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## ABSTRACT

How can—and should—aesthetics respond to 9/11? This thesis participates in the ongoing critical dialogue about literature's response to 9/11. In particular, it examines how two such American responses, Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*, problematize their response-ability to the 9/11 trauma. The analysis first considers how Spiegelman employs a "glocalized aesthetic" to effect globalized citizenship in his comix. The thesis then shifts to examine Don DeLillo's use of a "double consciousness aesthetic" to undermine post-9/11 cultural identities by encouraging transcultural engagement. Finally, it contemplates how an Iraqi citizen living in America complicates and complements Spiegelman's theme of globalization and DeLillo's mode of double consciousness.

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## INTRODUCTION

### From War Rhetoric to Aesthetic Response-Ability

In the weeks since September 11, we have been reminded many times that Americans aren't particularly informed about the world outside their borders.

—Naomi Klein, “Signs of the Times”

I wish there had been no occasion for this book.

—Sandra Silberstein, *War of Words: Language, Politics and 9/11*

There has never been an historical event like the four hijacked plane crashes of September 11, 2001. These crashes at the World Trade Center towers in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and Shankesville, Pennsylvania—collectively named “9/11”—projected the rhetoric of terrorism, an often misunderstood and misappropriated term, as the fundamental challenge to both U.S. national security and “freedom” as an American ideal. In the complicated aftermath of the events immediately branded by the government and the American news media as “attacks,”<sup>1</sup> President George W. Bush initiated American citizens still trying to accept the reality of 9/11 into the ambiguous “war on terror.”<sup>2</sup> What became apparent in this declaration was that American identity and citizenship would be fundamentally and inexorably different post-9/11 than pre-9/11.

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<sup>1</sup> When applied to the plane crashes of 9/11, the term “attacks” already pre-judges the events as acts of war, conditioning audiences to support this frame of reference and the ensuing U.S. military response. Throughout this thesis, I attempt to avoid using “attack(s)” whenever possible, except within quotations from outside sources. Instead, I use what I consider nonjudgmental descriptors like “plane crashes,” “events,” or “acts.”

<sup>2</sup> In the last half-century, U.S. Presidents have launched several American “wars” on various abstract concepts that lack defined targets, strategies, or methods of success. Pres. Bush’s “war on terror” rhetoric is

The U.S. government and American news media actively responded to the events as attacks by trying to discern historical precedents to locate the four hijacked plane crashes in “some familiar and manageable context”—the context of war (May 35).<sup>3</sup> With the magnitude of the World Trade Center crashes occurring in the country’s largest media hub, “live television and radio coverage was almost immediate” (Kanihan 207). During this “discovery period” of the crisis, “when uncertainty is highest, the threat is least understood and the need for reliable information is greatest,” the media functioned as a conduit for individuals in authority to provide information both to comprehend of the event and to restore a sense of normalcy (Grusin 1). These initial reports “powerfully define[d] the key issues, shaping understanding and constructing a collective memory” of the events of 9/11 (Berrington 47). The media coverage of the 9/11 events adhered to conventions of “war reporting” instead of templates “typically associated with reporting disaster or trauma” (Berrington 50). Since the media framed 9/11 not as a disaster but as an act of war, an immediate cultural response was to find an enemy upon whom to

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just as ambiguous as Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson’s “war on poverty” or Pres. Ronald Reagan’s “war on drugs.” As these two previous examples demonstrate, the abstract “war on terror” will likely never succeed in its project; instead, it may continue without a definitive end for decades.

<sup>3</sup> Elaine Tyler May considers the possibilities and limitations of two specific frames of reference, Pearl Harbor and the Cold War. Comparisons between Pearl Harbor and 9/11 observed how both events occurred on U.S. territory and were immediately categorized by the government as events of war. However, this comparison breaks down when looking at the perpetrators and victims of the attacks. During Pearl Harbor, an “identifiable enemy nation attacked a military base” (May 36). In contrast, 9/11 is “something new,” an act against innocents by a cohort of nineteen individuals with alleged ties to a terrorist organization called al-Qaeda (May 36). After deconstructing the Pearl Harbor comparison, May asserts the Cold War as a more appropriate frame of reference. She observes how both the war on terror and the war against Communism defined the enemy as “a worldwide conspiracy, with cells operating in many countries around the world and with operatives infiltrating the United States as well” (45). Yet, I perceive limitations to this frame as well. The Cold War’s half-century time span, with no definitive conflict, dwarves the events of September 11, 2001. From the crash of American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center at 8:45 AM until that tower’s eventual collapse at 10:28 AM, the destruction lasted less than two hours (*Inside 9-11* 261). While communism was perceived as a very real threat, Soviet terrorists did not hijack American planes and crash them into symbolic buildings of American identity. The failure of both comparisons demonstrates that the events of 9/11 are unlike any other in U.S. history.

attribute blame. This response created a rhetorical binary of the “good side” against the “bad side,” with jingoism and nationalism dominating the public consciousness. Media-sanctioned responses were of celebratory consumerism—what Cecilia O’Leary and Tony Platt term “prescriptive patriotism”—intended to anesthetize intelligent citizens as blind, flag-waving patriots who view dissent as fundamentally anti-American. The inability of American citizens to situate 9/11 outside this media-produced context enabled other events to unfold.

President George W. Bush capitalized on this discourse by declaring the U.S. government’s military response to 9/11 as the “War on Terror” in his “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People” at the United States Capital in Washington, D.C., on September 20, 2001.<sup>4</sup> In this speech, Bush boldly states his intentions: “Our war on terror begins with al-Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.” The audience loudly applauds this statement, championing war as the appropriate response to the 9/11 events, just as they had been conditioned to support it by the media discourse. Subsequent news reports echoed President Bush’s strategic language to reinforce the construction of the U.S. at war with terrorism. In her analysis of public discourse, Sandra Silberstein notices how the media became complicit in constructing this representation of the country post-9/11: “Through emblems of patriotism, the media endorsed, and indeed helped produce, ‘America’s New War’” (xii). The repetition of the 9/11 imagery, coupled with the constructed war rhetoric, threw the U.S. into a national security crisis. Ulrich Beck suggests that the media’s reproduction of the World Trade Center crash imagery facilitated the projection of terror on the international stage: “Terrorist groups instantly

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<sup>4</sup> For the full text of President Bush’s “Address to a Joint Session,” see Appendix A.

established themselves as new global players competing with nations, the economy and civil society in the eyes of the world” (“Terrorist Threat” 45). The “catastrophic spectacle” of 9/11 functioned to “deepen the psychic damage that terror is about” (Birshenlbatt-Gimblett 15). As newspaper pictures and television videos transmitted the terrorist imagery across the world, news reporters consented, either consciously or subconsciously, to President Bush’s response of war by failing to suggest alternative responses.

Another rhetorical catchphrase enabled President Bush to concretize the growing cultural division immediately after 9/11: “with us or with the terrorists.” This phrase first appeared in the same “Address to a Joint Session” speech referenced above, in which President Bush announces his “war on terror” strategy: “We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.” Again, the Congressional audience loudly applauds these statements. President Bush continues by stating the consequences of being on the wrong side of the dialectic: “From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.” As Jude McCulloch observes, this binary of “us versus them”—or, better signified by “U.S. versus them”—causes “opponents of government policy” like journalists and academics to be “vilified, censured, marginalised and punished” so that dissent of the “war on terror” is “muted if not silenced altogether” (55). This silencing of dissent also silenced reports that contextualized terrorism historically, specifically in the U.S. government’s

dubious support of it. News accounts after 9/11 “failed to inform audiences that bin Laden’s training camps, where it was alleged the September 11 atrocities had been nurtured if not actually planned, owed their existence to U.S. political intervention” (Berrington 52). Reports implicating the CIA in funding al-Qaeda operatives as “freedom fighters” during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan never manifested in the post-9/11 public discourse (Berrington 52). Since such dissent would only undermine “U.S. versus them,” it predominantly appeared in only international venues away from American readers.

The “with or us with the terrorists” catchphrase spawned its own progeny in the “coalition of the willing” rhetoric. This phrase circulated during strategic planning by U.S. government leaders of how to present an international façade to cover the U.S.’s unilateral decision to invade Iraq in 2003. CNN reports that President Bush, during a press conference in Prague, Czech Republic, on November 20, 2002, invoked the phrase as an open invitation for other nations to participate in the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq: “However, should [Iraqi President Saddam Hussein] choose not to disarm, the United States will lead a coalition of the willing to disarm him and at that point in time, all our nations...will be able to choose whether or not they want to participate.” In a State Department press briefing from March 18, 2003, 30 coalition members were identified (Lee). Although this number would later increase to 50, the vast majority of the initial military forces came from the U.S. and four other countries: Australia, Denmark, Poland, and the United Kingdom (Lee). This meager “coalition of the willing” demonstrates what Ulrich Beck defines as President Bush’s politics of citizenship after 9/11: “global unilateralism” (“Terrorist Threat” 49). The unwillingness to consider alternative, non-

unilateral responses only further reinforced the divisive “U.S. versus them.” The literature of 9/11, as I will define, operates within, and to undermine, this context.

Pronounced “nine eleven” so as not to be confused with the U.S. emergency telephone number 9-1-1, the collective naming of the events of September 11, 2001, as “9/11” echoes that date’s singularity of trauma. In *Deconstruction After 9/11*, Martin McQuillan argues that entitling the events with the mnemonic “9/11” eliminates the possibility of understanding them: “As soon as it has been named as a date, there can be no one meaning” (3).<sup>5</sup> This lack of singular meaning translates into an infinite pluralization of meanings, which speaks to the necessity for contextualizing 9/11 as trauma. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines trauma as “a psychic injury, especially one caused by emotional shock the memory of which is repressed and remains unhealed.” This definition locates the experience of trauma as an ongoing crisis that one must continually address. Trauma theory developed out of psychoanalytical approaches, in the

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<sup>5</sup> McQuillan further argues that naming the events as a date creates a tension between singularity and repetition. He criticizes the suggestion that “9/11” is enough “to understand that day and to be affiliated with all that this day entails” while recognizing that it “contains within its citational structure a commitment to all those other dates as the promise of its own memorial power” (3). Not only does he draw parallels to “the mnemonic of the [U.S.] ‘emergency services’ telephone number,” but he also deconstructs “9/11” (in an attempt to locate a referent for the “after 9/11” of his title) by tracing the September 11s of history, including: the CIA-supported military coup in Chile in 1973; the beginning of construction on the Pentagon in 1941; and even the birth of Theodor Adorno in 1903. In *9/11: The Culture of Commemoration*, David Simpson argues against any meaning to these coincidences by reflecting how “almost any date would bring up other anniversaries” (14). To demonstrate his argument, he considers both the dates immediately before and after 9/11: “Take September 10, the date of John Smith’s assumption of the presidency of the Jamestown colony (1608), or of the beginning of the British economic boycott of Iran (1951). Or take September 12, the date of the first major U.S. offensive in Europe (1918), or the defeat of Persia by Athens at the battle of Marathon (490 BCE), or of the birth of Richard Gatling, inventor of the Gatling gun (1818)” (14). This deconstruction of the perceived history of “9/11” enables a productive contextualization in the present. Simpson begins this process by turning to evidence that suggests the hijackers did not earmark September 11 for any symbolic meaning or the irony of the emergency number. Instead, they selected this particular date “late in the planning process as the best conjunction of all sorts of pressures and conditions, some of them short term” (Simpson 14).

tradition of Sigmund Freud's melancholia and mourning,<sup>6</sup> to the "emotional shock" and "repression of memory" experienced by Holocaust survivors. Its literature includes foundational texts by Dominick LaCapra, whose arguments I will use to locate my critical discussion of the traumatic effects of 9/11.

In contextualizing 9/11 as trauma and applying LaCapra's arguments to the literature of 9/11, I am drawing on the wealth of criticism available on these topics. More precisely, I am indebted to the evocation of trauma theory in literary scholarship, particularly articles by Marco Abel, Linda S. Kauffman, and Kristiaan Versluys. In addition, I reference two books, Versluys' *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel* and the foundational *Literature After 9/11* edited by Ann Keniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn, to frame my arguments. During the writing of this thesis, these critical texts have functioned as examples not just of literary analysis, but also of how to apply interdisciplinary criticism to 9/11 responses. I use this foundation to participate in the ongoing public discourse about the literature of 9/11 by suggesting new approaches and interpretations. Before addressing how this thesis departs from previous criticism in the previews of my two chapters, I want to foreground my use of LaCapra's trauma theory, which I complicate with Berel Lang's argument about the relationship between trauma and art, to derive what I term "aesthetic response-ability" through Theodor Adorno's discussion of poetry after Auschwitz.

LaCapra observes that traumas are "a dissociation of affect and representation: one disorientingly feels what one cannot represent; one numbingly represents what one

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<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of Freud's relationship to contemporary trauma theory, see E. Ann Kaplan's *Trauma Culture: The Politics of Terror and Loss in Media and Literature*.

cannot feel” (42).<sup>7</sup> This “dissociation” describes the post-9/11 public consciousness and discourse in the U.S. and, importantly, allows for the problematization of responses that 9/11 caused.<sup>8</sup> Even as life continued after the plane crashes, the 9/11 trauma disrupted any sense of time: September 12, 2001, became “one day after the planes.” In this context, the quickly declared “war on terror”—undermined by its lack of strategy and unclear prospect of victory—further traumatized the American citizen identity. For an individual to respond to trauma, LaCapra posits two possible processes: the negative “acting out” and the positive “working through.” In *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, he argues that working through is a better approach to trauma than acting out: “Working through trauma involves the effort to articulate or rearticulate affect and representation in a manner that may never transcend, but may to some viable extent counteract, a reenactment, or acting out, of that disabling dissociation” (42). Because it enables the productive response to trauma that acting out limits, working through should be attempted whenever possible. LaCapra’s deliberate choice of the gerund “working” instead of the active verb “work” speaks to ongoing nature of this response to trauma. One “may never transcend” trauma, but working through can still lead to a productive

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<sup>7</sup> Quotations from Dominick LaCapra in this thesis are from *Writing History, Writing Trauma* unless cited otherwise.

<sup>8</sup> Other theorists have since elaborated on the implications of defining 9/11 as trauma. Linda S. Kauffman’s “World Trauma Center” describes how two previously mentioned texts, David Simpson’s *9/11* and E. Ann Kaplan’s *Trauma Culture*, approach the topic “in useful, complementary ways” (649). Simpson’s text advances the critical discussion of 9/11 as a cultural event “supposedly without precedent” that “draws to itself a new history and projects a new future” (14). Specifically, Simpson considers how the culture of 9/11 commemoration—*The New York Times*’ “Portraits of Grief” series, the debate about the future of the space termed “Ground Zero,” and the circulation of Iraq War visual imagery—speaks to “just how pertinent the power of theory is to an urgent world situation” (19). Similarly Kaplan foregrounds her theoretical project in her text’s opening sentence: “This book is about the impact of trauma both on individuals and on entire cultures or nations, and about the need to share and ‘translate’ such traumatic impact” (1). Like Simpson, Kaplan considers the rebuilding plans at Ground Zero—the space she describes as “the great yawning crematorium at the end of Manhattan [that] continues to fester like a sore without bandages or healing salve”—as a concrete representation of the ongoing cultural crisis of 9/11 trauma (136). As long as this 9/11 trauma remains, so too will cultural critics continue to address this topic.



understanding of the event(s). This process can begin through what LaCapra terms “writing trauma,” which:

involves the process of acting out, working over, and to some extent working through in analyzing and ‘giving voice’ to the past—processes of coming to terms with traumatic ‘experiences,’ limit events and their symptomatic effects that achieve articulation in different combinations and hybridized forms. (186)

Unlike news media responses that reproduced the terrorist threat through imagery of fear and victimization or the U.S. government’s response of war rhetoric, aesthetic responses of writing 9/11 trauma open up the possibility for an individual to experience a working through of 9/11. By problematizing “the notion of response,” such aesthetic responses allow both authors and readers of these texts to begin working through the 9/11 trauma outside dominant framings of the events (Abel M. 1236).

Berel Lang’s work about the historical and ethical functions of art responding to the Holocaust trauma provides an ethical justification for aesthetic responses to the 9/11 trauma. This application of Lang’s argument about Holocaust art to 9/11 aesthetic responses is not an attempt to compare two events whose singularity resists comparison but rather a way to consider the ethics of responses to 9/11. For Lang, the historical and ethical distinctiveness of the Holocaust affects the success of its various artistic representations: “What the event was, in other words, would also limit or even close out certain possibilities to the artist while opening the way to others” (5). In strong opposition to claims that the Holocaust is “indescribable” and “ineffable,” he proposes that the Holocaust “is speakable, that it has been, will be...and, most of all, ought to be spoken”

(7, 18). Just as the writer, as an artist, must speak the Holocaust, so too must the writer speak 9/11. While Lang suggests a contextualized principle of “representation within the limits of history, history within the limits of ethics,” he also asserts the need for art to problematize responses by recognizing “the different reactions to [any complex historical event involving personal or group identity] in which variant perspectives on the event may conclude” (34, 131). An aesthetic working through of the 9/11 trauma contextualizes the event while simultaneously problematizing responses to it, allowing such responses to overcome the politically biased U.S. government and sensationalism-driven American media responses.

Lang’s argument opposes interpretations of Theodor Adorno’s often quoted, yet rarely contextualized, dictum about writing poetry after Auschwitz:

The critique of culture is confronted with the last stage in the dialectic of culture and barbarism: to write a poem after Auschwitz is barbaric, and that corrodes also the knowledge which expresses why it has become impossible to write poetry today. Absolute reification, which presupposed intellectual progress as one of its elements, is now preparing to absorb the mind entirely. Critical intelligence cannot be equal to this challenge as long as it confines itself to self-satisfied contemplation. (*Prisms* 34)<sup>9</sup>

Most criticism of this statement, as exemplified by the analysis of Kristiaan Versluys, emphasizes the adjective “barbaric” as asserting that the Holocaust trauma must not be

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<sup>9</sup> Because of the harsh backlash to this misunderstood assertion, Adorno later qualified his intentions in *Negative Dialectics*: “Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living—especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living” (363-63). This revision supports my suggestion that aesthetics must undergo the process of working through after traumas like the Holocaust or 9/11.

spoken (*Out of the Blue* 60). In contrast, Marco Abel interprets Adorno's assertion as a challenge to reexamine the means of critical response. His analysis focuses on the term "critical intelligence" as demanding that responses to trauma "must begin to rethink what it means to respond to that which seems beyond one's capacity to perceive and understand" (1246). Abel's productive interpretation implicitly recognizes Adorno's use of the preposition "after." This word choice speaks to the necessity that, in responding to trauma like the Holocaust or 9/11, the aesthetics of poetry must adjust to reflect both the situation of trauma and the response of working through. The titles of *Literature After 9/11* and *Deconstruction After 9/11*, two texts in relation to which I situate my arguments, hinge upon this preposition. However, as the title of my thesis, "The Literature of 9/11," reflects, I replace "after" with "of" to emphasize that this literature, more so than appearing after, is only possible *because of* 9/11. Aesthetic response-ability—the ability of aesthetics to respond to trauma through contextualization and problematization—enables the writing of 9/11 trauma.

This "literature of 9/11," as I label it, includes at least three distinct sections: cultural criticism of U.S. government responses to and American news media representations of 9/11; aesthetic responses to 9/11 in media like comics, literature, and television; and subsequent literary and media criticism of these aesthetic responses. This thesis engages with texts from across these three sections to evaluate the possibilities and limitations of two aesthetic responses to 9/11, Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* and Don DeLillo's *Falling Man*. In identifying 9/11—specifically the fantastic collapse of the World Trade Center towers—as trauma, each text uses the narrative form to begin working through the fractured American identity. Through their different

aesthetic responses, Spiegelman and DeLillo participate in the “counter-narrative” of 9/11 that challenges the dominant response of the “war on terror” in the U.S. Their participation, and subsequent encouragement of others to recognize their own responsibility, engages a transcultural discourse to disable terrorism by refusing to validate acts with nationalism-fueled, military attacks while simultaneously honoring the memory of the 9/11 victims.

