Remembering the Iraq War: The Rhetoric of Public Memory and the Memory of Publics

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ABSTRACT

Although scholars have widely acknowledged the fact that public memory is a partisan and contested phenomenon, little work has been done to identify the processes by which groups engage in this contest over the meaning of the past and how public memory can seem to "shift" over time as different sets of views about the past dominate at different times. By calling on Warner's view of publics and scholarship from political communication on framing, public opinion, and attitude influence, I extend theories of public memory to demonstrate the ways in which discourse constitutes publics and gains its impact on "public consciousness" through circulation in more and more prominent texts. When a set of ideas becomes visible and appears to be in ascension or even appears to be dominant for more people, those ideas seem to represent *the* public opinion or *the* public memory, implying that this view is held by the majority, all, or typical members of society. Of course, there is never consensus in the diverse public sphere, and so in this research I take the position that it is more useful to think of public memory as "the memory of publics" in order to highlight the ways there are multiple groups composed of individuals united by their shared views of the past. Public memory in this sense is a contest between groups constituted by circulating discourse, and it is this discourse that public memory scholars study, not to merely identify what given texts say or do, but also to examine how they help constitute publics vying for influence in the public sphere.

In this dissertation, I analyze representations of the Iraq War beginning with texts produced while the war was still in its early stages to gain a sense of how these texts and their underlying discourses were and are circulated to influence the dominant public memory. This allows me to look at how not just traditional commemorative texts play a role in public memory, but also how news media representations—namely, photographs—produced immediately following events initiated the discourse over which, and through which, publics compete. By attending to evidence of reception and recirculation of such texts, I am able to see how individuals and groups engage in the discursive competition over public memory through online discussions and new media, through film, and through public protests. Examining the connections between these various media and discursive modes presents a picture of public memory formed by a

web of texts across diverse levels of discourse as publics compete to make their ideas about the war prominent and ultimately dominant in the larger public discourse. In this model, it is not enough that texts are produced representing the war. Public memory is constructed by the individuals who take up the ideas in these texts and pass those ideas around when they reproduce or redistribute those texts or produce new ones.

I argue that the public memory of the Iraq War has been dominated by publics critical of the Bush Administration as they have been able to respond to events and produce durable, potentially far-reaching texts that made their critiques seem like the "natural" or authentic evaluation of the war. This discursive model of public memory formation accounts not only for how a dominant public memory is formed but also how it is subject to change as competing publics rise in prominence and gain legitimacy for their counter-framing of the past. In order to maintain this position, groups must continue to circulate critical discourse through various texts reaching even those individuals and audiences who have little interest in following politics. This process ensures that references to the Iraq War as a failure of the Bush Administration are received more readily than references to the war as a successful foreign policy endeavor. In this sense, I present public memory as not only a resource for building relations among strangers but as a figurative archive of ideas, images, narratives, and evaluations of events about the past that serves as an inventional resource for subsequent rhetoric. In this research, then, I demonstrate how the struggle over public memory is a process by which circulating texts help make particular ideas appear most legitimate and particular publics appear dominant in public discourse.

1. Introduction

After Vietnam, the American people couldn't bear to see another bloody conflict that left tens of thousands of American soldiers dead and hundreds of thousands haunted by their memories of war. This was the prevailing notion, anyway. On the campaign trail in 1980, Ronald Reagan (1980) lamented the curse of the so-called "Vietnam Syndrome," the memory of Vietnam which he saw as a source of weakness of resolve in the American public who had lost the propaganda war to the North Vietnamese. As a consequence, after the election, Reagan was unable to muster public support for war in Nicaragua (Goodnight, 1996). Reagan's successor, on the other hand, was able to declare the Vietnam Syndrome finally cured by the "clean war" in the Persian Gulf.[1] The "clean war," of course, was the illusion of a bloodless war fought remotely by "smart bombs" that could destroy buildings from a safe distance. It meant that the U.S. could flex its military muscle without sending young soldiers into harm's way. Again, this was the prevailing notion. As Stahl noted, however, the war was hardly bloodless for Iraqis, with the number of deaths somewhere in the range of 50,000 to 150,000 (Stahl, 2009, p. 26). The inevitable price of war is suffering, and yet the disease of the Vietnam Syndrome was declared to be cured not by preventing suffering but by erasing that suffering, by showing on television the spectacle of smart bombs[2] that made quick work of the dirty business of war from a safe and unseeing distance, with not a bloody civilian in sight or a single naked girl running down the road after being napalmed.

When George W. Bush got his chance to lead the country into war, it was managed much the same way—that is, as a war of images and a war of erasure. The 1991 ban on photographing soldiers' caskets arriving in the U.S. was still in place, and although the restrictions on in-country press access were far more relaxed than in 1991, the practice of embedding journalists would ensure coverage slanted in favor of the military's perspective (Artz, 2004; Kellner, 2004; King & Lester, 2005; Pfau et al.,

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[1] See Stahl's (pp. 21-22) discussion of the Vietnam Syndrome and the Persian Gulf War.
[2] The use of smart bombs and surgical strikes shown by Generals Norman Schwarzkopf and Colin Powell in their television presentations seems to have been overstated since 91.2% of the bombs used in the war were so-called "dumb bombs" with a 25% accuracy rate (Human Rights Watch, 1991, p. 5). This translated to thousands of civilian casualties as a direct result of combat, especially in cities and towns outside of Baghdad.

2005). As a consequence, U.S. media showed little death or injury in the initial five weeks of combat (Fahmy & Kim, 2008; Silcock, Schwalbe, & Keith, 2008).[3] Beyond the absence of casualties from the media, however, there was also a conspicuous absence of something else. The Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) that had been the basis of the justification for the war were never found. In fact, the Bush Administration reportedly devoted little effort and few personnel to finding WMDs or even securing known nuclear facilities, facts which led commentators to conclude that Bush did not really believe in their existence, much less fear Saddam Hussein would deploy them or let them get into the hands of terrorists (Corn, 2003, p. 322). To frustrate matters even more, Bush denied that WMDs had been the reason for the war in the first place. The reason all along, he claimed, had been to bring democracy to the region, or it had been to remove a ruthless dictator from power. That being the case, the war appeared to have been won on April 9th 2003 with Hussein's abdication of power and the fall of Baghdad, complete with stage-managed photo-ops organized to make up for the lack of jubilance among Iraqi citizens.[4] Bush seemed to officially declare an end to the war three weeks later amidst the spectacle of his landing in a fighter jet on the deck of the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln just off the coast of southern California. The spectacle, in fact, was so thoroughly staged that the press had to be positioned just right, and the course of the ship had to be adjusted to ensure that photographers did not catch the California coastline in the background, thus spoiling the premise that Bush had taken the jet by necessity because the Lincoln was too far from shore to be reached by helicopter (Schill, 2009, pp. vii-viii).

Add to this obstruction of reality the fact that, in the absence of a draft, few Americans had their lives disrupted by the war, and many did not even know anyone

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[3] Fahmy & Kim (2008) offer somewhat contradictory numbers, at first indicating that as many as one in five photographs in the New York Times the UK Guardian depicted the loss of civilian lives (p. 455), and yet their tables presenting the data seem to indicate that 21% of the photographs actually depicted "civilian life," while only 2.6% showed Iraqi "civilian casualties" (p. 452). In any case, American casualties are much less common in this coverage, appearing in only 2% of images (p. 452).
[4] According to Aday, Cluverius, & Livingston (2005), the media event of the fall of the statue of Saddam Hussein on April 9th was framed by the press as victory and even led to a decrease in coverage of the war in the following weeks despite continued fighting and mounting casualties.

who was fighting in it.[5] There was no rationing of resources, no victory gardens or pitching in, not even a War Bonds drive or even a tax increase to pay for the war. For most Americans, the war was something that happened in the distant background and required little if any attention. How, then, is the Iraq War to be remembered when so much of the politics surrounding it has been about erasure?

The research presented in this dissertation examines representations of the Iraq War in various media between 2003 and 2012 and evidence of reception of these representations in online discussions and other forms of response. The analysis draws on scholarship in rhetoric and public culture,[6] especially Warner's (2002) theory of publics and research on rhetoric and public memory such as that of Blair and colleagues (Blair, 1999, 2006; Blair & Michel, 1999) and Hariman & Lucaites (2007) to gain insight into the ways texts help to circulate the discourse of public memory that calls publics into being. In the process, I explore links between elite discourse, news media, entertainment media, online discussions, and public protest to gain a view of the competing discourses of the Iraq War across multiple types of media and various strata of the political culture. In sum, I argue that public memory of the Iraq War is formed through a competition among publics through various media and modes of address to influence the meaning of the war in the larger discourse. In response to the politics and the events of the war, a critical public has been able to achieve an apparent dominance for their view that Iraq was a political failure and a needless source of suffering for members of the U.S. military and Iraqi civilians to be blamed on the Bush Administration. However, this view is by no means permanent, and so the critical discourse must be maintained through the continual circulation of new and old texts and must be responsive to new events and changing political conditions.

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[5] Only about .5% of the American public has served in the military during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the lowest percentage of any war in the nation's history. By comparison, 9% of the citizenry served in the military during World War II (Pew Research Center for Social and Demographic Trends, 2011, p. 14).
[6] The concept of public culture here is derived from Hariman & Lucaites (2007), who wrote that "Public culture includes oratory, posters, print journalism, literary and other artistic works, documentary films, and other media as they are used to define audiences as citizens, uphold norms of political representation and institutional transparency, and promote the general welfare" (p. 16).

1.1   The Memory of Publics

There are, of course, different types of memory that may be drawn on by different people in remembering the Iraq War. For example, veterans themselves will rely on their individual, personal memories of their experiences in the war. There is also social memory formed by small groups telling stories about their experiences of the war. However, it is another type of memory, public memory, which is of greatest concern here. Answering the question of how the Iraq War will be remembered in public memory begins with a consideration of how the war has been represented in the mass media. It is these public texts that mediate the experience and help those who have not had direct experience gain an understanding of the war.[7]

Halbwachs (1925/1980) famously asserted that remembering the past is not solely the work of isolated individuals, but is rather a social, collective endeavor in which individuals interact with each other in co-remembering shared experiences. This was a divergence from Freud's previously prevailing theory that memory was housed in the individual unconscious (Sturken, 1997, pp. 3-4), and it opened the door for a wealth of scholarship on collective memory and its cultural implications. Nora (1989) extended Halwachs's notion of memory mediated by cultural practices and interaction, arguing that the loss of "real memory" in the move away from ritualized peasant cultures meant that it had been replaced with a memory that, he claimed, "relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image" (p. 13). For Nora, then, modern memory relied on literal archives which stored physical artifacts to remind the people of the past. One may think of this kind of archiving in the well-known quotation from Albert Einstein, who once said, "I don't burden my memory with such facts that I can easily find in any textbook" (Frank, Rosen, & Kusaka, 1947, p. 185). In this way, it may be said that individual memory has been "outsourced" to physical archives that individuals need only access in order to "remember."

However, when one pays attention to the texts that constitute this archive of collective memory, especially their materiality, and the ways in which people interact

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[7] Sturken (1997), in fact, has argued that these mediation also impact the memories of those who experienced events. See also Landsberg (2004), whose work on "prosthetic memories" describes the ways in which media texts help produce felt memories of events not actually experienced by viewers.

with them, it becomes apparent that it is not the physical archive that really makes up public memory as much as the figurative archive, the content originating in these texts but stored in a more ephemeral circulating discourse among publics. For example, although the U.S. Constitution is a physical document stored in the National Archives, it is not this original copy of the document that matters in the political culture. Instead, it is the ideas that were initially set down there that matter, and these ideas are spread by countless other texts throughout the culture, constantly debated and reinterpreted in an ongoing process of constructing American political culture.[8] For this reason, it is necessary in a study of public memory to attend to the materiality as defined by Blair (1999) as not just the physical form of the original—such as the layout of a memorial, which can influence the ways viewers interact with the text—but also its durability, reproducibility, and the processes by which it takes on new forms and new meanings. As texts are translated into new forms, the ideas in them become detached from their original materiality, drifting, as Casey (2004) put it, into "an encircling horizon" (p. 25) in the consciousness of a public. The ideas presented in texts can move not only freely into new forms in new texts, but also into a more abstract kind of public consciousness, where groups are united by their shared understandings of events of the past. For Casey, this shared consciousness is a resource for publics, waiting on the horizon "to be invoked" (p. 29). In other words, public memory in this conception is a figurative archive that grows from the discourse initially circulated in usually physical texts until they become assimilated into a group's shared understanding of the past.

In this dissertation, therefore, I take public memory to be a figurative archive of ideas, images, narratives, facts, and judgments of events from the past that are available for reference in arguments circulating among publics. It is through this archive that events become a "usable past" (Huyssen, 2000, p. 18; Winter, 2006, p. 18), or in

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[8] If, for example, that document were destroyed, it would have no impact on the memory of its contents because they have been thoroughly circulated in other forms. However, the materiality is not insignificant since the recording of these ideas on paper allowed them to spread more easily and be preserved until copies were made. Further, the reverent treatment of the original can be said to serve some ritual purpose in the remembrance of the nation's origins. Eisenstein's discussion of "the preservative powers of print" addressed these matters quite directly, noting Jefferson's view of the need to preserve documents not through the protection of the original copies by through "a multiplication of printed copies" (2005, p. 80) to protect against fire and damage.

rhetorical terms, an inventional resource,[9] with a more or less stable meaning that can be deployed in making sense of the past and the present, a meaning that is stable at least for the rhetor and ideal audience of a particular message. I am interested in the processes by which groups form this figurative archive, how they expand their influence over the political culture by making their judgments of the past seem dominant to more people, and how they can be said to remember together and form collective identity by circulating the discourse that affirms their given sets of views.

