriotism -- a punch-packing story to be sure but a very simple one told in an emphatic, simply way. It is a story such as generals would like to hear again and again."²⁸⁶

The architecture critic points towards a significant difference with the original design of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which does not prescribe its visitors a narrative or a history, but allows visitors to come to terms with the war in their own way. It also suggests that because the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was compared to memorials that came after it, the impact it had had on the memorial landscape ensured that it was more difficult to justify the creation of a traditional standalone monument with a focus on patriotism. A new memorial therefore had to merge with its location, and its narrative should not be one-sided.

Fundraising Part II

The new design made clear that 6 million dollars in funding was an underestimate; the multiple elements called for a new goal for the ABMC: to raise 11 million dollars. However, the original deadlines for gathering enough finances still remained intact; this meant that the ABMC needed to get its funds in order before October 28, 1991. In September of 1990, the costs had already gone up to 13 million, including 10 million for construction, 1 million for maintenance, 1 million for "architectural and engineering supervision," and 1 million for any extra costs.²⁸⁷ Eventually the amount of money necessary would rise to a final amount of 18 million.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Blaine P. Friedlander, "The Straight Information About the Memorial," *Graybeards* 6.1, 1990: 16, http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_90/gb_9009_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

The ABMC mailed veterans directly, which already raised money from 15,000 veteran donations, and they sought to double this number by reaching out to even more veterans in July of 1990.²⁸⁸ Unfortunately, because of such a substantial amount of money now necessary, private funding from veterans did not seem sufficient. Congress therefore had to step in to raise additional money. Stan Parris, who had already pleaded in favor of federal funding when he introduced his bill to create a Korean War Veterans Memorial, at this time was more successful, as Congress passed his bill H.R.5053 and accompanying bill S.2737.²⁸⁹ This bill, signed into law by President Bush on October 31, 1990, ordered the Secretary of Treasury to issue silver dollar commemoration coins of the 38th anniversary of the Korean War.²⁹⁰ The sale of these coins for 30 dollars apiece to Korean War veterans, coin collectors, and Korean Americans, raised 7 million for the memorial.²⁹¹ The ABMC used, among others, the KWVA magazine *Graybeards* to communicate with the veterans; for instance, it advertized for the commemorative coin in the magazine in June of 1991.²⁹²

According to Highsmith and Landphair, in addition to a continuous stream of donations from veterans, the remainder of the memorial's money came from Samsung

²⁸⁸ Tom Kelly, "Korea: Lessons learned about war," *Washington Times*, May 28, 1990.

²⁸⁹ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 101st Congress (1989 – 1990) S.2737," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d101:S.2737:@@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

²⁹⁰ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "S.2737."

²⁹¹ Kent Jenkins Jr., "Parris Pushes Bill For War Memorial; Measure Would Allow Minting of Coin For Project in Honor of Korean Conflict," *Washington Post*, October 18, 1990.

²⁹² Korean War Veterans Association, "Buy This Valuable Memory of Korea and Help Build the Memorial in the Nation's Capital," *Graybeards* 6.5, 1991: 13 http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_91/gb_9106_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

Information Systems and other Korean firms based in America.²⁹³ Southern Korean support of the project is striking: Almost 3 million dollar of the 18 million necessary was raised from corporations from South Korea.²⁹⁴ At the dedication of the memorial, the South Korean President Kim Young Sam attended and said in a speech: “We are dedicating this Korean War veterans memorial so that all succeeding generations will know how great the sacrifices and devotion of those veterans were and how precious freedom and peace are.”²⁹⁵ The South Korean government’s support of the memorial effort did not go unnoticed in South Korea; papers criticized that government could better spend its time to fix the problems at home “instead of encouraging companies to contribute to a memorial that primarily honors U.S. war dead.”²⁹⁶ This suggests that the South Korean government actively aided the fundraising effort and asked its companies to contribute to the fund. The efforts of the KWVA as well as those of the American and South Korean governments ensured that the memorial had sufficient funding to implement its design, even though it would change dramatically after the initial design competition phase.

Changes in the Design

Fundraising in 1990 was already well underway with the coin act, and the original design was used to promote donations to the memorial from veterans and companies. However, although the design had received tentative approval from both the CFA and the

²⁹³ Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 51.

²⁹⁴ Anthony Faiola and Lena H. Sun, “Out of History, Onto the Mall; Korean War Memorial to Be Dedicated,” *Washington Post*, July 23, 1995.

²⁹⁵ Kim I. Mills, “Forgotten No More, Veterans Reminisce, Pay Tribute,” *Associated Press*, July 27, 1995.

²⁹⁶ Faiola, “Out of History, Onto the Mall.”

NCPC after its unveiling, the KVMAB saw the design they approved only as a starting point; it now had to be revised to further answer to the demands the board had made in their design competition statement.²⁹⁷ Accordingly, the KWVMAB now sought a firm to implement and adapt the design, and a sculptor to make the 38 sculptures as realistic as possible, including branch of service and ethnicity. The design winners received their prize money of 20,000 dollars, but their role in the project was downgraded to “design consultants.”²⁹⁸ To carry out the project, in May of 1990, the KWVMAB hired the firm Cooper-Lecky, which had been responsible for the creation of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as well.²⁹⁹ The Cooper-Lecky firm hired sculptor Frank Gaylord II, a World War II veteran, to make the statues realistic enough to show their “branches of service, ranks, races, ethnicities, and military functions.”³⁰⁰

In the first revision of the winning design the statues were given racial and ethnic identities by Gaylord. Four statues represented the Korean Augment to the US Army, nineteen Caucasians, six Hispanics, five African-Americans, two American Indians, and two Asian-Americans.³⁰¹ This kind of specificity naturally brought with it political questions of who should be represented, and which groups in army and society should have more statues than others. For instance, Schwartz and Bayma explain how in further revisions the number of Hispanic statues was lowered from six to five, so as not to overshadow the

²⁹⁷ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 953.

²⁹⁸ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 953.

²⁹⁹ Karen Goldberg, “Architects to oversee 2nd memorial,” *Washington Times*, May 4, 1990.

³⁰⁰ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 953 – 954.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 953.

number of African-American statues.³⁰² It is difficult to find data on the ethnicity of the veterans at the time of the Korean War itself; however, in the 1990 census, the Veterans Administration was able to tell the ethnic makeup of the Korean War veteran population: 4.5 million were white, 339,400 were African American, 133,500 were Hispanic, 30,400 American Indian, and there were 39,300 were Asian Americans.³⁰³ Ethnic representation was important because the Korean War was the first war where the army was integrated. In addition, multiple branches and forms of service were represented in the soldiers: not only the Army, Marine, Navy and Air Force, but also artillerymen and medics.³⁰⁴ A total of 2.8 million served in the Army, 1.2 million in the Navy, 424,000 served in the Marines, and 1,3 million served in the Air Force.³⁰⁵

A second change was the placement of the soldiers. The initial design was a straight movement in a line through the 38 months of war towards the flag; the new design had the soldiers move diagonally on an axe that intersected with the Lincoln Memorial.³⁰⁶ The story of the 38 soldiers also became quite different because they were not walking through the

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Program and Data Analyses, *Data on Veterans of the Korean War*, by Robert E. Klein (Washington D.C., June 2000): 2. <http://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/KW2000.pdf> (accessed April 20, 2012).

³⁰⁴ Benjamin Forgey, "More Salvos in Memorial Fight; Commission Delays Decision on Korean War Monument," *Washington Post*, December 14, 1990.

³⁰⁵ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *American War and Military Operations Casualties: Lists and Statistics*, by Anne Leland and Mari-Jana Oboroceanu, CRS Report RL32492 (Washington DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, February 26, 2010), available from <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL32492.pdf> (accessed June 6, 2012).

³⁰⁶ Forgey, "More Salvos."

months of war; they were now under attack, and used grenades and bazookas.³⁰⁷ These changes turned the memorial much more into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial's representation of soldier's experiences in the war, and away from a patriotic story of the war.

Cooper shared Forgey's criticism of the Penn State's work when he said that the design looked like it "could be anywhere," and did not blend in with the beautiful surroundings. It is another comparison to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial because that memorial was the epitome of site integration. Notable, too, is that Cooper-Lecky had established this site integration for the memorial and hoped to do the same for the Korean War Veterans Memorial.³⁰⁸ In the next chapter, it will be shown that the World War II Memorial also sought to merge with its site, and that this is therefore an important characteristic for all three veterans memorials. Although the wall stayed part of the design, it was relocated and now surrounded a large ceremonial plaza to the west of the flag pole. The ceremonial plaza led up to a grove of trees that would form a contemplative space. Although the changes caused the design to become larger than the original design, it was less intrusive to the surrounding landscape.

After the unveiling, the winning design had received little attention; however, this all changed when a conflict arose between the architects from Penn State and the Cooper-Lecky firm over the adjustments. In October 1990 the *Washington Post* published an article where the Penn State designers said that the modifications made the memorial look like a

³⁰⁷ Benjamin Forgey, "War Memorial Revisions Decried; Architects Call Changed Design for Korean Monument a 'Fraud'," *Washington Post*, October 25, 1990.

³⁰⁸ Roger K. Lewis, "War Memorial Design Symbol of Controversy," *Washington Post*, November 17, 1990.

“G.I. Joe” battle scene.³⁰⁹ They argued the firm completely turned the initial concept of the memorial on its head by the changed position and appearance of the soldiers; to them the inclusion of elements of war and the depiction of a war scene even romanticized war.³¹⁰ In response to these allegations Cooper-Lecky claimed that the competition winners were “unreasonable” and “stubborn” because they did not want to change their design to correspond with the requirements of the other organizations overseeing the design.³¹¹

At its hearing in December of 1990 the CFA felt that, out of fairness, both designs should be presented in order to establish which one was the correct Korean War Veterans Memorial design. However, NPS chairman John Parsons said that to him the Cooper-Lecky design seemed to have flown naturally from the initial design, and that, unless other reviewing bodies raised any significant doubts, the firm would have his support.³¹² Notable protest from other bodies did not seem forthcoming when the secretary of the CFA, Charles Atherton, defended Cooper-Lecky as well, and said: “they have the liberty to change whatever they feel is not suitable, and they have the legal right to do that.”³¹³ This was not to say that the reviewers were in love with the new design; while deferring judgment for a month, John Carter Brown hinted that the CFA had reservations about the Cooper-Lecky design when he said: “The whole concept of the Vietnam Memorial was you couldn't see it,

³⁰⁹ Forgey, “War Memorial Revisions Decried.”

³¹⁰ Barbara Gamarekian, “Architects Clash Over Korean War Memorial,” *New York Times*, December 15, 1990.

³¹¹ Lewis, “War Memorial Design Symbol of Controversy.”

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ Gamarekian, “Architects Clash.”

one reason it is so effective is that it doesn't wave its hand at you.”³¹⁴ This shows once more that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had made a substantial impression on the members of the CFA, and that this caused them to demand similar site integration for new memorials.

After this hearing, the competition winners filed suit against the KVMAB for changing their design without permission. The goal of the Penn State architects was to have the design restored to its original form.³¹⁵ It was unfortunate for them that the competition details specified that the designers had to be consulted, and paid a consultancy fee for their actions; nothing in the rules therefore said that they had any decisive power over what happened to their design. Thus, this was a difficult case to make in court. Eventually the ruling of the district court of appeals in 1993 came to the same conclusion, and stated that the designers “read too much into the rules” of the competition, and that nothing in those rules stated that they had any right to veto design changes.³¹⁶

With a lawsuit already filed before ground was even broken, the Korean War Veterans Memorial had all the hallmarks of another controversial design struggle in the making, and the CFA certainly helped spread this belief when it rejected the Cooper-Lecky design in January of 1991. The commission lamented that the revised design was larger than the initial; this not only raised the costs, but also interfered with pre-existing structures on

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Carleton R. Bryant, “Korean War memorial's designers sue to halt changes,” *Washington Post*, December 19, 1990.