In Chapter One, “A ‘Rooted’ Cosmopolitan,” I explore how *In the Shadow of No Towers* illustrates more than Art Spiegelman’s tense fluctuations between responses of acting out and working through the World Trade Center collapses of 9/11; his text writes trauma to effect glocalization. I set up my analysis of Spiegelman’s “glocalized aesthetic” in relation to other literary interpretations of the text, most notably Versluys’ argument about the text’s mimetic approximation and Hillary Chute’s discussion of its fragmented style. This aesthetic manifests within the text through its fragmented intertextuality, its overall argument championing glocalization, and its transnational publication. *In the Shadow of No Towers* challenges comics conventions, particularly Scott McCloud’s notions of the gutter space and the closure process, to create a “glocalized” form of pluralized styles and intertextual references. Within this form, Spiegelman articulates his investment in glocalization. He firmly identifies himself as a “rooted cosmopolitan,” a description I unpack through the glocalization theory of Ulrich Beck and Victor Roudometof. These two critics complicate and complement one another, particularly in their dialogue about the possibilities and limitations of glocalization in the post-9/11 moment. The comix medium provides an opportunity for Spiegelman to voice his explicit opposition to prescriptive patriotism and uniformed citizenship. After attacking the media

for its complicity in President Bush's "war on terror" response, Spiegelman demonstrates a productive news media response to 9/11 by exposing what he views as the U.S. government's "hijacking" of 9/11 for its own political gains. By creating this awareness, he uses his comix to transform his readers into glocalized citizens.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Spiegelman reinscribes the "coalition of the willing" rhetoric to champion the transnational venues willing to publish his dissent. As Spiegelman begins the process of working through with the production of this text, readers are also able to participate in working through by recognizing their own response-ability to 9/11.

In Chapter Two, "Undermining 'U.S. Versus Them,'" the focus shifts to Don DeLillo's pair of post-9/11 texts, "In the Ruins of the Future" and *Falling Man*. The chapter first considers how "In the Ruins" demands that the writer initiate the "counter-narrative" to oppose the dominant narratives framing the 9/11 events as attacks of war. I use this model to consider how *Falling Man* operates to produce meaning stylistically and thematically. The analysis departs from previous literary interpretations by Versluys and Linda S. Kauffman, who both locate Keith Neudecker as the novel's protagonist and perceive the text's overall melancholia as a disabling representation of the post-9/11 American psyche. Instead, I argue that DeLillo constructs a counter-narrative through his "double consciousness aesthetic," which I locate in relation to W. E. B. Du Bois' first articulation of the concept and the subsequent criticism of it. Through *Falling Man*, this aesthetic demands that individuals—including the writer—must recognize and attempt to undermine the disabling social constructions of identity post-9/11, particularly the divisive "U.S. versus them" binary. This deconstruction requires a simultaneous

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<sup>10</sup> Through this thesis, I deliberately use "glocalized" instead of "glocal" to emphasize both the active process of glocalization and the agency this process enables.

acknowledgement of the other and reevaluation of the self. As the chapter follows the formal division of the novel, I consider how DeLillo exposes the limitations of media representations of 9/11 and undermines the rhetoric of terrorism by offering an alternative, and more appropriate, aesthetic response. Jean Baudrillard's *The Spirit of Terrorism* frames my discussion of DeLillo's emphatic separation of terrorism from Islam. By viewing Lianne, and not her husband Keith, as the protagonist of the novel, the thesis considers how DeLillo uses this character to project one possible path of transcultural engagement and self-reevaluation post-9/11. Based on this textual analysis, I evaluate the possibilities of DeLillo's authorial double consciousness in his articulation of Hammad's narrative and his open invitation for future responses. This double consciousness aesthetic allows DeLillo to demand that readers recognize both the identities responsible for and response-able to 9/11.

Both Spiegelman's and DeLillo's texts contribute to one of the defining, overall projects of the literature of 9/11: to produce an alternative response to 9/11. *In the Shadow of No Towers* and *Falling Man* both operate to counter Naomi Klein's assertion that Americans "aren't particularly informed about the world outside their borders" (146). They initiate the transcultural engagement of American readers—either through glocalized citizenship or double consciousness—to accept the reality of a post-9/11 U.S. Echoing throughout these two texts and the entire literature of 9/11 is the opening line of acknowledgement in Sandra Silberstein's *War of Words: Language, Politics and 9/11*: "I wish there had been no occasion for this book" (ix). Without 9/11, these texts would not exist, but they are unable to change the reality of the situation. Yet, the literature of 9/11

reinscribes what 9/11 means both in the present and in the future by demanding a cultural shift from war rhetoric to aesthetic response-ability.

## CHAPTER ONE

### A “Rooted” Cosmopolitan: Glocalization of Identity, Media, and Citizenship in Art

#### Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers*

But why did those provincial American flags have to sprout out of the embers of Ground Zero? Why not...a globe??!

—Art Spiegelman, *In the Shadow of No Towers*

Of course, September 11th was a moment of decision. This marks the decision the Bush administration took. There are alternatives: for example, strengthening of international law, choosing the ‘cosmopolitan alternative.’

—Ulrich Beck, “The Terrorist Threat: World Risk Society Revisited”

Even though he spent “much of the decade before the millennium trying to avoid making comix” (1),<sup>11</sup> Art Spiegelman responded to his experiences of the World Trade Center crashes and collapses on September 11, 2001, by producing *In the Shadow of No Towers* (hereafter *SONT*). His text operates within the complicated aftermath of the 9/11<sup>12</sup> terrorist acts and in the midst of the subsequent “war on terror” declared by

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<sup>11</sup> The broadsheet format of *SONT* resists normal pagination. For the purpose of this thesis, my methodology cites the opening essay, “The Sky is Falling!” by page number (1-2), the broadsheets by their sheet number (B1-B10), the second essay, “The Comics Supplement,” by page number (3-4), and the historical comics by plate number (P1-P7).

<sup>12</sup> As foregrounded in the Introduction, Martin McQuillan deconstructs the mnemonic “9/11,” arguing that this name-date eliminates singular understanding by pluralizing meaning. Yet, as he observes “something local and irreducibly idiomatic about the phrase ‘9/11’ even as it is deployed as a universal metonym to foreshorten a considerable and complex discussion,” the name-date already encourages a glocalised consciousness (3). By de-territorializing the events through naming them with a date, understandings of “9/11” simultaneously consider the local (individuals both directly and indirectly affected by the plane



President George W. Bush.<sup>13</sup> Spiegelman is critically aware of how representations of the World Trade Center events, including the responses of the U.S. government and American news media, continue to shape both the collective memory of and the public discourse about the events. Dissatisfied by these responses to 9/11, Spiegelman recognizes his own aesthetic response-ability and subsequently reinscribes the acts to effect glocalization. Identifying himself as a “rooted” cosmopolitan, first in the opening essay, “The Sky is Falling!” and again in the fourth broadsheet, affords Spiegelman the credibility to explore the limitations of nationalism and the possibilities of glocalization after 9/11. This identity provides a foundation to critique the American media’s depiction of the aftermath of the World Trade Center crashes, particularly how the media became complicit with the Bush administration in fueling the “war on terror.” Using himself as an example, Spiegelman follows Dominick LaCapra’s process of “working through” the trauma of 9/11 by authoring *SONT*, enabling readers to witness and participate simultaneously in this process.

Literary critics of *SONT* foreground the ways in which Spiegelman marshals fragmented, juxtaposed styles in response to the World Trade Center crashes. Kristiaan Versluys argues that the production of *SONT*, even as a collage of various perspectives, is the first step in a productive response to the 9/11 trauma: “Wrenching trauma out of the

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crashes) and the global. In this context, Spiegelman’s use of “9/11” refers to both the specific World Trade Center collapses and the general events of September 11, 2001.

<sup>13</sup> In the Introduction, I describe how the Congressional audience loudly applauds Pres. Bush’s declaration of the “war on terror.” After the applause, Pres. Bush continues: “Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.” Not only does Spiegelman argue that the U.S. government is not “democratically elected” due to the controversy surrounding President Bush’s election in 2000 (B7), but he implies that, in post-9/11 America, we do not have the freedom to “assemble and disagree with each other” because jingoism unfairly dismisses legitimate disagreement as anti-Americanism (B10).

realm of the inarticulate and nudging it towards expression is a first step in the healing process” (994-95).<sup>14</sup> This transition from “inarticulate” to “expression” appears not only in the text’s fragmented styles, but also in its serial production. Hillary Chute suggests that the irregular intervals of the *SONT* broadsheet publication reflect Spiegelman’s post-9/11 temporality, “in which a normative, ongoing sense of time stopped or shattered” (230). However, Spiegelman works through this “shattered” sense of time by articulating what I term a glocalized aesthetic—visible in *SONT*’s intertextuality, glocalized argument, and transnational publication. Spiegelman’s text was not the first comics response to 9/11, but his glocalized aesthetic of comix differs from the disabling political cartoons championing nationalism or the superhero comics questioning the heroic identity. The glocalized aesthetic of *SONT* enables Spiegelman to frame the World Trade Center collapses as a founding trauma to effect glocalized citizenship, which translates into informed, participating, and response-able American citizens aware of the dynamics within and without the U.S. nation. Whereas “within” the U.S. refers to a local engagement, “without” signifies a global consciousness. Instead of opposing one another, the local and global combine in *SONT* to supersede the national and expose what Ulrich Beck terms the “national fallacy”: the “belief that what takes place within the container of this or that national state can also be pinned down, understood and explained nationally” (“Cosmopolitan Society” 29). The decision to isolate the World Trade Center crashes as the localized focus of the September 11, 2001, events facilitates Spiegelman’s glocalization of post-9/11 New York City for his transnational audience. *SONT* works to

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<sup>14</sup> Citations of Kristiaan Versluys in this chapter refer to his article, “Art Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers*: 9/11 and the Representation of Terror.”

replace the disabling response of prescriptive patriotism after 9/11 with a more productive response of glocalized citizenship in the present and the future.

The first image of the *SONT* collection illustrates Spiegelman's impression of post-9/11 rhetoric public consciousness as "The New Normal" (B1).<sup>15</sup> A family of three sits in front of a television in three successive panels, with a calendar in the background showing the progression from one night to the next. The family dozes off passively the night of September 10, presumably just another dull evening. The next panel reveals the family in a state of shock—aghast faces, static hair, and terrified eyes—as they witness the trauma of September 11 reproduced on the television. In the third panel, the family returns to their vegetative state of September 10, although their hairs remain on-end in the aftershock. However, instead of the calendar reading September 12, Spiegelman replaces the calendar with an American flag, signifying a temporal disjunction. This displacement of ordinary representations of time—the recognition that post-9/11 America will be inescapably different than pre-9/11 America—causes the events of that date to function as a founding trauma for the U.S. in the 21st century. Dominick LaCapra defines "founding traumas" as ones that "paradoxically become the valorized or intensely cathected basis of identity for an individual or a group rather than events that pose the problematic question of identity" (23). Angelica Nuzzo argues that 9/11 functions as this "basis of identity" for Americans because the event's singularity rejects comparative history: "9/11 yields no possible memory and no possible comparison" (136).

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<sup>15</sup> I have reproduced several broadsheets from *In the Shadow of No Towers* in Appendix B, including: the first sheet depicting "The New Normal;" the third sheet showing Spiegelman's frantic search for his daughter at her school; the seventh sheet illustrating both the demand for a glocalized response to 9/11 and the U.S. as a nation "under two flags;" and the tenth and final sheet narrating Spiegelman's interview revelation of his glocalized identity. Additionally, I include Spiegelman's reproduction of post-9/11 newspaper and magazine headlines on the last page of his text. Appendix B is intended to provide a visual representation of the entire *SONT* project while concretizing specific references in this chapter.

Consequently, she situates it as “the absolute beginning of all memory...the beginning of a new history, of a new America” (136). Because 9/11 challenges the adequacy of traditional categorization, this “new America” requires a new palette of potential responses to document its “new history” (Rockmore 3).

Through *SONT*, Spiegelman attempts to operate against trauma’s “dissociation of affect and representation” by working through the 9/11 trauma to separate his memory of the World Trade Center events from his present consciousness (LaCapra 112).

Particularly in the later broadsheets, Spiegelman succeeds in “distinguish[ing] between past and present” (LaCapra 22) by looking at the past World Trade Center collapses in a present context: “September 11, 2001, was a memento mori, an end to Civilization As We Knew It. By 2003 Genuine Awe has been reduced to the mere ‘Shock and Awe’ of jingoistic strutting” (B10). He even looks beyond the present to hypothesize about the future: “And September ’04? Cowboy boots drop on Ground Zero as New York is transformed into a stage set for the Republican Presidential Convention” (B10).<sup>16</sup>

Although these panels present unpopular responses to the events, Spiegelman considers the articulation of his views necessary because they provide a level of truth and accuracy lacking from other media reports. LaCapra identifies the importance of accurate memories of trauma in that memory “is bound up with one’s self-understanding and with the nature of a public sphere, including the way a collectivity comes to represent its past in its relation to its present and future” (96). In *SONT*, Spiegelman projects himself as a response-able witness to the 9/11 trauma who successfully begins working through by

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<sup>16</sup> Ulrich Beck argues that this shift from the past to the future demonstrates how globalization not only de-territorializes space, but also influences perceptions of time in the transnational crisis of 9/11: “People all over the world are reflecting on a shared collective future, which contradicts a nation-based memory of the past” (“Cosmopolitan Society” 27). Spiegelman echoes this collective aspect of globalization through the transnational publication of *SONT*, the implications of which I will address later.

LaCapra's process of "writing trauma" (186). Spiegelman "gives voice" to the World Trade Center crashes of September 11 from the perspective of not just a New Yorker, but also a rooted cosmopolitan. He achieves this articulation by challenging the reader to explore his argument for glocalization.

By identifying himself as a "rooted cosmopolitan," Spiegelman implies the rhetoric of globalization, cosmopolitanization, and glocalization. Ulrich Beck locates the first two of these terms in reference to one another, defining "globalization" as "a non-linear, dialectic process in which the global and the local do not exist as cultural polarities but as combined and mutually implicating principles" ("Cosmopolitan Society" 17). In building from this definition, "cosmopolitanization" refers to "internal globalization, globalization from within the national societies" (Beck "Cosmopolitan Society" 17). Victor Roudometof elaborates on this globalization from within nations as the process of "glocalization," which operates to undermine nation-state boundaries ("Transnationalism" 118). As glocalization "provides the preconditions, the material, and non-material infrastructure for the emerging spaces of human interaction" in transnational social fields involving relationships of power, the "national" effectively loses its collective purchase (Roudometof "Transnationalism" 119). Spiegelman's identification as a rooted cosmopolitan signals, in Roudometof's terms, that he "sees no necessary contradiction between feelings of loyalty and commitment to particular cultures and openness towards difference and otherness" ("Transnationalism" 122). Beck summarizes such an identity as "having 'roots' and 'wings' at the same time," an identity that demands synthesizing local and cosmopolitan perspectives ("Cosmopolitan Society" 19). Spiegelman only comes to this realization in the 9/11 aftermath, comparing his "affection

for the chaotic neighborhood I can call home” to the displacement resistance of German Jews during World War II: “I finally understand why some Jews didn’t leave Berlin right after Kristallnacht!” (1, B4). His inability to “image myself leaving my city for safety in, say, the south of France” expresses a certain civic loyalty—not to America as his country—but to the “chaotic neighborhood” of New York City as his localized community (1). In replacing the national-local construct with a global-local continuum (Beck “Cosmopolitan Society” 30), Spiegelman depicts New York City as the cosmopolitan locus of a glocalized modernity, which fuses globalized form and localized content (Roudometof “Glocalization” 37).

Spiegelman elaborates on his investment in being a rooted cosmopolitan by illustrating how much of his “American” identity is actually a product of glocalization. One year after the World Trade Center collapses, the NBC television network invites Spiegelman, described as a “typical New Yorker...[whose] point of view never gets on network TV,” to participate in the “Concert for America” (B10). In the subsequent panels, Spiegelman recalls the interview, which he claims “is 100% nonfiction,” as questions attempt to illicit pro-nationalism responses from him (B10). However, instead of falling prey to these constructed questions, he uses this interview as an opportunity to declare his glocalized identity: his favorite American food is shrimp pad thai; the place where he feels most American is Paris, France; and the greatest thing about American is that “as long as you’re not an Arab you’re allowed to think America’s not always so great” (B10). Not only do these comments speak to the myth of the American national dish, they propose what Beck names “banal cosmopolitanism,” in which “everyday nationalism is circumvented and undermined and we experience ourselves integrated into

global processes and phenomena” (“Cosmopolitan Society” 28). By demanding that the television audience recognize the possibilities of banal cosmopolitanism in dietary and city preferences, Spiegelman attempts to lay a foundation to effect glocalized identities. Although NBC denied this opportunity by kicking Spiegelman out of the studio, *SONT* operates as a transnational text that, by circumventing media limitations, enables readers to witness this “rooted cosmopolitan” identity. The original appearances of the broadsheets comprising *SONT* in the newspapers and magazines of European countries he identifies as his own “coalition of the willing” further illustrates Spiegelman’s commitment to his glocalized identity (2).

American media outlets undercut the powerful possibilities of this rooted cosmopolitan assertion through the national discourse of prescriptive patriotism after 9/11. When he “traveled to a university in the Midwest in early October 2001,” only a month after the planes, Spiegelman recognized a gross disjunction between New York City and the rest of the country, namely “that all New Yorkers were out of their minds compared to those for whom the attack was an abstraction” (1). Although the small town was “draped in flags,” Spiegelman describes these symbols of America as “the garlic one might put on a door to ward off vampires” (1). The local citizens, in pledging their allegiance to the flag, are unable to recognize how the destruction of the World Trade Center continues to affect the New York City community; instead, they were “at least as worked up over a frat house’s zoning violations as with threats from ‘raghead terrorists’” (1). This commentary demonstrates the crisis of globalization during the post-9/11 moment, as nationalism threatens to fracture America’s potential as a society of cosmopolitan identities and citizens. Nationalism, as Ulrich Beck explains, has become

“the remaining real danger to the culture of political freedom” in the post-9/11 moment (“Cosmopolitan Society” 38). Threats of terrorism foreground this danger as they fuel the rhetoric of nationalism. The September 11 acts signified the “threat of global terror networks, which empower governments and states” (Beck “Terrorist Threat” 41). In addition, because the terrorists targeted the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the “symbol of global capitalist wealth and the symbol of American military power” (Lombardi 133), citizens like Spiegelman interpreted the assault as “indeed an attack on America, not one more skirmish on foreign soil” (1). The Bush Presidency manipulated this sentiment as justification for the “war on terror,” empowering themselves “by defining who is their terrorist enemy” (Beck “Terrorist Threat” 44). The “terrorist” actions created a culture of nationalism, immediately enabling U.S. government leaders, in Spiegelman’s terms, to “instrumentalize the attack for their own agenda” (1).