Phillips (2004) noted that public memory may be considered in two ways, as "the public-ness of memory" and "the memory of publics" (p. 3). The former refers to remembrances that occur "in view of others" (p. 6)—that is, memories *in* public. However, the latter is of greatest interest here because in focusing on the memories *of* publics, in the plural, it invokes the image of the public sphere as composed of multiple groups vying for influence in a terrain of shifting identities, competing within the realm of public discourse and memory. This research takes the notion of publics at the center of this form of memory from Warner (2002), who argued that a public is a "self-organized" (p. 68) "relation among strangers" (p. 72), "constituted through mere attention" (p. 87) by "the reflexive circulation of discourse" (p. 90) that "is both personal and impersonal" (p. 76). Different discourses on the Iraq War, then, circulate among different publics that are constituted not by their preexisting identification but by the discourse that members of the public create and pass-on, discourse that "speaks" to the individuals in the group and calls them to identify with the views it expresses.

Warner's (2002) view is significant for a study public memory of the Iraq War for several reasons. First, it helps to identify the existence of multiple publics in competition for influence of the dominant meanings attached to the war in public discourse. The members of these groups are united by their shared set of ideas and judgments about the war, and it is the discourse about these events that serves as the site of their struggle to attain prominence and even dominance in the public sphere. Although Hariman & Lucaites's (2007) work on iconic images was informed by Warner's concept of publics as relations among strangers and sites of reflexive

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[9] An "inventional resource" here is simply some form of cultural meaning that can be called on by rhetors constructing arguments. In other words, it is a resource for inventing arguments.

circulation of discourse, they were not explicit in their attention to uptake[10] and appropriation that the reappearance of iconic imagery in public culture is the evidence of particular publics' continued influence over time to keep the images relevant as shared references. Kubal (2008), on the other hand, attended to the struggle between groups for influence on public memory, but he was more interested in groups formed by preexisting identities such as ethnic groups, rather than those constituted by the very discourse that serves as the site of competition found in Warner. This is a crucial point in public memory scholarship because it helps understand how given views come to appear dominant, not by groups arguing for those outside their group to see the past according to their view. Instead, publics invite others to be integrated into the group, united by the view that appears to be the "natural" way of remembering the past when they become used to seeing it repeated in multiple texts, even across various levels of discourse.

The second way Warner's (2002) view of publics is significant in the study of public memory is that he draws attention to the fact that a public, and therefore I argue the memory of a public, is constructed by a web of interrelated texts. He wrote:

> No single text can create a public. Nor can a single voice, a single genre, even a single medium. All are insufficient to create the kind of reflexivity that we call a public, since a public is understood to be an ongoing space of encounter for discourse. Not texts themselves create publics, but the concatenation of texts through time (p. 90)

To examine public memory as the memory of publics, then, it is necessary to analyze not just one text, or even a few texts, but to see those texts as mere fragments of the larger discourse of which they are a part. While various scholars of public memory have addressed multiple levels of discourse,[11] especially in paying attention to reception (Biesecker, 2002, 2004; Hariman & Lucaites, 2007; Hasian, 2001; Haskins, 2011), not enough attention has been paid specifically to the connection between various media and levels of discourse in the process of creating the memory of publics. In response to this

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[10] For Warner (2002), "publics are only realized through active uptake" (p. 87).
[11] "Levels" here can refer to different media, especially those that are seen to occupy different positions in the public culture. For example, the discourse of the news media is generally seen as holding a more respectable position than entertainment media such as television situation comedies or popular films. One argument in this dissertation is that these "levels" are all connected in the circulation of discourse and that the ideas initiated at one level sometimes impact what can be communicated at other levels.

view of publics as constituted by circulating discourse, this research attends to representations in the news media, film, and public protest, as well as the responses to and re-circulation of these representations among publics.

In addressing the question of how the war will be remembered according to the view of public memory presented here, I ask, what processes initiated while the war was still going on contribute to a lasting impact on the struggle among publics? Further, what is the role of texts originating in various media and circulating among different audiences in these processes?

1.2 Contributions

This research contributes to the study of public memory in a number of ways. First, I add to the previous literature by focusing on the Iraq War, which offers a unique complement to research on the Vietnam War and World War II. By examining a war with such an abundance of memory texts[12] produced while the war was still going on, I am able to identify some of the key processes by which discourses have risen and fallen in prominence as time has gone by. Second, my placement of Warner's (2002) conception of publics as at the heart of public memory positions me to identify these processes not as a competition among texts, but rather a competition among publics constituted by the discourse that addresses them. As such groups circulate discourse, they struggle to make their respective views seem more salient and to ultimately reach a critical mass at which point the views appear to be the dominant, consensus interpretation of the war. Third, within this process of competition among publics, I contribute a view of the connection between various types of media and different levels of discourse, noting especially how the news media provide an initial frame of events which is either reproduced or challenged in other media and other discourse. Fourth, I also contribute to this area by identifying some of the processes involved in this competition among publics, offering the concept of "memory maintenance" by which texts help to combat memory decay as new texts or republished old texts re-circulate

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[12] The term "memory text" typically refers to a text that consciously seeks to commemorate an event, person, or idea such as a monument or a memoir, though, as the use by Schudson (1997, p. 4) and others have implied, there is some flexibility in the term to also accommodate texts that persist in communicating meaning about the past without doing so "self-consciously."

ideas already previously established as prominent. As these texts continue to circulate the discourse of previous texts, the discourse has greater reach and greater durability,[13] which translate to a greater chance to be viewed by wider audiences and thus seen as holding a dominant position in the public discourse. In this way "memory maintenance" not only maintains the memory, but it maintains the public, as well. Finally, I note that whereas previous scholarship has either focused on the contribution of highly-invested performers of public memory[14] or on texts' ideal or imaginary audiences by favoring rhetorical analysis that pays little attention to reception, this study highlights the ways in which less-engaged populations are invited into and contribute to this process by texts that appeal not only to those with high political knowledge and interest but to a wider group, as well. This is a necessary consideration because the inclusion of a greater segment of the population in this apparent dominance of a certain public's views only strengthens their influence on the public culture and public memory.

1.3 Texts

Because public memory is formed by the circulation of discourse across a variety of media and among audiences at various levels of political engagement, the texts selected for this research encompass a range of levels of discourse. I begin with an analysis of the imagery of the war, focusing in particular on the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in central Baghdad's Firdos Square on April 9th, 2003. Next, I look at Iraq War docudramas, focusing on Brian De Palma's 2007 film *Redacted* (Weiss & Urdl, 2007). Finally, in the third case study, I examine the temporary Iraq War memorial, Arlington West, produced by Los Angeles Veterans for Peace each Sunday at Santa Monica Pier. In each case, however, I also attend to evidence of reception and re-

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[13] "Reach" refers to the ability of texts to extend to large audiences while durability refers to their ability to remain at least present over time so that more people view the texts.

[14] For example, several studies have focused as visitors to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial who leave letters and objects at the site to symbolize their grief, gratitude, and other feelings toward their loved ones. These are "highly-invested" performers of public memory because they have a personal connection to the memorial. For these visitors, Vietnam is something they can hardly forget. Less heavily-invested people, however, have little reason to think of Vietnam in their daily lives, may never visit the memorial, and would be unlikely to leave a letter addressed to the deceased if they did. For this reason, studies of public memory that have attended to audience reception and response have tended to overlook the impact of disengaged member of the culture in the processes of public memory.

circulation of the texts and/or ideas of the texts. In the first two studies, the sites of interaction are online discussions, while in the third I also look at visitors' comments in the guest log books kept at the Arlington West site from 2005 to 2012. In addition, I also attend to texts inspired by the memorial in online videos, blogs, and in a film produced by local artists.

By looking at online circulation of images initiated in the news media, a film produced by an established Hollywood director, and a recurrent grassroots memorial, I am able to view how the discourses at the heart of various texts connect and respond to the political situation and the events of the war. Through the process, these texts also allow me to see how each is dependent upon other media representations for constructing the resources by which viewers understand the war and, as importantly, how they interpret the prominence of the publics constituted by that discourse. These texts are also selected because their circulation spans nearly the entire period of the war. The toppling imagery was first produced just three weeks after the invasion, and it experienced an increase in circulation periodically as time went by. *Redacted* was produced in 2007 and, though it was given a limited theatrical release, it continued to circulate in the online and home markets and to incite discussion among viewers on both sides of the war debate even beyond the end of the war. Arlington West, too, continues to be produced more than a year after the end of the war. Although the Santa Monica display resembles other temporary memorials to the Iraq War, it is unique because it has been running consistently each Sunday since February 2004. The feedback in the visitor logs,[15] then, offers an opportunity to view a trajectory in the responses, reflecting the changing political context and the shifts in discourse in this time.

These texts were not selected because they represent the most highly-circulated texts of their kind. The Abu Ghraib photos, for example, were perhaps more heavily circulated, and films such as *The Hurt Locker (Bigelow, Boal, Chartier, & Shapiro, 2008)* and *Green Zone* (Bevan, Fellner, Levin, & Greengrass, 2010) experienced greater box office and secondary market success than *Redacted*. However, the selected texts are

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[15] Although comment logs were placed on the site of the memorial from the beginning, some of the books have been lost. I was given access to forty-five books spanning from the summer of 2005 to the summer of 2012.

significant because they have each served as a point of contest for multiple publics over the course of their circulation. In fact, *Redacted* is an important text because it reveals the role of even unpopular films in fostering the kinds of identification and the kinds of critical responses to the war that are central to this research. Even the local performance of Arlington West helps demonstrate the fluidity and expansiveness of discourse as representations inspire responses that spread their reach beyond the local audiences to the larger discourse of the critical public. What these cases represent, then, is a collection of texts whose influence spreads through wide channels as individuals become interested in the text and take up their ideas which then become resources for the construction of subsequent discourse. The wider the channels—that is, the more spaces in which viewers encounter equivalent representations of the war—the more common and "natural" the particular view appears to be. A few highly circulated texts would not seem adequate in this respect, and so it is important to examine the wide breadth of texts, as well.

The examination of the proliferation of texts and ideas also contributes to my selection of reception texts. By looking at topical discussion boards, online and offline video-based responses, highly localized handwritten visitor comments, and general blog discussions, I gain a sense of how viewers respond in a variety of forms across different media. Perhaps as importantly, I look at how people in numerous political and apolitical settings respond because I am not only interested in how highly engaged and politically aware citizens remember the war, but also how those who seem to have less interest and knowledge about politics see the war. For this reason, I look at comments on sites ranging from a cigar collector's forum to general interest sites such as *LiveJournal*, *YouTube*, and *Internet Movie Database* (IMDb) to political blogs and forums such as *Independent Media Center*, *Politics Forum*, and *Huffington Post*. As a result, I am able to sample a variety of responses from viewers with multiple levels of interest and engagement. Of course, there can be no exhaustive survey of the countless responses to these public texts, and so I do not claim that this analysis identifies definitive descriptions of a consensus reception. Because I do not subscribe to a polling definition of public opinion but rather something more akin to Hauser's (1999) concept of a rhetorical public opinion formed through vernacular discussion by everyday citizens or Warner's (2002) implicit notion of a discursive public opinion of circulation and uptake,

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I am interested in the presence—and more importantly, prominence—of given views at multiple levels of public discourse, not in attempting to calculate the majority view. The response texts I collect, then, are selected on the basis of the dialogic engagements they demonstrate, both in the sense of commenters in dialogue with each other and in dialogue with various media as they make sense of the texts and negotiate their understandings of the past.

Together, these texts offer a site of inquiry in which viewers at various levels of political engagement are invited to remember the war collectively. In each case, the struggle over meaning of the images, narratives, and information presented offers a glimpse into the inner workings of public memory and the competition among publics. Further, these particular cases are selected because, in their range from highly circulated to little-circulated, they allow me to illustrate the ways the figurative archive of ideas that unites a given public is constructed and maintained not just through the persuasive appeals of the most popular, most powerful texts, but rather through the accumulation of many texts from multiple sources that seem to affirm the pervasiveness of a given view.

1.4 Methodology

In order to understand how texts help form the basis of the circulating discourse of the memory of publics, it is necessary to scrutinize their symbolic and material appeals, as well as evidence of reception, uptake, and circulation. This approach responds to McGee's (1990) assertion that since texts are mere fragments of the larger culture, the rhetorical critic's first task is "inventing a text suitable for criticism" (p. 288) by looking to its sources, as well as its cultural context, and finally its influence (p. 280). In other words, critics must pay attention to invention, context, and reception. However, because this research centers on the notion of circulating, self-reflexive discourse as constitutive of publics, there is a point at which the attention to the influence/reception of texts also becomes an analysis of invention, as the original text under consideration becomes an inventional resource for subsequent arguments. This approach to rhetorical analysis is an important method to help gain a sense of the interconnection among various texts and different types of discourse in the construction and perpetuation of public memory.