³¹⁶ *Veronica Burns Lucas et al., v. United States Army Corps of Engineers*, 990 F.2d. 1377, U.S.App.D.C. 91-5396 (1993), available from <https://law.resource.org/pub/reporter/F2/990/990.F2d.1377.91-5396.html> (accessed June 6, 2012).

the Mall.³¹⁷ In addition, chairman John Carter Brown referred to the realism of the soldiers as a “Disney World approach in infotainment.”³¹⁸ According to the CFA, the memorial ran the risk of becoming an outdoor museum, and this was something that did not fit into the character of the National Mall.³¹⁹ After another revised design was handed in by Cooper-Lecky four months later, one that still contained the wall and the 38 statues as its essential elements, the CFA decided that the architects needed a serious wakeup call and unanimously rejected the design.³²⁰ The commission considered the combination of 38 statues with an accompanying wall as too much of a good thing. In a letter to the ABMC, the commission explained its position, and wrote that:

Both of these elements are powerful in themselves and exhibit considerable creative strength in skill and execution. However, as was clearly demonstrated by the mockup, the combined effect was excessive and confusing and would seriously diminish the overall impact of the memorial. The design would result in a memorial that would be less than the use of its parts. Moreover, it is also clear to us that the concept of thirty-eight free-standing figures, which we had agreed to see developed to this point, simply will not work. The commission believes that at this point we should all step back and examine the situation together.³²¹

Time was now of the essence. Because the lawsuit and the rejections had severely delayed the project, there was a now risk that it would not make the federal deadline for the start of

³¹⁷ Stan Hadden, “This is the Newest Design for the Korean War Veterans Memorial,” *Graybeards* 6.3, 1991: 1-4, http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_91/gb_9103_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

³¹⁸ Benjamin Forgey, “Memorial Design Rejected; Commission Wants Korean Monument Scaled Down,” *Washington Post*, January 18, 1991.

³¹⁹ Forgey, “Memorial Design Rejected.”

³²⁰ Sarah Booth Conroy, “Korea Memorial Design Rejected; Arts Panel Decides Plan Was ‘Overloaded’,” *Washington Post*, June 29, 1991.

³²¹ Korean War Veterans Association, “Is it Now Time For Veterans to Get Mad and Demand Action?” *Graybeards* 7.1, 1991: 14 - 16, http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_91/gb_9109_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

construction on October 28 of 1991. The board therefore now had to make massive changes to the memorial's design in order to rapidly acquire the building permit.

Final Design: The Sculptures

Speaking about the sculptures, William Lecky later said that there was “no question that there was healthy conflict between what the client wanted, which was something very realistic and military accurate, and what the reviewing commissions – the artistic side, if you will – preferred, which was something more abstract.”³²² This pinpoints perfectly the different objectives of the commissions: the ABMC and KWVMAB, which consisted of veterans, had the representation of the soldiers at heart, while the CFA and the NCPC, including architects and planners, sought to improve or retain the beauty of the National Mall. The KWVMAB knew early in 1991 that it had to compromise, or it would stand empty-handed at the when the deadline passed in October of that year. In the months that followed the CFA's multiple rejections the number of statues was reduced to nineteen, and the wall was reduced in size from 214 feet to 180. In addition, Frank Gaylord created statues that were less realistic. Gaylord gave the soldiers ponchos, in order to show the harsh weather conditions; this coincided nicely with the demands of the CFA because most of the military gear would now be hidden underneath.³²³ This meant that the service affiliations of each statue (fourteen soldiers, three marines, one Air Force spotter and one Naval attaché), could only be seen by someone who was really looking for it.³²⁴ Moreover, the material used for the statues was unpolished stainless steel; the goal was to give them the “raw, virile

³²² Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 74.

³²³ Sarah Booth Conroy, “Korean War Memorial Design Fails Again,” *Washington Post*, October 25, 1991.

³²⁴ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 956.

quality reminiscent of the black-and-white photos of the conflict.”³²⁵ This made it more difficult to identify the ethnicity of the statues.

Although the CFA rejected the proposal again, to push the architects towards further changes, their reaction to the statues was generally positive. John Carter Brown’s comment that the soldiers now had a “dreamlike quality” was significantly less critical than his previous comparison to Disney World. The main issue the CFA still had was that a way had to be found to make the statues and wall work together.³²⁶

Final Design II: The Wall

Although the CFA had expressed its doubts about the combination of the statues with a wall, the scaled down model they eventually approved featured both. Throughout the design process the KWVMAB stressed that it was important to recognize everyone who supported the war effort, and the wall became the main way to honor the work of those who were not directly in the combat zone. Thus, in the final design the support personnel is represented not by the statues in the field, but on a 164-foot-long black granite wall with photographs engraved.³²⁷ The wall features over 2,400 black and white photographs of American service personnel from all the five branches of service, taken from the Still Pictures Branch of the National Archives.³²⁸ A curb honors the United Nations personnel; it runs on the ground on the other side of the statues, and listed in alphabetical order the 22

³²⁵ Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 62.

³²⁶ Conroy, “Korean War Memorial Design Fails Again.”

³²⁷ Schwartz, “Commemoration,” 956.

³²⁸ American Battle Monuments Commission, “Korean War Veterans Memorial,” <http://www.abmc.gov/memorials/memorials/kr.php> (accessed April 20, 2012).

countries that aided the war effort.³²⁹ In addition, the wall plays a role in the commemoration of the soldiers in the field as well. This is because the wall is made out of granite, material similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and it therefore reflects the 19 statues. As a result, the wall's reflection doubles the nineteen soldiers back to their original thirty-eight. In addition, the wall blends past and present for visitors because they see their own reflection in the black granite wall and thus symbolically join the people in the photographs. An example can be seen in figure 6.

The use of a wall was controversial in the '90s to say the least. In their rejection of the initial design CFA members said about the wall that after the Vietnam Veterans Memorial this was a difficult act to follow and best not to attempt.³³⁰ John Carter Brown's initial comment was that "trying to warm up the leftovers" of Maya Lin's work would be unwise.³³¹ Moreover, Forgey said about the final design that "the blatant borrowing of Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall is still an embarrassment."³³² As was shown earlier, the representation of the ones lost on the wall of the Vietnam Memorial was something the KWVMAB did not want for its memorial. It is therefore only logical that the wall of this monument, although made of similar black granite, has a completely different meaning.

³²⁹ American Battle Monuments Commission, "Korean War Veterans Memorial."

³³⁰ Forgey, "Memorial Design Rejected."

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Benjamin Forgey, "Like the War Itself, an Unsatisfying Compromise," *Washington Post*, January 17, 1992.



Figure 6. The wall reflects the statues and the visitors

The names of the fallen are replaced by photographs of those who served. In regard to the absence of names, Highsmith and Landphair write that the memorial was not solely for those who fell, but also to everyone who served, and that “it was not to be another eternal gravestone.”³³³ The authors prefer the Korean War Veterans Memorial’s main idea to salute all who joined the war effort; the inclusion of all service personnel in the wall ensured that not another Hart statue of Women’s Memorial would be necessary for this memorial. In addition, the fact that the Korean War Veterans Memorial Board wanted to show that the war was a victory, ensured that they would create a memorial that leaned more towards celebrating those who served than commemorating those who had died.

³³³ Highsmith, *Forgotten No More*, 54

However, not all veterans felt that their wall expressed the right story. Some felt that the ones who made the “ultimate sacrifice” were entitled to a special part in the memorial. In the *Graybeards* magazine, several veterans call for a wall of names to honor those KIA and MIA personally. Because of the call that a list of names of those who fell should be included, the KWVMAB eventually added a video data base in a National Park Service pavilion at the entrance of the memorial.³³⁴ This was not the end. It would eventually lead to a drawn-out discussion on whether the fallen should or should not receive special recognition, as had been the case for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It is remarkable to see that, even as recently as 2011, efforts are made to add a wall of remembrance to recognize the servicemen killed, missing or wounded in action, and prisoners of war.³³⁵ In 2011 there was a public hearing on Bill H.R.2563, to authorize a Wall of Remembrance added to the memorial to list all the names of fallen soldiers. In this meeting, Colonel William E. Weber explained how in the nineties attempts from veterans to list the names of those fallen on the memorial were unsuccessful because the mood at the time was “we don’t want another wall on the Mall.”³³⁶ He also said that the CFA was unhappy about the controversy over the Vietnam wall, and that it did not want the same to happen with the Korean War Veterans Memorial.

³³⁴ Korean War Veterans Association, “No Title... No History... No Names,” *Graybeards* 7.3, 1992: 5 – 7, http://www.kwva.org/graybeards/gb_92/gb_9204_scan.pdf (accessed March 20, 2012).

³³⁵ House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, *Legislative Hearing on H.R. 2563, H.R. 1335, and H.R. 854*, 112th Cong., 1st Sess., October 4, 2011, available from <http://democrats.naturalresources.house.gov/hearing/subcommittee-legislative-hearing-hr-2563-hr-1335-and-hr-854> (accessed June 6, 2012).

³³⁶ House Subcommittee, *Legislative Hearing on H.R.2563*.

William Lecky in 2011 testified that there was an “interesting dichotomy” between the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial. The complaint of the Vietnam memorial was that it did not honor the ones who returned from the war, and this had led to the addition of the Hart statue and the Vietnam Women’s Memorial. Lecky felt that the Korean Memorial was the reverse situation; those who fell did not receive special recognition, and everyone who served was acknowledged as a reaction to the controversy over the Vietnam wall.³³⁷ The KWVMAB did include elements to commemorate those lost. Lecky said in his testimony that they felt that the Pool of Remembrance and the addition of the NPS pavilion sufficiently marked the ones who died. He later had to acknowledge that it did not work; people did not understand the symbolism of the pool, and the pavilion was offline half of the time. Furthermore, Lecky said he now understood that requesting the name of one fallen soldier at the NPS stand could never convey the sense of the tens of thousands of lost soldiers as a whole.³³⁸

Back in 1991, the willingness of the architects to make drastic changes to the memorial won over the reviewing commissions. Not only did they receive an extension of the dreaded October deadline, but on January 17, 1992, The CFA approved the changed design by Cooper-Lecky, which made sure that the design would finally be up for approval from NCPC in February. The NCPC initially called for the number of statues to be reduced, but because the approval process had already taken so long, it approved the design and vowed that further changes would be worked out before Memorial Day of that year.³³⁹ A

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Sarah Booth Conroy, “Korea Memorial Hits New Hurdle; Planning Panel Asks For Further Changes,” *Washington Post*, February 7, 1992.

building permit could now finally be given by the Secretary of the Interior, and ground-breaking finally began on June 14, 1992 in the attendance of 5000 veterans. The current look of the memorial is shown in figure 7.



Figure 7. The current look of the Korean War Veterans Memorial

Conclusion

The stories of veterans of the Korean War were for a long time overshadowed by stories from World War II and the Vietnam War. They did not call for a national memorial because the veterans of World War II had never asked for them either, and most of the Korean War veterans were part of that generation; some even fought in both wars. World War II was the good war, and its veterans were seen as heroes. In this light, the stories of collaborating POWs gave Korean War veterans a bad reputation, and made them less inclined to speak about their service. In addition, the fact that the war turned out a stalemate after two years of peace talks ensured that it ended with a whimper, one that did not receive the full attention of the public. The veterans came home to a society that was much more focused on who was communist and who was not, and in this tense political climate there was not a lot of room to call attention to veterans' issues; *The Manchurian Candidate* depicts part of the paranoid atmosphere that veterans must have encountered. Moreover, the fact that the war for the American way of life ended in a stalemate made it a chapter in American history that must have distressed Americans, and one they therefore preferred to ignore.

In addition, the memory of the Korean War faded into the background because of the trying times of the sixties and the Vietnam War, which started ten years later. The Vietnam War continued to overshadow the Korean War; the most ironic example is the *M*A*S*H* series which is set in the Korean War, but mostly because it is a neutral location to discuss the issues brought up by the Vietnam War. When veterans of the Korean War saw that this war was given national acknowledgment before they received it themselves, they began to speak out. Their arguments reveal that veteran suffering and service are now the prime motivation for the creation of a national war memorial. They did not argue the causes

of the war, its history, or its politicians. On the contrary, they argued how the death tolls were similar to those of the Vietnam War, and how all who served should be remembered because they had been forgotten for such a long time.

In the design, however, a clear split can be seen between remembering the ones who died and the commemoration of service. It is interesting to see that the memorial's initial design tried to honor all those who served, and was a lot more patriotic, with the placement of soldiers walking towards a flag. It was the opposite of Maya Lin's wall because it clearly did seek to tell visitors the story of the war; a war the KWVMAB considered victorious. The final result, however, is less about a victorious war, and more about the veterans who served and their experiences. Important are the changes in the soldiers, who no longer move through time towards a flag, but instead move towards the flag while haunted by the battles they are fighting. Similar to the Hart statue, the soldiers are not abstract symbols of heroism; they are realistic, and the fear and harsh experiences of the Korean war can be seen in their faces and the ponchos they wear to protect them from the cold.