*SONT* blurs the distinctions between terrorism and nationalism as the “enemy” to a globalized America; exhausted at his drawing desk, Spiegelman is “equally terrorized by al-Qaeda and by his own government” (B2). Looming over him are two caricatures: a mouse-like Osama bin Laden holding a bloody scimitar opposite a smiling President Bush holding both an American flag and a revolver. By having the Bush caricature smile as he equates patriotism with violence, Spiegelman projects a certain satisfaction on U.S. government leaders for having bin Laden oppose them as the figurehead of a terrorist organization that the government can exploit to justify American military action. Phil Scraton comments on this twisted satisfaction, noting that the hijackings provided the U.S. government “with the authority and legitimacy to define, name and eliminate ‘terrorist’ organisations, their members and their associates” (5). To emphasize these



manipulative actions, Scraton describes the American government leaders as “Bush and his hawks” (3). Spiegelman echoes this sentiment of disgust and apprehension, expressing disbelief that “the hijackings of September 11 would themselves be hijacked by the Bush cabal that reduced it all to a war recruitment poster” (2). This appalling distrust of the government “hijacking” manifests throughout *SONT*, with Spiegelman explicitly condemning U.S. government leaders by illustrating President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney hijacking a bald eagle. As Cheney slits the throat of the eagle with a box cutter, the infamous, concealed weapons carried by the terrorist hijackers on 9/11, the dying eagle barely squeaks out two questions, “Why do they hate us? Why???” Bush answers the questions with a brash exclamation of “Let’s roll!”—an allusion to the 9/11 plane crash in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Peter Perl relates the “heroic mythology” of “Let’s Roll” during what he terms the “single uplifting moment” of the 9/11 trauma when passengers foiled the hijacker plans. In a phone call from Todd Beamer, a passenger on United Flight 93, phone operator Lisa Jefferson heard Beamer’s dramatic last words before the passenger re-takeover of the plane: “Are you guys ready? Okay. Let’s roll!” (Perl). Perl relates how President Bush hijacked this phrase as a “patriotic battle cry” with “Let’s Roll!” emblazoned on “Air Force fighter planes, city firetrucks, school athletic jerseys, and countless T-shirts, baseball caps and souvenir buttons.” Spiegelman’s inclusion of this phrase enables his text to address a 9/11 plane crash outside the World Trade Center events while highlighting President Bush’s manipulation of 9/11 for his own agenda (B4).

With 9/11 hijacked as a political “war recruitment poster” by the Bush Presidency, American citizens like Spiegelman were at a loss to begin working through

the 9/11 trauma. Sitting terrorized between al-Qaeda and his government, Spiegelman “dozes off and relives his ringside seat to that day’s disaster yet again, trying to figure out what he actually saw” (B2). While the U.S. government was comfortable with its war on terror, American citizens “were left to ponder the short-term and long-term implication of the 9/11 attacks on themselves” (Harf 7). One solution to this situation was a pro-nationalism extension of the war recruitment imagery: prescriptive patriotism. Cecilia O’Leary and Tony Platt perceive such prescriptive patriotism as an uncomfortable “shift in the cultural politics of nationalism” (173). After the 9/11 catastrophe, O’Leary and Platt observed Americans “hungry for rituals and eager to communicate a deeper sense of national belonging”—a hunger satiated by patriotic rituals like the Pledge of Allegiance or symbols like the American flag (173).<sup>17</sup> The goal of such patriotism is to delegitimize dissent “through the imposition of a prescribed allegiance” (O’Leary and Platt 173). Subscribers to this opinion of patriotism view any such dissent that argues against President Bush’s “war on terror” response to 9/11—the type of dissent articulated within *SONT*—as anti-Americanism and antipatriotism. These interpretations, Angelica Nuzzo explains, effectively eliminate opposition: “To be against the war in Iraq is to be against the American soldiers that are fighting it. This inference is as immediate as it is wrong. But,” Nuzzo argues, “it silences opposition” (129). In attempting to publish parts of

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<sup>17</sup> In addition to the Pledge of Allegiance, O’Leary and Platt mention other initiatives for prescriptive patriotism among U.S. schoolchildren: “Government officials... called upon veterans to teach ‘Lessons for Liberty.’ The House of Representatives voted 444-0 for the display of signs proclaiming ‘God Bless America’ in the public schools” (173). Spiegelman adds to this list a specific situation with his daughter, Nadja: she was “told to dress in red, white, and blue on her first day at the Brooklyn high school she was transferred to while her school in Ground Zero was being used as a triage center.” Spiegelman recalls, “I forbade her to go, ranting that I hadn’t raised my daughter to become a goddamn flag; she placated me by explaining she had the perfect jumper for the occasion” (2). Whereas Spiegelman is cognizant of how prescriptive patriotism operates to manipulate American youth, Nadja unknowingly walks into the trap. As a concerned father, Spiegelman employs the comics medium, an art form typically pigeonholed as juvenile, to encourage his daughter and other youth to be aware of the dangers of prescriptive patriotism.

*SONT* in the U.S., Spiegelman was unable to find a welcoming publisher. Popular American venues denied him this opportunity because of the perception of anti-Americanism in his text.<sup>18</sup> “The Sky is Falling!” explains his professional dilemma: “Mainstream publications that had actively solicited work from me...fled when I offered these pages or excerpts from the series” (2). Although this nationalism-biased context suggests *SONT* may not have been able to be published domestically, Spiegelman demonstrates the possibilities of glocalized media by superseding the national—and turning to the global.

Spiegelman inverts and reinscribes President Bush’s “coalition of the willing” rhetoric through the transnational publication of *SONT* to reveal his idea of a glocalized professional identity. He explicitly identifies Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and England—“countries where my political views hardly seemed extreme”—as the members of his “coalition” (2). Hillary Chute names several of these international venues that published various parts of *SONT* from 2001-2003: *Die Zeit* (Germany), *Courrier International* (France), *The London Review of Books* (England), and *Internazionale* (Italy) (230). Chute views these irregular and serialized international publications as reflective of Spiegelman’s post-9/11 temporality, but I want to suggest that the de-territorialized publication through transnational venues fosters the text’s glocalized argument. In addition, this transnational publication demonstrates Spiegelman’s response-ability to the World Trade Center collapses as a “professional” trauma.

Undeterred by the lack of a domestic publisher, Spiegelman interprets such selective

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<sup>18</sup> Perhaps this anti-American perception stems from his identification as a rooted cosmopolitan as much as from the controversial caricatures of Pres. Bush. Whereas the latter may have offended Republican readers, Victor Roudometof argues that the former should not translate into bad patriotism at all: “Their negation of ethnocentrism does not mean that [rooted cosmopolitans] are not good patriots” (“Transnationalism” 122). Instead, Spiegelman suggests that his rooted cosmopolitan identity facilitates a response-able citizenship.

censorship as further motivation to publish *SONT* internationally. He remains rooted in the U.S., but his comix appear in a cosmopolitan context. Just as the post-9/11 media discourse of prescriptive patriotism inspires Spiegelman's push toward glocalized media, so does the patriotic censorship encourage a shift to the transnational publication of his glocalized aesthetic.

Spiegelman's rededication to comics after 9/11 was not without recognizing a temporal limitation of the medium: comics are "so labor intensive" (1) that they appear "too slowly to respond to transient events while they're happening" (2). He also confronted a similar spatial limitation: how could he reproduce his fragmented consciousness within the narrativized medium? An open invitation from a publishing friend at *Die Zeit*, a broadsheet newspaper, provided the solution to both of these problems by allowing Spiegelman to create individual sheets on a flexible schedule. *SONT* operates as a hybrid graphic novel that uses "The Sky is Falling!" to frame this first collection of 9/11-inspired panels, and then uses a subsequent essay and collection of early 20th century plates to revisit the history of newspaper comics. This combination creates a productive tension that enables the panels and essays to complicate and complement one another. Glocalization manifests within *SONT* as this intertextuality of form and style. This combination of comic styles facilitates *SONT*'s resistance to conventions of plot resolution, demonstrating Spiegelman's awareness that working through the 9/11 trauma is an ongoing process.

Similar to his previous text *Maus*, Spiegelman's *SONT* disrupts comics conventions through its fragmentation and hybridization of both form and content.<sup>19</sup> Scott

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<sup>19</sup> LaCapra comments on the hybridization within *Maus* not just in the juxtaposition of Vladek's past Holocaust narrative with his present conversations with Artie, but also in the text's hybrid genre status

McCloud provides a critical framework to approach Spiegelman's appropriation of the comics medium, beginning with a definition of comics as "juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer" (9). A vast majority of the images in *SONT* conform to this definition of comics, with panels occurring in narrative sequences. However, some of the most powerful images, including "Equally Terrorized by al-Qaeda and by His Own Government" and "Ostrich Party," function as single panels. McCloud classifies such single panels as "comic art," which "derive part of their visual vocabulary from comics" (McCloud 20). Spiegelman manipulates this derivation process by juxtaposing multiple single panels with panels in sequences, creating a fragmented broadsheet of "pictorial and other images." This definition of "comix" as a juxtaposed sequence of fragments underlies the logic not just of individual panels, but also of the project as a whole (1). Spiegelman justifies his use of fragmentation as a process of creating meaning: "I wanted to sort out the fragments of what I'd experienced from the media images that threatened to engulf what I actually saw, and the collage like nature of a newspaper page encouraged my impulse to juxtapose my fragmentary thoughts in different styles" (2). The "media images" force this style of fragmentation, but this fragmentation does not imply incompleteness. Instead, these fragments rearrange and reconstruct the aftermath of September in a more productive fashion to contextualize the 9/11 events and

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between fiction and non-fiction: "A basic point here is that binary ledgers in general, and the binary between fiction and nonfiction in particular, are inadequate to designate *Maus*. Its in-between or hybridized status resists dichotomous labeling, and the very notion of hybridity should not be made to imply a form of comprehensive explanation or masterful understanding that is not warranted by the nature of the text" ("Twas the Night" 146). One could argue that, like *Maus*, *SONT* also functions as a hybrid text between fiction and non-fiction. Gillian Whitlock adopts this position in classifying these Spiegelman memoirs as "autographics" in order "to draw attention to the specific conjunctions of visual and verbal text in this genre of autobiography, and also to the subject positions that narrators negotiate in and through comics" (966). This identification foregrounds the function of *SONT*'s glocalized aesthetic.

problematize *SONT* as a response to them. While Kristiaan Versluys interprets this “broken-up form” of fragmentation as a “mirror image” of Spiegelman’s “consternation,” it also visualizes the process of working through the 9/11 trauma for the reader (989).

By de-territorializing the broadsheet and collapsing the gutter, Spiegelman glocalizes the comix medium, creating a form that reproduces his glocalized argument.<sup>20</sup> The gutter space in comix, or the physical gap between panels, mediates reader interpretation through the process of closure (McCloud 67). This process, McCloud argues, functions to create a temporal and spatial narrative out of comics panels, allowing the reader “to connect these moments and mentally construct a continuous, unified reality” (67). In *SONT*, this closure operates both within and across broadsheets as Spiegelman creates a “continuous, unified reality” out of a fragmented consciousness. Within the broadsheet depicting Spiegelman’s arrival at his daughter’s high school, the gutter spaces collapse as individual panels overlap one another (B4). The TOPPS-inspired playing card of “Washington in Flames”<sup>21</sup> covers the faces of three characters as a security guard translates the latest news from a Spanish radio station: “They saying a plane just bomb into the Pentagon” (B4). Overlapping the next panel is a picket-fence

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<sup>20</sup> McCloud defines Spiegelman’s aesthetic identity as an explorer of form interested in discovering the capabilities of art: “Creators who take this path are often pioneers and revolutionaries—artists who want to shake things up, change the way people think, question the fundamental laws that govern their chosen art” (179). However, he also observes how Spiegelman is able to vary his comics style: “Art Spiegelman’s aggressively experimental work of the seventies and early eighties left no one prepared for the unassuming ‘report’ style of his landmark biography *Maus*” (181). One could further argue that this *Maus* style left no one prepared for the fragmented, glocalized aesthetic of *SONT*.

<sup>21</sup> Spiegelman’s traumatic TOPPS card directly parodies the “Enduring Freedom” card packets, released by TOPPS soon after 9/11, that visualize the war on terror imagery for American youth. Elaine Tyler May warns that these cards “may seem innocuous,” but their attempt to equate patriotism with consumerism has devastating consequences in the post-9/11 moment: “When citizens can buy patriotism, the essence of citizenship withers. Flags flew across the land at the same time that lawmakers debated and enacted legislation that included some of the most serious threats to civil liberties since the draconian measures of the McCarthy era” (47). Spiegelman’s satire seems attune to this burning of civil liberties by President Bush in the framing of dissent as anti-American during the 9/11 aftermath.

poster of “NYC to Kids: Don’t Breathe!” which again covers the facial reactions of these characters (B4). The poster, originating from a lower panel, is held by Spiegelman depicted as a mouse, an explicit allusion to *Maus* (B4).<sup>22</sup> In both of these situations, the foreground panels parallel the background story, a tension that foregrounds the mediation both of comix and of World Trade Center representations.<sup>23</sup> Such overlapping and layering of panels creates a sense of urgency across the gutters, adding immediacy to the

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<sup>22</sup> Detailing the function of the mouse *Maus* allusions in *SONT* (B2, B3, B6, B8, B9, and B10) is worthy of its own exhaustive exegesis. For this chapter, I briefly want to suggest only a few possible interpretations:

1. The allusions enable Spiegelman to historicize 9/11 within the context of other founding traumas like the Holocaust, possibly implying, as David Hajdu argues, that he “clearly sees Sept. 11 as his Holocaust (or the nearest thing his generation will have to personal experience with anything remotely correlative), and *In the Shadow of No Towers* makes explicit parallels between the events without diminishing the incomparable evil of the death camps” (13).

2. Kristiaan Versluys proposes that one can read *SONT* as a sequel to *Maus*: “With regard to the stylistic means that are marshaled forth to mimetically approximate the events of September 11, it is possible to consider *In the Shadow of No Towers* as a sequel to *Maus*. The strategic devices Spiegelman has opted for can even be seen as an intensification of those used in the earlier narrative” (989). This sequel identification implies that working through 9/11, similar to working through the Holocaust, is an active process that continues to influence Spiegelman’s identity long after the publication of his aesthetic responses.

3. They foreground the ways in which the 9/11 and Holocaust traumas fundamentally challenge perceptions of identity. The allusions subsequently concretize how Spiegelman found solace in the history of comix, including his own. Hillary Chute’s argument notices how “every single unit of mappable space in the book—including the front and back covers and endpapers—references a historical serial context” (233). These references ground *SONT* while enabling its glocalised aesthetic to produce new possibilities for comics.

4. The *Maus* allusions are a convenient way for Spiegelman to transform his text from a realistic description of his post-9/11 consciousness to a conceptual argument for glocalization through the use of cartooning. McCloud explains that “cartooning” an image, or de-emphasizing its specific physical appearance, enables it to function as an amplified concept: “By stripping down an image to its essential ‘meaning,’ an artist can amplify that meaning in a way that realistic art can’t” (30). Instead of being his character representation, mouse Spiegelman functions as an “everyman” cartoon. Versluys argues that this animal metaphor can represent one’s loss of agency: “The animal metaphor, which in the Holocaust narrative is the symbol of the martyred victim, [in *SONT*] has a related and only slightly different meaning. It stands for the powerless innocent, who finds himself in the hands of uncontrollable forces” (984). However, instead of depicting the “powerless innocent,” the allusions enable a rediscovery of identity through cartooning.

<sup>23</sup> Not only did he have to decide how to illustrate his representations of 9/11, but Spiegelman also had to select which sequences to include in *SONT*. He elaborates on this selective mediation by describing three sequences he did not have the opportunity to illustrate: a “harrowing drive through a panicked city” to find his son, Dash, at the United Nations School; his daughter, Nadja, being told to dress in red, white and blue at school and his opposition; and the rumors of “women patriotically rushing into the wreckage to give comfort to rescue workers at night” (2). Mentioning these potential candidates not present in the final project emphasizes the problematization of *SONT*’s glocalised aesthetic: Spiegelman’s comics are only one possible representation of the events.

purchase of *SONT* despite the time lapse in producing these comix.

Spiegelman welcomed the broadsheet format because it provided a comix form “perfect for oversized skyscrapers and outsized events” (1). The transitions between the broadsheets of *SONT*, in terms of time and space, function as macrocosms of the gutters between panels. Spiegelman presents these spaces as artificial boundaries that he attempts to unify and de-localize simultaneously. Including a digitally created representation of the North Tower’s glowing structure in every sheet facilitates this dual purpose. Spiegelman reveals that he structured much of his text around this “pivotal image”: “I managed to place some sequences of my most vivid memories around that central image” (2). The repetition of this image, though of different sizes and angles, unifies the divergent styles of the individual broadsheets by emphasizing the traumatic collapse of the World Trade Center towers as the impetus of the text. Unable to capture its physicality—a physicality that only exists in the Ground Zero rubble—Spiegelman turns to the graphic as a way to represent the tower. That *SONT* employs both irregular and no panel frames with these North Tower images and throughout the text demonstrates Spiegelman’s awareness of the necessity to open new possibilities for responding to 9/11.

Although these sheets were originally published as single units, the *SONT* collection re-presents the broadsheets as a graphic narrative. The “dead and cuddly” Tower Twins, anthropomorphized representations of the collapsed towers, assist in the simultaneous unification and de-localization processes (B5). The twins first appear in the second broadsheet, but they are not named until the fifth broadsheet. This later appearance illuminates the content of the first appearance, disrupting closure within sheets by presenting closure across broadsheets. Not only do early images foreshadow



subsequent appearances like the Tower Twins, but later images also complicate previous appearances. The assertion that the U.S. is “actually a nation under two flags” as the United Blue Zone and the United Red Zone adds a political purchase to the earlier Ostrich Party panel, the “third party that actually represents us” (B7, B5). Hillary Chute observes how a reader of *SONT* is left without a roadmap to the narrative, noting that while one “usually reads horizontally from left to right,” at other moments one “may read vertically or horizontally, without being instructed which to do first” (237). Whereas Chute suggests that this challenge to reader participation reflects 9/11’s demolition of global organization, I argue that Spiegelman’s aesthetic combination of globalized form and localized content reveals the nuances of how intertextuality unifies *SONT* despite the lack of narrative direction (237). Chute also interprets *SONT*’s unorthodox pagination as mirroring trauma’s disruption of linear narratives: “I read its fragmented, unorthodox approach to pagination as a material register of trauma’s inability to conform to the logic of linear and temporal progression” (231-32). However, at the same time that *SONT* disrupts linear progression, it produces a narrative of fragmentation that resists pagination. A reader of *SONT* must work through the fragmented narrative direction while the critic must work through the awkward pagination—but working through is the point of the text.<sup>24</sup> Spiegelman’s text asserts the response-ability of comics to voice the process of working through the 9/11 trauma, a process undermined by the acting out of American media post-9/11.

*SONT* criticizes the responses to 9/11 by media journalists who failed their audiences by not scrutinizing the reactionary U.S. government response of the “war on

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<sup>24</sup> McCloud views all closure in comics as a process of reader engagement and participation, even considering how an artist can deliberately employ closure: “Making the reader work a little may be just what the artist is trying to do” (91).

terror.” Spiegelman aims his attack at both the newspapers and television news programs that manufactured a disabling discourse of paranoia instead of a productive one of accurate information. To combat his assertion that “My subconscious is drowning in newspaper headlines!” Spiegelman uses his comix as a vehicle to demonstrate what he considers more responsible news reporting (B8). His proximity to the World Trade Center towers on the morning of 9/11 enabled him to witness firsthand the “discovery period” of the events and the subsequent explosion of media personnel (Grusin 1). Spiegelman writes how cameras almost immediately appeared at Ground Zero and remained fixtures on the streets: “In mere moments their quiet Soho street was filled with paparazzi. And camera crews remained on their corner, at the perimeter of Ground Zero, for days after” (B4). That he identifies these camera crews as “paparazzi” speaks to the disjunction between objectively reporting the events and framing reports of them within a military context as attacks of war. These reports, many of them published in special afternoon editions on September 11 or on the front pages of newspapers on September 12, contained headlines that decried the 9/11 events as “war” and “terrorism.” Spiegelman includes several dozen of these headlines at the end of *SONT*, demoting their headline purchase as ephemeral afterthoughts considerably less important than the preceding comix pages.