At the most basic level, however, the rhetorical analysis in this dissertation looks at how texts attempt to control or influence the way viewers see the war. The texts that compose each case study represent a response to the lack of clear imagery in the news media representing the truth of war, especially its costs.[16] In each case, therefore, my rhetorical analysis examines how the texts attempt to focus the viewers' attention, to help influence not just what they believe about the war but what they see and how they see it. There are two related but distinct theoretical foundations to this aspect of the analysis. First, I engage in framing analysis, as I examine the ways news media images represent views of the war consistent with the Bush Administration's framing of events, as well as how alternative frames can be introduced. Second, I look at several ways in which texts position their viewers, considering both symbolic and physical influences on the way viewers see the war.

In order to gauge the impact of the news media on the circulating discourse of publics, including its impact on other media forms, I begin with a framing analysis of news media images, noting the ways in which the selection of details in the imagery helps influence how audiences tend to interpret the events depicted. That is, I draw on scholarship in political communication by Entman (2004) to look at the way initial frames were employed to influence the audience's reception and the subsequent discourse on the war.

Frame analysis is in essence an examination of which elements of an issue are emphasized, which are selected and made salient for understanding an event or issue. In Chapter Three, the analysis focuses on how the borders of photographs cut out certain details while the composition of what is contained in the shot emphasizes others. In a sense, the framing of the shot positions viewers to occupy a particular perspective that matches the verbal framing of news media reports and the Bush Administration's preferred frame. The imagery that dominated the initial news media circulation places viewers in the scene as witnesses to a particular part of the scene that favors one set of

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[16] The case study in Chapter Three begins with the highly circulated imagery of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square, but much of the discussion focuses on responses to the framing of this imagery that, in effect, obscured the truth of the war and its continuing human costs.

meanings over others that become apparent only when alternative views are offered in other imagery.

This view of framing and positioning unites the analysis of imagery and news stories with my analysis of films and public demonstrations. In the absence of satisfactory imagery circulating in the news media, filmmakers, bloggers, and activists produced images to position viewers as witnesses of the human costs of war, witnesses of what had been hidden from them in the mainstream news media. In this respect, my methodological approach helps reveal not only how news media influence other representations and other discourses of war by providing positive resources of invention, but also negative ones as filmmakers, bloggers, and activists strive to fill the gap in the representation.[17] Through this lens, it also becomes possible to see the rhetorical processes by which public memory is constructed and maintained. These texts call on those with various levels of political knowledge and political engagement to see what they may have already learned or implicitly known to be true about war: that there are always human costs to combat. By positioning these viewers as witnesses and reframing the issues to draw attention to what had been ignored in other media, these texts strive to give audiences the resources by which to participate in the continual circulation of critical discourse about the war and to identify with the rising critical public. Whether or not viewers adopt these positions or draw the conclusions the texts intend is, of course, another matter, and one that scholars of rhetoric and public memory have begun to address more and more in recent years.

In order to acknowledge the possibility of various responses and gain a sense of texts' actual impact on public memory, I take a cue from Kansteiner (2002), who called for the adoption of methods from communication and media studies to account for reception of public memory texts. Consequently, I acknowledge such measures as box office data as indicators of important aspects of the circulation of public memory texts, but in order to account for changes in media practices, I also attend to measures of secondary market and peer-to-peer circulation of texts to estimate the reach *and*

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[17] The influence is positive in the sense that news stories set the agenda for discussion and present images that can be imitated by other media creators, and so others respond to what *is* present in these stories. "Negative influence," on the other hand, refers to the response to what is conspicuously absent in the news media.

durability of films beyond traditional measures. However, I am also interested in more subjective, qualitative indicators of reception. For example, in my analysis of a physical memorial site, I follow the observational approach of public memory scholars such as Blair & Michel (Blair, 1999, 2006; Blair & Michel, 1999, 2000) to gain a sense of how visitors contribute to the memorial experience. By looking at how visitors move around the site and, perhaps most importantly, cue other visitors about how to read and respond to it, I am able to observe the different levels of engagement the text invites.

While observation of physical interactions is important, the majority of attention to reception in this work is concentrated on textual responses to public memory texts. Each case study features an examination of secondary texts serving different functions. Measuring reception, then, requires attention to the kinds of interaction involved and the rhetorical uses to which the original imagery or ideas are put, as well as the additional resources in the larger circulating discourse called upon to make sense of these texts. This approach complements my focus on rhetorical analysis of primary texts and helps me identify the processes involved in the construction of public memory by giving me the tools to see how texts favor views common to certain discourses and the ways readers can accept these views or call on other discourses to support other interpretations.

1.5   Selling the War

Most of the texts examined in this dissertation were produced and reproduced to make up for the absence of adequate or truthful images and information about the war in the news media and larger political discourse. This lack has been blamed on the press and on the general public's lack of interest in and knowledge about foreign policy issues, but by far the greatest part of the blame has gone to the Bush Administration's efforts to withhold, erase, and obscure information about the war. As a consequence, there were limits to the ability of publics to construct critical views of the motives for and costs of the war, as well as to accurately gauge the progress of the war, especially in its early stages.

In a speech in Cincinnati in October 2002 outlining the need to act decisively to remove Hussein from power, Bush made it clear that the movement toward war with Iraq was a direct response to the September 11th attacks:

> On September the 11th, 2001, America felt its vulnerability—even to threats that gather on the other side of the earth. We resolved then, and we are resolved today, to confront every threat, from any source, that could bring sudden terror and suffering to America. (2002a)

Bush was declaring that whatever motives might be assigned to him and his administration by his largely marginalized critics by this point, this was not a war for oil or revenge for Hussein's alleged attempts to assassinate his father. This was part of the war on terror. As scholars have noted, Bush's justifications for the war were primarily based on the threat of terrorism that could now be identified in the post-9/11 world (Gershkoff & Kushner, 2005).

By the fall of 2002 the Administration had developed three primary arguments for the war: (1) Hussein possessed or was actively developing WMD; (2) Hussein was involved with terrorist organizations including Al Qaeda and may have even been involved in the September 11th attacks; and (3) there was a danger that if Hussein possessed WMD, he would give them to terrorist organization that would use them on American citizens. However, in hindsight, these arguments seem to have been used to obstruct the true motives for the war and the Administration's cherry-picking of evidence to justify their ambitions to oust Hussein.

According Woodward (2004), the movement within the Bush Administration to pursue a military strategy to remove Hussein from power began even before Bush was inaugurated. Woodward's book suggested that it was Vice President Cheney, the former Secretary of Defense under Bush's father during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, who led the push to go after Hussein, motivated apparently by the sense of "unfinished business" (p. 9).[18] Cheney arranged for Bush to be given a special briefing on the situation in Iraq in

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[18] Cheney was the earliest to assert certainty in a public speech about Hussein's weapons program, saying in August, 2002, "There is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction … There is no doubt that he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies and against us" (Bumiller & Dao, 2002). According to Woodward (2004), this speech was a direct response to publications by prominent Republicans from previous administrations urging against unilateral action, and Cheney

early January, 2001. After the inauguration, however, Bush did not aggressively pursue a plan on Iraq, though his team soon began discussing war plans. Hussein was clearly on the agenda, however, and within a day following the September 11th attacks, both Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Bush were asking questions about how they could connect Hussein to the attacks (Clarke, 2004, p. 34; Woodward, B., 2004, p. 25). Although the motives certainly predated September 11th, the Bush Administration quickly became aware that their success in convincing the American people to go along with a war depended on how well they could convince them that Hussein had or would soon have WMD that could lead to even more devastating attacks on American soil (Foyle, 2004; Gershkoff & Kushner, 2005; Hartnett & Stengrim, 2004).

As early as his January 2002 State of the Union Address, Bush (2002b) was laying down the foundation for this argument, naming North Korea, Iran, and Iraq the "axis of evil" and asserting that "Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror." He added, "The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade." The argument was already forming, but the campaign did not begin in earnest until later that year when the White House Iraq Group—featuring such notable names as Bush Senior Advisor Carl Rove, then National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, the now-famous Cheney aide "Scooter" Libby, and others—was formed to devise a plan to "sell" the war through rhetorical means and a coordinated media effort (Gellman & Pincus, 2003).[19]

The press largely served the needs of the Administration in the lead-up to the war, with the various news outlets presenting a unified story handed down from political elites and, in effect, working together to affirm the developing frame of the Iraq War as part of the War on Terror. The coordinated media campaign was launched in September 2002 and had its most notable day on September 8th, when top administration officials, including Cheney, Rice, and Secretary of State Colin Powell, made scheduled appearances on the Sunday talk shows, each making reference to a story that had been

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allegedly gave the speech without Bush's prior knowledge of content, suggesting that Bush had ceded control of the messaging to the Vice President (p. 163).

[19] Much attention has been paid to the comment by Bush's Chief of Staff, Andrew Card, a member of the Iraq Group, who told the *New York Times* on September 5, "From a marketing point of view … you don't introduce new products in August" (Bumiller, 2002). This signaled the approach to the war as a product that must be sold.

leaked to the *New York Times's* Judith Miller (Miller & Gordon, 2002) and published that morning. The article was about aluminum tubes bound for Iraq that had been confiscated in Jordan the previous year. There had been a debate in the intelligence community over whether the tubes would be suitable for use in a centrifuge for uranium enrichment, but this controversy was absent from the *Times* article, nor was it mentioned in the Sunday talk programs. The article did not cite intelligence officials, but rather "Senior administration officials" who, it said, "insist that the dimensions, specifications and numbers of the tubes Iraq sought to buy show that they were intended for the nuclear program" (Miller & Gordon, 2002). The strategic value of the leaked story is most evident in Cheney's statement on NBC's *Meet the Press*, where he told host Tim Russert, "I don't want to talk about … specific intelligence sources, but it's now public that, in fact, [Hussein] has been seeking to acquire … the kinds of tubes that are necessary to build a centrifuge" (Russert, 2002). In the process of deleting the controversy, then, the Administration also concealed an apparent manipulation of the news media to make it seem that the story had arisen from multiple sources and was therefore credible.

As Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston (2007) noted, one of the effects of the repetition of these assertions in multiple news outlets was that it silenced meaningful deliberation among the public over the issues. This and the lack of critical reexamination or whistleblowers—deterred by the apparent momentum of the reporting—had "notable effects on public opinion" (p. 22). Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston were clear that competing information did, in fact, appear in the news, but they explained, "it came and went without leaving much of a trace on public opinion or gaining the prominence needed to provide a safe and inviting public context for other government opponents to speak out" (p. 25). This is a significant point for a consideration of public opinion because it highlights the importance of visibility on the influence of attitudes about political issues. Consistent with Entman's (2004) "cascading activation" theory, the preponderance of voices on one side of the issue perpetuated the silencing of opposing voices first by creating a schema by which reporters would judge opposing frames as not newsworthy. Second, the prevailing schema effectively dictated the bounds within which opposing elite officials would have to construct their arguments. To challenge the

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aluminum tubes story and the WMD frame meant that the opposition would have to argue either that the intelligence was wrong—intelligence that, according to the Bush Administration, Democratic members of Congress did have access to (p. 27)[20]—or that the Bush Administration was intentionally misleading the press and the people.[21]

As Jacobson noted, after the beginning of the coordinated campaign in September, 2002, public opinion amongst Republicans, Independents, and Democrats began to turn more sharply in favor the Bush Administration's position. In addition, the momentum continued to build in October when Bush (2002a) delivered a prime-time address on the Iraqi threat in which he stated in no uncertain terms that Hussein had biological and chemical weapons and was pursuing nuclear weapons. He repeated the aluminum tubes claim and argued that because Hussein had a history of using WMD on his own citizens and that he posed a unique and credible threat to the U.S., namely in his willingness to engage in an attack with the potential to be greater and more devastating than September 11th attacks. In this speech and the larger coordinated effort, Bush and his surrogates effectively erased the controversy within the intelligence community, and with the threatening catch-phrase "we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud," they had shut down debate. Four days later, Congress passed a Joint Resolution authorizing Bush to wage preemptive war on Iraq. At that point, the press's coverage of the debate about the merits of military action ceased in the news media, and elite U.S. voices in opposition to war were all but silent in the coverage (Groshek, 2008).[22]

In November, 2002, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed a resolution that required Iraq to let arms inspectors back into the country or face strict, unspecified,

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[20] According to Woodward (2004), for example, California Senator Dianne Feinstein had gone over the intelligence that was available to her as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee in early September and found neither evidence of Hussein having nuclear weapons nor posing an imminent threat (p. 171). By October 10th, however, she had come to the conclusion that, since Hussein was refusing to allow inspectors access to his presidential palaces, he must have been hiding nuclear weapons (Neuman, 2002). On October 11th, Feinstein voted for the resolution to give Bush war powers.
[21] It was not until January of 2004 that a prominent Democratic Congressperson, Senator Ted Kennedy, took the position that Bush had lied (Stolberg, 2004). Even then, his voice was easily dismissed because it was not soon followed by others (Bennett, et al., 2007, p. 33).
[22] See also Hayes & Guardino (2010) for an analysis of the heavy sourcing of Bush Administration officials and near silence of Democrats prior to the war. See Harmon & Muenchen (2009) for a textual analysis of linguistic framing of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Al Qaeda link, and world public opinion prior to the war.

consequences. Inspectors returned later that month, and Iraq supplied a 12,000 page report on its weapons programs, though the Bush Administration considered the report to lack credibility. As a result of this assessment, the Administration now took the position that only the departure of Hussein from power could prevent war (p. 286). They then initiated a new phase in the campaign to sell the war, highlighted by Bush's January 28th State of the Union Address and Colin Powell's presentation to the U.N. Security Council on February 5th.