Important to this memorial is the fact that at least four federal organizations were part of the design effort, and that they had different interests. The ABMC and KWVMAB had the interest of the veterans at heart, aided by the fact that all twelve members of KWVMAB were veterans of the Korean War. The two veteran groups wanted a memorial that included all service personnel, in opposition to the memorial of the war they felt had for too long overshadowed the Korean War. It might therefore have been unavoidable that the CFA and NCPC eventually had to halt the project because it was becoming too big, and too expensive. Furthermore, Congress had just passed the Commemorative Works Act out of a fear that the Mall would become saturated with monuments. Thus, adding a memorial as

large as initially proposed would have been in disregard to this new law. The CFA often referred to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as an example for design revisions that should be made. The commission especially liked the site integration of the Vietnam memorial, and the fact that it does not tell its visitors what to think.

Although an initial proposal sought to show the history of the war on a granite wall, characteristics of the war can only be found in the depictions of the individuals that served in it. The memorial offers no historical account of the war, and neither does the Vietnam Wall. It will be shown later that the World War II Memorial sought explicitly to incorporate the history of the war into the memorial, and that this led to a considerable amount of protest.

The Korean War Veterans Memorial was dedicated on July 27 of 1995, and to this day the lack of names on the memorial is still an issue. It appears that the situation is indeed like William Lecky said; the Korean War Veterans Memorial followed a process opposite to that of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and on the first glance is more of a monument to honor those who served. However, both edifices still end up in the middle; they both have to be a monument and a memorial, and honor both the American veterans that served and the ones who died. We will see that the situation was similar for the final memorial in this project: the tribute to the veterans of World War II.

4. The World War II Memorial

What is known about World War II is that not only was America's entry and presence in the war never forgotten, it was, as opposed to the other two war memorials discussed, already widely commemorated before a movement to build a national memorial on the Mall came about. This chapter will first discuss how veterans felt that they had been honored by memorials that were very different from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial. Subsequently this chapter explains why the World War II veterans began to ask for a national war memorial as well. Furthermore, special attention is paid to the highly professional fundraising campaign, and the controversy that arose over the memorial's central location on the Mall.

Living Memorials and Iwo Jima

Kirstin Ann Hass writes that commemoration started immediately after World War II ended.³⁴⁰ There are many local structures, and national commemorations of the veterans; for instance, there is the Iwo Jima Memorial. Besides classic and patriotic structures reminiscent of the World War I memorials, several of the memorials built were shaped differently than the works on the Mall or Arlington Cemetery; in general the memorials were in the form of buildings and stadiums. This came out of the belief that following the Depression years America was best served if tributes to its veterans would have a practical use; these buildings were called the living memorials.³⁴¹ Erika Doss writes that: "As witnessed in the profusion of local, national and living memorials that were raised in the

³⁴⁰ Hass, *Carried to the Wall*, 61.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

immediate post-war era, World War II was clearly commemorated – ‘recognized’ and ‘honored’ – in America.”³⁴² The question to start this chapter with is then, if there was never a doubt that the war was commemorated throughout America, why was there suddenly a need to make another memorial on the D.C. Mall?

Doss is correct when she writes that the living memorials are today no longer seen as actual commemoration of veterans’ service.³⁴³ Heavily contributing to this is the fact that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated with such a powerful media presence, and that now Korean veterans received their own national memorial, in addition to the women veterans that received their Vietnam Women’s Memorial. Several veterans of World War II therefore began to feel the need to also put their war in this new national spotlight. With dozens of fifty-year celebrations of World War II starting in 1989, some veterans of World War II began to speak out for a new national memorial to World War II veterans. Marcy Kaptur, a Democratic Representative from Ohio, found in 1989 that among her constituents the authorization of the Korean War Veterans Memorial caused anger that World War II had not been commemorated as well.³⁴⁴ It is remarkable that these veterans were not angry about the commemoration of the Vietnam War, but that it took the addition of Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Mall years later to get the World War II veterans to start their movement. Perhaps this was because the Korean War veterans were part of their own generation.

In the beginning it took a while for the veterans to get society behind their efforts because at the time many still felt that World War II was the war that was sufficiently

³⁴² Doss, “War, Memory, and Public Mediation,” 231.

³⁴³ Ibid., 232.

³⁴⁴ Dale Russakoff, “Monumental Obsessions,” *Washington Post*, February 23, 1989.

remembered in the memorials that had been built in the earlier decades after the war. For instance, when World War II veteran Roger Durbin asked Kaptur in 1989 why there was no national memorial to the veterans of World War II in Washington, she answered that there was: the Iwo Jima Memorial near Arlington Cemetery.³⁴⁵ Kaptur's answer to Durbin illustrates how many saw the Iwo Jima Memorial as the national memorial that commemorated World War II veterans. The Iwo Jima Memorial (figure 8), still is one of the most prominent World War II Memorials in the nation. To Bodnar, the memorial stands for the representation of nation and sacrifice that was so important to memorials before the Vietnam Memorial shifted the focus to veterans' experiences.³⁴⁶ The memorial is certainly different from the Vietnam and Korea memorials because of the central location of the flag, which asserts a theme of victory for the state. One might say that veterans of war are represented in this sculpture as well; they are individuals who were even known in society at the time.³⁴⁷ However, the central place of the flag, and the action of the soldiers, clearly places them in the common narrative of fighting for the nation.

In addition, the memorial is not a national memorial that honors the veterans of all branches of service; this is something that the two veterans memorials do attempt. Instead, it is a memorial to all who gave their lives in service of the U.S. Marine Corps.³⁴⁸ The public perception of this monument is, however, a completely different thing; Savage writes that the Iwo Jima Memorial is often associated with American victory in World War II.³⁴⁹ For

³⁴⁵ Russakoff, "Monumental Obsessions."

³⁴⁶ Bodnar, "Saving Private Ryan," 809.

³⁴⁷ National Park Service, "U.S. Marine War Corps Memorial."

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Savage, *Monument Wars*, 245.

instance, in a discussion on the Vietnam Women's Memorial's fundraising an editor of *the St. Petersburg Times* in Florida spoke some very interesting words: "World War II veterans have the Iwo Jima Memorial. Vietnam veterans have the 'wall.' Korean veterans will soon have their 'weary soldiers on patrol' walk." The editor in this quote equates the Iwo Jima Memorial with the national veterans memorials for the Vietnam and Korean veterans, which suggests that he feels that all three wars have now found a commemorative space in Washington D.C. However, this was not the view of several World War II veterans. Durbin's response to Kaptur's remarks on the Iwo Jima memorial was: "That's a *monument* to one service branch, the Marines."³⁵⁰ This shows how the two previous war memorials have influenced the call for a new World War II memorial: suddenly all branches of service had to be recognized in a national memorial, similar to the way the Korean War Veterans Memorial had depicted all the branches of service. This movement towards a national memorial had not been present before, but after the two later wars had been dedicated the living memorials and statues that only represented part of the troops were not sufficient anymore. Durbin's comments led Kaptur to dive into research of the Smithsonian Institute, and she concluded that there was indeed no such national memorial, and she started the effort to get Congress to authorize the creation of a memorial on federal land in Washington.³⁵¹

³⁵⁰ Nicolaus Mills, *Their Last Battle: The Fight for the World War II Memorial*, (New York: Basic Books, 2004), Kindle Edition, location 278 of 3677.

³⁵¹ Russakoff, "Monumental Obsessions."



Figure 8. The Iwo Jima Memorial

The Approval Process

Kaptur introduced her bill on December 10, 1987, she hoped to appoint the ABMC Commission to establish a memorial and a museum on federal land for those who served in the Second World War. It failed to receive enough support in the House; action on the bill ended on July 7, 1988.³⁵² American Studies scholar Nicolaus Mills has written a biography on the creation of The World War II Memorial, and he shows that Kaptur's efforts to get the bill signed into law proved to be a serious struggle. Two subsequent bills to erect the memorial

³⁵² *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 100th Congress (1987 – 1988) H.R.3742," <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.100hr3742> (accessed April 15, 2012).

failed in the House³⁵³ In addition, Senator Strom Thurmond's parallel efforts for a bill into the Senate failed to gain enough votes twice.³⁵⁴

How to explain that multiple efforts by the Senator and Congressman failed to come into fruition? It probably has to do with the fact that Congress was not yet convinced that World War II was in need of a memorial the way the other two wars had been. The Commemorative Works Act designated that Congress could only establish a memorial in D.C. under special circumstances, and World War II already had its national veterans memorial with the Iwo Jima Memorial. In 1987, Kaptur and Durbin were a minority in their quest to establish a new, national memorial to honor the veterans of World War II. The veterans memorials for Vietnam and Korea were created to heal society's wounds over a divisive war, as well as the neglect of its veterans, and to correct the problem that the Korea veterans were forgotten at all. Since World War II was never forgotten, or divided society in such a prominent way, many Americans, as well as members of Congress, must have felt that there was simply no need for another national memorial.

Commemoration of returning veterans and the recognition of their service, however, had become more frequent since the veterans parade for the Vietnam War veterans. An example is the homecoming celebration of the Gulf War veterans. The Gulf War was a short and highly successful military effort; Operation Desert Storm ran from January 17, 1991 up to February 28, 1991. In this month the coalition swiftly defeated the Iraqi forces, and the war was seen in the United States as a much-needed military victory. In an article on the scheduled Gulf War homecoming parades, *Washington Post* writer Stephen Fehr said that "it has been more than 45 years since Americans have fully embraced returning war

³⁵³ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 404 of 3677.

³⁵⁴ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 396 of 3677.

veterans. Now, with the end of the Persian Gulf War, a new generation of half a million veterans is coming home, and this time the reception will be different from Vietnam and Korea. Suddenly, it's all right again to cheer the troops.”³⁵⁵ This shows once more, that the Vietnam and Korean War veterans were perceived as the ones who had not received a proper welcome home, or who were overlooked. Parades and memorials were therefore seen as long overdue for these two groups. Many people considered the World War II veterans as the group who had been given a recognition American society could be proud of; an example for the way veterans of later wars should have been treated. Gulf War veterans would therefore now be honored with parades in New York City and Washington D.C., according to organizers these were the largest victory parades since World War II.³⁵⁶ They were to be held somewhere around the 4th of July, and both were 5-million dollar events, money raised by massive citywide fundraising campaigns.³⁵⁷

That the veterans’ homecoming was high on the political agenda was without a doubt, as the 5 million of raised funds for the parade in D.C. was complemented by a 7 million dollar check from the government, to pay for things like meals and transportation for veterans.³⁵⁸ Eventually, 800,000 people were on the Mall and 200,000 came to see the

³⁵⁵ Stephen C. Fehr, “Veterans Applaud Surge of Support for Gulf War Soldiers,” *Washington Post*, March 4, 1991.

³⁵⁶ Ruben Castaneda, “Gulf War Veterans to be Honored With D.C. Parade,” *Washington Post*, April 25, 1991.

³⁵⁷ Mary Jordan, “D.C. Parade Plans Roar Into Focus; Logistics 'Enormous' For Gulf Celebration,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1991.

³⁵⁸ Andrea Stone, “Pre-parade Invasion Swarms Capital. Desert Storm Swoops in for the Big Party,” *USA Today*, June 7, 1991.

parade on June 8, 1991.³⁵⁹ *Newsweek* said that the parade for the Gulf War veterans stood for the country's tribute to all those who served in the military.³⁶⁰

It is uncertain if the World War II veterans agreed with this ideal. All this attention to Gulf War veterans was bound to create backlash at some point, and it came from the veterans of other wars. *The St. Petersburg Times* printed letters from a few veterans. World War II veteran Paul W. Neuber felt that General Schwarzkopf had received enough praise, and that tribute should be paid to the "servicemen and women who lost their lives or limbs," in earlier wars, and who were now only remembered on the 4th of July. Another veteran of World War II, John Skrzyniarz, wrote how the ones who actually did the fighting received few benefits and parades over the years.³⁶¹

Kaptur's repeated attempts to approve the World War II Memorial Act finally paid off in her fourth effort, H.R. 1624, as it passed the House on June 22 of 1992. What caused this change of heart in the House is unclear. Mills attributes it to the fact that Kaptur had reintroduced the bill for five years.³⁶² Another reason might be that commemoration of other veterans had been so prominent in the years before, and that the upcoming 50 year anniversary of America's entry and victory in World War II was coming up created an impulse to commemorate the veterans of the "good war." Kaptur was also happy to see that the House approved a commemorative coin act on June 30, 1992. The Senate passed the Commemorative Coin Bill on September 29 and President Bush signed it into law on

³⁵⁹ Mary Jordan, "800,000 Jam D.C. for Tribute to Troops," *Washington Post*, June 9, 1991.

³⁶⁰ "Hail the Heroes," *Newsweek*, June 17, 1991.