One possible reason for the news media’s coverage of 9/11 as an attack of war rather than trauma is ethnocentric reporting, a lens intended to placate both economic pressures and audience interests (Billeaudeau 64). In describing how journalists fueled nationalism post-9/11, Billeaudeau’s study observed that newspaper editorials, by aligning themselves in favor of the government’s response of the war on terror,

influenced the ways citizens received the war: “The support for the war on terror developing over time in the editorial voices of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* may have contributed to the ways in which some citizens, other news media and even some politicians responded to government and military decision-making and communications” (73). In isolating *The New York Times*, Spiegelman attacks the most notable American newspaper for failing to report accurate, unbiased news: “*The N.Y. Times* displaces its guilt for printing the Pentagon’s lethal fictions about Iraqi nukes as fact...then beats itself up in a 7000 word apology for some minor journalist’s pattern of inconsequential lies!” (B9). In the same panel, a cat version of Spiegelman reads a copy of *The New York Times* with the headline: “WMDs Found in a Baghdad Litter Box” (B9). This satire speaks to his criticism of how a nationalism-fueled discourse tolerates a displacement of reliable news. Through his comix, Spiegelman reinscribes *The New York Times* by satirizing its credibility while providing the information it failed to report.

Spiegelman’s attack against news providers extends from newspapers to television programs. He singles out Dan Rather as a television personality who influences reception of the 9/11 news: “Maybe it’s just a question of scale. Even on a large TV, the towers aren’t much bigger than, say, Dan Rather’s head” (B1). In the next panel, Spiegelman challenges the reliability not of Dan Rather but of the entire television medium, commenting that “logos, on the other hand, look enormous on television; it’s a medium almost as well suited as comics for dealing in abstractions” (B1). As a plane crashes into the side of the television, a close-up shot of the stars and stripes of an American flag—the logo of the U.S.—appears on the television screen. Kristiaan Versluys writes that TV personalities hijacked the World Trade Center crashes,

intentionally or not, by mediating the events through nationalism: “Millions of people saw the events on television, while only a few thousand were there to live through them on the spot. Hence it is obvious that the voice of the direct witnesses is no match for the Dan Rathers of this world” (997). Instead of concretizing the events by functioning as a medium for witness testimonies, news personalities manufacture a response of nationalism. Not only is he aware that “those crumbling towers burned their way into every brain” through television, Spiegelman attacks the medium as complicit in enabling “The New Normal”—the opening panels of *SONT*—that creates an American citizenship ignorant of information outside the nationalism-fueled media discourse (B1). He even criticizes himself for almost participating in the production of this blind nationalism perspective during his interview for NBC’s “Concert for America”: “I can still vividly remember the horrors of Ground Zero on September 11...2002! I was an eyewitness to the bombardment of kitsch on sale that day...and I almost became a participant!” (B10). The following panels articulate his glocalized identity of a rooted cosmopolitan, an identity that Spiegelman uses to effect glocalized citizenship.

Spiegelman uses his text both to inform citizens about the limitations of the political status quo and to produce a fertile climate receptive to considering alternative possibilities. With the “Ostrich Party” single panel, Spiegelman satirizes the “rampaging Republican elephants” and the “dimwitted Democratic donkeys” by denouncing “the two party animals” as “19th century dinosaurs, interested only in their own survival” (B5). By encouraging his readers to “join your fellow Americans before it’s too late...Rise Up & Stick Your Heads in the Ground,” he projects the immediacy of the political situation; action must be taken now—“before it’s too late” (B5). Accompanying this image is

Spiegelman's succinct, scathing criticism of American citizenship: because of the dysfunctional nature of partisan politics, "real Americans don't bother to vote" (B5). The divisive nature of the Democratic-Republican binary, he suggests, means that individuals that do vote actually divide, rather than unify, citizens: "The stars & stripes are a symbol of unity that many people see as a war banner. The detailed county-by-county map of the 2000 election—the one that put the loser in office—made it clear that we're actually a nation under two flags!" (B7). The color scheme of the broadsheet mirrors this division, as democratic blues clash against republican reds. Claiming that he "hardly knows anyone who supports the war and no one who voted for that creature in the White House," Spiegelman locates himself in "the state of alienation, down in the dumps in the dark indigo heart of the Blue Zone" (B7). However, this "state of alienation" implies a reluctance to identify himself within the partisan binary; instead, Spiegelman argues for the fictitious Ostrich Party, an emblem of glocalized politics that supersedes the partisan binary. For Spiegelman, globalization can lead to a fundamental shift within American ideologies away from partisan politics and toward a more response-able citizenship.

The attempts to stimulate an awareness of glocalized possibilities represent the first step in transforming the United States into more than a society of cosmopolitans. Ulrich Beck names the "cosmopolitan state" as one such possibility that "could provide the conditions for multiple national and religious identities to coexist through the principle of constitutional tolerance" ("Terrorist Threat" 50). Beck further argues that cosmopolitan states facilitate the development of transnational justice: "When we set out to revitalize and transform the state in a cosmopolitan state, we are laying the groundwork for international cooperation on the basis of human rights and global justice"

(“Terrorist Threat” 50). To achieve such “coexistence” after the World Trade Center collapses, citizens must fight through prescriptive patriotism to recognize the value in glocalization as a way to disable terrorism. Through a series of panels, Spiegelman illustrates his realization about the limitations of nationalism and concretizes his argument for glocalization: “But why did those provincial American flags have to sprout out of the embers of Ground Zero? Why not...a globe??!” (B7). Next, as the Homeland Security advisory escalates from an orange alert of “high risk of terrorist attack” to a red alert of “severe risk,” he attempts to shield himself under a U.S. flag, resulting in a “Red, White, & Blue Alert! Virtual certitude of terrorist attack” (B7). Hiding under this symbol of nationalism, Spiegelman thinks, “I should feel safer under here, but—damn it!—I can’t see a thing!” (B7). Because the rhetoric of nationalism fuels the purchase of terrorism, particularly in how the media amplifies events, hiding under the flag creates a blind citizenship and fails to provide what a cosmopolitan state enables—transnational safety. No nation can ensure its national security alone, but glocalized citizenship provides a solution to this dilemma: “Helping those who have been excluded is no longer a humanitarian task. It is in the West’s own interest: the key to its security” (Beck “Terrorist Threat” 48). Cosmopolitan states, not jingoist nations, have the promise to reduce the terrorism potential “from the black holes of collapsed states and situations of despair” (Beck “Terrorist Threat” 48)” *SONT*’s argument for glocalized citizenship produces the response-ability to enable individuals, including Americans, to spark this shift.

Spiegelman succeeds in his glocalization project by producing *SONT* as a foundational text that both advocates for the remembrance of the World Trade Center and

embodies the response-ability of glocalized identity, media, and citizenship. “The Sky is Falling!” concludes by revealing Spiegelman’s motivations for publishing the individual broadsheets together as *SONT*:

Still, time keeps flying and even the New Normal gets old. My strips are now a slow-motion diary of what I experienced while seeking some provisional equanimity...I still believe the world is ending, but I concede that it seems to be ending more slowly than I once thought...so I figured I’d make a book. (2)

Spiegelman laments that his newfound reception at American venues that had denied him previously, including *The New York Times*, is a reluctant outcome of being “an artist who’s consistently Seconds Ahead of His Time”:

The climate of discourse in America shifted dramatically just as I concluded the series. What was once unsayable now began to appear outside the marginalized alternative press and late-night cable comedy shows...What changed? Basically, America entered its pre-election political season...And though it has been an enormous relief to hear urgent issues get an airing again, I was disappointed that vigorous criticism had been staved off until it could be contained as part of our business as usual. (2)

The broadsheets of *SONT* operate against “business as usual” by presenting dissent from before the “pre-election political season.” This dissent argues how globalization would have enabled such “vigorous criticism” from response-able citizens like Spiegelman to

appear immediately in the U.S. public consciousness after 9/11, not several years later in the midst of the ongoing and escalating “war on terror.”

The decision to “make a book” enables readers to witness Spiegelman write the World Trade Center trauma in a way that other texts cannot. In “The Comics Supplement,” Spiegelman describes how New York City residents used other aesthetic texts to find meaning after 9/11:

Poetry readings seemed to be as frequent as the sound of police sirens in the wake of September 11—New Yorkers needed poetry to give voice to their pain, culture to reaffirm faith in a wounded civilization. I must have heard W.H. Auden’s ‘September 1, 1939’ a dozen times in those weeks, but my mind kept wandering. (3)

Although he recognizes the value in Auden’s poem about the outbreak of World War II, Spiegelman admits that this popular poem did not keep his mind from “wandering.” As a result, he returns to the history of newspaper comics to achieve this solace:

The only cultural artifacts that could get past my defenses to flood my eyes and brain with something other than images of burning towers were old comic strips; vital, unpretentious ephemera from the optimistic dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That they were made with so much skill and verve but never intended to last past the day they appeared in the newspaper gave them poignancy; they were just right for an end-of-the-world moment. (3)

Spiegelman reproduces these “ephemeral” “cultural artifacts” in the supplemental plates, allowing readers to experience how these “old comic strips” inspired the *SONT* project. He reinscribes the political purchase of his comix not by breaking from the past, but by



taking inspiration from the past. This return enables comix not only to critique American identity and media but also to effect the glocalized citizenship Spiegelman views as necessary to cope with the 9/11 trauma. The implicit comparison between Auden's poem and Spiegelman's *SONT* positions the latter to function like the former for individuals suffering the 9/11 trauma: to "give voice to their pain" and to "reaffirm faith in a wounded civilization.

Spiegelman appropriates historical comics in order to upset and resolve the narrative of *SONT* simultaneously. Kristiaan Versluys argues that these historical comics, similar to the *Maus* allusions, enable Spiegelman to begin the "mimetic approximation" of understanding 9/11 as they "bring it nearer and at the same time push it away to one remove" (990). I want to argue that, at the same time, the complex reappearance of these comics operates against the simplistic resolve projected by editorial cartoonists' uses of patriotic ideas and symbols in newspapers after 9/11. In a study of both U.S. and non-U.S. newspapers after 9/11, Scott Abel and Vincent F. Filak observe a disjunction between domestic and international comics:

For the categories of resolve, the United States cartoonists showed a much higher frequency of this tone than did the non-U.S. cartoons. Statistically, however, cartoons from non-U.S. sources that expressed fear and victimization were much higher in proportion than were cartoons that exhibited this tone from U.S. cartoonists. (171)

*SONT*'s attacks against nationalist "resolve" and international projections of "fear and victimization" represent its glocalized aesthetic in action. Spiegelman asserts that the

comics/comix medium provides a de-territorialized, and thus glocalized, space to problematize responses to a contextualized understanding of 9/11.

By employing the medium to make sense of 9/11, Spiegelman joins with other comics writers that “used comics to contest dominant framings” of the events (Jenkins 98). Because of their willingness to expose the dangers of the nationalist status quo, these artists often “found themselves in the center of controversy within a culture where it suddenly seemed dangerous to ask too many questions” (Jenkins 98).<sup>25</sup> Contemporaneous with this comics dissent are other comics projects that either support or question the “war on terror” prospects. In tribute collections like Marvel’s *Heroes* and D.C.’s *9-11: Artist’s Respond*, artists challenge the medium’s assumptions about “the heroic” by displaying a “shift of attention from superheroes to emergency workers” (Jenkins 97, 87). Some of these images question the nature of heroism and terrorism, while others depict their artists in the post-9/11 moment as confused by the public discourse about response-ability.<sup>26</sup> Spiegelman participates in the reinscription of the comics/comix medium to illustrate and facilitate a productive working through not just of identity, but also of comics, post-9/11. His fragmented problematization of responses to the specific World Trade Center crashes and the greater 9/11 events enables *SONT* and comics responses like it to succeed in avoiding the political hijackings they condemn. By employing a glocalized aesthetic to

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<sup>25</sup> Henry Jenkins names other artists and projects that he aligns with Spiegelman’s deconstruction of nationalist responses to 9/11, including “alternative editorial cartoonists like Tom Tomorrow or Ted Rall, web comics like *Secret Asian Man*, [and] newspaper strips like *The Boondocks*” (98).

<sup>26</sup> For a more complete analysis of popular comics after 9/11, see Henry Jenkins’ “Captain America Sheds His Mighty Tears: Comics and September 11” and Simon Cooper and Paul Atkinson’s “Graphic Implosions: Politics, Time, and Value in Post-9/11 Comics.” Both essays survey the wide range of comics responses to 9/11, from jingoist images of Superman and Spider-man to “heroic” images of New York City rescue workers to sympathetic images of grieving families who lost loved ones in the World Trade Center collapses.

enable a pluralization of perspectives, Spiegelman begins working through the 9/11 trauma to produce a response-able citizen-readership.

With Spiegelman as their glocalized interlocutor, readers are able to use *SONT* to break through the rhetoric of nationalism and establish glocalization as a foundation for meaning after the World Trade Center events. In the “Weapons of Mass Displacement” panels, Spiegelman bitterly attacks the collectively passive citizenship who facilitated a public displacement of civic response-ability: “Cheney’s crooked Halliburton pals get rewarded, the Enron gang pulls off one of the biggest heists in history...and Martha Stewart takes the rap?!” (B9). The last panel of the page depicts Spiegelman saying that this “complaining is the only solace left” (B9). However, this “complaining” can achieve more than just “solace,” as the author chose to produce *SONT* as an example of glocalized response-ability. Indeed, Spiegelman’s strategic complaining through *SONT* functions as dissent that enables the text to effect glocalized citizenship as a response to the founding trauma of the World Trade Center events. Art Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers* demonstrates that comics/comix can—and must—participate in the literature of 9/11, continuing the writing trauma project he began in *Maus* while inspiring other graphic artists to aspire to new possibilities for the medium.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Undermining “U.S. Versus Them”: The Double Consciousness Aesthetic of Don DeLillo’s “In the Ruins of the Future” and *Falling Man*

The writer wants to understand what this day has done to us...In its desertion of every basis for comparison, the event asserts its singularity. There is something empty in the sky. The writer tries to give memory, tenderness, and meaning to all that howling space.

—Don DeLillo, “In the Ruins of the Future”

The prodigious success of such an attack presents a problem, and if we are to gain some understanding of it, we have to slough off our Western perspective to see what goes on in the terrorists’ organization, and in their heads.

—Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism*

*Falling Man* was not Don DeLillo’s first response to the World Trade Center collapses of September 11, 2001. In December 2001, less than three months after 9/11, DeLillo published “In the Ruins of the Future: Reflections on Terror and Loss in the Shadow of September” (hereafter “In the Ruins” and “Ruins”) in *Harper’s*. DeLillo’s essay argues for and initiates an aesthetic “counter-narrative” to the dominant “narrative” of 9/11, allowing him to break through the disabling representations of both 9/11 and the “terrorists” in *Falling Man*. Like Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers*, DeLillo’s post-9/11 texts explore LaCapra’s process of “writing trauma” in response to 9/11. *Falling Man* follows the “In the Ruins” model for demonstrating the response-ability of writing trauma to articulate a working through of 9/11 not just for readers, but also for aesthetics. DeLillo’s *Falling Man* functions as an aesthetic argument that deconstructs the

government-projected and media-endorsed binary of post-9/11 public discourse as “with us or with the terrorists”—identified in the Introduction as “U.S. versus them”—offering instead a new paradigm for responding to 9/11 in the present and the future.

“In the Ruins” articulates a productive framework for writers and citizens to respond effectively to 9/11 by evaluating the event from multiple historical and identity perspectives. For Marco Abel, this project “demonstrates the impossibility of saying anything definitive about 9/11” (1237). Similarly, Linda S. Kauffman observes how “In the Ruins” refuses to limit interpretations of 9/11 by historicizing that day’s event within the history of America-Islam relations, particularly American “incursions into Islamic domains” (357). The essay reminds Kauffman as a reader that 9/11 “did not occur in an historical vacuum” (357). DeLillo’s essay situates the subsequent literature of 9/11 as not only engaging, but also demanding, the response-ability of the writer to address the altered Manhattan skyline: “There is something empty in the sky. The writer tries to give memory, tenderness, and meaning to all that howling space” (“Ruins” 39). In the midst of such a devastating trauma as 9/11, an event with a name that implies “there can be no one meaning,” DeLillo authors his texts to problematize, and thus produce, such “meaning” (McQuillan 3).

Despite widespread visual representations of 9/11, DeLillo anticipates the urgent need for the writer to “speak 9/11” through language that recognizes its singularity and incomparability: “The event itself has no purchase on the mercies of analogy or simile. We have to take the shock and horror as it is” (“Ruins” 39). As a writer, he wants “to understand what this day has done to us,” leaving him no choice but to confront the uncomfortable “shock and horror” directly through the “living language” of the counter-

narrative: “The narrative ends in the rubble, and it is left to us to create the counter-narrative” (“Ruins” 39). Although DeLillo suggests the writer cannot analogize 9/11 to any other historical event, one can use the cultural precedent of double consciousness to contextualize responses to 9/11. What I term DeLillo’s “double consciousness aesthetic” reminds the reader that character and cultural identities are social constructions, both for the self and for the other. This aesthetic enables *Falling Man* to deconstruct the “with us or with the terrorists” cultural response to 9/11, a binary which assumes that the terrorists hijackers—“them”—are irreconcilably opposed to the U.S.—“us.” Angelica Nuzzo argues that this binary opposition implicates a *tertium non datur*, an excluded middle: “Dialectic allows us to explain why terrorism is defined by the U.S. in such a way as to create the normative dilemma according to which one cannot not be either against or for terrorism” (130). DeLillo’s double consciousness aesthetic operates against this binary by superseding it, using the plural pronouns “we” and “us”—and not using the adjective “American”—to implicate everyone in his problematization of collective responses to the World Trade Center collapses of 9/11.

I derive *Falling Man*’s double consciousness aesthetic from W. E. B. Du Bois’ founding argument about the duality of racial identity post-slavery and its subsequent criticism. This cultural precedent of response allows DeLillo to avoid reinforcing the American exceptionalism he wants to undermine. In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois foregrounds the racial implications of his double consciousness as:

This sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro;

two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (2)

Du Bois laments the sacrifice of personal agency that allows the “eyes of others,” oppressive white Americans, to construct his black identity. This “two-ness” functions to oppress Du Bois’ agency, though subsequent critics suggest that double consciousness can enable agency for the oppressed. Paul Gilroy extrapolates Du Bois’ “black internalisation of an American identity” to include other transnational groups of color post-slavery, both in the present and the future, in what he considers Du Bois’ attempt “to animate a dream of global co-operation among peoples of colour” (126). By pointing to the language of the title, Gilroy observes that the text is “not ethnically restricted or closed off” by a reference to America, enabling double consciousness “to illuminate the experience of post-slave populations in general” (128, 126). In addition to this transnational focus, other critics, like Judith R. Blau and Eric S. Brown, suggest that double consciousness enables cultural awareness for the oppressed: “Whites do not have the burdens associated with the Veil, but neither do they possess the agency blacks do in taking it on and off” (221). This “burden” allows blacks, but not whites, to understand the system of “cultural frameworks and the institutions that whites employ” to maintain oppression (221). For Blau and Brown, the unveiling project provides not just an awareness of double consciousness, but also a cultural insight into how to overcome this limitation.

*Falling Man*’s double consciousness aesthetic participates in this rich history of criticism while simultaneously reversing the perceived hierarchy of the veil between

oppressors and oppressed. Though not explicitly identified by the term double consciousness within the novel, Nina, Lianne's aging mother, alludes to the social construction of identity in her description of passport photos as the "face in transition":

"What you see is not what we see. What you see is distracted by memory, by being who you are, all this time, for all these years... What we see is the living truth. The mirror softens the effect by submerging the actual face. Your face is your life. But your face is also submerged in your life. That's why you don't see it. Only other people see it. And the camera of course."  
(114-15)<sup>27</sup>

Nina focuses on the "face" as key to one's identity, lamenting that one's "submerged" impression tends to disagree with what others see. This tension between being in control and out of control of identity, as it manifests within *Falling Man*'s formal structure, applies to both the self and the other. Kristiaan Versluys criticizes the text's division into three parts, which are titled "Bill Lawton," "Ernst Hechinger," and "David Janiak," as representative of the novel's "enigmatic or problematical" use of language in projecting a post-9/11 melancholia; he dismisses these characters, and thus this division, as "tangential to the plot" (40-41).<sup>28</sup> Instead of this disabling interpretation of these minor characters, I want to argue that DeLillo uses these three individuals—each a major participant in his own section—to foreground double consciousness post-9/11. Each of these names is a pseudonym, which already signifies a veiled identity: Bill Lawton is the name of the children's misinterpretation of hearing the name bin Laden on television;

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<sup>27</sup> For DeLillo citations not explicitly identified by "Ruins," the quotations are from *Falling Man*.