In addition to references to the aluminum tubes, the State of the Union (Bush, 2003a) also featured the infamous "sixteen words" in which Bush asserted that "The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa." In fact, this report had been discredited months before by former Ambassador to Niger, Joseph Wilson (2003), and the incriminating documents had been known to be forgeries since the previous spring (Hartnett & Stengrim, 2004, p. 174). What is more, the Central Intelligence Agency had taken references to the Niger uranium deal out of the October Cincinnati speech (Woodward, B., 2004, p. 20). A week later, Powell addressed the Security Council, and though he did not mention the Nigerian Uranium deal, he did speak in detail about the aluminum tubes—acknowledging then refuting the questions of their suitability for use in a centrifuge—and other questionable evidence that Hussein was harboring terrorists and pursuing nuclear weapons.[23] Again, this was a case of the Bush Administration obscuring the conclusions of the intelligence community, erasing doubt, and constructing in its place the appearance of certainty designed to sway the American people that war was the only way to stop Hussein.

In the lead-up to the war the press dutifully reported what the Bush Administration officials told them and paid little attention to voices that did not meet with those frames. As the *New York Times* later published in a *mea culpa* reflecting on their irresponsible coverage of the case for war, "Administration officials were allowed

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[23] For example, Powell included a claim that had been the basis of much of the Administration's assertion that Hussein had been harboring Al Qaeda operative Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. It was allegedly the Zarqawi connection that led Rumsfeld to tell the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in September 2002 that they had found a "bulletproof" link between Hassein and Al Qaeda (Schmitt, 2002). Intelligence officials had allegedly urged Powell to remove this claim from his speech (Smith, 2003), but he decided not to, and it took him a year to acknowledge the mistake (Marquis, 2004).

to hold forth at length on why this evidence of Iraq's nuclear intentions demanded that Saddam Hussein be dislodged from power" ("The Times and Iraq," 2004). Further, they admitted that when they reported credible challenges to the stories in the following days, they did not place them on the front page, where they would be prominent, but rather buried them on pages A13 and A10. The *New York Times* in effect accepted responsibility for failing in their watchdog function to ensure that elite officials were not able to undermine the public dialogue on important issues.

In the absence of a critical press, the critical public, which was active in mass demonstrations across the country, was unable to gain momentum or attention. Consequently, measures of public opinion showed overwhelming belief in what the Bush Administration had claimed and/or implied. In early February, before Powell's speech to the U.N., a Gallup poll found that 77% of respondents believed Hussein had nuclear weapons, while 95% believed he had facilities to make them. Ninety percent of respondents said they were either certain (39%) or thought it was likely but uncertain (48%) that Hussein had ties to Al Qaeda (Saad, 2003). As a result of the effectiveness of these arguments, polls showed over 70% of support for war in March, 2003 (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2008).

1.6 Burying the Dead

On March 17th, 2003, Bush (2003b) delivered a televised address in which he gave Hussein forty eight hours to leave Iraq, or war would be declared. Among his statements blurring the line between war and terrorism and recapping the arguments he and his administration had mustered over the previous year, he also took the time to assure the Iraqi people that they would not be the target of American military actions, stating, "If we must begin a military campaign, it will be directed against the lawless men who rule your country and not against you." He also reminded the American people that they "understand the costs of conflict because we have paid them in the past. War has no certainty, except the certainty of sacrifice." Thus, he at once acknowledged the cost of war for Americans and warned that "the only way to reduce the harm and duration of war is to apply the full force and might of our military." The irony is that the full force of might of the American military would reduce the danger to Americans

while heightening the toll on Iraqi civilians. The "shock and awe" campaign that began four days later was the most deadly period in the war for Iraqi civilians, with over 6,700 civilian casualties in the first three weeks ("Iraqi deaths from violence 2003–2011," n.d.).

After the war began, the coverage continued to be dominated by frames favorable to the Bush Administration. Stories relied on government and military sources (Carpenter, 2007; Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Strömbäck, 2005), they focused on stories about the rebuilding of Iraq (Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Connolly-Ahern, 2007), and they presented the "conflict frame" and "human interest frame" over the human cost of the war (Dimitrova, Daniela V, Kaid, Williams, & Trammell, 2005; Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Strömbäck, 2005; Fahmy & Kim, 2008; King & Lester, 2005; Schwalbe, 2006; Schwalbe, Silcock, & Keith, 2008). In place of images of suffering were images of military technology, dutiful young soldiers, and eventually triumphal pseudo-events. One result was that much of the general public was unaware of the number of casualties in the war. Berinsky (2009), for instance, found that survey participants differed wildly in their estimates of the number of U.S. casualties. At a time in 2004 when the total was just 952, the range of guesses offered by survey respondents ranged from zero to 130,000 American deaths (p. 76).

Conventional wisdom blames the steady decline in public opinion on the continuing accumulation of casualties following the several apparent victories in the war—the daring rescue of Private Jessica Lynch, the fall of Baghdad on April 9[th,] 2003 and the infamous "Mission Accomplished" speech of May 1st (Berinsky, 2009; Mueller, 2005).[24] At first glance, opinion polls seem to support this conjecture, since public opinion declined more or less steadily from the start of the war. However, the most comprehensive report produced by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2011), including data from March 2003 until November 2011, shows the decline in support leveling off toward the end of the 2008 and even increasing modestly between 2010 and 2011. The final poll was the

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[24] Berinsky (2009) argued that it is not the number of casualties that impacts the public opinion but the cues offered by political elites in responses to the casualty figures. His position, then, is an indirect, though substantial influence, of casualty rates on public opinion.

first since 2006 to show a greater number of respondents saying the use of military force was the right decision (48%) than those who said it was the wrong decision (46%) (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2011, p. 30). In addition, the report demonstrated that support among Democrats rose from a low of 17% in 2008 to 37% in 2011, the highest since 2004 (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2011, p. 30). This would seem to indicate that approval of the war was much more tied to partisan issues than to casualties. It may be that criticism of the war had always been tied to Bush, a fact that would make it easier for poll respondents in the Bush years to form an opinion in the absence of information about the war and its casualties. As Bush left office, opponents who had tied the war to his presidency lost the target for their criticism.

In the meantime, however, the Administration was able to obscure the human cost of war by limiting access of journalists to the images of American service members' coffins arriving at Dover Air Force base. However, the cost of war was also absent from the press as a result of journalistic and professional ethics that led editors to exclude images of death from the news reports to avoid shocking and upsetting viewers. Griffin (2004, 2010) argued, as well, that the selection process is often directed at finding simple images that will not challenge existing frames or the version of events offered by officials. In this way, the reliance of American news organizations on the Bush Administration's frames of the war reduced the likelihood that media organizations would select images of suffering and death that would contradict those frames.

When news organizations did challenge the Bush Administration's frame by emphasizing the American casualties, the result was often controversy in which pro-Bush media did much of the work of silencing dissent. This was the case in 2004 when ABC's *Nightline* planned to dedicate their entire April 30th episode to reading the names and showing photos of the Americans who had died in the war. Conservative commentators criticized the move as a ratings ploy and an antiwar statement (Jensen, 2004) violating standards of objective journalism (Rusciano, 2010), and the Sinclair Broadcast Group refused to air the episode on their ABC affiliates because they thought it was "intended to damage support for U.S. actions" ("Broadcaster pulls," 2004). The "with us or against us" frame that the Bush Administration had employed, perhaps best

exemplified by Cheney's repeated accusations that Democrats and others who opposed the war were aiding the terrorists,[25] had been taken up by others in the Republican party and the media to the point where, to even call attention to the casualties was considered an anti-American act.

Of course, as is the case in any war, deaths accumulated on both sides. According to iCasulaties.org ("Operation Iraqi Freedom," 2012), a website that keeps updated accounts Department of Defense casualty numbers, the number of coalition military casualties in the Iraq War was 4,804, and 4,486 of them were American service members. In addition, iCasulaties.org lists 468 civilian contractors killed in Iraq, 191 of whom were American. This site also publishes counts of Iraqi civilian and military deaths, which total 50,152 and 10,125 respectively ("Contractors," n.d.). These numbers represent official U.S. department of Defense figures, but there have been many other counts published by other organizations. One of the most credible sources available is the Iraq Body Count Project, which tallies the number of deaths verifiable in media reports cross-checked with medical examiner records, death certificates, and other official documents. As of February 14, 2013, the number of verifiable civilian deaths was placed between 111,152 and 121,456 ("Iraqi deaths from violence 2003–2011," n.d.). The Body Count Project site, however, is often considered to represent a low estimate due to its strict methodology of cross-checking and only counting violent deaths. Another frequently cited source of Iraqi civilian deaths is a 2006 study by researchers at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Burnham, Lafta, Doocy, & Roberts, 2006),[26] which conducted survey research in Iraq to estimate the excess mortality rate over pre-invasion figures. They found that between the 2003 invasion and 2006, the civilian mortality rate nearly quadrupled, and based on this figure, they estimated that 655,000 died as a result of the war, with over 600,000 coming from violent causes and the remaining 54,000 from the effects of the war such as

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[25] Cheney warned Iowa voters that if John Kerry won the 2004 presidential election, "then the danger is that we'll get hit again—that we'll be hit in a way that will be devastating from the standpoint of the United States" ("Cheney: Kerry win risks terror attack," 2004). In 2006, he said the Connecticut Democratic primary defeat of Joseph Liebermann by antiwar candidate Ned Lamont "would encourage 'al-Qaeda types' who want 'to break the will of the American people'"(Baker, 2006).

[26] This research was an update to their earlier research from 2004, in which the same team found similar results (Roberts, Lafta, Garfield, Khudhairi, & Burnham, 2004).

damage to hospitals and other infrastructure.[27] What these body counts suggest, whether one favors the most conservative estimates or the much higher numbers produced by independent researchers, is that what appears to be a relatively "clean" war for America—in terms of the lack of representations of suffering in the news media—is by no means clean for Iraqis. Again, these deaths had been obscured from the American people by a combination of a news media that showed little concern for the suffering of civilians and the Administration's positive framing of the war to fit their narratives.

Much of the research in this dissertation is concerned with representations of the Iraq War that attempt to correct the erasure of the suffering and death of the war. I am interested in the ways critical discourse takes many forms, coming from different levels of access to the media in order to produce texts that help call a critical public into being and put that public in a prominent position to have a lasting influence on the memory of the war. While these texts respond to the media landscape that has grown from the initial coverage of the Bush Administration's frames, they work to remember the war as a failure of a corrupt cadre of political figures. Therefore, when I ask, *how will the Iraq War be remembered when so much of it has been about erasure?*, I am interested in how the war is now being represented in more enduring texts, as well as what are the processes by which a critical public has risen in influence and can continue to persist in prominence.

1.7   Chapter Outline

In Chapter Two, I call on literatures from a variety of fields to form a picture of public memory as being built on the foundations of social knowledge and public opinion established in the interactions between the news media and political elites. This provides the framework by which to understand the apparent "shifts" in public memory as publics rise and fall in apparent prominence and dominance when the political context and

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[27] The authors have been both criticized and praised for their methodology, and in one published response to criticism of their earlier study (Roberts, et al., 2004), they acknowledge that their otherwise well-respected methods may have been skewed by the fact that they were researching in a war zone in which explosions killed large numbers of people at a time. However, they defended the paper for what it revealed about the war's harm to civilians in Iraq, nonetheless.

media landscape change over time. I then apply the concepts to three case studies in subsequent chapters.

In Chapter Three, I take the imagery of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein as the focal point of an exploration of how publics challenged the dominant frame of the Bush Administration that were initially circulated in the mainstream and online media. I note the ways in which the discourse of oppositional groups introduced the challenges of these frames that would later slowly gain momentum when discourse critical of the Bush Administration began to appear more credible as time went by and the events of the war revealed a significant weakness in the planning and execution of the war. I examine the impact of Abu Ghraib photos and the "Bush Lied" schema that helped these oppositional voices look back at the toppling imagery and reappropriate it as a symbol of the failures and mistakes of the Bush Administration. As that meaning rose in prominence, not only the image but the evaluation of the image became a part of public memory, a resource for thinking about subsequent events such as the 2011 Arab Spring.

In Chapter Four, I continue thinking about how other media re-circulate concepts introduced in the news media and at the same time fill in the gaps as they reframe initial presentations in more durable texts that have greater opportunity to continue circulating and thus have a lasting impact on public memory. I focus specifically on Iraq War docudramas with particular attention to the representations of war atrocities in *Redacted*. I also consider evidence of reception in online discussions in order to gain a sense of how viewers call on different resources to judge films and evaluate other representations of the war. This analysis shows the ways that high-information news media and entertainment media exist in a recursive relationship and thus both offer access points for more or less engaged viewers. In other words, films offer an invitation for others beyond the "political junkies" for whom the news media's reporting is often most suitable (Bennett, et al., 2007, p. 31).

Finally, in Chapter Five, I examine the temporary Iraq War memorial Arlington West as a site of the performance of public memory that extends the invitation of engagement to "accidental" participants. Because the memorial is situated at a site of leisure in which passersby are confronted with a representation of the human costs of

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war where they had been seeking fun, it calls on them to consider and to remember what they already know implicitly, that war has human costs that go unseen in the contemporary media landscape. As the text does this, it invites viewers to interact in a subtle form of response cueing that I argue mimics the processes of public discourse, in which the mere visibility of given responses makes them seem normal and safe to express.