³⁶¹ "Schwarzkopf Has Received Enough Praise," *St. Petersburg Times*, May 20, 1991.

³⁶² Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 424 of 3677.

October 14 of 1992.³⁶³ The Korean War Veterans Memorial had benefitted from a similar act, but Kaptur wanted to make sure that funding would be available; consequently, she chose to establish a fund in Congress even before approval for the memorial had been given.

In another financial matter, the situation of the World War II Memorial is not all that different from the Korean Memorial. Alongside Kaptur's bill, Senator Strom Thurmond introduced his own set of bills in the Senate to allow the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund to establish the memorial on the land with private funding. David R. Barron had created the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund in February 1992, and claimed that the sale of coins would never be sufficient, and that his organization had the connections to draw funds from many sources: he estimated 25 million dollars.³⁶⁴ The situation seems like a repeat of a few years earlier; a debate arose if the memorial should be established with federal or public coordination of the project. However, Kaptur worried that through the use of private organizations such as the World War II Veterans Memorial Fund the government would not have a decent oversight in funding, and she therefore felt the project should stay under the wings of the ABMC, especially because the government would be involved in fundraising through the Commemorative Coin Act.³⁶⁵ It makes sense for Kaptur to worry, since the Korean War Veterans Memorial Fund had certainly had its internal struggles.

³⁶³ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 102nd Congress (1991 – 1992) S.3195," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d102:S.3195:@@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

³⁶⁴ Bill McAllister, "Seeking a Fantastic Memorial to a 'Fantastic' War," *Washington Post*, July 10, 1992.

³⁶⁵ Kaptur, "World War II Memorial Newspaper Articles."

Eventually she won the argument, as Strom Thurmond's Senate bill was merged with Kaptur's bill, and passed the Senate with unanimous consent on October 7 of 1992.³⁶⁶ What remained after this point were mere formalities before the bill could be signed into law, and this was scheduled for the final House session on October 9th. What happened next must have been one of the most frustrating occurrences, and no doubt one of the reasons that the bill took six years to be approved: the House adjourned in favor of recess, and the bill now had to be reintroduced in its entirety into the new 103rd Congress.³⁶⁷ Luckily, the continued efforts of both Thurmond and Kaptur led to recognition in the 103rd Congress that this bill was to be delayed no longer, and their renewed efforts led finally into a bill for the World War II Memorial signed into law on May 25 of 1993.³⁶⁸ This bill designated that the ABMC was to establish the memorial, aided by the advice of the newly created World War II Memorial Advisory Board (WWIIMAB).³⁶⁹ With this out of the way, the first step in the process had been taken, and it had, similar to the process of the Korean War Veterans Memorial, already taken longer than the totality of time it took to create the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

³⁶⁶ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 102nd Congress (1991 – 1992) H.R.1624," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d102:H.R.1624:@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

³⁶⁷ Kaptur, "World War II Memorial Newspaper Articles."

³⁶⁸ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 441 of 3677.

³⁶⁹ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 103rd Congress (1993 – 1994) S.214," <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d103:S.214:@@L> (accessed May 20, 2012).

Location

Even before Congress approved the proposals for fundraising and the memorial, reporters, like the politicians had in 1986, noted that memorials had changed the Mall a lot in recent years. Benjamin Forgey warned in 1990: “The danger is that we are in the process of significantly altering its character by peppering it with new memorials.”³⁷⁰

In addition, Forgey said that the excessive size of several memorials, specifically the Korea Memorial and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, was uncalled for because of the limited space available.³⁷¹ Furthermore, he feared that the large size of those memorials would ensure that the veterans of World War II would ask for an even greater space on the Mall. Thus, Forgey asked the question: “Where in the world -- or, to the point, where in the monumental core -- could it comfortably be fit?”³⁷²

Mills describes that the members of the ABMC were caught in a Catch-22 when they sought a location: if they chose a prominent spot, they would be accused of disrupting the Mall’s character; if they opted for a space outside of the main axes of the Mall, they would be accused of not building a memorial more significant than the Korean War Veterans Memorial.³⁷³ In this dilemma the ABMC made the decision to view World War II as a central event in American history, and said that its memorial should be created to reflect that; thus, they desired a central location.³⁷⁴ The first site-selection meeting was held by the ABMC and

³⁷⁰ Benjamin Forgey, “Washington’s Monumental Excess; Proposed New Memorials Would Overpower the Capital’s Open Space,” *Washington Post*, June 16, 1990.

³⁷¹ Forgey, “Washington’s Monumental Excess.”

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 797 of 3677.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

the WWIIMAB on January 20 of 1995. Also present were representatives from the NPS, NCPC, NCMC and the CFA.³⁷⁵ The ABMC said in a meeting with the NCMC that it favored Constitution Gardens, because of its nearness to the other two veterans' memorials and the Lincoln Memorial. There was also good public transportation to the site. In addition, the commission suggested the Capitol Reflecting Pool, because of its nearness to the Capitol and good visitor access.³⁷⁶

What is striking is that after all this debate, the site that the commissions would eventually agree on was none of the above. Haydn Williams, chairman of the ABMC committee for the World War II Memorial, would begin to push for a site at the Rainbow Pool. In meetings on July 27, 1995, the CFA and the NCPC both needed to approve either one of the locations the ABMC presented. Haydn Williams presented the Constitution Gardens as the commission's prime choice. The CFA did not like the idea of placing the memorial at this site, listing as reasons among others that another large memorial would ruin the character of the site. It was in this meeting that Haydn Williams was able to work the Rainbow Pool into the discussion; he argued that its central location and nearness to both the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial would place it into "proper historical perspective."³⁷⁷ This was something that CFA chairman John Carter Brown agreed with and the outcome of the meeting was that further study would be done into the Rainbow Pool site.³⁷⁸ The NCPC initially gave its approval to the site at Constitution

³⁷⁵ Ibid., location 1224 of 3677.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., location 1224 of 3677.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., location 1332 of 3677.

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

Gardens, but members like John Parsons, also associate director of planning for the NPS said that they would consider the Rainbow Pool as well .³⁷⁹

A second round of meetings with the CFA and NCPC in September and October came where the ABMC put forward the Rainbow Pool as it favored location. On September 19, 1995, the CFA unanimously approved the site.³⁸⁰ NPS warned that it might become a problem that the Rainbow Pool was the location for the annual 4th of July fireworks, and also a landing zone for helicopters of heads of state about 50 times a year. To this Williams said that the memorial would be “an especially appropriate backdrop for such widely watched ceremonial activities and celebrations.”³⁸¹ What thus became extra important because the site was so prominent, was that the memorial would blend in with its site. CFA Chairman John Carter Brown warned that the memorial was to merge with the Rainbow Pool and was not to disturb the central axis that ran from the Lincoln Memorial all the way to the Capitol.³⁸² This meant, for starters, that the memorial could not go in a vertical direction. It would also be the opinion of the members of the NCPC on October 5, 1995; they gave their approval under the condition that the memorial would not “visually intrude upon the open area.”³⁸³

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

³⁸⁰ Benjamin Forgey, “New Mall Site Backed for WWII Memorial,” *Washington Post*, September 20, 1995.

³⁸¹ Forgey, “New Mall Site Backed.”

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Benjamin Forgey, “WWII Memorial Gets Choice Mall Site; 2nd Panel Approves Location, Clearing Way for Design Phase,” *Washington Post*, October 6, 1995.

The Design

When President Clinton dedicated the site on the Mall, on November 11, 1995, there were talks on what guidelines the ABMC should set for the upcoming design competition, and if it would even be possible to fulfill the demands of the planning commissions to build a fitting memorial on the central location.³⁸⁴ By February of 1996 the ABMC had decided that the competition should not be as open as it had been for the previous two veterans memorials. Haydn Williams said that they looked carefully at all the issues of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Veterans Memorial, and saw how the design had generated a significant amount of controversy. Williams said they that they wanted to prevent this design from becoming part of that tradition; therefore, the competition was placed under the authority of the General Services Administration (GSA).³⁸⁵ The GSA is a governmental agency that helps to create products and communication for the U.S. government; among other products, the GSA had been responsible for hiring architects for major U.S. building projects. Their vision for the competition was based on the way they selected architects for other major projects; it was to consist of two parts: the first one would select skilled architects from a general round on the basis of their resume and past designs, and a second round would judge the proposed designs of five to ten finalists.³⁸⁶

Mills writes that this system of selecting architects failed to recognize that the selection of designers for memorials had significantly changed since Maya Lin won the

³⁸⁴ Janet Naylor, "A Lasting Tribute to WWII Vets; Monument Site on Mall Dedicated," *Washington Times*, November 12, 1995.

³⁸⁵ Benjamin Forgey, "Competition Set for War Memorial," *Washington Post*, April 17, 1996.

³⁸⁶ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1580 of 3677.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial's competition as a 21-year old student.³⁸⁷ As a result, it is no surprise that in May of 1996 several reporters and architecture schools began to speak out against the GSA competition. In an op-ed for the *Washington Post*, architect Paul D. Spreiregen said that the process of screening resumes and previous work was undemocratic. He said: "The heroes of World War II weren't screened for bravery. No one could predict which American would rise to the heights of human courage. Equally, no screening of candidates can ensure that a designer will be found who rises to the moment."³⁸⁸ The GSA had already made several changes that allowed students to be able to enter more easily by the submission of portfolios, and to have past experience weigh less than the vision of the architect.³⁸⁹ However, in May a group of students stood outside the GSA building to urge the administration to change its guidelines to give them a fair chance to enter the competition; they felt that the agency's focus on resumes and experience would still favor big names and firms, and that it shut them out from the process.³⁹⁰ In addition, a petition signed by deans of architecture schools in 14 states stated that the competition entries should be anonymous, and that the current process of evaluation "underrates the actual memorial design."³⁹¹

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 1591 of 3677.

³⁸⁸ Paul Spreiregen, "A Democratic Approach for Our WW II Memorial," *Washington Post*, May 5, 1996.

³⁸⁹ Lisa Nevans, "Students Seeking Shot at Design of WWII Memorial," *Washington Times*, May 21, 1996.

³⁹⁰ Nevans, "Students Seeking Shot."

³⁹¹ Benjamin Forgey, "War Memorial Battle; Who's Eligible to Design Is Debated," *Washington Post*, May 21, 1996.

The WIIMAB therefore had now generated controversy with its actions to avoid controversy, and sought a solution to the problem. Bill Lacy, who had served as the executive director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize and as director of the architecture and design program at the National Endowment of the Arts, was selected to be the professional advisor to the competition. Lacy's presence was highly respected, and along with members of the ABMC, he established new rules for the design competition; he felt that critics had a point when they denounced the closed nature of the competition.³⁹² The new rules stated that designs were to be handed in anonymously, and that no resumes would be required, which meant that, as Bill Lacy said it: "The rating in the first stage is now based 100 percent on design."³⁹³ Eventual selections would go on to a second round where designers would be asked to expand on their submission and to reflect on their ability to put it into reality.³⁹⁴ As a result, the competition's setup now became similar to that of the Vietnam and Korean War veterans memorials.

The deadline for the competition was August 12, 1996. By that time the ABMC had received 407 design proposals. This time the evaluation board for the first-stage competition was made up of a mix of architects and veterans.³⁹⁵ Over the course of two days, these judges picked six finalists, and they were a diverse bunch among whom there were students, professors from architecture schools, as well as heads of architecture

³⁹² Mills, *Their Last Battle*, 1644 of 3677.

³⁹³ Benjamin Forgey, "Battle Lines Redrawn; New Rules for Design of War Memorial," *Washington Post*, June 11, 1996.

³⁹⁴ Forgey, "Battle Lines Redrawn."

³⁹⁵ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1663 of 3677.

firms.³⁹⁶ For the second round, the ABMC stressed that contestants had to take into account that the memorial's most vertical elements should be placed on the northern and southern part, so as not to interfere with the view of the Mall, and that it needed an interior space of about 80,000 square feet to accommodate ceremonies and tell stories of the Second World War.³⁹⁷ Benjamin Forgey and other architects were unhappy that the ABMC had requested competitors to plan for a large underground space.³⁹⁸ Forgey said that attempts of the memorial to try and tell long complicated stories turned it into a museum, and that the location was not suitable because a museum would draw a larger crowd and additional traffic right in the center of The Mall.³⁹⁹ Haydn Williams responded directly to Forgey's criticism in an op-ed by saying that there was no museum planned for the site, and that that responsibility lay in the hands of the Smithsonian and National Archives.