<sup>28</sup> Citations of Kristiaan Versluys in this chapter refer to his book, *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel*.



Ernst Hechinger is the original name of Nina's art dealer lover, Martin Ridnour; and David Janiak is the name of the mysterious Falling Man artist that performs throughout New York City. As Lianne comes to realize the double consciousness identities of these characters—that each is a synthesis of how she defines him and how he defines himself—she applies this realization to post-9/11 cultural discourse. I structure the analysis within this chapter first to follow *Falling Man*'s formal division and then to consider the cultural implications of double consciousness. As “Bill Lawton” foregrounds the limitations of the news media, “Ernst Hechinger” exposes terrorism's independence of ideology, allowing “David Janiak” to function as a microcosm for *Falling Man*. Across these sections, DeLillo argues that problematized and contextualized aesthetic responses to 9/11—the “counter-narrative” of *Falling Man*—can begin a working through of the World Trade Center collapses.

Simultaneous to the narrative play on character identities, DeLillo projects double consciousness as one way for individuals to understand the cultural frameworks both responsible for and response-able to 9/11. Although 9/11 was not the first terrorist act on U.S. soil, the uniqueness of these hijackings and crashes, which Didier Bigo identifies as “the level of the use of violence, the combination and repertoires of action, the scale of the attacks, and its location in the heart of U.S. territory,” forced the nation to realize that the U.S. is not immune to terrorism (48). Subsequent non-mainstream media reports, as mentioned in the Introduction, revealed how deeply implicated the U.S. government is in terrorism outside U.S. borders. In effect, 9/11 lifted the veil from the eyes of the American oppressors, allowing them to perceive the disastrous consequences of the “cultural frameworks and institutions” they employ for oppression, similar to Blau and

Brown's analysis of the unveiling agency. *Falling Man* works to contextualize, and thus understand, the terrorist project. As Martin describes the terrorism project with language evoking Jean Baudrillard's *The Spirit of Terrorism*, he encourages his American audience to acknowledge the presence and equality of the misunderstood other—the oppressed Muslim—through transcultural engagement. This process manifests in Lianne's observations of other individuals engaged in both learning the history of Islam and reading the Koran. DeLillo also participates in this process aesthetically by articulating the terrorist counter-narrative of Hammad's participation in the 9/11 plot. At the same time, Americans must deconstruct their notion of the self to recognize how others perceive them, which, in turn, enables the negation of the systems of oppression. In mirroring Gilroy's transnational focus, DeLillo's double consciousness aesthetic undermines the "U.S. versus them" binary with a new paradigm of individual responsibility. Since this post-9/11 double consciousness revelation is subjective, the responsibility remains for the reader—regardless of nationality—to initiate the two-part process in one's own life.

Although the name "Bill Lawton" appears in large font on the page designating "Part One," DeLillo slowly teases out this identity over the section. At a chance meeting on a street corner, Isabel, the mother of the siblings Katie and Robert, admits to Lianne that she is "beginning to wonder" what her children are doing with Lianne's son, Justin, when the three "spend a lot of time at the window in Katie's room, with the door closed" (16, 17). Lianne dismisses these concerns as merely "three kids being kids together," but Isabel elaborates on the details of their conspiring: "It's getting a little strange, frankly, all the time they spend, first, sort of huddled together, and then, I don't know, like

endlessly whispering things in this semi-gibberish, which is what kids do, absolutely, but still” (17). Despite acknowledging that these strange actions of “huddling together” and whispering in “semi-gibberish” are “what kids do,” Isabel asks Lianne if Justin has revealed any secrets to her. Without a definite answer, Lianne dismisses the behavior by assuming it originates from “doing clouds in school,” a claim that Isabel immediately discredits (17). Both mothers express an interest in the activities of their children, but neither is able to provide a sufficient answer. However, Isabel does have an idea: “It has something to do with this man...This name” (17). The episode ends without any further information as to whom “this name” is or what influence that identity might have over Justin and the Siblings. When the mothers resume their conversation some days later, Isabel explains that Justin has been allowing her children to use binoculars belonging to Keith, Justin’s father, attributing their usage as “definitely something to do with Bill Lawton” (37). Although Isabel is able to provide a name for “this man,” “that’s all” she knows (37). Again, Lianne presumes the binoculars relate to school, but Isabel retorts by recalling her friend’s previous mistake about the clouds. The mothers now share in the knowledge of the name Bill Lawton, but they are unable to do anything without knowing more about this identity.

More information about Bill Lawton does not manifest until a subsequent conversation during which Keith explains their son’s behavior to Lianne: “They’re searching the skies...[for] planes...Katie claims she saw the plane that hit Tower One. She says she was home from school, sick, standing at the window when the plane flew by” (71). The parents do not know whether Katie is being truthful or fabricating a lie, but the prospects of both options scare Lianne: “That scares the hell out of me. God, there’s

something so awful about that. Damn kids with their goddamn twisted powers of imagination” (72). Lianne damns this “imagination,” but then Keith explains something even “scarier” that Justin believes: “The towers did not collapse... They were hit but did not collapse. That’s what he says” (72). Although Justin “didn’t see it on TV” because his mother “didn’t want him to see it,” he “seemed to absorb it” when she told him “they came down” (72). Justin’s inability to comprehend the collapse of the World Trade Center towers suggests that the visual imagery of 9/11—the news coverage documenting the consecutive collapses—concretizes the events better than Lianne can articulate. To confirm 9/11 as real, Justin needs to see the collapses with his own eyes either through television imagery or firsthand at Ground Zero.

While the 9/11 media imagery confirms the collapse of the World Trade Center towers, the creation of the Bill Lawton identity exposes the possibility of misinterpreting television news reports. Keith explains that he learned about Bill Lawton by accident, saying that Justin “let the name slip” (73). Keith discusses Lawton’s origins with Lianne:

“The name originates with Robert. This much I knew. The rest I mostly surmise. Robert thought, from television or school or somewhere, that he was hearing a certain name. Maybe he heard the name once, or misheard it, then imposed this version on future occasions. In other words he never adjusted his original sense of what he was hearing.”

“What was he hearing?”

“He was hearing Bill Lawton. They were saying bin Laden.” (73)

Wherever Robert may have heard the name “bin Laden,” be it “television or school or somewhere,” he misinterprets it as “Bill Lawton.” Even though this misinterpretation is

an extreme case, it demonstrates a problem of mediation in that what the news media projects—bin Laden—can disagree with what one perceives the media to project—Bill Lawton. Keith continues to inform Lianne about the constructed Bill Lawton identity, describing what he knows of “the myth of Bill Lawton”:

“Bill Lawton has a long beard. He wears a long robe...He flies jet planes and speaks thirteen languages but not English except to his wives. What else? He has the power to poison what we eat but only certain foods. They’re working on the list...The other thing he does, Bill Lawton, is go everywhere in his bare feet” (74)

This constructed mythos fetishizes the Bill Lawton identity, grossly distorting certain characteristics like his linguistic capability to “speak thirteen languages” or his military ability to “poison what we eat.” Yet, despite these fetishized talents, Bill Lawton has various trivial limitations in only speaking English “to his wives” and the ability to poison only “certain foods.” The children’s continued “working on the list” suggests that this constructed mythos will continue to evolve as they deem appropriate, potentially drawing future inspiration again from “television or school or somewhere.”

The mythic construction of Bill Lawton’s identity demonstrates the paradoxical double function of media representations of 9/11. These representations simultaneously confirm the collapse of the World Trade Center towers while mythologizing the event because, in DeLillo’s terms, it “dominated the medium” (“Ruins” 38). Although Lianne assumes that Katie must recognize the fallacy of Bill Lawton because she is “way too smart,” she regrets maternal responsibility in Justin’s misinformed plane watching with the Siblings: “This is what we get for putting a protective distance between children and

news events” (74). Keith’s response of “Except we didn’t put a distance, not really” (74) reflects the inability of not just parents, but of anyone, to “put a distance” from such a dominant event about which ninety-seven percent of Americans learned within three hours (Kanihan 207). Such permeating news coverage of 9/11 demonstrates how the terrorists successfully hijacked the “instantaneous world transmission” of live images, inculcating the media as “part of the event” and “part of the terror” (Baudrillard 27, 31). That Justin’s lack of effective contextualization of 9/11 leads him to construct the myth of Bill Lawton mirrors the blurring of “the history and origins of conflict” seen in “decontextualized news reports” framing the World Trade Center crashes as “attacks” (Berrington 52).

The 9/11 events were so fantastic, so removed from reality, that DeLillo describes them as too real: “A phenomenon so unaccountable and yet so bound to the power of objective fact that we can’t tilt it to the slant of our perceptions” (“Ruins” 38-39). The media’s inability to resolve the paradox of 9/11 as “unaccountable” and yet “objective fact” foreshadows the disabling rhetoric of the “war on terror” as a hunt for Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Despite Osama bin Laden’s appearances in media reports attributing blame for 9/11 on him, his identity is no better understood than the identity of the fictitious Bill Lawton. While Lianne can recognize the construction of Bill Lawton, for the children this identity not only exists but, as Justin explains, also remains a real threat: “[Bill Lawton] says this time the towers will fall” (102). Similarly, the real threat of bin Laden cannot be separated from the media’s creation of the threat. Equally important to the construction of Bill Lawton/bin Laden are both the ambiguous interpretations that stereotype and the omitted pasts that veil identity. The mythologized Bill Lawton figure

is more than a child's misinterpretation of bin Laden; it implicates the media in its own construction of Osama bin Laden's identity.

While "Bill Lawton" exposes the construction of a specific identity, "Ernst Hechinger" disrupts the disabling rhetoric of terrorism and the terrorist identity through the words of Martin Ridnour. Lianne suspects that Martin, as an art dealer, "bought art and then flipped it, quickly, for a profit" (42). In addition to having an apartment in New York City and an office in Basel, Switzerland, Martin spends time in Berlin, Germany, and perhaps "did or did not have a wife in Paris" (42). The art dealer occupation leads Martin to a transnational lifestyle, engaging in what Ulrich Beck terms "place polygamy," an identity "belonging in different worlds" ("Cosmopolitan Society" 24). When pressed by Lianne to identify "one city" that he would most like to be, Martin responds with an identification confirming his investment in place polygamy: "I don't think I'm ready to face that question. One city...and I am trapped" (194). Martin's transnational identity does not effect the glocalized citizenship that Art Spiegelman argues for in *In the Shadow of No Towers* because the refusal to be "trapped" denies the local engagement that Spiegelman demands is necessary to be a "rooted" cosmopolitan. However, it does provide him with a plurality of national perspectives. Martin, despite being an art dealer, strangely admits an indifference to owning art: "My walls are bare. Home and office. I keep bare walls" (112). Although Nina later revises this assertion as "not completely" bare, the deliberate absence of artwork enables Martin to achieve a double consciousness perspective: he is able to perceive art from his perspective and from the perspectives of others simultaneously. Rather than functioning as the contradiction that Nina and Lianne interpret, Martin's transnational identity as an art

dealer with almost bare walls grants credibility to his ability to translate perspectives without owning, and thus valuing, one perspective instead of another.

This double consciousness ability with art allows Martin to function as an interlocutor for productive responses to 9/11 that cut through the “U.S. versus them” binary by encouraging an evaluation of the World Trade Center collapses from multiple perspectives. Lianne confides in Martin that while other people read poetry “to ease the shock and pain” or “to bring comfort or composure,” she feels compelled to read “newspapers,” which cause her to “get angry and crazy” (42).<sup>29</sup> After listening to these concerns, Martin suggests “another approach,” which is to analyze 9/11 through double consciousness: “Stand apart and think about the elements...Coldly, clearly if you’re able to. Do not let it tear you down. See it, measure it.” (42). In “standing apart” from the 9/11 events, one can perceive meaning: “There’s the event, there’s the individual. Measure it. Let it teach you something. See it. Make yourself equal to it” (42). Nina’s presumptive interjection about the reasons for the hijackings quickly disables Martin’s productive response; however, the interruption enables Martin to demonstrate the “something” that 9/11 can “teach.” Nina claims that the hijackings were “out of panic” and that the terrorists have “no goals they can hope to achieve” aside from attempting to “kill the innocent” (46). Martin counters this assumption of panic-driven terrorism by exposing the divisive inequalities between the U.S. and the Middle East: “One side has the capital,

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<sup>29</sup> Specifically, Lianne reads *The New York Times*’ “Portraits of Grief” series: “She read newspaper profiles of the dead, every one that was printed. Not to read them, every one, was an offense, a violation of responsibility and trust. But she also read them because she had to, out of some need she did not try to interpret” (106). This project of memorializing each victim who died on 9/11 has been the subject of criticism both in what the portraits provide and what they do not address. Nancy K. Miller observes how the series gives “formal dimensions to suffering” by creating “a coherent public persona to fit the event, and one that also serves to protect both the victim and the mourners from the display of unsuitable emotions” (23). However, she criticizes the project in that it emphasizes American civilian deaths while ignoring “the individuality of those killed by Americans, first in Afghanistan and then Iraq” (37).



the labor, the technology, the armies, the agencies, the cities, the laws, the police and the prisons. The other side has a few men willing to die” (46-47). This gross discrepancy demonstrates that the terrorism of 9/11 needs to be contextualized economically, historically, and politically.

Martin summarizes his impression of what inspired 9/11 as “all the things that shape lives, millions of people, dispossessed, their lives, their consciousness” (47). These individuals, the men “willing to die,” sacrifice their lives to demonstrate how “a power that interferes, that occupies,” can be made “vulnerable” (46). Implicit in Martin’s consideration of the economics, history, and politics that instigated 9/11 is the noticeable exclusion of religious justification, a perspective echoing the argument of Jean Baudrillard’s *The Spirit of Terrorism*. Baudrillard rebukes the suggestion that religious ideology motivates terrorism: “We are far beyond ideology and politics now. No ideology, no cause—not even the Islamic cause—can account for the energy that fuels terror” (9-10). Instead, Islam merely functions as a convenient culture for the American media to identify as supporting terrorism. Baudrillard argues that terrorism “reaches far beyond Islam and America,” but these two cultures are the media focus “in order to create the delusion of a visible confrontation and a solution based on force” (11). Nina’s assertion that God, and thus religion, is the terrorist motivation behind 9/11 demonstrates the pervasive adherence by Americans to this “delusion.” In contrast, Baudrillard contextualizes the “spirit of terrorism”—a project “to radicalize the world by sacrifice”—as uninterested in ideology but instead focused on destabilizing hegemonic order: “It is what haunts every world order, all hegemonic domination—if Islam dominated the world, terrorism would rise against Islam, for it is the world, the globe itself, which

resists globalization” (17, 10, 12). In noticing how “they invoke God constantly” as “their oldest source, their oldest word,” Nina assumes that Muslims follow Islam because it is “convenient” for providing “a system of belief that justifies these feelings and these killings” (112). Her perspective accepts the media-driven representation of Islam as a violence-friendly religion driven by the principle of jihad. Martin, building upon Baudrillard’s argument by considering Islam’s moral principles, firmly chastises Nina by declaring that “Islam renounces this,” with “this” referring both to the “feelings” and “killings” of Nina’s statement.

Martin’s critically informed perspective exposes the perceived definition of jihad as false in both its misinterpretation by al-Qaeda agents and its misuse in Western media. Sahail H. Hashmi historicizes a definition of jihad by examining how “Muslim legal theory divided wars against non-Muslims into two categories,” either “defensive fighting” or “expansionist jihad” (151). While bin Laden and al-Qaeda may “appeal to the notion of defensive jihad,” Hashmi locates them outside both categories because of their acceptance and justification of total war: “This repudiation of limits on the means to one’s ends puts al-Qaeda’s war outside the jihad tradition” (150). Although “al-Qaeda terrorism is rationalized with Islamic justifications,” this argument fails in light of a historical definition of the jihad practice (Hashmi 159). Even the self-sacrificing martyrdom of 9/11 is not an accepted part of the jihad tradition, as suicide “is strongly condemned in Islamic teachings, and as a result it is rare in Muslim societies” (Hashmi 161). As it is not “theological or sacred,” Hashmi agrees with Martin’s observation that the motivation for the 9/11 hijackings is “more political and mundane” (155). Martin makes this cultural observation explicit in his rebuke of Nina’s assertion of religious

motivation: “Don’t think people will die only for God” (116). Instead, he locates the motivations for 9/11 as an attempt to assert Middle East identity and agency: “They want their place in the world, their own global union, not ours. It’s an old dead war, you say. But it’s everywhere and it’s rational” (116). In his close examination of terrorist motivations, Martin champions a double consciousness perspective not just by encouraging Lianne and Nina to take a more contextual approach to 9/11 and the terrorists, but also by demanding that they consider their identities—as representative identities of the U.S.—from the position of the terrorist other.

Martin elaborates on this double consciousness by considering how the Twin Towers contain a symbolic meaning for Americans as well as non-Americans. When Nina laments that she does not yet “want to see” the “ruins” at the Ground Zero, Martin strongly criticizes her unwillingness, arguing that she must accept this ruin identification:

“Weren’t the towers built as fantasies of wealth and power that would one day become fantasies of destruction? You build a thing like that so you can see it come down. The provocation is obvious. What other reason would there be to go so high and then to double it, do it twice? It’s a fantasy, so why not do it twice? You are saying, Here it is, bring it down.”

(116)

Instead of attributing a single symbolic meaning to the towers, Martin translates their “twin-ness” as representative of the U.S. “wealth and power” fantasies, which suggests that wealth and power are at least coterminous, if not codependent. Martin’s symbolic interpretation of the towers evokes the rhetoric of Jean Baudrillard’s attempt to answer two questions—“Why the *Twin* Towers? Why *two* towers at the World Trade Center?”—

in the post-9/11 aftermath (42). Baudrillard designates the architecture of the double towers as symbolic of the “end of any original reference” (43). Their perfect twin-ness complicates a tension “of attraction and repulsion,” resulting in what he views as an overwhelming “temptation to break that symmetry” in order to restore a “singularity” (Baudrillard 46). Martin echoes this argument by suggesting that the “fantastic” verticality of the towers, coupled by their twin-ness, functions as an open invitation for the terrorists to “bring it down.” Martin’s deliberate use of the singular pronoun “it” synthesizes the Twin Towers as a paradox: the singular term “World Trade Center” denies singularity, both in the simultaneously construction and consecutive collapses of the two towers.

Lianne anticipates something distinctive about Martin’s past, something behind his art dealer façade that enables him to employ double consciousness in perceiving 9/11 from both his and the terrorist perspectives. A tense conversation between Lianne and Nina culminates in the mother’s revelation of Martin’s real identity to her daughter: “His name is Ernst Hechinger” (148). Although Nina and Martin/Ernst have been in a relationship for twenty years, she does not know much about his past, save for “one thing”: “He was a member of a collective in the late nineteen sixties. Kommune One. Demonstrating against the German state, the fascist state. That’s how they saw it. First they threw eggs. Then they set off bombs. After that I’m not sure what he did” (146). Kommune One’s escalation from “eggs” to “bombs” mirrors the philosophy of terrorism as destabilization of order; Martin has a “terrorist” past as Ernst Hechinger. Nina describes a wanted poster Martin once showed her of “German terrorists of the early seventies [showing] nineteen names and faces,” but she emphasizes that Martin is “not

one of the faces on the poster” (147, 19). After learning this information, Lianne repeats the number, “Nineteen,” drawing an implicit comparison between these nineteen individuals and the nineteen men responsible for the hijackings of the four planes on 9/11 (147). Nina makes this parallel explicit as she describes Martin/Ernst’s opinion of the 9/11 terrorists: “He thinks these people, these jihadists, he thinks they have something in common with the radicals of the sixties and seventies. He thinks they’re all part of the same classical pattern. They have their theorists. They have their visions of world brotherhood” (147). This comparison deterritorializes the terrorist “identity” from exclusively Islam, similar to Baudrillard’s observation of terrorism’s independence from any specific ideology.