1.8 Summary

As public memory practices unfold in the complex interplay among competing publics, the political consequences can be high. The memory of Vietnam still haunts American political culture thanks to the apparent dominance of the critical public in persistently shaping the narratives of the war in the larger discourse. As the Iraq War recedes into the "external horizon" of public memory (Casey, 2004, p. 25) and the dominant interpretations face the dangers of decay, this critical public must assert and reassert its influence through the continued circulation of critical texts.

2. Memory as a Source and Site of Struggle

In studies of museums, monuments, and other media, public memory scholars have frequently adopted the view presented by Nora (1989) that "Modern memory is, above all, archival" (p. 13). For Nora, this referred to material objects and texts collected in actual archives, but it is also a metaphor for a "structural" form of memory[28] in which symbols marking the past are stored for future reference. This perspective is prominent in Bodnar's (1992) frequently-cited description of public memory as "a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future" (p. 15). Older theories of memory presented a similar view, such as Plato's metaphor of memory as a wax tablet[29] or Freud's "mystic writing pad" (2007) on which one records information to be retrieved later. Although there is merit to viewing memory in this way, much public memory scholarship has tended to focus excessively on the contents of the texts that make up the archive, neglecting to attend to the processes by which they are collected and by which information is retrieved and made usable in public discourse.

This is not to suggest that theorists have failed to consider the uses of memory. The second half of Bodnar's (1992) definition above, in fact, points to the ways memory is called on to support collective identity construction, a point Casey (2004) also addressed in looking at public memory as an unstable "external horizon" that is "there to be invoked" (p. 29) in constructing collective identity. This instability and Bodnar's larger focus on the tension between vernacular and official memory suggest what other scholars have argued, that public memory is contested, partisan, and always subject to change (Blair, 1999; Browne, 1993; Dickinson, Blair, & Ott, 2010). However, such scholarship has not fully engaged the processes at work when public memory does seem

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[28] Klein (2000, p. 131) used the term "structural memory" to describe the concept of memory presented by Schudson (1993) as that which "bridges a wide array of physical objects, on the one hand, and the psychic acts of individuals on the other" (p. 131). A statue in this conception is both the reminder that prompts individuals to remember and the physical archiving of memory.

[29] See Phillips (2010) for a review of Plato and Aristotle's theories of memory.

to undergo a shift,[30] when different views of the past become more prominent and seemingly dominant in public discourse than others.

This study addresses this gap in the research and presents a theory of the processes of public memory that accounts for both the instability of publics and the instability of memory. I maintain the archive metaphor with some modification to account for this instability, taking public memory as a rhetorically-constructed storehouse of knowledge and beliefs that serves as a resource for the development of collective identities and partisan arguments within and across discursive communities competing for prominence and influence in the public sphere. Of course, such a storehouse is far from a physical collection of texts, but is rather a set of images, narratives, attitudes, ideas, facts, and judgments which are preferred by one group over others. I begin by examining the public-ness of memory and, following Warner's (2002) theory of publics, the ways in which discourse and the resulting social knowledge helps constitute groups of strangers united by shared views of the past. I go on to present a view of the struggles of public memory as a competition among groups vying for dominance in the public sphere. In order to better understand how these processes work, however, I draw on research on attitude formation and theories of public opinion, as well as insight gained from scholarship in political communication, to develop a theory of public memory processes that operates on subtle, social levels. I argue that the processes of constructing, challenging, and deploying public memory operate by appealing to fragments of opinion and memory to make a given view more plausible, attractive, and socially acceptable for groups of people who are then susceptible to rhetorical appeals based on the resulting social knowledge. In addition to calling on attitude influence research to extend the theory of the rhetoric of public memory and focusing on Warner's (2002) definition of publics as a basis for a theory of the memory of publics, this chapter also contributes to the study of public memory by introducing the concept of "memory maintenance" to explain the ways in which mediated discourse does more than just record information in an archive, but also establishes the resonance of a given view of the past among the publics to which the discourse appeals. I conclude with a discussion

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[30] As is argued below, the concept of public memory "shifting" can be seen as analogous to the "shifts" in public opinion as different views seem to become more or less dominant over time.

of methodological implications, arguing that conceiving public memory as a discursively constructed storehouse and an inventional resource among partisan publics suggests a need to consider not only the rhetorical appeals of public memory texts, but also the sources and the influences of memory discourse in order to understand the potential lasting effects of given interpretive frames flowing through news and entertainment media.

2.1   The Public-ness of Memory and the Memory of Publics

The central criterion for differentiating public memory from other forms of memory is, of course, its public-ness. "Public," here, takes on multiple senses, first referring to texts' exposure to large groups of people and second as a reference shared by a particular group. This is the memory *in* public and the memory *of* publics distinguished by Phillips (2004, p. 3). Whereas the more localized, conversational "social memory" may be a construction of interpersonal communication, "public memory" has traditionally referred only to those memories that are circulated to wide populations through public address texts such as film and television, print sources, prominent speeches, or physical memorials.[31] This textual emphasis also distinguishes public memory from its conceptual sibling, cultural memory, scholarship on which tends to be more concerned with myths and narratives of the past that bind groups together than with the textual vehicles of those myths and narratives. Although these two terms are used almost interchangeably by some, it is typical for rhetoricians to examine public memory by considering how texts propagate certain memories and how rhetors employ shared understandings of the past to influence the future. Social scientists and media scholars, in contrast, tend to examine cultural memory, sometimes without paying attention to specific texts.

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[31] As new media distribution has brought a challenge to the hegemony of traditional broadcast media and even blurred the lines between vernacular and institutional discourse (Howard, 2010), it has also introduced possible ambiguity in the distinction between public and private communication. Thus, whereas social memory could once be conceived as the memory of face-to-face communication, such distinctions may begin to break down when small groups gain the ability to connect with others based on shared interests and experiences and when they begin to reach wider audiences.

As a defining characteristic of public memory, the textuality of commemoration invites rhetorical analysis of texts in order to explain the ways in which public memory is both constructed and made usable. As rhetoricians have examined this textuality, they have engaged a number of issues relating to the effect of mediation on the way memory is experienced. For example, Browne (1993) wrote, "To claim that public memory is textual is therefore to stress that its constructed quality can be made evident and its modes of inducement observable" (p. 467). Although Browne's view joined the vast majority of rhetorical scholarship in privileging invention and the author's agency in moving the audience, scholarship on the textuality of memory has begun to consider not only the production of texts but also the reception. Thus, research on the textuality of public memory has focused on such issues as the materiality of texts, including the place of public memory and the performance of memory by both rhetor and audience. Blair (1999) argued that "No text is a text, nor does it have meaning, influence, political stance, or legibility, in the absence of material form" (p. 18). Further, she provided a frame for interpreting texts' materiality:

> (1) What is the significance of the text's material existence? (2) What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the text? (3) What are the text's modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation? (4) What does the text do to (or with, or against) other texts? (5) How does the text act on people? (p. 30)

Although Blair's immediate purpose was to focus on physical memorial sites, these questions highlight the materiality of other kinds of texts, as well. For example, in considering durability and reproduction or preservation, one may discover the extent to which the media of commemoration impact the extent to which texts are likely to endure in public consciousness. A physical monument in a city square, for instance, will be more durable than a speech given one time in the same square.

However, whereas such considerations of textuality provide a useful frame for thinking about how memories circulate, materiality only tells part of the story. Remediation[32] is always possible, as when a photograph of a public monument makes

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[32] This term is taken from Bolter & Grusin (2000), who referred to remediation as "the representation of one medium in another" (p. 45). Here, it is used to describe the reproduction of the form and content of a

the text easily reproducible and thus, in a sense, more flexible and capable of confronting and appealing not just to the people who move around it as tourists or city residents but others who find it in books, films, and other media. Further, a public speech, such as Martin Luther King Junior's "I Have a Dream" speech may appear to be ephemeral until it is recorded, reproduced, and thoroughly circulated to the point at which it becomes a durable reference point in public memory confronting not just those present at the Lincoln Memorial steps in 1963 but to virtually everyone familiar with American culture. Texts appearing in busy city squares or texts well circulated through public culture succeed in influencing public memory because of their public-ness, because they appear to many viewers, even in various contexts, and even with various meanings.

The lines between levels of durability also become less constraining when ephemeral texts serve ritualistic and performative functions. One aspect of performance of public memory can be found in epideictic speeches that engage in a "ritualized display of official values and functions" (Browne, 1993, p. 475). Such commemorations instruct audiences on what events, people, and activities are worthy of remembrance within the larger society (Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci, 1991, p. 263; Browne, 1993), but they also draw attention to the performance of memory and how audiences interact with texts. Audience performance and reception has been examined by scholars interested in both ephemeral (Blair & Michel, 2007; Haskins, 2011) and more durable memory texts (Blair & Michel, 1999; Doss, 2010). These scholars have addressed performance as an interaction with the memorials, whether by those who co-construct the texts (Blair & Michel, 2007; Haskins, 2011) or by those who move through the space of the memorials with their own agendas that often fail to mesh with those of the memorial's designers (Blair & Michel, 1999). Performance, here, draws attention to reception, as audiences are called on to remember, often through bodily interaction with memorial texts. This is an important aspect of textuality and the public-ness of public memory because it demonstrates the ways in which commemoration requires both authors and audiences to engage with the texts and thus the memory. Because audiences can always produce their

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text in a different medium than the original. See also Hariman & Lucaites's (2007) use of the term in discussing the reproduction of iconic images across various media.

own readings, their own meanings, and their own memories, public memory must be seen as a negotiation between authors and the publics they address, a point scholars have begun to engage in the past decade and a half as they have taken a cue from media studies and begun to look at reception of texts, not just the invention and their rhetorical appeals (Blair, 1999; Hariman & Lucaites, 2007; Hasian, 2001, 2005; Haskins, 2011; Jordan, 2008).[33]

The movement from the public-ness of memories exemplified by materiality and performance of texts to the second sense of the term as the memory *of* publics is a short step when one asks simply, who is addressed by this public discourse? In some cases, it may be tempting to identify "the masses" of mass communication or "the public" often conceived to denote large groups such as "The American people" as if they are a single, homogenous entity. Of course, they are not, and thus a conception of "the public" encompassed by terms such as "public memory" may be drawn from a number of theories that together zero in on a view of such groups as fragmented, fluid, and constituted by discourse. What does unite members of a group, according to Farrell (1991/1999), is the rhetorical resources available to them. He suggested that group membership is defined by shared social knowledge, the same knowledge which serves as the basis for rhetorical appeals. He argued, "Rhetoric in the classical sense provides an important inventional capacity for the conventions, emotions, and cognitions necessary for us to affiliate in a community of civic life" (1991/, p. 85). In this way, a text's audience is both predetermined by the assumptions of shared knowledge and constituted by discursive social processes which create this shared knowledge, such as education and other cultural experience.

Similarly, Black (1970/1999) argued that each text has an implied or ideal auditor whom the text addresses, even singles out, through stylistic tokens that play on preexisting attitudes. For example, conservative discourse may appeal to the ideal audience through metaphors implying the ridiculousness of their liberal adversaries, and thus at once assuming disdain for the other and inviting the reader to identify with that

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[33] Rhetorical scholarship such as Condit's (Condit, 1989) work on polysemy and Brummett & Bowers's (1999) work on subject positions also bridge this gap between rhetorical production and audience reception.

disdain. This extends Farrell's (1976) normative dimension of social knowledge, for whereas he suggested that some knowledge demands action (p. 10), such as when one learns the number of starving children in one's community, Black's view suggests a normativity in which some discourse assumes a proper attitude toward a given subject. In this way, public memory texts not only communicate the information that is commonly agreed-upon by a given audience, but also the way to feel about that information.

Warner's (2002) theory of counterpublics advances this discussion from the concept of audiences to the concept of publics. For him, public address makes audiences into active participants in the circulation of discourse. Whereas Black's (1970/1999) theory seems to rely on a sort of preexisting consensus and group identity, Warner found that the discourse itself was the source of consensus as it constituted publics through the circulation of given views.[34] He argued:

> Public discourse says not only "Let a public exist" but "Let it have this character, speak this way, see the world in this way." It then goes in search of confirmation that such a public exists, with greater or lesser success – success being further attempts to cite, circulate, and realize the world understanding it articulates. Run it up the flagpole and see who salutes. (p. 114)

The "salute" indicates not a passive process of reception but an active adoption of the ideas in the discourse which can then be re-circulated in other discourse produced by that public. A public, in this sense, is a "self-organized" (p. 68) "relation among strangers" (p. 72), "constituted through mere attention" (p. 87) by "the reflexive circulation of discourse" (p. 90) that "is both personal and impersonal" (p. 76). By the very act of addressing a group as the ideal auditors, based on the shared views they *may* hold, and yet which may be latent or fragmentary prior to this invocation, discourse creates publics. This is not to suggest that everyone who reads a text will respond to it in the same way, but rather that those individuals who do respond in the same ways may be

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[34] A broader discussion of consensus would address the work of Frankfurt School (Habermas, 1962/1991; Horkheimer & Adorno, 2006) , as well as the Birmingham School (Fiske, 1986; Hall, 2006; Williams, R., 1977) theorists whose work on the media has addressed the hegemony of media texts for constructing consensus. Although this is important work in considering the mediation of social knowledge, it is beyond the scope of this chapter.

seen as sharing an attitude that defines them as a group. This attitude, then, is both the result of constitutive rhetorical appeals and a resource for making further arguments.