The way eventual winner Friedrich St. Florian handled the problem of the Mall's skyline was to lower the entire site, including the Rainbow Pool, about 15 feet.⁴⁰⁰ He won the competition on October 31, 1996, and his design made the Rainbow Pool the center of the memorial, surrounded by two arches opposing each other on the north and south to represent the Atlantic and the Pacific theaters of war. In addition, 50 columns (25 on each side) would represent the states that fought in the war.⁴⁰¹ In his design of the columns, St.

³⁹⁶ Benjamin Forgey, "Designs on History; Finalists Chosen for World War II Memorial," *Washington Post*, August 22, 1996.

³⁹⁷ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1689 of 3677.

³⁹⁸ Benjamin Forgey, "Tactical Error; World War II Monument Site Is No Place for a Museum," *Washington Post*, September 7, 1996.

³⁹⁹ Forgey, "Tactical Error."

⁴⁰⁰ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1850 of 3677.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, location 1850 of 3677.

Florian tried to reconcile modern and classical architecture by cutting off the classical tops.⁴⁰² These columns would be flanked by two berms covered in white roses, which created two large internal spaces behind the columns where exhibitions on the war could be held. The winning design was approved by the ABMC in November, and then unveiled to the public by President Clinton at the White House on January 17, 1997. Clinton said that it was appropriate that one of the most defining chapters in American History was to be dedicated alongside the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument.⁴⁰³

Mills notes that opponents of the memorial's location on the Mall, who would become very vocal later on, did not start their protest immediately after the location was picked. This was probably because the public needed a design to respond to and not merely a site; now that the competition was underway, protests began to appear in newspapers.⁴⁰⁴ This protest would start a debate on the significance of World War II in American History, and how the memorial should function within the overall symbolism in the center of the Mall, in between the Lincoln and Washington monuments. There was a split between what these memorials on the central axes stood for: did they stand for democratic ideals, or were they there to represent poignant events in American history? And if they did represent defining moments in American History, did World War II fall among them?

Several architecture critics regarded the monuments on the Mall as symbols of the nation. In July of 1997, architect Paul Spreiregen read the Mall as a democratic ideal when he said that on the east-west axis: "Democratic deliberation is represented by the Capitol;

⁴⁰² Benjamin Forgey, "World War II Memorial Design Unveiled; \$100 Million Is Still Needed to Complete Mall Project in 2000," *Washington Post*, January 18, 1997.

⁴⁰³ Jayson T. Blair, "Unity Triumphs in Design Decision; World War II Memorial Will Be Built on Mall Between Washington, Lincoln," *Washington Times*, January 18, 1997.

⁴⁰⁴ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1388 of 3677.

the assertion of confidence in a new nation by the Washington Monument; the reaffirmation of nationhood by the Lincoln Memorial.”⁴⁰⁵ In addition, the North-South axis had the White House, which stood for leadership, and the Jefferson Memorial, which showed “intellectual breadth.” In Spreiregen’s vision, five memorials sufficiently symbolized the nation, and anything added would disturb this concept.⁴⁰⁶ Furthermore, on May 17, Roger Lewis, professor of Architecture at the University of Maryland, called the Mall “the symbolic heart and soul of the nation” He stressed that the memorials for Washington and Lincoln were not war memorials, and that World War II had no place in between them.⁴⁰⁷ Spreiregen also brought forth this argument when he said that none of the five principal monuments on the Mall were military.⁴⁰⁸ The argument of the architects is highly contradictable because one can also read the Lincoln memorial as one that was created to reconcile the country after the Civil War, and the Washington Monument as a dedication to the man who won the Revolutionary War; this view makes the memorials more symbols of historical events.

Lewis did stress the historical value of the Mall, but he meant the history of the Mall’s open space itself. He recalled the marches of Vietnam protesters, the Civil Rights Movement, and Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech which all featured massive amounts of people gathering at the axes of the Mall.⁴⁰⁹ He felt that the addition of a

⁴⁰⁵ Paul D. Spreiregen, “One Mall, Indivisible; A World War II Memorial Is a Good Idea --- But the Location is All Wrong,” *Washington Post*, July 6, 1997.

⁴⁰⁶ Spreiregen, “One Mall, Indivisible.”

⁴⁰⁷ Roger K. Lewis, “World War II Memorial Plan Needs Revision,” *Washington Post*, May 17, 1997.

⁴⁰⁸ Spreiregen, “One Mall, Indivisible.”

⁴⁰⁹ Roger K. Lewis, “World War II Memorial Plan Needs Revision.”

memorial in the heart of this space would change the nature of this historic landscape. Washington Architect Robert Miller agreed with Lewis when he said that this part of the Mall had been brought to life over the past two hundred years and that it had to be protected.⁴¹⁰

Saving Private Ryan and Fundraising

A memorial this large called for a campaign that was unheard of before. During the unveiling of the design former Republican Senator and losing presidential candidate Robert Dole came to the forefront; Bill Clinton awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his service in World War II.⁴¹¹ Bob Dole after this ceremony sought to prevent any more delays for the memorial's dedication, and early 1997 he became the national chairman of the World War II Memorial Campaign.⁴¹² Dole kicked off his fundraising campaign on March 19, 1997. The fact that he had been the Republican presidential candidate not even a year ago, and was wounded in Italy during the Second World War, ensured that his presence attracted a solid amount of attention from the press.⁴¹³ Despite this, it was hard to raise funds in the beginning, and certainly the process was not helped by the controversy that would evolve around the design and its location in 1997. However, by the end of 1998, the

⁴¹⁰ Robert L. Miller, "Violated Symbols of Our Democracy," *Washington Post*, June 25, 1997.

⁴¹¹ Michael E. Ruane, "Clinton Shows Memorial Design, Honors Dole," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 18, 1997.

⁴¹² Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 1919 of 3677.

⁴¹³ Ceci Connolly, "Dole Campaigns for WWII Memorial," *St. Petersburg Times*, March 20, 1997.

organization had raised 30 million dollars.⁴¹⁴ Although at the time Bob Dole had already made a number of television appearances and gave speeches to call for donations, the fall 1998 newsletter of the World War II Memorial Campaign stated that it was important to continue to increase national awareness of the memorial campaign.⁴¹⁵

Numerous veterans organization had already given substantial donations to the campaign; the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) had started a project to raise 7.5 million dollars, and the American Legion planned to donate 3 million dollar.⁴¹⁶ The VFW would eventually donate 6 million dollars, and the American Legion 4,5 million.⁴¹⁷ In addition, Dole's contacts in politics as a former Senate Majority Leader aided the formation of a campaign that asked states to donate a dollar for every veteran from World War II that lived in their state. Although only seven states had passed legislation in the fall of 1998, by the end of the campaign in 2001, all states had joined the "Dollar per Veteran Campaign."⁴¹⁸

⁴¹⁴ World War II Memorial Campaign, "Society Members," *World War II Memorial Newsletter* Fall 1998: 8, <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/newsletters/Fall1998.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2012).

⁴¹⁵ World War II Memorial Campaign, "Society Members."

⁴¹⁶ James A. Duffy, "Backers Want WWII Memorial While Vets Are Alive to See It / Short of Fund-Raising Foal, They Fear They May Be Short of Time," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 12, 1998.

⁴¹⁷ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2316 of 3677.

⁴¹⁸ World War II Memorial Campaign, "Dollar Per Veteran Campaign," *World War II Memorial Newsletter* Fall 2001: 9, <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/newsletters/Fall2001.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2012).

Because of this the states of New York and California contributed funds between the 1 and 2 million dollars.⁴¹⁹

Companies were slow to react at first. The campaign's newsletter of fall 1998 lists Federal Express and the SBC Foundation as 2 million dollar contributors to the project. Federal Express's involvement in the project probably can be attributed to the fact that its CEO, Fred Smith, was also co-chair of the World War II Memorial Campaign. The SBC Foundation (now part of AT&T) donated 3 million dollars because "more than 19,000 SBC employees served in the military during World War II," and the company wanted to recognize their service.⁴²⁰ The fall newsletter also lists smaller donations; among them was DreamWorks with a donation between 100,000 and 250,000 dollars to the project.⁴²¹ This was not all that Steven Spielberg's film studio would do for the fund, as its most recent World War II movie, *Saving Private Ryan*, helped to bring World War II to national attention. The movie came out in July of 1998, and it featured a landing of American troops on Omaha beach in 1944.⁴²² The carnage that the landing on the beach leaves behind in the movie's first half hour puts the horrors of warfare on full display. The subsequent story was inspired

⁴¹⁹ The National World War II Memorial, Washington D.C., "Funding: Veterans and States", <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/default.asp?page=funding.asp&subpage=vetssts> (accessed May 20, 2012).

⁴²⁰ SBC Communications Incorporated, "SBC Retirees Who Served in World War II Participate in National Memorial Dedication," *Corporate Social Responsibility Newswire* May 27, 2004, http://www.csrwire.com/press_releases/24631-SBC-Retirees-Who-Served-In-World-War-II-Participate-In-National-Memorial-Dedication (accessed May 5, 2012).

⁴²¹ World War II Memorial Campaign, "Corporate and Foundation Giving," *World War II Memorial Newsletter* Fall 1998: 8, <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/newsletters/Fall1998.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2012).

⁴²² *Saving Private Ryan*, DVD, directed by Steven Spielberg, Universal City, CA: DreamWorks, 1999.

by the death of the five Sullivan brothers during World War II when their warship, the U.S.S. *Juneau*, sunk. This tragedy had become legend in the United States, and from that point on the U.S. Navy advised brothers not to serve on the same ship, so as not to put family through the experience of losing all their children to war at the same time.⁴²³ This story was adapted in a way that shows the country's new focus on what war puts veterans and the home front through, in favor of a portrayal of sacrifice for the nation.

In the movie, General George Marshall in the United States finds out that Private Ryan's mother is about to hear that three of her four sons died in battle at the same time. If this movie was a traditional patriotic tale, Private Ryan's mother's losses should be treated as sacrifices for the nation. However, General Marshall orders a mission to find the final son and bring him back home to his mother, which makes the subject of the movie the losses and experiences of the individual above the goals of the nation.

John Bodnar puts it correctly when he says the movie represents the ongoing struggle between the collective ideals of fighting for the nation and democracy, and the individual loss and heroism in light of this fighting.⁴²⁴ The fact that a unit of soldiers sets out to save one private, is a deviation from the traditional tale of fighting for a bigger cause, and a representation of the individual veteran's experiences. Moreover, the soldiers of the unit that go out to find Private Ryan are not mere stereotypical drones that fight for a democratic ideal, Bodnar argues; they are all individuals that suffer from the war effort, and at times doubt the war effort, but remain moral in their actions.⁴²⁵ According to Roger

⁴²³ Edward Helmore, "Saving Private Ryan... and Private Borgstrom... and Sergeant Niland," *The Guardian*, July 30, 1998.

⁴²⁴ Bodnar, "Saving Private Ryan, 817.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.

Ebert, the movie works because Spielberg made the characters “deliberately ordinary”.⁴²⁶

Tom Hanks performance as captain John Miller shows that he is at times weak and confused, yet strong and ready to sacrifice himself for the country. He is the depiction of the individual veteran, who suffers from his experiences, while he fights for his country. It can be said, therefore, that the soldiers in this movie are as realistic as the statues of the Vietnam and Korean War Memorial.

The movie opens and ends with a World War II veteran pondering his life at a military cemetery, who turns out in the end to be private Ryan (Matt Damon). An old man now, standing in front of the grave of Captain John Miller (Tom Hanks), he hopes that he earned the lives that Miller and his unit sacrificed to save him. Thus, similar to *The Deer Hunter* and *Coming Home*, central focus falls upon the veterans who did the fighting, their suffering, and their homecoming.⁴²⁷ The movie received good reviews and won numerous awards, and put the World War II veterans even more prominently into the spotlight than the preceding years of anniversaries and Memorial Days had done. For his role Tom Hanks was nominated for an Academy Award. The movie was also nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture. It was right around this time, in 1998, that the ABMC looked for another spokesman to further the fundraising campaign, and felt that Hanks, because of his age, popularity, and recent role in *Saving Private Ryan*, would be able to get the campaign’s message across to multiple generations. Mills describes how when Bob Dole called him Hanks eagerly answered “I’m your man, what do you want me to do?”, before Dole could

⁴²⁶ Roger Ebert, “Saving Private Ryan,” *Chicago Sun Times*, July 4, 1998, <http://rogerebert.suntimes.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/19980724/REVIEWS/807240304/1023> (accessed May 10, 2012).