However, a reader must not interpret Martin’s presentation of terrorism through a contextualized, historicized lens as an attempt to sympathize with the terrorist project. Sahail H. Hashmi denies that attempts to understand the motivation behind the 9/11 terrorism legitimize the plane crashes: “Taking a close look in particular at the grievances articulated by al-Qaeda is in no way tantamount to ‘giving in’ to or ‘sympathizing’ with the terrorists” (163). Instead, Martin/Ernst demands that American responses to 9/11—including witness responses by Keith, a World Trade Center survivor—must contextualize terrorism in order to prevent its repetition. As the narrative from “Ernst Hechinger” to “David Janiak” jumps three years in the future to 2004, Martin’s presence recedes into that of a secondary character; his advice to problematize 9/11 responses has been marginalized. He reappears once in Lianne’s recollection of her late mother’s memorial service. The two have a conversation about global politics in which Martin

launches a tirade lamenting that the American identity has lost its transnational character and purchase:

“We’re all sick of America and Americans. The subject nauseates us...For all the careless power of this country, let me say this, for all the danger it makes in the world, America is going to become irrelevant. Do you believe this?...We are all beginning to have this thought, of American irrelevance. It’s a little like telepathy. Soon the day is coming when nobody has to think about America except for the danger it brings. It is losing the center. It becomes the center of its own shit. This is the only center in occupiers.” (191)

The plural “we” of Martin’s assertion includes not only his understanding of Europeans, but also his understanding of transnational Americans. He straddles both perspectives that lambast America’s future as “irrelevant.” The “danger it brings” is the unknown consequences of the “war on terror.” That he deliberately chooses the word “occupies” speaks to the U.S. military occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq—without yet finding Osama bin Laden—three years after 9/11. For Martin/Ernst, the U.S. cannot both stand for democracy and occupy other countries; the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq negate the U.S. as a symbol of democracy.

Although Lianne does not explicitly respond to Martin’s assertions, another individual at the memorial service argues that America is not to blame. In challenging the legitimacy of Martin’s understanding of the U.S., the library director places blame for the country’s “central” position on Europe:

“If we occupy the center, it’s because you put us there. This is your true dilemma...Despite everything, we’re still America, you’re still Europe. You go to our movies, read our books, listen to our music, speak our language. How can you stop thinking about us? You see us and hear us all the time. Ask yourself. What comes after America?” (192)

This American’s response confirms what Martin views as the limitations of U.S. identity: Americans fail to consider how the world operates outside their perspective, how others view the U.S. Europeans may watch movies, listen to music, and read books from America, but this perspective forgets that Americans have their own hunger for international movies, music, and books. The suggestion that Europeans “speak our language” also forgets the history of the English language as an import into America and reinforces the stereotype of the American attempting to claim ownership of a language that has become not just transnational but also transcultural. Martin responds, seemingly speaking “to himself,” by denying recognition of “America”: “I don’t know this America anymore. I don’t recognize it...There’s an empty space where America used to be” (192-93). Martin/Ernst no longer recognizes the America that he allegedly sees and hears “all the time,” but he stops pressing the matter when the guests begin to leave. As the pair departs, Lianne understands that “she would never see [Martin] again,” causing her to contemplate his “secret,” his “mystery.” She finally realizes Martin/Ernst’s function: to make her realize that “U.S.” and “them” engage in terrorism: “Maybe he was a terrorist but he was one of ours, she thought, and the thought chilled her, shamed her—one of ours, which meant godless, Western, white” (195). Martin/Ernst disables the “with us or with the terrorists” rhetoric by exposing the West’s history of supporting terrorism,

allowing Lianne to implicate both “U.S.” and “them” as responsible for the cultural frameworks that facilitated the 9/11 events.

After “Bill Lawton” attacks the status quo in the media’s misrepresentation of Osama bin Laden and “Ernst Hechinger” exposes the misunderstanding of terrorism in post-9/11 U.S. public discourse, “David Janiak” proposes that aesthetics can overcome these limitations and provide a working through of 9/11. David Janiak is the name of Falling Man, the mysterious performance artist that Lianne sees throughout New York City. He first appears to Lianne at Grand Central Station near the exit to 42nd Street, an iconic New York City space (32). She notices his upside down position and suit attire, coupled with a “barely visible” safety harness, as directly evoking “those stark moments in the burning towers when people fell or were forced to jump” (33). The performance slows traffic and Lianne’s worldview; she describes his “awful openness” as “disturbing,” an emotion that sends her “back into the terminal” (33). After greeting her mother, Lianne leads her out another exit so she can shield their eyes from “the man who was upside down, in stationary fall, ten days after the planes” (34). This date of September 21 is not the Falling Man’s first appearance; Lianne had already “heard of him” and how he “appeared several times in the last week, unannounced, in various parts of the city” (33). That the Falling Man chooses to perform through the city speaks to engaging the entire New York City community, which had perhaps forgot about these falling images in the weeks after 9/11, as an audience.

The disappearance of these haunting images of individuals falling from World Trader Center towers from the public consciousness of 9/11 enabled them to be forgotten. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, newspaper editors faced a difficult impasse in



deciding whether or not to “run disturbing 9/11 photos” (Kratzer 25). Renee Martin Kratzer and Brian Kratzer define such disturbing images as “photographs that showed people trapped in the upper floors of the World Trade Center towers or jumping or falling from the towers” (27). In their study, the Kratzers observe that no newspaper published these images on the front page; instead, the images “all ran inside” (30). They conclude that newspaper editors, despite finding the images “disturbing,” decided to publish the pictures because “they added to the visual storytelling about what happened during and after the terrorist attacks” (35). However, these falling person images typically only ran once in the morning newspapers on September 12 and never again; the images that became, “by consensus, taboo” were quickly relegated “to the Internet underbelly” (Junod).<sup>30</sup> By performing Falling Man throughout New York City after the tower collapses, David Janiak attempts to reclaim these images from the media censorship of 9/11 and reinsert them into the public consciousness.

Falling Man does not appear again in the novel until several chapters later when, “thirty-six days after the planes,” he appears “to be coming out of nowhere” (170, 159). Lianne slowly recognizes his figure standing on overhead train tracks despite “no stations stop here, no ticket office or platform for passengers” nearby. As a crowd gathers around

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<sup>30</sup> Junod further describes the situation of media censored that permitted Richard Drew’s “Falling Man” photograph to appear only once: “Papers all over the country, from the *Fort-Worth Star-Telegram* to the *Memphis Commercial Appeal* to *The Denver Post*, were forced to defend themselves against charges that they exploited a man’s death, stripped him of his dignity, invaded his privacy, turned tragedy into leering pornography. Most letters of complaint stated the obvious: that someone seeing the picture had to know who it was.” However, as Junod’s “The Falling Man” piece relates, family members of World Trade Center victims often do not want to acknowledge the possibility of Drew’s subject as their loved one. Junod identifies several possible victims, but his essay closes with an emphasis on the photograph’s power of unidentified commemoration: “Richard Drew’s photograph is all we know of him, and yet all we know of him becomes a measure of what we know of ourselves. The picture is his cenotaph, and like the monuments dedicated to the memory of unknown soldiers everywhere, it asks that we look at it, and make one simple acknowledgement. That we have known who the Falling Man is all along.” The lack of a specific identity, similar to the *Maus* allusions in Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers* as a cartoon of anyone suffering from the trauma, is representative of everyone—save for nineteen individuals—that died on 9/11.

the corner, she realizes that “this is who he had to be” (160). However, while Falling Man prepares for his upcoming jump, Lianne still questions his reasoning, silently asking: “Why is he doing this” (160). His behavior, both in its temporal proximity to and direct evocation of 9/11, confuses Lianne. As representative of the New York mentality after 9/11, Lianne continues to criticize the Falling Man’s actions as “too near and deep, too personal” for comfort (163). She wishes that she were instead witnessing “some kind of antic street theater, an absurdist drama” (163). Her criticism particularly addresses Falling Man’s decision to perform “here and not somewhere else” (163). He typically performs “among crowds or at sites where crowds might quickly form,” but Lianne dismisses this present location as “strictly local circumstances” with only “some kids in a schoolyard,” “an old derelict,” and a “woman in a window” (163-64). As her anticipation for the upcoming jump grows, Lianne begins to understand the reason for this specific location:

Performance art, yes, but he wasn’t here to perform for those at street level or in the high windows. He was situated where he was, remote from station personnel and railroad police, waiting for a train to come, northbound, this is what he wanted, an audience in motion, passing scant yards from his standing figure. (164)

The choice of an “audience in motion” upsets received notions of performance art audiences as static, or at least not physically moving. Lianne postulates one possible motivation for this decision, for the people in the passing train “to spread the word [about his jump] this way, by cell phone, intimately, as in the towers and in the hijacked planes” (165). This potential avenue of communication deliberately extrapolates the experience

of 9/11 victims—the individuals who died either in the plane crashes or who were trapped in the World Trade Center towers—to another group of innocent bystanders. Lianne tries to use double consciousness to perceive how Falling Man may identify himself, but she considers that perhaps “she was dreaming his intentions” (165). Her decision to not talk to him, because conversation “was another plane of being, beyond reach,” constrains the truth of her interpretation (168). Falling Man’s identity and purpose continue to elude Lianne.

In re-presenting the images of the World Trade Center trauma, David Janiak attempts to reinscribe the defining image of 9/11 as an image of agency. As she questions “why was she standing here watching” him fall, Lianne explicitly connects this performance art to a personal referent: “She saw [her husband’s] friend, the one she’d met, or the other, maybe, or made him up and saw him, in a high window with smoke flowing out” (167). Lianne attempts to classify Falling Man’s movement as a decision to fall, but then, in thinking of her husband’s friend, she considers the alternative: “Jumps or falls” (168). The difference between the two verbs is a matter of agency, a tension I try to reproduce in the combined “jump-fall.” The Falling Man decides to jump from the train tracks, but his name suggests that the individuals trapped in the towers fell to their deaths—a suggestion that DeLillo seeks to overcome through Janiak’s agency. This process begins by exposing the two images David Janiak’s performances refer to: both the actual jump-falling persons who leaped from the towers on 9/11 and the reproduced images circulated in newspapers and online like the photographs by Richard Drew and David Surowiecki (Kratzer 28). While these respective pictures display “a man falling head first with his legs slightly apart” and “the falling bodies of three people” (Kratzer

28), Junod reminds his readers that these “photographs lie”: “The Falling Man in Richard Drew’s picture fell in the manner suggested by the photograph for only a fraction of a second, and then kept falling.” The pictures forever suspend the jump-falls, a suspension mirrored by Janiak’s inclusion of a safety harness in his performances. The fall “was not the worst” part of his performance for Lianne; the suspension is: “There was something awful about the stylized pose, body and limbs, his signature stroke” (168). Janiak projects art as a public reminder of the suspended reality of the jump-falling man images as he simultaneously incorporates the falling man imagery into a post-9/11 aesthetic consciousness.<sup>31</sup>

In “David Janiak,” Lianne finally discovers the identity behind “the performance artist known as Falling Man” by reading David Janiak’s obituary in a “newspaper that was six days old” (219, 218). The time lapse between publication and reception, coupled with the “brief and sketchy” life story that Lianne presumes was “written in haste to make a deadline,” leads her to “the computer in the next room” for an “advanced search” of him “in pictures and print” (219). The search results synthesize images from the iconic New York City locations of Janiak’s performances like Central Park West, the Queensboro Bridge, and a church in the Bronx with biographical details about his life including his study of “acting and dramaturgy” and his death at age 39, “apparently of natural causes” (220). Other results describe how the performances were planned improvisations, with “none announced in advance” (220). The pictures of Falling Man only exist because they “were taken by people who happened to be at the site or by a

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<sup>31</sup> For a more through discussion of art evoking the jump-falling bodies from the World Trade Center towers, see Laura Frost’s “Still Life: 9/11’s Falling Bodies.” Frost locates Junod’s discussion of Richard Drew’s “Falling Man” photograph and Don DeLillo’s Falling Man character among other representations, most notably Eric Fischl’s bronze sculpture *Tumbling Woman*.

professional alerted to the event by a passerby”—similar to both the first photographs of the 9/11 plane crashes and the pictures of the jump-falling people. Just as Drew happened to be in the vicinity of the World Trade Center with his camera, so too did Lianne and other witnesses to Falling Man happen to be near his performances.<sup>32</sup> That Janiak deliberately “had no comments to make to the media on any subject” speaks to his investment in the visible suspension of his performance art as a reinscription, and not a reproduction, of the jump-falling images.

Lianne attempts to understand the meaning behind Janiak’s Falling Man, drawing an explicit comparison between his suspended, upside down position with the “body position of a particular man who was photographed falling from the north tower of the World Trade Center, headfirst, arms at his sides, one leg bent, a man set forever in free fall against the looming background of the column panels in the tower” (221). Although not mentioned by name, this picture is likely Richard Drew’s “Falling Man” photograph.<sup>33</sup> Kristiaan Versluys picks up on this allusion, noting that *Falling Man*’s inclusion of Drew’s photograph is a symbolic stand in for “the dark underside of 9/11”

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<sup>32</sup> Tom Junod relates the circumstances of how Richard Drew’s “Falling Man” photograph was taken. Drew was “shooting a maternity fashion show in Bryant Park” when his “editor rang his cell phone” with news about the plane attacks, leading Drew to move to a location “where ambulances were gathering” so that he could start “shooting pictures through a 200mm lens” (Junod). Drew’s photograph would appear “in hundreds of newspapers, all over the country, all over the world”—and all over the Internet (Junod).

<sup>33</sup> Textual evidence supports this allusion to Drew’s photograph rather than other 9/11 jump-fall pictures. In her description of the photograph, Lianne emphasizes the picture’s “composition”: “The man headlong, the towers behind him. The mass of the towers filled the frame of the picture. The man falling, the towers contiguous, she thought, behind him. The enormous soaring lines, the vertical column stripes. The man with blood on his shirt, she thought, or burn marks, and the effect of the columns behind him, the composition, she thought, darker stripes for the nearer tower, the north, lighter for the other, and the mass, the immensity of it, and the man set almost precisely between the rows of darker and lighter stripes” (221-22) This visual language of the frame’s composition evokes Tom Junod’s own description of Drew’s photograph: “The man in the picture, by contrast, is perfectly vertical, and so is in accord with the lines of the buildings behind him. He splits them, bisects them: Everything to the left of him in the picture is the North Tower; everything to the right, the South. Though oblivious to the geometric balance he has achieved, he is the essential element in the creation of a new flag, a banner composed entirely of steel bars shining in the sun.” Both descriptions remark on the transcendent presence of the image, particularly the jump-falling person’s “precise” “bisection” of the two towers.

that the “mainstream media tried to crush” through its selective censorship (23).

However, because he dismisses the “transformative magic” of art in the 9/11 aftermath, Versluys limits Janiak’s performances as embodying “the repetition compulsion of the whole city” (30, 31). Instead, I want to argue that the nature of Falling Man as performance art within New York City enables Janiak to produce a working through of 9/11 that can appropriately locate its referents—the actual World Trade Center jump-fallers and subsequent images of them like Drew’s photograph—through double consciousness. Janiak challenges his audience to imagine themselves as one of the jump-falling persons on 9/11.

Janiak only engages the New York City audience, the local witnesses to the World Trade Center collapse. These improvised performances, with “plans for his final jump at some unforeseen future time [that] did not include a harness,” speak to Roma Patel’s discussion of how street theater can alter conceptions of public spaces: “Theatre interventions such as these can become a catalyst for ‘interrupting’ and re-animating the spectator-space interaction, for recapturing their attention and in so doing can reinvent their memories of public space” (177). Janiak directly evokes the jump-falling imagery in a new context—an aesthetic representation—to demand that his audience begin working through the World Trade Center trauma by “reinventing the memory” of New York City after 9/11. After Lianne unsuccessfully searches online for an image of Falling Man from “when she’d stood beneath the elevated tracks, nearly three years ago,” she realizes how Janiak’s aesthetics have transformed her agency, like the difference between fall and jump, from passive to active: “She was the photograph, the photosensitive surface. That nameless body coming down, this was hers to record and absorb” (223). Her

transformation into “the photosensitive surface” evokes Nina’s discussion of double consciousness as “the face in transition” (114). Lianne becomes like the camera, following Martin’s advice to “stand apart and think about the elements” as she makes herself “equal” to Janiak’s performance (42).

The two-part double consciousness aesthetic that builds throughout these parts of *Falling Man*, for both Lianne within the story and DeLillo in the novel’s project, culminates in the transcultural engagement with the other and the deconstruction of the systems of oppression through a reevaluation of the self. Lianne experiences her double consciousness—a culturally imposed identity—in her simultaneous participation in a “war on terror” protest and her recollection of a previous trip to Cairo. She reclaims her citizen identity in marching “against the war, the president, the policies” with “five hundred thousand others” (181). Not only does she walk “the entire route,” but Lianne also brings Justin along with her, exposing him to the possibilities of civic engagement (181). Although she expresses a “separation” from the crowd that “did not return to her a sense of belonging,” Lianne considers her presence necessary “for the kid” to enable him “to walk in the midst of dissent, to see and feel the argument against war and misrule” (182). Along the protest route, Justin takes a leaflet “from a woman in a black headscarf” and eventually comes to “rest in a tiny sumo squat” in order to sort “through his literature” (181, 183). Peering at these various papers, Lianne see “words in boldface, with explanations,” words like “Hajj” and “Shahadah,” which Justin reads aloud (183). As Justin recites a line, Lianne tells him that “it was Arabic, transliterated” (184). This “transliteration” signifies a growing cultural interest in Islam by Americans. With her son reading this literature on Islam, representing his transcultural engagement even as a ten-

year-old, Lianne recalls a graduation trip to Cairo. Among the crowds of Egypt, Lianne remembers feeling “a heightened sense of who she was in relation to the others” (184). She experiences the loss of identity agency as she goes behind the veil of double consciousness, “forced to see herself in the reflecting surface of the crowd”:

She became whatever they sent back to her. She became her face and features, her skin color, a white person, white her fundamental meaning, her state of being. This is who she was, not really but at the same time yes, exactly, why not. She was privileged, detached, self-involved, white. It was there in her face, educated, unknowing, scared. She felt all the bitter truth that stereotypes contain. (184-85)

The crowd of others defines Lianne by “her skin color,” applying the disabling “stereotype” of being “white”—or of being American—as “privileged, detached, [and] self-involved.” The past collides with the present in an uncomfortable doubling; Lianne feels compelled “to flee both crowds” (185).