It is my contention that when media texts circulate discourse that offers a particular representation of the past, they help to constitute a particular kind of "mnemonic community" (Zerubavel, 1996) which may be called a "memory public" composed of individuals who share an interpretation of discourse about the past. This shared understanding serves two functions: on the one hand, it is constitutive of collective identity as strangers work out a shared sense of who they are as a community. On the other hand, it serves an instrumentalist purpose as the members of these publics demonstrate this shared understanding by drawing on the ideas and attitudes in the discourse when they create their own rhetorical texts. This uptake and continuing circulation of discourse suggests a kind of archive of ideas available for members of the public and for rhetors who wish to appeal to them through a shared body of knowledge and attitude. The creation of this archive in turn suggests a successful shaping of social knowledge, public opinion, and public memory, with significant implications in the public sphere composed of multiple groups circulating multiple discourses as they vie for influence.

2.2 Shaping Memory and the Usable Past

Rhetoricians have studied the ways in which rhetors shape memories of the past to suit their own needs while at the same time calling on these constructions in support of arguments about the present and future. Scholarship abounds on such topics as public memory of The Holocaust (Ebbrecht, 2007; Hasian & Frank, 1999; Young, 1993; Zelizer, 1998), World War II (Auster, 2002; Biesecker, 2002, 2004; Bodnar, 2001; Ehrenhaus, 2001; Hasian, 2001; Owen, A. S., 2002), the Civil Rights Movement (Blair & Michel, 2000; Gallagher, 1999, 2004; Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles, 2000; Pauley, 1998), and many other events and issues. The struggle over public memory of the Vietnam War, however, is perhaps the most vivid example of how the contestation of public memory pits partisan groups against each other as they strive to frame the past in order to better serve their present interests.

Conflict over the war did not end when the last troops were pulled out of Saigon in 1975, as the memory of the war came to represent both a constraint on policy decisions and a source of enduring division between groups. This has been addressed in scholarship on the much celebrated and criticized Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Blair, et al., 1991; Blair & Michel, 2007; Bodnar, 1992; Foss, 1986; Lembcke, 1998; Sturken, 1997), as well as in scholarship on other forms of discourse. For instance, Ivie (1990) and Goodnight (1996) each looked at the ways conservatives attempted to reframe the war in order to place blame and ultimately salvage interventionist approaches to foreign policy. Others, such as Stuckey (1992), Beamish, Molotch, & Flacks (1995), Storey (2003), and Williamson (2010) examined how the public memory of Vietnam influenced public attitudes toward the Persian Gulf War and the Iraq War. These studies show that the memory of Vietnam is far from monolithic, as the controversy over this memory is often displayed in a battle of public discourse between the left and the right over who is to blame for the failure of Vietnam and, consequently, which lessons must be learned from it. At the same time, however, this struggle over public memory is also a site in which to negotiate the collective identity. Whether a group remembers the war as a betrayal by liberals and hippies or a travesty of institutional power is an important part of who they are collectively. This, in turn, determines what the group sees as the lessons of Vietnam.

Thus, when a president makes an argument for military intervention in another country, he or she must do so with consideration of the audience's knowledge of and feelings toward analogous interventions in the past. Public memory in this sense is the basis for all such arguments. For Aristotle (Trans. 2007b), rhetoric was built on *endoxa*, the commonly held opinions "that seem right to all people or most people or the wise" (100b18), but as Farrell argued, the agreement of most people requires not a preexisting consensus in the minds of the audience but one which is attributed to them in the discourse (p. 6). Among the most important aspects of Farrell's theory is that rhetors have the ability to "[impart] significance to the numerous 'bits' of information which are disseminated to the mass of public citizens" (p. 12). In this way, social knowledge is at once the basis of arguments and a form of consensus which is constituted by the very discourse which calls upon it. This is an apt description of public memory of Vietnam as

both a rhetorical construction of given views of the war and a rhetorical resource for arguments about subsequent events, such as when arguments against the Iraq War focused on the shared understanding of Vietnam as a quagmire. Rhetors may call on the audience's fragmented memories of the past—the images, narratives, and presumed facts—and as a rhetor selects the pertinent details needed to construct a vision that a given public will agree upon, then that agreement becomes the basis for an argument about the present or the future.

An example of this privileging of one set of beliefs about the past in producing arguments about the future may be found in Stuckey's (1992) discussion of George H.W. Bush's Persian Gulf War rhetoric. Stuckey noted that Bush was able to frame the coming war as one which would be won by a united American public (p. 251). Implicitly, Bush was calling on a public memory of Vietnam as a failure of American unity, one set beside World War II's home front spirit of "pitching in." As a form of attributed social knowledge, Bush made the argument so that it would appeal not just to those who already held such an opinion about Vietnam but for those who *could* form such an opinion when Bush's arguments seemed to assume that to be the truth of the failure of the war. Such appeals only asked the audience to remember images of disunity and turbulence—found, for example, as Storey (2003) argued, in Vietnam war films— and to piece that information together into an attitude toward the past and a memory of failure based on this social conflict.

Such rhetorical constructions and uses of public memory are common themes in scholarship on issues other than Vietnam, as well (Biesecker, 2004; Bodnar, 2001; Edy, 2006; Hasian, 2001; Huyssen, 1995; Morris, 2004). The way in which the story of the past is told impacts the way in which it serves as a resource for decisions in the present, and as scholarship on Vietnam has shown, when opposing sides can benefit from opposing interpretations of the past, memory becomes a site of conflict with political and cultural consequences.

Although scholarship on Vietnam and other issues in public memory provides an example of the discursive uses and constructions of public memory, it does not adequately address how different views of the past rise and fall in prominence, even dominance, over time. Why, for example, were George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush

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able to successfully muster support for their wars in Iraq while Reagan was not able to gain support for war in Nicaragua?[35] Of course, attempting to answer such questions inevitably leads to speculation which cannot be proven, but they are nonetheless useful prompts for thinking about how public memory evolves over time and how the forging of a usable past for a given public can have more or less impact at different times. A number of scholars have been interested in this shifting of public memory as one set of attitudes ascends in prominence and influence over time (Bodnar, 1992; Huyssen, 2000; Kubal, 2008; Novick, 1999; Schwartz, 1991, 2000, 2008; Winter, 2006). Generally, these scholars attribute shifts in memory to changes in power within the social order, but they may not entirely address the relationship between discourse and power.

Bodnar's (1992) work on public memory is among the most prominent studies to link power to public memory, examining the competition between official and vernacular interests in establishing a dominant public memory through different periods of U.S. history. He found that commemorative activities have favored one perspective over the other at different times and surmised that this indicated a shift in power within the culture. However, this conception of power assumed strict categories of competing interests and stable group identities. One reason Bodnar's study fell short of providing a model for public memory processes is that he seemed to focus on "national memory" by limiting the study to such themes as patriotism in national events and local commemorations. While he certainly was studying memories disseminated in public, what he seemed to neglect is that the various groups he considered were not merely subgroups within a singular public, but rather publics unto themselves. Although he was wary of assuming consensus in defining this national memory, he could not help but imply it when arguing that given views dominated at certain times. Consequently, the perspective on shifting public memory in Bodnar's work relied on changes in the balance of power among groups, though it is unclear how such groups and such memories became more prominent and thus more powerful.[36]

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[35] See Goodnight (1996) for an analysis of Reagan's attempts to reframe Vietnam and gain support for war in Nicaragua.

[36] For instance, Bodnar (1992) wrote of the rise of the "lost cause" public memory formed in the southern U.S. in the late nineteenth century by a movement "in literature, schooling, and in public commemorative activities" (p. 31). According to Bodnar, "In this public version of the Civil War southern soldiers had

Schwartz's research on how Americans have remembered Washington (1991) and Lincoln (2000, 2008) over the course of several centuries provided a similar view of memory and power. He found that collective memory reflected the needs of the present, a point common in collective memory scholarship (Huyssen, 2000; Winter, 2006). However, what he left out is a consideration of how the needs of the present are shaped by competing groups vying for influence over collective memory. For example, Schwartz (2008, pp. 130-131) discussed how African American organizations sought to reframe the Civil War as a fight to end slavery, rather than preserve the union, and yet he did not address the ways in which the changing view of Lincoln and the Civil War during the Civil Rights era was a result of the growing influence of the African American community in framing the collective memory. In other words, it may be argued that as the African American public grew in prominence,[37] they were thus able to make more resonant this view of Lincoln not just for African Americans but for a growing public constituted by the circulating discourse of the era. Schwartz attributed the change in the perception of Lincoln to the circumstances rather than the success of Civil Rights discourse and the associated publics, failing to acknowledge that it was this discourse that created those circumstances and the publics that influenced them.

Kubal's (2008) work follows the lead of Bodnar (1992) and Schwartz (1991, 2000, 2008) by inquiring into the ways groups compete for influence in the public sphere as they work to shape collective memory. He employed the term "memory movements" to highlight how different groups across time have managed to shift the meaning of the Christopher Columbus myth. This research focused on social movements and the ways groups could gain access to power by influencing collective memory of Columbus, a fairly controversial notion summed up in Kubal's claim that "It is not the powerful that

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fought bravely but were simply outnumbered by the forces of the North. Southerners had a noble cause and had no reason to feel ashamed" (p. 31). Although it may seem obvious that a public memory that gives the south a sense of the past about which citizens of southern states could be proud, it is not clear how business interests—which Bodnar said were responsible for the rise of the lost cause public memory—managed to gain an influence on the public memory, how they were able to insert this memory into literature and education, or even who these people were.

[37] Perhaps it would be even more accurate to identify the rising group as a "civil-rights-conscious" public, rather than one seemingly identified by preexisting racial or ethnic identification. The point is that as this group gained prominence in public discourse and was able to appeal to greater numbers, the public grew in strength to the point where the discourse could reframe the meanings of Lincoln, the Civil War, and the very concepts of race and citizenship.

control the past, but rather it is the 'soon to be' powerful that control the past" (p. 171). The past is a resource not just for the elites who provide the frame to which a public responds, as much scholarship on memory and power would suggest, but a resource for marginalized groups to challenge elite power. Building on McAdam's (McAdam, 1999) political process model of social change, Kubal argued that social movements affect change when they are able to "take advantage of political opportunities, effectively mobilize resources, and produce resonant framing" (p. 5). Although Kubal's view seems to presume preexisting identities and rhetorical agency similar to Bodnar and Schwartz, it does suggest that the struggle for public memory is a struggle for power, not the *result* of shifts in power. Thus, while Reagan could be said to already hold power as the President, ostensibly representing a conservative public, this did not automatically grant him agency to define public memory of Vietnam for the mass of the American people. Rather, he could only muster support and thus the power to engage in military intervention in Nicaragua if he were able to first skillfully shape public memory about Vietnam in order to support arguments for intervention in another country, as both Presidents Bush were later able to do.

Kubal's (2008) view begins to accommodate a theory of public memory as a memory of publics, as a struggle among discursively constituted groups to shape public memory and make use of it for their own interests. In order to better understand these shifts in prominence and even dominance among competing public memories, it is useful to consider in greater depth how the discourse of groups may rise and fall in prominence and how that prominence may translate to greater appeal to more people. For this perspective, one may turn to scholarship on attitude influence and public opinion.

2.3   The Opinion of Publics

In this chapter, I have suggested that rhetors can both assume their audience to believe something and at the same time constitute them as believers. One explanation for how this is possible can be found in the vast research on attitude formation and public opinion, much of which suggests that individuals tend to hold fragmentary, ambivalent views that may be called upon in support of multiple, even contradictory perspectives at different times. This fragmentation of belief has important implications for the

construction and uses of public memory, just as it does for the construction and uses of public opinion. Accordingly, this section takes public opinion and attitude influence research as a guide for understanding how public memory forms and changes, how individuals come to identify with groups and discourses, and how this identification suggests cultural and political consequences.

Public opinion can be seen as an analog to public memory in two senses. First, both are estimates of aggregated individuals' thoughts, at once formed in the individual mind and in the interaction with the public. Second, they both can be said to "shift" as one set of views rises in prominence and appears to become dominant over time. The advantage of looking to public opinion research for a prompt for thinking about public memory is that some of the social science research on opinion and attitude influence offers a model of how to conceptualize the ways large groups' apparent shared feelings can shift over time in response to the circulation of discourse.

2.4 Opinion, Memory and the Individual

The conception of public opinion favored here is the rather cynical view expressed by such statements as the title of Bourdieu's (1973/1979) well-known essay, "Public opinion does not exist." Similarly, for Entman & Herbst (2001), public opinion is a "useful fiction" (p. 203) that imprecisely conflates several phenomena influenced by the media.[38] These views are much in keeping with those of prominent rhetorical theorists such as McGee (1975) and Hauser (1999), as well. McGee was critical of social science research that aimed to identify "the will of the people" and assert the majority's feelings on issues (p. 237). Instead of this model of a so-called objective, mathematical view of the spirit of the people, McGee argued that "the people" "are conjured into objective reality, remain so long as the rhetoric which defined them has force, and in the end wilt away, becoming once again merely a collection of individuals" (p. 237). Politicians, for example, can attribute a collective identity and a supposed shared set of needs and aspirations in order to serve their political purposes. This can be done through

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[38] They identify four common referents that they see invoked when people talk of "public opinion:" mass opinion, activated public opinion, latent public opinion, and perceived majorities. Each of these can be used to support misleading statements about the "will of the people."