⁴²⁷ Bodnar, “*Saving Private Ryan*,” 808.

even begin to ask him if he was interested in joining the campaign effort.⁴²⁸ Hanks said in the campaign's spring newsletter of 1999: "After the experience of making the film *Saving Private Ryan*, I was surprised to realize there is no national memorial to honor the men and women who served in World War II." Accordingly, when Hanks heard of the WWII Memorial's effort, he wanted to help.⁴²⁹

In January of 1999, the actor received the People's Choice Award for favorite male actor, and he surprised the ABMC when he used his acceptance speech to ask people to donate to the World War II Memorial Campaign. The ABMC said it was overwhelmed by 43,000 calls and a 100,000 dollars in donations; the increased interest necessitated the campaign to hire 200 additional call operators.⁴³⁰ Besides the surprise effort, Hanks also became the face of a well-organized public service ad campaign for the memorial. Ads were printed in major news magazines, and ads on national television ran from March to April of 1999. In one of these ads, Hanks introduces his plea by referring to the World War II veterans as "ordinary people who half a century ago did nothing less but save the world", followed by the comment that there was still no National World War II Memorial, and that it was now "time to say thank you."⁴³¹ Further ads of Hanks stressed that the veterans were

⁴²⁸ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2274 of 3677.

⁴²⁹ World War II Memorial Campaign, "Ryan Star Helps Memorial Campaign," *World War II Memorial Newsletter* Spring 1999: 3, <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/archives/newsletters/Spring1999.pdf> (accessed May 20, 2012).

⁴³⁰ Andrea Billups, "Hanks Helps War Memorial Get Funds; Movie Star's Televised Plea Garners \$100,000 for WWII Monument," *Washington Times*, February 5, 1999.

⁴³¹ Ad Council, *Public Service Announcement Tom Hanks I* (1999), from the National World War II Memorial, AVI,

the greatest generation, and that its members were dying by a 1000 a day.⁴³² The death of veterans of World War II was an important argument; Bob Dole also stressed that time was now of the essence, and that construction should start on Veterans Day 2000.⁴³³ Edward Linenthal is a historian and professor of religion and American culture at the University of Wisconsin, and he has frequently written about war and American memory. Linenthal explained that veterans who approach old age come to fear that “the profundity of their sacrifice” will be forgotten. Memorials, he said, become a way for them to imprint their sense of things on the landscape.⁴³⁴ It is not surprising that the main way to market the memorial therefore became the fact that this was the last chance for those veterans to be honored in person, and to tell their stories.

The public service ads garnered an overwhelming amount of interest and funds for the memorial. In addition, Mills says that contributions from internet campaigns, a new way of fundraising not available to the previous memorials, aided the effort. Together with the 1800-numbers displayed in Hanks’s public service ads they garnered 9 percent of the total amount on its own, and probably millions more in the attention it gave the World war II Memorial. For instance, private contributions from direct mail to citizens raised a stunning 22 percent of the total funds raised; this was not far behind the 27 percent that came in from corporate donations. Among the biggest business contributors were Walmart with 14.5 million dollars in the summer of 2000, and the Lilly foundation with 2 million dollars in

⁴³² Ad Council, *Public Service Announcement Tom Hanks II* (1999), from Tom Hanks Online, MP4, <http://www.tomhanks-online.com/media/video/detail/59/world-war-ii-memorial-official-psa/> (accessed May 15, 2012).

⁴³³ Richard Sisk, “Monumental Task, Money Not Only Issue for WWII Memorial,” *Daily News*, May 24, 1998.

⁴³⁴ Janny Scott, “Taking Its Place in U.S. History; For the 90’s, a Memorial to All Who Served in World War II,” *New York Times*, March 6, 1997.

1999. In a press release, Walmart said: “With more than 1,900 World War II veterans currently serving as Wal-Mart associates, we are proud to salute the men and women who pledged their lives and sacred honor to provide the peace and prosperity we enjoy today.”⁴³⁵ The Lilly foundation, a private philanthropic enterprise based in Indianapolis, said that it felt privileged to be able to contribute to the formation of the World War II Memorial and the effort to “honor the men and women who served during the war and to acknowledge the commitment and achievement of the entire nation.”⁴³⁶ What is interesting in their statements, and throughout the fundraising campaign, is the need to *honor* the veterans, instead of *remembering* them. This probably has to do with the fact that the war was never forgotten in American society; it drew its commemorative need from the fact that the veterans had one last opportunity to tell their stories in a new way. The effort to gather funds was very different from that of the earlier two memorials, where fundraising was mainly a veteran, political and corporate affair. This memorial needed more funds, and to make that received them it created a well-organized funding campaign. It made apt use of new technology, political heavyweights, a celebrity face, and the anniversaries of the Second World War, in order to stress the old age of the veterans, and the need to thank them for their service. Since its inception in 1999, the World War II Memorial Campaign

⁴³⁵ Walmart Corporate, “Wal-mart Contributes \$ 14.5 Million to National World War II Memorial,” <http://www.walmartstores.com/pressroom/news/4163.aspx> (accessed May 15, 2012).

⁴³⁶ Lilly Endowment, *Annual Report 1999*: 8, http://www.lillyendowment.org/annualreports/LEAR1999_pdf/1999-cover.pdf (accessed May 15, 2012).

would garner 42,2 million dollars in 1999, 68,8 million in 2000 and 28,4 million in 2001.⁴³⁷

This ensured that finances would no longer be a problem in the continuance of the project.

Criticism and Changes of the Design

Criticism of the design, especially on the way it engaged with its location, continued throughout the years of successful fundraising. Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska was one of the most vocal critics of the site; as others had done before him, he argued that the memorial would be detrimental to the Mall's open space.⁴³⁸ Bob Kerrey proved ready for a fight and said in an op-ed for the *Washington Post* in 1997 that he hoped that the CFA and NCPD would think long and hard about the criticism people like Roger Lewis had presented on the site.⁴³⁹ Subsequently, in July, he led a group of nineteen Senators that raised concerns for the memorial in an effort to delay the process.⁴⁴⁰ He stressed the historical value of the Mall when he said that it was "perhaps the most famous, historic open space our nation has and is surely one of the most hallowed," Thus, similar to Lewis, Kerrey wanted to leave the space as it was.⁴⁴¹

On July 25 of 1997, the design faced its first political scrutiny since it had been revealed in January; it came up before a CFA hearing. The Catch-22 of the memorial became prominent once more: it had to be fit into the site, but it also had to be a landmark to

⁴³⁷ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2305 of 3677.

⁴³⁸ Janny Scott, "Planned War Memorial Sets Off Its Own Battle in Washington," *New York Times*, March 18, 1997.

⁴³⁹ Bob Kerrey, "Monumental Overload: Let's Rethink the Reflecting Pool Site..." *Washington Post*, May 18, 1997.

⁴⁴⁰ "Senators Question Project," *New York Times*, July 1, 1997.

⁴⁴¹ "Senators Question Project."

commemorate the biggest war the United States had fought to date. The commission's main concern was the scale of the memorial; members felt that the outside berms surrounding the plaza, and the columns, were too large, and therefore a serious intrusion on the Mall's outlook. Furthermore, the memorial's size required several of the Mall's oldest elms to be cut in order to have it fit into the site. The CFA presented these problems to the ABMC, and subsequently rejected the design. However, chairman John Carter Brown said that the site was no longer an issue, and that concerns raised by the CFA would only be about the design itself.⁴⁴² This is another example of what happened to the previous memorials: a specific site was selected, and it was necessary for the design to merge with this location. This had been an issue for the Korean War Veterans Memorial, which was rejected multiple times because it did not engage with its surroundings. In this case, because the location would change the Mall's open view, site integration became the main issue.

The large scale of the design came in part because the ABMC pressed for large interior spaces to document the history of the war, which, according to Forgey, were more appropriate for a museum.⁴⁴³ Although John Carter Brown said that there were many parts of the memorial the CFA approved, such as the presence of water and the lowering of the Rainbow Pool, he too had to admit that the memorial leaned too much in the direction of a museum.⁴⁴⁴ According to St. Florian, Forgey's comments that a memorial was not to teach, but to inspire, influenced him when he redesigned the memorial, and he took the enclosed

⁴⁴² David Scott, "Design Changes Urged for WWII Memorial," *Washington Times*, July 25, 1997.

⁴⁴³ Benjamin Forgey, "A Nasty Skirmish and a Hazy Future; WWII Memorial Back to the Drawing Board," *Washington Post*, July 26, 1997.

⁴⁴⁴ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2044 of 3677.

exhibition spaces out.⁴⁴⁵ The new design was reduced to two thirds of its original size. Furthermore, it had a more open view, and was substantially less obtrusive than its predecessor; all the old elms would be saved with the new size.⁴⁴⁶ The berms and columns were replaced by two arches to represent the Pacific and Atlantic battles.⁴⁴⁷ Forgey commented that the changes were certain improvements, but lamented that the memorial character was now taken out and that it had turned into more of a park, which could hardly have been the intention of the ABMC when it asked for a memorial to commemorate World War II. He called upon the architect to transform this “formal park into a truly memorable memorial.”⁴⁴⁸ One World War II veteran took Forgey’s position in a hearing with the NCPC, when he said that “World War II was not a walk in the park.”⁴⁴⁹

On May 21 of 1998, the revised design was presented to the CFA, and this time the commission gave its unanimous approval.⁴⁵⁰ With Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt’s support for the design, and the approval of the NCPC by an 8 – 2 vote on July 10, the way seemed finally cleared for the design to be implemented.⁴⁵¹ The next step would be to create a final design proposal with added statues and inscriptions to present to both

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid., location 2065 of 3677.

⁴⁴⁶ Ronald J. Hansen, “New Plan for WWII Memorial Hailed as ‘a fine tribute’ to Vets,” *Washington Times*, May 13, 1998.

⁴⁴⁷ Linda Wheeler, “WWII Memorial: A Lower Profile; New Proposal Would Save Trees, Views,” *Washington Post*, May 13, 1998.

⁴⁴⁸ Benjamin Forgey, “Room Without a View,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1998.

⁴⁴⁹ Ronald J. Hansen, “WWII Memorial Receives Final OK; Set for Mall, Design Smaller, More Open,” *Washington Times*, July 10, 1998.

⁴⁵⁰ Robert J. Hansen, “Fine Arts Panel OKs Concept of Memorial for World War II,” *Washington Times*, May 22, 1998.

⁴⁵¹ Hansen, “WWII Memorial Receives Final OK.”

committees.⁴⁵² This new design came about in 1999, and paid more attention to detail and symbols of the war, just as Benjamin Forgey had requested. It appears that whereas Forgey had a reviewing role for the previous memorials, the architecture critic now seems to have had a direct influence on the process, mainly with his comments to St. Florian. There would be 56 columns to represent the states and territories that fought in World War II. The west side of the memorial would be a contemplative space, called the Sacred Precinct, which included a fountain, a wall of remembrance, and multiple small elements to show the wars costs.⁴⁵³ The CFA and NCPD both approved the changes, but said that the Sacred Precinct needed improvement, because between an eternal flame, a cenotaph, a crater, waterfalls and a wall of remembrance, it simply became too cluttered with elements.⁴⁵⁴

The final design St. Florian submitted in June of 2000 solved the problem of cluttering because he replaced all the elements with a single wall embedded with 4000 golden stars; one star for roughly every 100 soldiers that had died in the war effort. St. Florian felt that the wall was so powerful that no additional features were necessary.⁴⁵⁵ Features from the initial interior space had also been scaled down significantly; 24 bronze plates that depicted scenes from the war and the efforts by American society at home replaced the initial inner exhibit rooms.⁴⁵⁶ Furthermore, the allies and battles fought were represented by inscriptions in the Pacific and Atlantic Memorial arches, and on the plaza

⁴⁵² John W. Fountain, "New Design for WWII Memorial Approved," *Washington Post*, July 11, 1998.

⁴⁵³ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2149 of 3677.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, location 2161 of 3677.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, location 2181 of 3677.

⁴⁵⁶ Benjamin Forgey, "War and Remembrance; The World War II Memorial Offers a Fitting Salute to a Time of Great Heroism and Sacrifice," *Washington Post*, April 25, 2004.

quotes could be found from Harry Truman, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Navy Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, and First Commanding Officer of the Women's Army Corps Oveta Culp Hobby.⁴⁵⁷

This memorial is very different from the two previous memorials; however, it also seeks to combine the two elements of recognizing service and honoring the fallen. As a result, similar to the other two memorials, the World War II Memorial is both a memorial and a monument. The 4000 stars mark the ones who have fallen, again in a wall of remembrance; the columns, plates and inscriptions mark the ones who have served, and this time even included scenes from the homefront. It appears as though inclusion of all those who served became more important with each subsequent memorial, and that the group that was defined as veterans of World War II now even included the homefront during the war. This was how the memorial could justify its central location: it was a tribute to an entire generation of Americans.