This personal reflection carries into Lianne’s observations of responses to 9/11 by other Americans. Some time after the protest, she considers how “people were reading the Koran” (231). These people bridge the cultural understanding gap by buying “English-language editions of the Koran” in trying to “find something that might help them think more deeply into the question of Islam” (231). Contrasting her situation to the Koran’s translated opening line of “This book is not to be doubted,” Lianne admits that “she doubted things, she had her doubts” (231). As others are reading the Koran, she finds herself “going to church” (233). However, church does not effect “something godlike” but instead “a sense of others,” particularly the dead: “It was a comfort, feeling



their presence, the dead she'd loved and all the faceless others who'd filled a thousand churches. They brought intimacy and ease, the human ruins that lie in crypts and vaults or buried in churchyard plots" (234-34). Even though Lianne is not explicitly religious, this self-reflection challenges the core of her identity—an American. After an apparent moment of epiphany, "the kind of moment that is always only seconds from forgetting," Lianne asserts that she "was ready to be alone, in reliable calm, she and the kid, the way they were before the planes appeared that day, silver crossing blue" (236). Her narrative concludes with that final line of unresolved tension, which casts doubt on her ability to maintain "reliable calm" in the way "before the planes." Such a return to pre-9/11 disagrees with DeLillo's assertion of the counter-narrative response-ability to the World Trade Center collapses and would reinforce, rather than undermine, the cultural frameworks of "U.S. versus them" that *Falling Man*'s aesthetic seeks to deconstruct. Although she does not yet explore the connection, her path to begin working through the trauma effectively—to reevaluate the self from the perspective of the other post-9/11—becomes apparent: Lianne must visit Ground Zero to explore its "intimacy and ease" of "human ruins." Just as the 9/11 events began with a plane crash in New York City, so too must responses pay homage to the victims of the crashes by visiting these ruins not just of America, but also of transnational identity.

DeLillo fulfills the transcultural engagement of his double consciousness aesthetic in the three brief chapters of Hammad, a fictional representation of the terrorist hijackers.<sup>34</sup> This attempt to describe the hijacker perspective approaches the problematic

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<sup>34</sup> DeLillo's *Falling Man* follows several other texts that attempt to reconstruct the hijacker narrative. Lawrence Wright's *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* provides a two-fold narrative of the events leading up to 9/11 in tracing Osama bin Laden's rise to prominence in the 1990s and the subsequent response of the FBI counterterrorism unit. The specific events of all four plane crashes on 9/11

notion of speaking for others. In demanding that trauma must be spoken, Berel Lang remains cautious that one can and must determine the limits of representation when weighed against the possibilities of silence: “The question [is] of whether, in comparison with the voice heard in the representation being considered, silence itself would have been more accurate or truthful or morally responsive” (71). For the nineteen hijackers, no concrete testimony exists to provide an answer to questions of motive or means aside from the ambiguous “words of a handwritten letter found in the luggage of one of the hijackers” (“Ruins” 38). Silence yields no productive response. Instead of suspending identities with the unanswerable questions “Why?” and “How?” Linda Martín Alcoff suggests that, although one should strive to “the practice of speaking with and to,” the best option in some cases is speaking for others (128). DeLillo remains cognizant of this concern and limits his narrative accordingly. In projecting this terrorist narrative, he excludes quotation marks—signifiers of dialogue—so that his text functions as a possible narrative speaking “with and to,” rather than the narrative speaking “for,” the 9/11 terrorists. DeLillo follows Baudrillard’s advice that, in order “to gain some understanding” of 9/11, one must see “what goes on in the terrorists’ organization, and in their heads” (21). Hammad’s narrative consists of three separate sections, each of which describes a particular scene of the 9/11 planning: “On Marienstrasse” depicts the recruitment in Germany; “In Nokomis” details the flight training in Florida; and “In the Hudson Corridor” chronicles the last minutes leading up to and including the plane crash into the North Tower. The defining figure in Hammad’s acceptance of violent jihad is Amir, whose full name is “Mohamed Mohamed el-Amir el-Sayed Atta,” an allusion to

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are described in *Inside 9-11: What Really Happened*, edited by the staff of Germany’s *Der Spiegel* magazine. While these two texts try to approximate the truth as close as possible, *Falling Man* concerns itself with the psychology of a fictional terrorist.

9/11 terrorist Mohamed Atta (80). Amir's persuasive rhetoric, in its ability to coerce Hammad, represents a limitation to the possibilities of DeLillo's double consciousness.

Amir manipulates the veil of double consciousness to reinforce, rather than undermine, the "U.S. versus them" binary. The soon-to-be hijackers exploit this veil to their advantage, allowing them to plot while remaining "unseen" (172). When Hammad raises his final doubts about "the lives of the others he takes with him," Amir replies with indifference: "There are no others. The others exist only to the degree that they fill the role we have designed for them. This is their function as others. Those who will die have no claim to their lives outside the useful fact of their dying" (176). This "filling the role" directly mirrors the CIA intentions in funding al-Qaeda to "function as others" as described in the Introduction. However, Amir's discourse appears temporally pre-9/11, before the plane crashes lifted the veil. Hope remains that post-9/11 transcultural engagement could eliminate such a disabling misappropriation of double consciousness. Yet, *Falling Man* neither confirms nor denies this possibility. Although he explores the terrorist identities responsible for 9/11, DeLillo does not explore the non-American identities response-able to 9/11. Here, DeLillo declines to speak for the other because he realizes, through a "concrete analysis of the particular power relations and discursive effects involved," that to do so would unravel the projects of both "In the Ruins" and *Falling Man*: to allow the self, and not cultural frameworks, to define one's own identity (Alcoff 128).

This necessary limitation, while it may seem disappointing within *Falling Man*, expands the possibilities of the literature of 9/11. The unresolved double consciousness aesthetic, visible in the unclear future of Lianne and her family and the unarticulated

future of Hammad's culture's response to his actions, encourages a transcultural engagement from other artists to respond to 9/11. *Falling Man* does not complete the "counter-narrative" initiated in "In the Ruins." Instead, the novel advances the public discourse of 9/11 response-ability with a double consciousness aesthetic that demands self-identification while attacking culturally imposed identity. As examples of "writing trauma," Don DeLillo's "In the Ruins of the Future: Reflections on Terror and Loss in the Shadow of September" and *Falling Man* begin to address the effects of the 9/11 trauma—Hammad's planning, Martin's perspective, and Lianne's working through—on American and non-American identities.

## CODA

### This Iraqi Life: Glocalization and Double Consciousness in Praxis

People still like to believe the United States does actually stand for the values and principles it was founded upon. So, it's hard for them to face or to admit that it's not the case anymore or this has been changing and they need to do something about it.

—Haider Hamza, *This American Life*

Underlying the structure of *This American Life*, a radio program turned television series, is a simple premise that host Ira Glass explains near the start of every episode: “Each week on our show we choose a theme and bring you different kinds of stories on that theme.”<sup>35</sup> Of particular interest to this thesis is the first act of the episode titled “Two Wars,” the narrative of Haider Hamza’s summer of travel across the U.S., specifically the South and Midwest, in 2007. Hamza, who grew up in Baghdad, Iraq, under Saddam Hussein’s regime, earned a Fulbright scholarship to attend college in New York City (Yago).<sup>36</sup> After his first year of graduate study, he was eager to encounter U.S. civilians in favor of the U.S. invasion of Iraq to ask them a simple question: “Why are you for the war?” His New York City friends, denying their support for the war, encouraged him to seek out individuals in “the South and Midwest” to find an answer.

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<sup>35</sup> Quotations in this coda, unless cited otherwise, are from the “Two Wars” episode of *This American Life*.

<sup>36</sup> Producers of *This American Life* first introduced their audience to Haider Hamza on an episode of the radio program titled “Big Wide World.” In this episode, Hamza details how he worked for the Ministry of Information under Saddam Hussein to escort foreign media throughout Iraq. He describes this position as being a “diplomat,” an occupation during which he would “dress up the truth, and make it look nice, and make it friendly” (“Big Wide World”).

Accompanying Hamza on this journey was a film production crew of Showtime's *This American Life* series. This crew is responsible for suggesting the set for Hamza's casual conversations with regular Americans: a small, wooden booth, evoking Lucy's "Psychiatric Help 5¢" stand from *Peanuts*, complete with a nonthreatening invitation for dialogue: "Talk to an Iraqi." With nearby cameras recording the conversations, Hamza and passersby discuss a wide range of topics. This television episode, which includes both parts of these conversations and parts of Hamza's reflection interview after his journey, participates in the literature of 9/11 while presenting an alternative perspective of both Spiegelman's glocalization theme and DeLillo's double consciousness mode. By exposing how the dubious "Operation Iraqi Freedom" of March 2003 marginalized the Iraqi citizen identity through disabling cosmopolitan identities and imposing a double consciousness, Hamza participates in the Iraqi "counter-narrative" of post-9/11. He employs *This American Life* as a venue through which he can voice an Iraqi perspective encouraged by—yet noticeably absent from—other aesthetic responses to 9/11 like *In the Shadow of No Towers* and *Falling Man*.

Hamza expresses conflicted feelings about both U.S. culture and living in America. Born in Germany to an Iraqi diplomat, Hamza grew up across Europe and East Africa, a childhood of transcultural engagement that laid the foundation for his cosmopolitan identity in the future ("Haider Hamza"). His impressive English skills, which he attributes to "movies," imply an early recognition that English would be a valuable language to know. Before March 2003, Hamza escorted Western media throughout Baghdad, even introducing them to his family. However, the U.S. military

invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq traumatized his transcultural identity, reducing his enjoyment of U.S. culture to a feeling of shame:

Even after the Gulf War, even during the sanctions, it was cool to be a fan of the U.S. culture. Now, when I talk online with my friends, I kind of feel shamed, actually, of telling them I'm in the United States, for those who are still in Iraq, especially, because I feel that they will look at me differently. I am an Iraqi, right? And they are Americans. And America is at war with Iraq, so it is, in some level, having conversation with the enemy.<sup>37</sup>

That he feels his friends in Iraq will look at him “differently” for “having conversation with the enemy” disables Hamza’s identity as an Iraqi citizen living in the U.S. The U.S. invasion of Iraq, an Iraqi trauma justified as a necessary response to the American trauma of 9/11, dispossessed Hamza of his country; he became an “uprooted” cosmopolitan, an identity distinct from both Art Spiegelman’s “rooted” cosmopolitanism and Martin Ridnour’s place polygamy. For Hamza, remaining in Iraq under the military occupation was no longer a feasible option: “At some point I realized that it is more important to live for a cause than to die for one” (“Haider Hamza”). He is neither the only Iraqi nor the only member of his family to be dispossessed of Iraq, as he explains how the decision to leave effected his current family dynamic: “We left everything behind, we lost our business, we lost our jobs. Now, I’m living in New York, my sister lives in Baghdad, my brother is in Jordan, my parents are in Syria—and we consider ourselves to be the lucky ones.” Hamza’s narrative in “Two Wars” depicts only one example of what could be

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<sup>37</sup> I have deliberately avoided inserting brackets that would make Hamza’s speech pattern conform to U.S. grammar standards; this decision allows the quotations to preserve Hamza’s voice.

called the “Iraqi diaspora.” Yet, even after leaving Iraq, Hamza still proudly identifies himself as an Iraqi, demonstrated by the Iraqi flag taped to his booth and his wearing of a traditional black-and-white Iraqi scarf. Despite being dispossessed of his country and criticized by his friends who remain in Iraq, Hamza remains invested in his Iraqi roots.

However, as an Iraqi living in the U.S., Hamza experiences the “two-ness” of double consciousness in the imposition of his identity by U.S. culture. Various conversations with Americans in the television episode demonstrate how, rather than asking him questions so that he can voice his perspective, Americans project a predetermined opinion upon him: “People were telling me how life was under Saddam...They were telling me what’s good for the Iraqi people. They were telling me what the Iraqi people want.” Hamza feels “surprised” at this lack of open engagement from U.S. citizens, particularly considering his active interest and strong communication skills. While listening to these positions, he challenges the validity of suggestions that American soldiers are dying so that the Iraqi people can have freedom by revealing that the U.S. occupation has made Iraq not more safe, but more unsafe:

You can be at a traffic light and a car bomb goes off next to you. You can be driving and a military convoy shows out of nowhere and opens fire.

That’s what me as an Iraqi and what my family and all the Iraqis I know think: they used to think they used to live in hell, and now they say, ‘You know what? That was heaven in fact, and this is hell.’

The particular American in this conversation, convinced that the U.S. government and media project the true plight of the Iraqi people in need of “freedom,” replies without listening to Hamza’s perspective: “But you weren’t free.” Hamza takes particular issue



with this American obsession with “freedom” in the desire to provide Iraqis with freedom and the pre-occupation with protecting American freedoms.

This tension culminates in a conversation between Hamza and an American woman who supports President Bush’s war on terror. After she explains her primary reason for supporting him is that “he would do anything to protect this country,” Hamza asks: “Don’t you think that this is a bit selfish to say, ‘He’s going to do anything to protect our country,’ and you don’t care what happens anywhere else in the world?” The woman agrees that such a perspective is “extremely selfish,” but she is unable to explain how Iraqi civilians dying directly because of the U.S. military invasion protects American freedoms. This inability to answer—the recognition that there is no answer—is part of Hamza’s project to expose how the U.S.-projected Iraqi condition conflicts with the present situation. When asked by another American if anyone in Iraq feels “upbeat about now,” Hamza responds with a bleak evaluation: “No, not a single person feels good about it.” He recognizes that such a pessimistic answer is not what Americans want to hear, but to cave to this pressure would only reinforce the façade he wants to deconstruct. Haider Hamza, just like Spiegelman and DeLillo for 9/11, must speak the Iraqi trauma.

In the reflective interview, Hamza considers how his journey is just as “selfish” as the American citizens willing to protect their freedoms at the expense of marginalizing others. At the same time that he attempts to lift the veil from Americans ignorant of the real Iraqi dispossession by forcing them to consider how the invasion traumatized his identity, Hamza experiences his own lifting of the veil as he imagines himself as an unassuming American:

I thought it was just very selfish of me, like I'm the one who's just bringing bad news to all these people. Coming halfway around the world, in their peaceful, nice, quiet life, and ask them to worry because of what's happening over there. And I was just looking around and I was saying, 'You know what? Why would anyone with a life like this care about what I'm going through and my family is going through?' For a second I said, 'If that was my life, would I actually worry what's happening halfway around the world? I don't think so.' I don't think I would.

Through this reflection, Hamza recognizes a limitation of his criticism of the U.S., shifting blame from individuals to the dominant cultural frameworks projected by the U.S. government and American news media. Were he to be to be a "free" American, he hypothesizes that he likely would not "worry what's happening halfway around the world." However, not all Americans are unaware of the reality of the violent situation in occupied Iraq. Hamza discovers an unlikely group—the wives and daughters of soldiers—with whom he can share his constant worry about family members: "They know what it means to be away from your family; they know what it means to worry constantly about the safety of those you love. So, we had a lot in common, and I don't think I looked at it that way before I went and met them." He recognizes an irony of this connection: the only individuals who can begin to understand the effects of the traumatizing Iraq War on his consciousness as a dispossessed Iraqi civilian are the traumatized families of the military members actively engaged in the occupation of Iraq.

The individuals who converse with Hamza express a variety of positions about the continuing American occupation of Iraq. Notable among these conversations is a tense

dialogue in Savannah, Georgia, with Marine Michael Bizzoco, who “spent a year assigned to the Abu Gharib prison in Baghdad” (Matteucci). In their discussion of Iraqi civilian casualties, Bizzoco does not sympathize with the victims: “It’s war. It happens.” As Hamza presses Bizzoco on how he justifies the U.S. military invasion, their dialogue confirms an indifference to the Iraqi trauma felt by certain military members:

“By the end of the day, do you feel good about what you are doing?”

“Yeah.”

“You do?”

“I don’t feel bad.”

The “what” of this exchange is Bizzoco’s determination “to get rid of all of [the terrorists]” despite Hamza’s charge that the U.S. invasion of Iraq caused the deaths of “hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians.” The filmmakers decide to shift the story to another conversation after these comments, demanding that the audience consider whether they too “don’t feel bad” about the Iraq War. However, in this cut, the television narrative does not reveal that the producers had to step in to end the interview “after the dialogue between Bizzoco and Hamza grew heated” (Matteucci). The reconciliation between such opposed individuals requires mediation to ensure that conversation remains productive and not violent.

In contrast to this hostile interaction between American occupier and Iraqi dispossessed, Hamza’s conversation with Tori Allen, a homeschooled eleven-year-old from Fayetteville, North Carolina, projects hope of transcultural engagement by the next generation of America. After introducing herself, Allen quickly apologizes to Hamza, not for an act she personally committed, but rather for the U.S. military: “I’ve been waiting to

apologize to an Iraqi for the past three years. I'm sorry for the way we walked into your country acting like we owned it." In its placement after the tense conversation with Marine Bizzoco, Allen's apology works to undermine the passive indifference to traumatized and dispossessed Iraqi civilians felt by members of the U.S. military. While he appreciates the apology and reaches out to thank Allen, Hamza anticipates the young girl's conflicted perspective about the Iraq War: her father in the Army is currently stationed in Iraq. Her admission of worrying about her father's safety "everyday" concretizes a transcultural opposition to the Iraq War. In Hamza's attempt to remove the veil from Americans, individuals like Tori Allen remove the veil from his own eyes. Recognition of this connection opens up possibilities for a transcultural movement of both American and Iraqi citizens to undermine the ongoing U.S. occupation of Iraq by voicing their dissent—possibilities enabled by Hamza's investment in being a globalized journalist. Instead of capitalizing on his cultural celebrity from *This American Life*, Hamza, when requested to foster this cultural awareness in venues across the U.S., is said to donate half his earnings to "Iraq widows and orphans who were displaced by violence" ("Haider Hamza"). He is constantly mindful of his dual commitment to American and Iraqi audiences.

Just as Spiegelman and DeLillo demand that their readers recognize their response-ability, so too does Hamza's narrative in *This American Life* challenge viewers to participate in the Iraq War counter-narrative, itself a part of the 9/11 counter-narrative. This challenge manifests in the closing critique of the disjunction between American assumptions of the U.S. character and its transnational perception. Hamza notes that "it's not the case anymore" that the United States still stands for "the values and principles it

was found upon.” Still, in lamenting that this disjunction has emerged, he argues that Americans have the response-ability “to do something about it.” His narrative closes with an open invitation for such responses: “People have chose what they want to hear. They chose what they want to listen, which is what can make their life easier. Everybody hears what is easier for them to believe.” While he regrets that this history of selective awareness facilitated the American citizen’s ignorance of the Iraqi perspective, Hamza implores his audience to choose to listen to him—an Iraqi civilian—rather than accept artificial representations of the Iraqi identity. At the same time, he challenges his fellow Iraqis—whether they remain in Iraq or elsewhere—to follow his model for initiating this transcultural dialogue. Haider Hamza attempts to inspire his transnational audience to circumvent the disabling public discourse to discover their own voices, their own response-ability to 9/11 and the Iraq War.

Hamza’s counter-narrative puts pressure on the aesthetic response-ability of the literature of 9/11. While the footage of this episode was shot during the summer of 2007, “Two Wars” did not air on Showtime until May 11, 2008—timed to coincide with what Spiegelman would call America’s “pre-election political season” (*SONT* 2). However, Hamza does not campaign for either Republicans or Democrats; his political message is greater than either party. Instead, he campaigns within the U.S. for marginalized Iraqis so that American politics recognizes the trauma in Iraq. This counter-narrative still remains relevant almost two years later in the increasing cultural anxiety over the ongoing Iraq War. Yet, Hamza’s setting is not Iraq but the U.S. That his journey begins in Iraq—where the world tolerated the U.S.-led invasion—then goes to New York City—where the world watched the World Trade Center towers collapse—and finally takes him across multiple

U.S. geographies speaks to his identity as a glocalized journalist. This transcultural travel, first as the son of an Iraqi diplomat and then as a young adult, facilitates his development of a cosmopolitan perspective. At the same time, his willingness to share conversation with Americans, during both his booth experiences and his interview with *This American Life*, demonstrates his commitment to local engagement. Hamza's awareness of post-9/11 double consciousness allows him to undermine "U.S. versus them" by creating an awareness of the Iraqi perspective for his American audience while simultaneously creating a similar awareness of the American perspective for his Iraqi audience.