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the appeal of national myths, as McGee noted, but also through the manipulation of polling and other ways of framing the majority opinion. Along similar lines, Hauser resisted quantitative definitions of public opinion, arguing that "survey research transmutes public opinion from a discursive phenomenon to be interpreted and studied critically into a behavioral phenomenon to be quantified and studied scientifically" (p. 191). However, although this skepticism of the quantification of opinion is justified, it does not mean that all the conclusions of political theorists engaging in such research must be disregarded. This is especially true of theories that have attempted to describe the processes of opinion formation while resisting the tendency in the social sciences to define mass behavior and justify claims of the people's will. In these cases, such research can at least be seen as presenting provocative ways of thinking about how public opinion and public memory share characteristics and share ways of thinking about publics.

As phenomena of the individual psychology, public opinion and public memory have both been seen as composed of latent fragments stored in memory that must be recalled in order to be made intelligible and usable in public discourse. In his landmark research on public opinion, Zaller (1992) criticized the ability of survey research to measure opinion as a stable phenomenon of the individual's mind. Instead, he claimed that "citizens do not typically carry around in their heads fixed attitudes on every issue on which a pollster may happen to inquire; rather, they construct 'opinion statements' on the fly as they confront each new issue" (p. 1). The opinion one forms depends on which "considerations" "are at the top of the head at the moment of response" (p. 54), including those cued by the pollster's question. Public opinion, then, is real in the sense that it can be mobilized to support policy arguments and processes of collective identity, but it is a fiction in the sense that in part it attempts to define in mass terms what is unstable and even subject to manipulation at the individual level.

Fundamental to this process of constructing opinions "on the fly" is the concept of retrieval which rhetoricians interested in memory have long understood to be an essential aspect of individual memory. The emphasis on retrieval of memory can be found in the story of Simonides told by Cicero (1942) and frequently cited by scholars of rhetoric and memory. In the story, Simonides was commissioned to present a poem at a

banquet for the nobleperson, Scopas. After he completed the recitation of the poem, he was called outside by a messenger, and while he was gone, the roof of the hall collapsed, killing all those inside and so mangling their bodies that they could not be recognized. However, Simonides was able to identify each of them because he had a mental picture of the location each guest sat within the room. The story illustrates the mnemonic power of both spatial location and imagery in the disciplined process by which information is encoded in, and made retrievable from, the individual memory. Rhetorical scholars such as Phillips (2010), have also looked to the retrieval process of individual memory to discuss public memory. In examining the difference between memory and recollection, Phillips called on Plato's *Theaetetus*, in which Socrates offered the metaphor of an aviary where one possesses a large number of birds collected over time. Phillips explained, "one begins with a memory (an imprint from previous experience) of the bird one seeks and then goes in search (recollection) of that specific bird among the various other types of birds one has collected" (p. 212). However, when Phillips went from the individual-level of personal memory to the collective level of public memory, his concept of recollection changed and no longer seemed to be about retrieval of stored information. Instead, it seemed to emphasize the encoding aspect of the disciplining of memory. Recollection here is public process by which competing groups struggle for control over the dominant image of the past. While this is an important aspect of public memory, it may be that something is lost in the change of meaning between individual recollection and public recollection that is maintained by Zaller's (1992) notion of public opinion as always based on the individual's recollection. In fact, a study of public memory benefits from both views, from seeing the public struggle of the dominant meanings of images of the past as one that depends on the psychological processes in the minds of individuals.

What is important for Zaller's (1992) theory but largely unacknowledged in much rhetorical scholarship on memory is the importance of the cue to trigger recollection. When public discourse invokes the past, it sometimes requires the individuals in the audience to fill in the implicit information about the past, such as a

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judgment about what a particular event means, in order to support an argument.[39] However, Zaller's work would suggest that when rhetors make such appeals they are not relying on audience members to retrieve a fully-formed memory. This would severely limit their ideal audience to only those who had already thought about and formed the precise judgment of the past that their argument requires. As in the example of Vietnam war discussed above, then, when George H.W. Bush argued that the Gulf War would not be a failure of national unity like Vietnam (Stuckey, 1992), the argument appealed not only to those who had already thought about the war in that way and stored that particular judgment in their memories. The argument also appealed to those individuals who could then scan their memories for the set of associations linking Vietnam with the image of protestors spitting on veterans or burning draft cards to form a judgment consistent with Bush's argument. This is a public invocation of individual psychological processes consistent with Zaller's theory of public opinion mobilized for rhetorical discourse operating at the public level.

2.5 Public Opinion Shift

If public memory and public opinion may be seen as rooted in the retrieval processes of the individual mind, understanding "shifts" in these phenomena requires a focus more at the level of public discourse. However, rhetorical scholars have not theorized the way these shifts occur. One could extrapolate from the rhetorical theorists above some estimates of how public memory might shift in accordance with their views of publics. For example, McGee's (1975) theory may suggest that the shifting of the supposed "will of the people" would be based on the appeals of leaders to induce audiences to identify with particular sets of myths. In Hauser's (1999) conception of public spheres arising around given issues, if it could be said that public opinion "shifts," it would be only to the extent that particular issues become more salient to more people over time, resulting in greater engagement among diverse voices on those issues. The notion of public recollection as a struggle among competing groups in Phillips's (2010) conception would seem to suggest a similar rhetorical process by which groups make

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[39] Like Farrell's (1991/1999) discussion of social knowledge, this is the use of the memory in the enthyme that serves as the basis of Aristotle's rhetoric (Phillips, 2010, p. 216).

arguments for the kinds of images that should be considered in public memory and the appropriate ways to interpret them. Although these extrapolations may seem plausible, they do not quite describe *how* individuals agreeing on issues would come to be identified as a group, how they would expand their influence to other individuals, or how that group would rise in prominence and assert influence on the larger culture.

Public opinion and attitude influence scholarship, however, can offer theories of the social, often subtle, influences on attitudes to help guide understanding of shifts in public memory. For instance, early scholars of the influence of opinion leaders and reference groups (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1948; Merton & Kitt, 1952; Newcomb, 1952) theorized the ways those who are less engaged in the political process learn about issues and form opinions based on what others say about them. More recently, the Spiral of Silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1974) and contagion (Bartels, 1988) theories of public opinion have theorized the ways in which individuals form and express opinions based on their observations of circulating discourse and their judgments on which views are ascendant, apparently dominant, and socially acceptable. In Noelle-Nuemann's Spiral of Silence theory, for example, members of a group are constantly monitoring the apparent dominant opinion of the group through what she called a "quasi-statistical organ" (p. 44). According to the theory, individuals who sense that the view they hold is held by the minority of the group or is contrary to an ascendant view will choose not to express their opinion on the issue. Consequently, the vocal minority may tend to silence the majority, and thus a spiral ensues in which only the minority view is being expressed, leading to the appearance of dominance for that view, which in turn continues to silence holders of opposing views.[40] In fact, all of these

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[40] Noelle-Nuemann's theory is based on survey research which has been called into question, particularly by Glynn, Hayes, & Shanahan (1997), for its isolation from the social pressures that form an important aspect of the theory. Much research has answered their calls for more experimental research that attends to these shortcomings (McDevitt, Kiousis, & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2003; Neuwirth, Frederick, & Mayo, 2007; Woong Yun & Park, 2011). One study, Kim (2007), moved beyond the survey and experimental methods and employed rhetorical analysis of actually existing online interactions, arguing from examples of silenced South Korean bloggers that a kind of Spiral of Silence develops from online bullying, leading to the silence of not only the bullied but others who may express opinions similar to those of the silenced bloggers. Overall, the vast research on the Spiral of Silence from various methodological and disciplinary approaches indicates that the theory, while certainly questionable in some respects, at least offers a conceptual guide for thinking about how subtle, social pressures impact the kinds of opinions individuals are willing to express and how trends in discourse can rise from such pressures.

theories of attitude influence suggest that the key factor is prominence, the visibility of certain ideas that are "safe" to express, even for those who may have little interest or knowledge about the issues.

In basic terms, there is safety in numbers, and the increased circulation of particular ideas seems to suggest rising numbers and greater safety for individuals to adopt given views. This is one way in which political communication scholars have provided useful frameworks for thinking about how these shifts depend on the press's coverage of an issue, especially when they favor one view while rendering the opposing side invisible. For example, Bennett (1990) argued that the news media adjusts its coverage of political issues according to the balance of elite opinion and that a partisan split among elected officials leads to balanced reporting on both sides of the issue, but when one of the sides stops speaking out, the coverage of that side fades. Bennett found this to be the case in the coverage of the Iran-Contra scandal, in which the issue was allowed to "die" when oppositional Congresspersons faced attacks that jeopardized their reelection prospects. As oppositional voices in Congress disappeared, Republicans were able to salvage Reagan's image and even win funding for the support of the Contras in the vacuum created by the lack of critical attention.

Bennett's indexing theory and the Iran-Contra example he cited have particularly telling implications for a consideration of public memory, especially when one compares, as Bennett did, the escalation of scandal and the damage to Nixon's reputation following Watergate. A generation after Reagan, in fact, another example followed when the Monica Lewinsky affair not only damaged President Clinton's reputation but perhaps played a role in costing the Democrats the 2000 election (Yioutas & Segvic, 2003). From this perspective, one might suggest that the limits of political scandal coverage affected public memory of these presidents. Although Iran-Contra may have some resonance for those who oppose conservative idealization of Reagan, the details are not necessarily clear enough, nor are the feelings about it pervasive enough to form strong associations in the minds of many individuals necessary for potentially reputation-destroying criticisms of Reagan to have great effect. Thus, Republicans are able to praise Reagan without much resistance from large numbers of people who might otherwise oppose some of his actions as president. This is not true for Watergate or Lewinsky,

perhaps because the indexing of media coverage killed the Iran-Contra story much more quietly than Watergate or Lewinsky stories.

Entman's (2004) cascading activation theory provides a related but distinct view of how public opinion and attitude influence research can provide a prompt for understanding shifts in public memory. Entman described the ways that elite officials, principally starting with the White House, frame issues, to which other less prominent elites must respond. The media, then, respond to these frames, most likely by passing them on to the public, particularly if the selection of details and perspectives resonates with preexisting schema. According to Entman, the schemata by which frames are judged and for which frames are constructed are the "knowledge networks" of fragmented associations between concepts stored in individual memory that people call on to interpret news stories.[41] As texts present stories framed in certain ways, they appeal to a schema that is common among many in the public culture. As prominent frames help to influence the kinds of associations people make, it is at once an individual psychological phenomenon and a collectively shared phenomenon that give the appearance of a dominant view in the public discourse and thus potentially trigger the subtle, social influences such as a Spiral of Silence, contagion effect, or reference group opinion formation.

In this way, the news media not only contribute to the construction of public memory, but public memory also plays a role in the framing of news and its influence on those who receive it. As Entman (2004) noted of the Bush Administration's framing of 9-11 in terms of terror, victimhood, and the battle of good and evil: "It required almost no cognitive effort to make the connections promoted by the administration's frame of the event. Previous information had repeatedly activated most of the mental pathways connecting similar or identical concepts in the past" (p. 15). Political elites adept in the language of public relations, then, are able to shape the way news stories are presented to the public in such a way that the stories will be read favorably to their positions based on the store of social knowledge, public memory, and public opinion about past events.

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[41] This kind of associative recollection can be found in Aristotle's (2007a) description of one searching the mind from a starting point and looking for "something similar, … something contrary, or … something closely connected" (p. 39).

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This theory of framing suggests the ways in which individuals and publics may be swayed as stories build on the fragments of knowledge and opinion they hold individually and collectively, framing also a given point of view as apparently dominant over others and thus suggesting momentum. For example, it was the momentum of rallying around the patriotic discourse that slowed and certainly complicated political dissent after the September 11th attacks (Chang, 2003; Gillham & Edwards, 2003; Rothe & Muzzatti, 2004). In the language of Bartels (1988), this is the appearance of a contagion effect, as viewers see stories repeatedly affirming a given schema, that schema appears "natural" and thus suggests a social acceptability and a safety in numbers that makes it safe to adopt that position and, in accordance with the Spiral of Silence, unsafe to oppose that position.

What researchers of public memory can learn from public opinion research and theories of the press is that to understand "shifts" in public memory, they should look at various media to get a sense of how publics build momentum through the circulation of discourse. As these texts present images, narratives, and associations, they bind groups together and produce the schemata by which individuals connect fragments of information. These schemata must be maintained through continual circulation of texts that keep the associations alive in the minds of individuals.

2.6   Memory Maintenance and Methodological Implications

As this chapter has argued, public memory is constructed and made usable through discourses that constitute and call on certain publics to respond to particular representations of the past. The focus on attitude influence and public opinion scholarship suggests a need to explore this conception of public memory with consideration of the ways texts and rhetors frame reality and build momentum for a given view of the past. However, scholars must be aware of how multiple sources throughout the culture perform what I call "memory maintenance." In order for the past to be usable, rhetors must be able to reasonably assume some level of consensus priming for acceptance among their ideal audience. Because memory is volatile, contestable, and subject to decay, this means that public memory requires maintenance in order to keep the fragments of the past resonant.