Final Protests

On June 7, 2000, after he accepted a 14.5 million dollar check from Walmart, Bob Dole criticized that the opposition came "a little late." He argued that they should have voiced their protest at the site's dedication in 1995.⁴⁵⁸ The political connections and strategies of politician Bob Kelley, according to Mills, had from 1997 and onwards created an opposition more organized and more vocal, that from that point on would appear at all design hearings of the NCPC and the CFA to speak out against the memorial.⁴⁵⁹ An

⁴⁵⁷ Thomas B. Grooms, *World War II Memorial Washington D.C.* (Washington D.C.: U.S. General Services Administration, 2004), 92 – 94.

⁴⁵⁸ Linda Wheeler, "Dole Raps Critics of Memorial as 'Late'; \$90 Million Raised for WWII Project." *Washington Post*, June 7, 2000.

⁴⁵⁹ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2204 of 3677.

important voice of strength for the memorial came from Benjamin Forgey, who had always remained critical, but in 2000 spoke out in favor of the site, and said:

The site is the real glory of the memorial. The Mall is not exclusively an 18th- and 19th-century place. History moves on. World War II was the major event of the 20th century, and America's role in it was crucial to our identity today. The nation's mid-century sacrifices and strengths--including especially those of the living and dead military veterans--deserve commemoration at this place.⁴⁶⁰

It shows that Forgey considers the Mall as a place to commemorate American history; a site that is therefore never completed. This was completely opposite to people such as Roger Lewis, and Paul Spreiregen, who considered the central axes of the Mall as the place where classic monuments represented the ideals of the American nation; therefore, in their opinion the works present fulfilled this role, and a monument to the Second World War did not belong in between them.

Not only architects spoke out against the site. John Graves of World War II Veterans to Save the Mall was an 80-year-old veteran of World War II, and he told the CFA that he had received letters from veterans that opposed the location of the memorial. Graves represented a group of veterans that felt that they did not need another memorial to commemorate their service; he said: "the thanks of a grateful nation is all we wanted. We don't need some fiasco gouging out the heart of the Mall."⁴⁶¹ Already when the location was dedicated veterans with similar ideas as Graves wrote letters to the *Washington Post*. For instance, World War II veteran William Jewett wrote that he felt a bronze plaque on the site

⁴⁶⁰ Benjamin Forgey, "A Fitting Memorial in Every Way; World War II Monument Would Add to the Emotional Power of the Mall," *Washington Post*, July 15, 2000.

⁴⁶¹ Guillermo X. Garcia, "USA's 'front yard' is veteran's latest battleground He and other opponents want to scale down World War II memorial and change its site," *USA Today*, October 27, 2000.

would be sufficient, and that there were enough memorials to honor their service.⁴⁶²

Another veteran, Albert Brown, said “We World War II vets need no other memorial than that symbolic space between these monuments to two great presidents”⁴⁶³ It was, however, only when protest became more organized in 1997 that their voices were heard. In addition, they proved a minority because many veterans organizations had contributed to the memorial effort, including the American Legion that testified in favor of the memorial in 2000.⁴⁶⁴

One notable protester was Judy Feldman, the chairwoman of the newfound National Coalition to Save Our Mall. She and others voiced their criticism in a public hearing of the CFA on the final design on July 20, 2000.⁴⁶⁵ The testimonies took five hours, and, according to correspondent Linda Wheeler, drew an uncommonly large audience. This shows that the protests against the design and its location ensured that the memorial’s approval process had not been as uncontroversial as the ABMC had hoped. The arguments against the design were the same as they had always been: that it would block the open view of the Mall, because it was in between the Lincoln and the Washington Monument, that the site was historic and should be preserved, and that no wars should be commemorated on the Mall’s central axes. Nevertheless, after long hours of testimonies, the CFA unanimously approved

⁴⁶² William A. Jewett, “A Simple Plaque Would Be Fine,” *Washington Post*, March 11, 1997.

⁴⁶³ Albert L. Brown, “We Got Our Recognition,” *Washington Post*, March 26, 1997.

⁴⁶⁴ Arlo Wagner, “WWII Memorial Design Approved,” *Washington Times*, July 21, 2000.

⁴⁶⁵ Linda Wheeler, “WWII Memorial Clears Key Hurdle; Panel Approves Less Obtrusive Design,” *Washington Post*, July 21, 2000.

the final design.⁴⁶⁶ The NCPC meeting on September 21 took even longer; more than a 100 people testified against the design in a meeting that lasted for 10 hours. Judy Feldman even threatened that opponents from the National Coalition to Save Our Mall would sue if the committee did not reject the design.⁴⁶⁷ The testimonies certainly had their impact the commission's members because even though they approved the final design, they did so with a small majority of 7 to 5.⁴⁶⁸

On October 2 of 2000 The National Coalition to Save Our Mall, the World War II veterans to save the Mall, Committee of 100 on the Federal City and the D.C. Preservation League filed suit against the Secretary of the Interior, and the chairmen of the NPS, CFA, NCPC, and ABMC.⁴⁶⁹ The goal was to stop construction because during the approval process allegedly there had been violations of the Commemorative Works Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Federal Advisory Committee Act.⁴⁷⁰ The strongest argument of the opponents turned out to be a violation of the procedures of the Commemorative Works Act. The act stated that new monuments must not encroach upon the already present structures, and according to Feldman the memorial was an infringement of the Lincoln memorial because it impacted the open view

⁴⁶⁶ Wheeler, "WWII Memorial Clears Key Hurdle."

⁴⁶⁷ Linda Wheeler, "WWII Memorial's Design Gets Commission Approval; Some Elements Postponed; Opponents Vow Court Fight," *Washington Post*, September 22, 2000.

⁴⁶⁸ Wheeler, "WWII Memorial's Design Gets Commission Approval"

⁴⁶⁹ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2460 of 3677.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, location 2469 of 3677.

in front of it. She argued that this had been insufficiently studied and considered by the commission, and that this was against the rules of the act.⁴⁷¹

While protesters stood with signs against the memorial in Constitution Gardens the day before, on Veterans' Day 2000, President Clinton broke ground for the memorial in attendance of 10,000 people.⁴⁷² However, several newspapers stated that this groundbreaking was merely symbolic, because the lawsuit prevented actual ground on the site from being moved, and therefore the earth shoveled by President Clinton was in a box shipped to the site by the ABMC.⁴⁷³ The NPS gave the ABMC the final permit to start building on January 23, 2001.⁴⁷⁴ However, the opponents' claim that the committees did not follow proper procedures became much stronger when in March of 2001, the Justice Department discovered that the NCPC's chairman Harvey B. Gantt had cast votes in favor of the design even though his term had already expired.⁴⁷⁵ This forced the NCPC to make the decision to review its entire approval process of the World War II Memorial; it could not deny that Harvey Gantt as chairman and supporter had influenced the decision process.⁴⁷⁶

⁴⁷¹ Ibid., location 2473 of 3677.

⁴⁷² David Montgomery and Linda Wheeler, "Generations Gather in Gratitude; World War II Memorial Breaks Ground on Mall," *Washington Post*, November 12, 2000.

⁴⁷³ Vaishali Honowar, "No Pay Dirt on Memorial; Symbolic Ceremony Breaks Ground," *Washington Times*, November 1, 2000.

⁴⁷⁴ Bill Miller, "Groups Seek to Block World War II Memorial; Injunction Would Protect Site on Mall," *Washington Post*, February 16, 2001.

⁴⁷⁵ Bill Miller, "Plans for WWII Memorial on Hold; Officials Question Legality of Vote Approving Design," *Washington Post*, March 9, 2001.

⁴⁷⁶ Ellen Sorokin, "Agency to review votes on memorial," *Washington Times*, March 26, 2001.

On May 3 of 2001, the NCPD gave protesters a victory when it decided that the NCPD was to start over the entire approval process, including the location and design.

However, before the entire process would be delayed for years, Congress decided to step in. Representative Bob Stump from Arizona said: "It has literally taken twice as long to go from congressional approval to construction of a World War II Memorial than it did to fight and win World War II in the first place."⁴⁷⁷ He made these comments after he had introduced H.R. 1696; an act "to expedite the construction of the World War II memorial in the District of Columbia."⁴⁷⁸ The act stated that "Notwithstanding any other provision of law," the decisions of the CFA, NCPD and Secretary of the Interior were final, not up for judiciary review, and construction was to proceed at the site of Rainbow Pool.⁴⁷⁹ In quick coordination with supporters in the Senate, the bill passed on May 22nd of 2001. It was signed into law by President Bush on May 28, 2001, and he commended the actions of House and Senate when he said: "It is more important than ever that we move quickly to begin construction if those who served are to see the nation's permanent expression of remembrance and thanks."⁴⁸⁰

This action endorsed the entire approval process, and therefore left opponents without any legal leg to stand on. The general notion was that this process had gone on for too long, and that building should continue while there were still veterans alive to see it.

⁴⁷⁷ Daniel F. Drummond, "Memorial Gets Boost from House; Popular Bill Would Speed Up Construction of WWII Tribute," *Washington Times*, May 16, 2001.

⁴⁷⁸ *An Act to Expedite the Construction of the World War II Memorial in the District of Columbia*, U.S. Code 40 (2001) §1003.

⁴⁷⁹ *Act to Expedite the Construction of the World War II Memorial*

⁴⁸⁰ Daniel F. Drummond, "Senate Puts Mall's World War II Memorial on the Fast Track," *Washington Times*, May 17, 2001.

This was certainly the argument made by Benjamin Forgey; he was angry that the NCPC had even considered going back on its decision, and summarized statistics of how many veterans would die in another 1 to 5 years of delays. He furthermore stressed that it was the last chance to honor this generation of veterans when he added:

We are in the same club as Tom Hanks, who says as much on those touching it's-about-time television spots as spokesman for the national memorial. Such delays are unconscionable. The veterans -- and, in fact, the entire World War II generation -- deserve dignified commemoration while some are still alive to hold their heads high.⁴⁸¹

For many veterans the support of Congress came too late. This certainly held for the man who had brought the idea for a memorial to Marcy Kaptur: Roger Durbin died on February 6 of 2000, and thus never saw his efforts rewarded.⁴⁸²

Considering the general mood to not allow for anymore delays in the project, it was not surprising that Judy Feldman's request to delay the awarding of building contracts in review of her case, was denied by District Judge Henry H. Kennedy Jr.⁴⁸³ According to Kennedy, Congress did not overstep its bounds and *The National Coalition to Save Our Mall et al.* was therefore unlikely to win this case.⁴⁸⁴ On the basis of H.R. 1696, Judge Kennedy would go on to dismiss the entire lawsuit on August 17 of 2001, which cleared the way for construction to finally begin on August 27 of 2001. Further attempts to appeal or file a

⁴⁸¹ Benjamin Forgey, "An Overdue Honor for WWII Veterans Once Again Is Unjustly in the Line of Fire," *Washington Post*, May 5, 2001.

⁴⁸² Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 497 of 3677.

⁴⁸³ Bill Miller and Linda Wheeler, "Judge Lets WWII Plan Advance; First Contract Awarded For Memorial on Mall," *Washington Post*, June 8, 2001.

⁴⁸⁴ Miller, "Judge Lets WWII Plan Advance."

lawsuit were denied by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia on December 21 of 2001, and by the Supreme Court on May 3, 2002, both without explanation.⁴⁸⁵

What probably completely killed support for any further attempts by Feldman to stop the building process after it had begun was not only the act of Congress, but the different mood in the United States after the attacks on September 11, 2001. The attacks were frequently compared with Pearl Harbor, which had been so prominently featured in American media because of its fiftieth anniversary. Edward Linenthal said that “The Sept. 11 attacks and war on terrorism seemed to sweep away most lingering opposition to the memorial. It was as if Americans longed to draw on the national unity and resolve that World War II had fostered and that was represented by living veterans.”⁴⁸⁶ As such, the subsequent War On Terror was associated with memories of The Second World War as a time where the country woke up from a national tragedy to come together. Historian Marianna Torgovnick writes that in his speeches and photo-ops President George W. Bush never failed to seize an opportunity to compare current times with the Second World War era, either to draw support for the war effort, or to cast it as a war against evil.⁴⁸⁷ A national memorial to the generation that fought the earlier war therefore seemed extremely fitting, and not something that one could protest in the tense times the U.S. now found itself in. As a result, in 2003, the ABMC could start to plan a dedication ceremony on May 27 of 2004; it would be part of a nationwide salute to the veterans, similar to what had been done at the

⁴⁸⁵ Mills, *Their Last Battle*, location 2641 of 3677.