This double function reinscribes Hamza's "two-ness" as an opportunity for transcultural dialogue. Hamza's presentation of his glocalized identity in "Two Wars" complicates perceived notions of the literature of 9/11 by de-territorializing it from exclusively American, or at least Western, authors and texts. Current 9/11 literature scholarship, exemplified by Versluys' *Out of the Blue: September 11 and the Novel* and the Ann Keniston and Jeanne Follansbee Quinn-edited *Literature After 9/11*, preoccupies itself with 9/11 representations in U.S. texts, including Spiegelman's comix and DeLillo's novel, as well as Jonathan Safran Foer's *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* and John Updike's *Terrorist*.<sup>38</sup> However, perhaps fault for this limitation lies not with critics but with the lack of aesthetic responses to 9/11 from transcultural authors. By including Hamza's Iraqi counter-narrative as a topic of focus just as worthy of analysis as Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers* and DeLillo's *Falling Man*, this thesis

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<sup>38</sup> The notable exception to this predominantly U.S. production of 9/11 literature is Frenchman Frédéric Beigbeder's *Windows on the World*. However, this minute-by-minute fictionalization of a family trapped at the restaurant on the top floor of the North Tower on 9/11 limits its focus to this moment in U.S., albeit from a European author.

attempts to expand the future possibilities of the literature of 9/11 and its subsequent scholarship.

## APPENDIX A

“Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People”

President George W. Bush, September 20, 2001<sup>39</sup>

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.

We have seen it in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground—passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me to welcome his wife, Lisa Beamer, here tonight. (Applause.)

We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers, working past exhaustion. We have seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers—in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own.

My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our Union—and it is strong. (Applause.)

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done. (Applause.)

I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time. All of America

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<sup>39</sup> The formatting of this speech follows how it is appears on Yale University’s *Avalon Project* website.



was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol, singing "God Bless America." And you did more than sing; you acted, by delivering \$40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our military.

Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country. (Applause.)

And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support. America will never forget the sounds of our National Anthem playing at Buckingham Palace, on the streets of Paris, and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo. We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens. America has no truer friend than Great Britain. (Applause.) Once again, we are joined together in a great cause—so honored the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity of purpose with America. Thank you for coming, friend. (Applause.)

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars—but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war—but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known

surprise attacks—but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day—and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al-Qaeda. They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.

Al-Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world—and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics—a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children.

This group and its leader—a person named Osama bin Laden—are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

The leadership of al-Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al-Qaeda's vision for the world.

Afghanistan's people have been brutalized—many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan—after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid—but we condemn the Taliban regime. (Applause.) It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists. By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder.

And tonight, the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al-Qaeda who hide in your land. (Applause.) Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. (Applause.) Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. (Applause.) The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. (Applause.) The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them. (Applause.)

Our war on terror begins with al-Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated. (Applause.)

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms—our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way.

We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to

power—they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies. (Applause.)

Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.

This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. (Applause.) From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

Our nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities

affecting homeland security. These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me—the Office of Homeland Security.

And tonight I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend—Pennsylvania's Tom Ridge. (Applause.) He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows. (Applause.)

Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers. And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I've called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud. (Applause.)

This is not, however, just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded—with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the

attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.

The civilized world is rallying to America's side. They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror, unanswered, can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments. And you know what—we're not going to allow it. (Applause.)

Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat.

I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith. (Applause.)

I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, [libertyunites.org](http://libertyunites.org), to find the names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it.

I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a long struggle.

I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy. Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of our

people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and they are our strengths today. (Applause.)

And, finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for those in uniform, and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow, and will help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what you will do. And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together.

Tonight, we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights, and take new measures to prevent hijacking. We will come together to promote stability and keep our airlines flying, with direct assistance during this emergency. (Applause.)

We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home. (Applause.) We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans of terrorists before they act, and find them before they strike. (Applause.)

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy, and put our people back to work.

Tonight we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New Yorkers: Governor George Pataki, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. (Applause.) As a symbol of America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress, and these two leaders, to show the world that we will rebuild New York City. (Applause.)



After all that has just passed—all the lives taken, and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them—it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear. Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead, and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them. As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world. (Applause.)

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom—the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time—now depends on us. Our nation—this generation—will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail. (Applause.)

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came—where we were and what we were doing. Some will remember an image of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever.

And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial to her son. This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end. (Applause.)

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them. (Applause.)

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice—assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.

Thank you. (Applause.)

## APPENDIX B

T W E N T Y N O R M A L

SEPT. 10 SEPT. 11

**IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS**

REVEALED: 19TH CENTURY SOURCE FOR 21ST CENTURY'S DOMINANT METAPHOR!

**ETYMOLOGICAL**

CHIC: "Drop the Other Shoe"

SHHH!

Z Z Z Z

!@!!

DROP THE OTHER SHOE SO WE CAN GO TO SLEEP!!!

**SYNOPSIS:** In our last episode, as you might remember, the world ended...

My wife, my daughter and I are rushing from the bomb site. We hear a roar, like a waterfall, and look back. The air smells of death—

Those crumbling towers burned their way into every brain, but I live on the outskirts of Ground Zero and first saw it all live—unmediated.

Maybe it's just a question of scale. Even on a large TV, the towers aren't much bigger than, say, Dan Rather's head...

Logos, on the other hand, look **enormous** on television; it's a medium almost as well suited as comics for dealing in abstractions.

Many months have passed. It's time to move on... I guess I'm finally up to about September 20th.

I still see the glowing tower, *awesome* as it collapses—

**WAITING FOR THAT OTHER SHOE TO DROP**

Okay! Let's say it's **NOT** September anymore...

I'm hunched over the drawing table in my Lower Manhattan studio, with my fingers tightly crossed...

...It's hard to hold a pen this way...

I was sure we were going to die! I've always *sorta* suspected it, but that morning really convinced me...

**JIHAD BRAND FOOTWEAR®**  
All handmade materials.  
(Extra-large sizes only.)  
Available in finer shops near you!

(9/11/01-2/15/02)  
© 21st gregalwines—2002



**SYNOPSIS:**  
In our last episode, as you might remember, time stood still. And maybe it's just as well: last week the artist began describing his September 11th morning and only got up to about 9:15... Considering that it takes him at least a month to complete each page, he should've started this "weekly" series in September 1999 to get it all told by Judgment Day...

They raced to their daughter's school. His 2-pack-a-day habit wasn't great training for this sort of thing...

Towers in flames four blocks south.

NADJA!

:COFF

SHE'S HYSTERICAL! LET HER IN TIL SHE QUIETS DOWN.

:COFF

I remember my father trying to describe what the smoke in Auschwitz smelled like.

—The closest he got was calling me it "ar... indescribable."

—That's exactly what the air in Lower Manhattan smelled like after Sept. 11!

After the attack, Nadja's school became a rescue center. The kids were sent to another school.

Some parents were upset that their kids would miss some college prep classes! We were thrilled our kid was away from Ground Zero.

Asbestos, PCBs, mold, dioxins, and body parts.

Lower Manhattan's air is so toxic that it makes Love Canal seem like a health spa.

THERE ARE 3,000 KIDS IN HERE. WE'LL FIND YOUR DAUGHTER AND BRING HER DOWN!

NADJA?

They were the only parents allowed inside. Hysteria has its uses...

They couldn't see the maelstrom outside, but they could hear the guard's radio...

UN AEROPLANO ACABA DE ESTRELLARSE EN EL PENTÁGONO!

HUH?? WH-WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

WASHINGTON IN FLAMES

When I was Nadja's age, in 1945, I loved these Marx Brothers comedy published by TOPPS GUM, INC. Funny how things have not...

He figured the Martians had invaded, that Paris was burning and Moscow was vaporized. His wife stayed more focused.

ATTENTION!!!

NAD-

WAIT! THE PRINCIPAL IS FINALLY MAKING AN ANNOUNCEMENT!

ATTENTION... DUE TO TODAY'S UNUSUAL CONDITIONS... ABSOLUTELY NO STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED OUTSIDE FOR LUNCH!

It was hard for puny human brains to assimilate genuinely new information... and it remains just as hard now, these many months later...

NYC TO KIDS: DON'T BREATHE!

I even designed a poster... but some parents plastered my poster for being too shrill.

Our government has been lying about the air quality, at course.

I didn't want Nadja to go back to that school. And the laws in there and says I'm just paranoid!

I am, of course! I mean all this has gotten me so angry I smoke more than ever now.

They never even cleaned the air ducts in Nadja's school, so I helped set up a protest at City Hall...

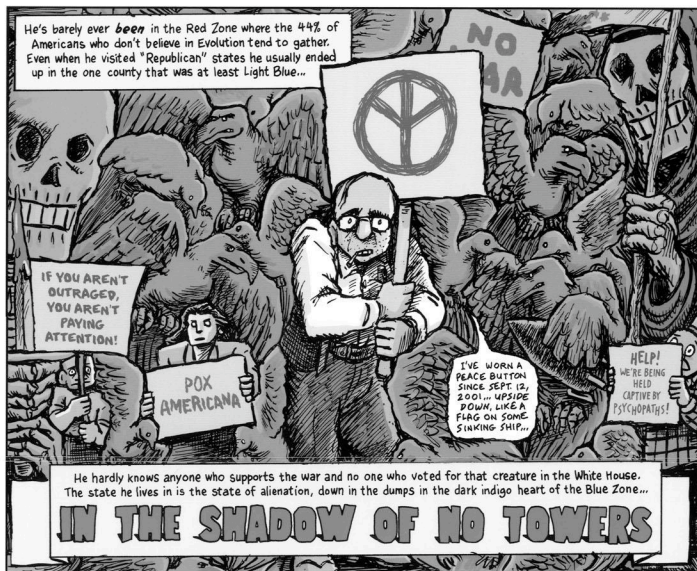
I'm not even sure I'll live long enough for a cigarette... so tell me: :coff! coff! :

© art Spiegelman—2002 15/20-7/11/02



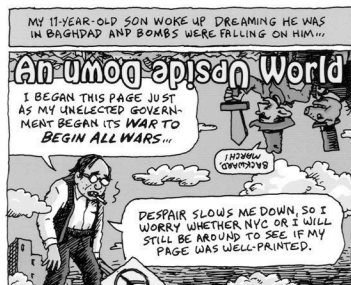


The stars & stripes are a symbol of unity that many people see as a war banner. The detailed county-by-county map of the 2000 election—the one that put the loser in office—made it clear that we're actually a nation **UNDER TWO FLAGS!**



He hardly knows anyone who supports the war and no one who voted for that creature in the White House. The state he lives in is the state of alienation, down in the dumps in the dark indigo heart of the Blue Zone...

## IN THE SHADOW OF NO TOWERS



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# In the Shadow of No Towers



Weather Forecast: **SHOWERS.**  
**First Where Best Known.**  
 The American News Company's  
 City circulation is less of the  
 greater than that of any other  
 See Auction Sales, page 12.

**THE WORLD**

**NEW ATTACK "A MATTER OF TIME"**  
 NY Post 5/27/02  
**ANTI ARAB ASSAULTS SURGE HERE**  
 NY Post 9/21/01

**HALLIBURTON OUT OF THE RUNNING**  
 DICK CHENEY'S FORMER EMPLOYER WON'T  
 HAVE LEAD ROLE IN RECONSTRUCTING IRAQ  
 CNN 23/03

**PRESIDENT'S WOUND REOPENED: SLIGHTLY WORSE**  
**"FIRE! THE WORLD TRADE CENTER IS ON FIRE!"**  
 Time 9/11/01  
**EMMA GOLDMANN CHARGED WITH CONSPIRACY**  
 HIJACKED JETS HIT TWIN TOWERS AND  
 HIT PENTAGON IN DAY OF TERROR  
 Caught Hiding NY Times 9/11/01  
 Taken to Police  
 Warrant Is LIVE IMAGES MAKE  
 ing Her of VIEWERS WITNESSES  
 dent McKinley TO HORROR  
 VEHEMENTLY DENY THAT SHE INSPIRED COLLECTOR  
 NY Times 9/11/01  
 Anarchist Queen, Dick Cheney and Then C  
 tailed State the Last Tw

**TALIBAN IN TEXAS FOR TALKS ON GAS PIPELINE**  
 THE 1,300KM PIPELINE WILL CARRY GAS  
 ACROSS AFGHANISTAN'S HARSH TERRAIN  
 BBC 12/4/97

**WANTED: DEAD OR ALIVE—BUSH CALLS FOR BIN LADEN'S HEAD**  
 NY Post 9/18/01

**THE AGE OF IRONY COMES TO AN END**  
 Time 9/24/01

**RADIO WARMS AFGHANS OVER FOOD PARCELS**  
 DO NOT CONFUSE THE CYLINDER-SHAPED  
 BOMB WITH THE RECTANGULAR FOOD BAG  
 BBC 10/28/01

**STORY OF THE LIFE OF ANARCHIST QUEEN**  
**BIN LADEN USES 10 LOOKALIKES TO FOIL HUNT**  
 Reuters 11/17/01

**BIN LADEN'S VEGAS VIDEO! HIGH STAKES, HOOKERS AND HUMMUS**  
 Weekly World News 12/31/01

**FORGET OSAMA, SAYS BUSH BUT LOOK OUT, SADDAM**  
 AP 3/14/02

**WAR IS HELL (ON YOUR CIVIL LIBERTIES)**  
 Time 11/15/01  
**IN NY, TAKING A BREATH OF FEAR**  
 ILLNESSES BRING NEW DOUBTS ABOUT  
 TOXIC EXPOSURE NEAR GROUND ZERO  
 Wash. Post 1/8/02  
**NEW YORK CITY SMOKING BAN SMELLS SWEET TO NEW JERSEY BAR OWNERS**  
 Knight-Ridder/Tribune 2/2/03

**TRAUMATIC MOMENTS END, BUT REMINDERS STILL LINGER**  
 NY Times 11/6/01

**THREE-QUARTERS OF AMERICANS SURVEYED SAID THEY FLEW FLAG AFTER SEPT. 11**  
 AP 7/3/02

**MUSLIMS SAY THEY'RE AVOIDING JULY FOURTH EVENTS OUT OF FEAR OF BEING MISTAKEN FOR TERRORISTS**  
 AP 7/4/02

**PROHIBITED WEAPONS; ILLICIT ARMS KEPT TILL EVE OF WAR, AN IRAQI SCIENTIST IS SAID TO ASSERT**  
 NY Times 4/21/03

**BUSH, BLAIR AND THE "EUROWIMPS" S**  
 Time 4/8/02

**PROTESTS; 1.5 MILLION DEMONSTRATORS IN CITIES ACROSS EUROPE OPPOSE A WAR AGAINST IRAQ**  
 NY Times 2/16/03

**BUSH KNOWS ABOUT THE S**  
 NY Daily News 5/2/03

**BEWARE THE BREFCASE BOMB**  
 NY Post 7/12/03

**PENTAGON OPENS CRIMINAL INQUIRY OF HALLIBURTON PRICING**  
 NY Times 12/24/04

**NEW YORK TIMES IN SHOCK AS REPORTER'S LIES ARE UNCOVERED**  
 The Guardian 1/12/03

**THE TRUTH WILL BE AS ELUSIVE AS SADDAM**  
 The Guardian 7/6/03

**MILLER TIME (AGAIN)**  
 THE NEW YORK TIMES OWE READERS AN EXPLANATION  
 FOR JUDITH MILLER'S FAULY WMD REPORTING  
 Slate 2/2/04

**WEAPONS O' MASS DISAPPEARANCE**  
 Time 6/0/03

**EDGY CITY MOVES TO ORANGE**  
 NY Post 2/23/03

**SODA SPILL ON LOBBY FLOOR OF FBI CAUSES COMMOTION**  
 The Oklahoman 2/12/03

**HOT OFF THE PRESSES: OLD NEWS! AFTER THE PAINFUL HEADLINES OF 9/11, DURING 2002 WE WANTED STORIES NICE AND STALE**  
 Time 12/3/02

**A TERROR WARNING FOR N.Y. AND D.C. TERROR KINGPIN SAMA BIN LADEN MAY BE PREPARING TO BOMB NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON**  
 NY Daily News 12/14/98

**BRITNEY VIDEO SHOCKER**  
 POP-ART SHELVES PLAN TO ACT OUT SUICIDE  
 NY Daily News

Weather Forecast: **SHOWERS.**  
**A ? and the Answer.**  
 1,410 employees advertised for help in The World yesterday. The next highest paper carried only 516.  
 Even so, the difference which is the great home paper of New York City?  
 See Auction Sales, page 12.

When the operation was done on Friday last it was noted that the bullet had carried with it a short piece beneath the skin a fragment of the President's coat, carried into the wound by the bullet, but they De-  
 re Patient's Condition Is Un-  
 changed in All Important Particulars.

**PATIENT TAKES FOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME.**  
 Dr. McBurney Had Planned to Leave for New York Last Night, but He Postpones His De-  
 parture and Takes Part in a Consultation of Surgeons that Lasts for Two Hours—Latest  
 eration Will Delay Healing of Wound.

**LATEST OFFICIAL BULLETIN.**  
 MILBURN HOUSE, BUFFALO, Sept. 10.—To 30 P. M.—The condition of the President is unchanged in all important particulars. His temperature is 100.0; pulse, 114; respiration, 28.  
 When the operation was done on Friday last it was noted that the bullet had carried with it a short piece beneath the skin a fragment of the President's coat, carried into the wound by the bullet, but they De-  
 re Patient's Condition Is Un-  
 changed in All Important Particulars.

It has been necessary on account of this slight disturbance to remove a few stitches and partially open the skin wound.  
 This incident cannot give rise to other complications, but it is communicated to the public, as the surgeons in attendance wish to make their bulletins entirely frank.  
 In consequence of this separation of the edges of the surface wound the healing of the same will be somewhat delayed.  
 The President is now well enough to begin to discontinue the use of the mouth in the form of pure beef juice.  
 (Signed)  
 P. H. RIXEY,  
 M. D. MANN,  
 ROSWELL PARK,  
 HERMAN MYNTER,  
 CHARLES MCBURNEY,  
 GEORGE B. CORTELYOU,  
 Secretary to the President.

(Reprinted in The World.)  
 BUFFALO, Sept. 10.—The bulletin issued at 10:30 P. M. today shows marked improvement.  
 It was known that something unusual had occurred when the customary evening bulletin did not make its appearance and the consultation of the surgeons was held.  
 It was there, having decided to postpone his departure, and that he may not leave Buffalo before Wednesday or Thursday.  
 The President's physicians left the house they declared that no unusual conditions were noted.  
 It was noted that a dressing desired by the President was not to the order, and it was necessary to send for it. The time the messenger returned he did not bring what was needed and was sent back.  
 NO OTHER COMPLICATIONS  
 The surgeons were so glad all superstitions by the public statement that the bullet wound gave rise to OTHER complications. They say the wound will be so slightly delayed the healing of the wound.  
 The patient acted, essentially, that Mr. McKinley had been able to take a little food for the first time he has taken food in the normal way for some time.  
 The President's brother, Albert McKinley, was in the house while the President was at work. With him were Secretary of War Root, Secretary of the Navy, John D. Wilson and Harry Hamilton, who has been entertaining the President.  
 In connection with tonight's developments it is explained that the removal of the outer wound did not affect the two inner wounds, one in the back, from which the President is suffering.  
 Early in the week, it was added, was healthier.  
 At 10 A. M. today Mr. McKinley hurried over to the great tent with Mr. Hamilton and declared that no alarm need be felt.  
 "There is no activity in the house," said Mr. Hamilton. "Tonight the doctors found some inflammation in the wound and took three or four stitches out of the incision. They wanted it and sent for new dressings."  
 "With the last bullet in the back, no great importance need be attached to it. No anxiety need be felt on its account. The bullet was simply intended to get the facts frankly before the public. We are not alarmed at the house."  
 "I am assured," said Mr. Cortelyou, in reply to further questions "that

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