⁴⁸⁶ Tom Infield, “For Aging Veterans, the New Memorial Marks ‘Their Last Battle’ on the Mall, WWII Finally Getting Its Due,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 6, 2004.

⁴⁸⁷ Marianna Torgovnick, *The War Complex: World War II in our Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 36.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial's dedication.⁴⁸⁸ The big difference was the age of its participants; this time the youngest members would be in their seventies.

Conclusion

As a standalone effort, the call to build a memorial to the veterans of the Second World War in the late eighties seems strange: the war had been frequently commemorated through living memorials, was never forgotten in American history, and there was no need to heal a sense of divisiveness, as the war was one that brought America together. In addition, many felt that the war was already represented in Washington in the form of the popular Iwo Jima Memorial. It is in the rise of this call for a memorial that we can complete the story of the Mall's Memorial Movement: because of the presence of memorials to the veterans of the two subsequent wars, World War II veterans now also wanted a national war memorial on the Mall.

What this time marked the debate on the memorial was not the inclusion or exclusion of groups of veterans, or the commemoration of service versus remembering the lost. The memorial's design included both these features, albeit in a more abstract way than the previous memorials had, the use of columns and a wall of stars replaced the statues, photographs and names of the earlier memorials. The abstractions in the design perhaps can also be attributed to the fact that the number of people that had to be represented was much greater than for the other two wars.

The most interesting about the World War II memorial is that the debate was raised beyond the design of the memorial itself because of its central location. It started a discussion on the war's significance in American history, as well as on the symbols and view

⁴⁸⁸ Donna De Marco, "D.C. Mobilizes for Major Salute to WWII Vets," *Washington Times*, November 12, 2003.

of the National Mall, and who had the right to be dedicated on it. The memorial's effort was to be bigger and more central to the National Mall than the other two memorials because it took up a more central place in American memory and society; this is why the Rainbow Pool was selected. Rest assured, none of the two other memorials would be able to pull off such a prominent location in between the central icons of the United States. This is because of the positive memory World War II has always had in American society in the ideal of the "Greatest Generation." To the objection of protesters that the memorial obtruded the view of the Mall the CFA and NCPC proved receptive; however, they did determine the importance of World War II could not be overstressed when they decided that the memorial did deserve a central place on the American Historical landscape. The commissions provided constant support for the Rainbow Pool; eventually Congress agreed as well and saved the memorial from further legal delays.

The fundraising campaign and Congress both drew strength from the argument that the memorial should be built when veterans were still alive to see it. This is essential to the veterans' memorial movement on the Mall: the memorials are created *for* the veterans. In this case, the memorial was not made to heal divisiveness, or to correct the fact that the war was never commemorated; it was created to honor and commemorate all those who served, and to offer veterans a feeling of appreciation of the entire nation for what they did so many years ago. It was because of this that its advocates stressed the urgency to build the memorial while a large group of veterans was still alive to see it. Luckily a group of veterans from all states was still present when President Bush dedicated the memorial on

May 29, 2004. They stood in a crowd of 100,000 people as speeches from President Bush, Tom Hanks, and author Tom Brokaw honored their service.⁴⁸⁹

When one looks at the memorial today, images such as the one in figure 9 show that the memorial leaves the open spaces on The Mall intact. However, the controversy that the building of this memorial generated over the disappearance of the Mall's open spaces, and the continued existence of organizations such as The National Coalition to Save Our Mall, suggest that further addition of war veterans memorials, or any memorial, on this part of the Mall will be difficult. A war needs to bring the memory, the fundraising skills, and political involvement of veterans similar to the ones of World War II to ever be dedicated on the central axes again.

⁴⁸⁹ Michael Janofsky, "Veterans Gather to Dedicate World War II Memorial," *New York Times*, May 30, 2004.



Figure 9. View of the World War II Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial

5. Conclusion

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial marked a watershed in America's commemoration of war because it created a specific kind of memorial that focused on veterans' experiences in the war, and not on the causes for which the war was waged. The divisive nature of the Vietnam War, and the loss of faith in government, caused political discussions on the war to be shunned. Movies such as *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter* reflect that a new way for American society to come together on the lost war was to remember and honor the experiences of the ones who served in the war. In addition, the popularity of the movies helped put the Vietnam veteran into the center of attention. The memorial that Jan Scruggs thought of was one to help veterans heal from their experiences; thus, a memorial specifically *for* the veterans.

The initial concept of Maya Lin's memorial was the representation of those who died; a memorial that did not prescribe visitors a story of politics and patriotism, but one that through its abstract elements encouraged visitors to find their own meaning to the lives lost in the Vietnam War. The unintended interaction that visitors had with the wall after its dedication only strengthened this focus on individual loss. However, the strong statement of the original design was changed because if this was to be a memorial for all veterans, then the ones who came home alive should be included as well. The addition of the Hart statue symbolizes the dichotomy between memorializing the American soldiers who became victims, and acknowledging those who served. This dichotomy lies at the heart of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial debate, and also marks the difference between the frequently interchanged terms "memorial" and "monuments". What can therefore be said of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, is that it is actually a blend between a monument and a

memorial, and that it inspired subsequent memorials to be so as well. In addition, the memorial could not exist without a flag pole added to it, introducing the one element of patriotism in the memorial.

The Korean War initially faded from collective memory. The least decorated and represented war was often overshadowed by the other two wars, or overlooked as a part of the larger Cold War. In addition, the veterans were part of the same generation as World War II, and some served in both. Several of them probably have shared World War II veterans' dislike of raising statues to commemorate the war effort. In addition, the bad reputation of American POWs as brainwashed collaborators, and the conditions of the Red Scare and McCarthyism created an environment where it was best for veterans to remain silent about their service, especially since the war had ended in a stalemate. It would take a new generation nearly 30 years later that commemorated the Vietnam War for Korean War veterans to stand up and demand a memorial of their own. Several felt that they deserved more than a memorial than the *M*A*S*H* television show, and they eventually convinced Congress and the American public that they their lack of public commemoration made them deserving of a belated homecoming and a veterans memorial as well.

Several veterans of World War II desired no national statue to dedicate the war, and were content with the creation of living memorials to the war in the form of stadiums and buildings. Furthermore, the popular Iwo Jima Memorial had always seemed enough of a tribute to the veterans in the nation's capital by veterans, politicians, and the American people alike. However, when the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Korean War Veterans Memorial came into existence, World War II veterans felt they were entitled to a national veterans memorial themselves, one that would have a central location on the Mall because of the war's massive scale.

Throughout the three chapters, it has been shown that the two subsequent memorials could not have come into existence without the creation of the preceding memorials, and that although they are very different in shape and form, they take two striking similarities from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The first is the central position of commemorating the experiences of the veterans. For instance, none of the national memorials list civilian casualties of the war; whether the memorial tends to be more like a memorial, or a monument, its focus remains the commemoration of the veterans themselves. The second similarity is the memorials are a blend of a “memorial” and a “monument”; they include contemplative spaces for the veterans that fell, and celebrate those who served.

Of course the dichotomy between monument and memorial plays out differently for each memorial. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial’s focus is on the fallen and the traumatized soldiers, whereas Korean Memorial supporters tried to create a tribute to all veterans who were part of the war effort. Both memorials struggled with incorporating the other half of the dichotomy, as the Hart Statue and the Women Veterans Memorial were added to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and the veterans of the Korean War are today still asking for a wall of remembrance to commemorate the ones that are KIA or MIA.

Of all three memorials, World War II is the most inclusive of all those who served in the war. It dedicates them through abstract columns and a wall of stars, and includes the home front in bronze plates, and the Allied forces through inscriptions. The inclusion or exclusion of groups was not what became an issue for its memorial; its central location caused a battle over what World War II represented in American society, the architecture at the heart of Mall, and what events or symbols had a right to be displayed on this prime location. The support of the approval committees, and Congress, ensured that protest was

stopped. The fact that the memorial's process had dragged on for years drew support from the political bodies. It took six years for the memorial act to be signed into law; this included one unbelievable incident where recess caused the approved bill to have to go through the entire process in a new Congress. This might be a common process for several laws, but it was highly disturbing to this project, since the veterans it was to be created for were dying fast. The eventual mood of Congress therefore became that there should be no more delays. They wanted to ensure that the memorial would be built when there were still veterans alive to see it, and stopped lawsuits against the memorial's location with an act that designated that the decisions made by reviewing bodies were final.

The age of the veterans, and the fact that they were running out of time, was also an important focus in the World War II Memorial's fundraising campaign. The campaign was highly successful in securing public funding through the use of the internet, the political connections of Bob Dole and the publicity brought by *Saving Private Ryan* star Tom Hanks. As a result, the World War II Memorial was the only of the three cases where fundraising was not an issue. Specifically, the Korean War Memorial had problems with the initial mismanagement of funds, and had to depend on Congress to pass a commemorative coin act in order to secure sufficient funding. What is notable is that it received a large contribution from South Korean firms and the South Korean government in establishing their memorial. Obviously it was very good for business for firms such as Hyundai Motors to support this American effort, but it would be interesting to see why the South Korean government so expressly supported a memorial that was build specifically for America's Korean War veterans. The luck the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had with its fundraising efforts was that it was a relatively inexpensive memorial to build, and it could thus rely solely on veterans for its fundraising.

The memorials are similar in the way they come to a final design; this process can best be described as a bit confusing. All three started out with a public competition, albeit that the World War II sponsors initially tried for a closed competition, out of which a design was chosen by a jury. For the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, this jury consisted of architects, for the Korean War Veterans Memorial of veterans, and for the World War II Memorial of both. The way the initial designs deal with the integration into the site show this difference in the type of jury members. Especially the Korean War Veterans Memorial's design was one that the veteran jury felt best represented the *veteran* effort during the Korean War, but it was a design highly ignorant of its location. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial design, selected unanimously by the architect jurors, is a remarkable achievement in blending with the site, even if the NPS later had to add walkways because the ground was becoming swamp-like from too many visitors and tributes. For the World War II Memorial, it was already evident that the design had to fully merge with its design, and the design from Friedrich St. Florian the jury selected certainly attempted this, although significant changes had to be made to satisfy the demands of the reviewing commissions.

The next step in the process is the approval of the design. Even though the Commemorative Works Act in 1986 sought to streamline the process, the necessity of both CFA, Secretary of the Interior or NPS, and NCPC to approve the designs was always present. The multiple reviewing bodies make decisions independently, and at times work against each other. For instance, the Secretary of Interior blocked the approval process of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial; he was influenced by people that felt that the design needed additional elements to commemorate those who served. Eventually for all three memorials, through changes in the design the reviewing bodies reached a consensus, and a building permit could be given. The CFA appears to take on the most prominent role in the process;

this commission was important in establishing the design and character of all three memorials. What is remarkable is that the commission not only made decisions on the location of the memorials on the Mall, or how the design would interact with the other monuments on the Mall, but that it actively engaged in decisions that shaped the artistic meaning of each memorial as well. For example, the CFA defended Maya Lin's design against those who sought to implement elements of commemoration of the troops, and helped it become "the wall of healing" because it ordered that the Hart statue could not be placed too close to the wall. Furthermore, the CFA not only ordered that the Korean War Veterans Memorial should be scaled down, but that it also had to become less realistic in its representation of ethnicity and branch of service. The CFA also approved and defended the controversial location choice of the World War II Memorial, while it safeguarded the character of the Mall by rejecting the memorial's design until it was scaled down sufficiently.

The memorials today stand as symbols for each war, but there are many opportunities for further research into this topic, as the movement never seems to be finished with adding elements to the memorial. For instance, why does the VVMF today seek to build an education center to tell the stories of the veterans?⁴⁹⁰ Will the veterans of the Korean War be successful in adding a wall of remembrance to their memorial? Why did Representative Bill Johnson introduce a bill to add a prayer from President Roosevelt from 1944 to the World War II Memorial in 2012?⁴⁹¹ A study into these additions may find that the new way to remember and honor the veterans is to continue to add new elements to

⁴⁹⁰ Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, "About the Education Center at The Wall."

⁴⁹¹ *Library of Congress THOMAS*, "Bill Summary & Status 112th Congress (2011 - 2012) H.R.2070," <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.112hr2070> (accessed May 20, 2012).

the veterans memorials now present. In any case, the memory of each war's veterans come to life today through the memorials, and their prime location on the Mall will ensure that discussion on their design and meaning will keep going, long after the veterans themselves have disappeared.

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Figures

Cover Images. Taken from photographs by author, March 2011.

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