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In a sense, this maintenance resembles at the level of public discourse what classical rhetoricians saw as the disciplining of memory through repetition. Phillips (2010) makes the point that "In the disciplined repetition of (public) recollection, we find the glimmer of hope that memory can be stabilized and in this way to fulfill the promise of presenting the past in a reliable and 'accurate' way" (p. 217). Phillips's point is valuable for the present study for two reasons. First, it helps see the need for the continued circulation of discourse to do the work of "reminding" individuals of a particular view of the past so that the associations are available for recollection when rhetors need them. However, the skepticism toward accuracy indicated by Phillips's use of quotation marks around "accurate" suggests a second valuable insight as it brings to mind a point that may seem to get lost in the discussion of public memory as an instrumental tool in the shaping of public policy. As Wertsch (2002) put it:

> In contrast to the reliance on an accuracy criterion in psychology and cognitive science, discussions in history, anthropology, and sociology often begin with the assumption … that another function of memory is paramount. They begin with the assumption that memory is to be understood in terms of its role in rhetorical and political processes concerned with identity and a usable past. (p. 32)

Here, the de-emphasis on the instrumental function of public memory and the emphasis on collective identity suggests that the disciplining of public memory is not necessarily, or not exclusively, aimed at ensuring that the past is remembered exactly as it happened. Instead, the past is often remembered as communities need to remember it in order to maintain their collective identity. In this sense, and consistent with a notion of public memory gleaned from Warner's (2002) theory of publics, one important use of memory maintenance is to maintain the public. A disciplined repetition of recollection in this sense is performed through the circulation of discourse that continually affirms and reaffirms the public's collective identity.

One prominent source of memory maintenance can be found in the news media. In describing a period of amnesia about the Holocaust, Zelizer (1998, p. 163) focused on the absence of stories about Nazi atrocities in the press, implying that attention denotes

remembrance while silence suggests forgetting.[42] It is, in fact, the news that plays a major role in maintaining issues and events in public consciousness. Edy (1999, 2006) identified three types of journalistic uses of the past: commemorations, historical analogies, and historical context. Historical analogies are normally the most relevant for studies of public memory because they call on a vision of the past to make sense of current events, but journalistic commemorations and uses of the past for historical context are also important means of memory maintenance. As journalists commemorate anniversaries and trace the roots of events, the past remains relevant for considerations of the present, and large audiences are reminded of selected details and images of the past which then may be called upon in arguments about the present and future. For example, to borrow one of Edy's case studies, one may ask how it is that people who were not present, and perhaps not even alive in 1968 come to understand the reference to the Chicago Democratic National Convention. It remains a useful part of social knowledge, at least for many people, because it is invoked in discourse, especially every presidential election year when news media report on conventions and the protester demonstrations outside the conventions. In fact, it may be that it is the maintenance of the memory of Chicago in 1968 that motivates demonstrators to plan large protests at the conventions every four years. This would be a case of the continued circulation of discourse helping to maintain the collective identity of such protestors who may see themselves as inheriting the "Spirit of '68" and seeing mass mobilizations as their role in the political process.

However, this is not to suggest that it is only the voices of the political elite and journalists who circulate the texts that perform such maintenance. Other sources may be found in the popular entertainment media, in online discussions, in pamphlets and zines, music, and any number of texts that contribute to the circulation of a particular discourse constituting a particular public. For those too young to have lived through an experience, as Lang & Lang (1989) found, popular film is the most effective method of developing and maintaining memory of such events. For example, it is widely acknowledged that

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[42] According to Connerton (2008), however, "We cannot … infer the fact of forgetting from the fact of silence" (p. 68). See also work on the rhetoric of forgetting by Vivian (2010), Snee (2001), and Zelizer (1998), plus O'Gorman & Hammilton (2011) for discussions on various types and motivations for forgetting.

film and popular television have become the most important purveyors of knowledge about the past (Calder, 2004, p. 23; Ebbrecht, 2007, p. 221; Grainge, 2003, p. 4; Grajeda, 2007; Hansen, 2001, p. 147; Kaes, 1990, p. 309; Landsberg, 2004; Storey, 2003, p. 101; Sturken, 1997, p. 23). In one sense, this may be attributed to the greater appeal of entertainment media over news media for many people, but the continuing circulation of such entertainment media versus the ephemeral nature of most news media also suggests that in order for the memory information initially presented in news media to endure, it must be remediated in a more durable form more likely to be circulated widely for an extended period of time.

The theories presented here of public memory construction and memory maintenance suggest that scholars must attend not only to rhetorical invention, but also to the discourse that precedes the texts, as well as to the subsequent texts that become possible as a result of this memory maintenance. In other words, this theory of memory maintenance highlights the value of McGee's (1990) approach to rhetorical criticism, which argued that texts must be analyzed as fragments of culture (p. 279). That is, an author draws on existing pieces of discourse in composing a message, while an audience receives the text as only one piece of the culture. Thus, McGee argued, rhetorical critics' "first job as professional consumers of discourse is inventing a text suitable for criticism" (p. 279). Thus, for example, in order to look at the ways in which popular media position publics to remember the Iraq War, it is necessary also to examine the way the war was framed by elites in the news media at the time of the war, the way the public responded to these frames in opinion polls and other forums, how popular and enduring memory texts responded to—or challenged—these views, and how publics in turn responded to these texts.

The concept of public memory offered here values textual representation, as well as indicators of reception such as the presence of re-circulated images, narratives, and judgments of the past in discussions and other cultural practices that serve collective identity formation. On the one hand, the dominance of one view of memory in media texts may be considered influential simply because it gives the impression of a dominant view, and thus, those who form or adjust attitudes or attitude expressions in response to "numbers," will adopt or express that view. This is observable when one looks at the

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discourse produced by everyday people, as in interpersonal discussions and in other kinds of commentary.

Therefore, to study public memory as conceived here, it is important to examine circulating discourse in its many forms, as it invites identification through appeals to fragmented views and bits of memory, social knowledge, and opinion. In the following chapters, this approach is taken up in looking not just at news media, film, and public performative remembrances of the Iraq War, but also at viewer responses to these depictions, especially in online discussions. The object of such research is not only the textual archive but the archive of ideas, the discourses *and* the responses, for public memory lives in all these places, not just in the concrete monuments or commemorative speeches that have been the object of so much research on public memory.

In Chapter Three, I begin to examine the circulating discourse that has helped shape the dominant, critical memory of the Iraq War by examining news media images and the response to them by online discussants. This analysis offers a chance to see how the initial framing of the events of the war were accepted by many but were later challenged by more people as they began to draw on other resources to help them dispute the initial meanings. As the discursive resources enabling viewers to reframe the imagery became more widely available and more acceptable, the dominant meanings of this early imagery were revised to reflect the circulation of a more critical discourse.

3. Malleable Memories

As Chapter Two argued, public memory can be thought of as a storehouse of ideas, opinions, images, narratives, and facts about the past that bind together a collection of strangers and serve as inventional resources for arguments among such publics. There is not, however, a single set of elements on which all members of a given culture agree, nor do the contents of this figurative storehouse carry objective meanings for all members. Instead, the meanings associated with certain events depend on the struggle amongst competing groups seeking to influence the kinds of arguments these memory figures can support. The struggle over the meaning of images of the Iraq War provides an illustration of the creation of these resources in a media-saturated public sphere dominated by political and media elites.

In this chapter, I will first examine scholarship on the power of images to affect perceptions and memories of events, then look at how the meanings of images, as well as the larger discourse surrounding them, can be framed to support different interpretations. In this process, I supplement previous public memory scholarship with political communication scholarship on news media framing to consider how public memory of the Iraq War has been negotiated by competing groups attempting to gain prominence for given frames that can be called on to make sense of the images of the war. I argue that the ascent of the "Bush lied" schema made it possible for more voices to respond critically to the images of the war and even offer credible counterframes to revise the meanings of previous images. In this view, the competition over public memory is the struggle between discourses and between publics to gain credibility for their ideas, to construct credible schemata by which wider audiences can understand events and, thus, invite the media and political elites to frame stories in ways favorable to their interests.[43] I will illustrate these points by analyzing the circulation of imagery depicting the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in central Baghdad's Firdos Square on April 9, 2003. Although there has been much scholarship on the news coverage of the "toppling"

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[43] As is addressed below, the usage of the terms "schema" and "frame" are borrowed from Entman (2004, pp. 6-7), for whom schemata were "interpretive processes that occur in the human mind" while frames were the product of textual appeals that activate the network of associations that are schemata in viewers' minds.

imagery, it has tended to focus on the mainstream news media's portrayals of the event without acknowledgement of reception or re-circulation. I contribute to this scholarship by examining how internet users responded to and made use of the imagery in online discussions. In looking at such imagery and its uses, it is important to probe how reception and context of production and reproduction help influence how events are remembered—i.e. how they come to hold a given set of meanings for larger audiences and thus favor one public's interests as time goes by. As "Bush Lied" rose in prominence, it became more acceptable to assert counterframes that challenged the "victory" frame initially attached to the toppling imagery. In turn, the revised interpretations of the event became more dominant and were ultimately used to not only challenge the Bush Administration's frames of the war in general, but also to make sense of subsequent events, namely the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings. This is an example of imagery serving as an inventional resource in arguments based on a shared understanding of the past, and it highlights the ways that the press, political elites, and various publics compete to influence public memory.

3.1   Image and Consensus

As Hariman & Lucaites (2007) noted while the Iraq War was still going on, "It should not be surprising that the struggle over the meaning of the Iraq war is being waged in part as a competition between images (p. 295). The struggle, however, may just as well be described as a competition *over* images, as competing groups not only attempt to foreground the images that represent the war consistently with their worldview, but also attempt to influence the meaning of images in the dominant "public consciousness." In addition, it may be noted that in this competition, it is not mere snapshots appearing in isolation that are sites of this conflict, but rather collections of *imagery* which include the numerous, potentially confabulated, photographs depicting multiple views of the same event or related events, as well as the verbal allusions to those images or the events they depict. The image of George W. Bush posing in a flight suit on the deck of the U.S.S Abraham Lincoln, the related but often discussed as distinct photograph of Bush speaking in front of a "Mission Accomplished" banner, the many photos of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein in central Baghdad, and the

various photos of prisoner abuse and torture at the hands of mocking American guards at Abu Ghraib detention facility all provide vivid resources by which the war is discussed and remembered. Whereas "Mission Accomplished" is represented by a single photo of a single event, there are nearly three hundred photos from Abu Ghraib[44] that may be referred to individually or collectively. As this imagery becomes the site of struggle for the control of meaning of the Iraq War, it becomes part of the discourse by which publics form their shared understandings of the war and becomes a resource for making arguments not just about that war, but also about other events based on the meanings associated with Iraq by dominant groups in the public sphere.

This struggle over the meanings of images is important because, as scholars of rhetoric and public memory have argued, photographs and images are essential resources in both collective and individual memory. Zelizer (2004), in fact, blurred the distinction between personal and collective memory, noting that, although public photographs may lack the detail of personal memory, "Collectively held images act as signposts within these limitations, providing a frame in which people can collectively appropriate images" (p. 161). The culture, then, becomes a vast storehouse for visual memories, increasing the ability of individuals to recall the past, and thus "make the past work for present aims" (p. 161). The image fills a vital function in the rise of the "materiality of the trace" which Nora (1989, p. 13) lamented as the shift from internal, ritualized memory to the external archive. He referred to a physical archive in which a culture collects artifacts documenting its past, arguing that "Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects" (p. 9). Here, however, I assume that, although such artifacts are important for their physical presence in a museum or even on the internet, they can also be stored within the individual's mind once the photos are produced and circulated publically. This means simply that several individuals may share a common image of an event even if neither was present, and this common image helps them relate to each other through a shared understanding of the past based on the image. For example, a verbal reference to "Abu Ghraib" may conjure an image of a hooded prisoner standing on a wooden box with wires attached to him. The image

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[44] The online magazine *Salon* published 279 images and nineteen videos from Abu Ghraib from late 2003, many of which showed abuse and torture of prisoners (Salon, 2006).

represents a common understanding of what happened at the prison and suggests, for many, a certain narrative of the Iraq War.

Photographs are also particularly powerful because they are thought of as objective sources of information about the world. As Sontag (2005) observed, "A photograph passes for incontrovertible proof that a given thing happened. The picture may distort; but there is always a presumption that something exists, or did exist, which is like what's in the picture" (p. 3). Partisans can argue about what the prisoner with wires hanging from him reveals about the war and America's treatment of Iraqis, but few argue that there was a prisoner in that position photographed by an American soldier. On the other hand, it is not difficult to stage such an image, so although the objectivity attributed to photographs is false, the perception of objectivity itself gives them some of their power. As Twigg (1992/2008) explained, such images are not only rhetorical, but they "in fact are rhetorically powerful because they can disguise their own rhetoricity" (1992/, p. 23). The rhetoricity of images is particularly important when they are employed in reporting war. Civil War photographer Alexander Gardner (1866/1959), for example, wrote of his Gettysburg photograph, "A Harvest of Death," "Such a picture conveys a useful moral: Here are the dreadful details! Let them aid in preventing such another calamity from falling upon the nation" (41). The "details" were the bodies, splayed out on their backs, eyes closed, mouths agape, necks twisted to the side, hands stiffened in rigor mortis. Gardner, it seems, hoped the photographic image would bring about a consensus judgment that war was not worth the suffering. He was not alone. Journalists, political elites, and the general public have tended to assume that images of suffering and destruction would turn public opinion against war (Andén-Papadopoulos, 2008; Fahmy & Wanta, 2007; King & Lester, 2005; Sharkey, 1993), but this has not proven to be true (Griffin, 2010, 2011; Oliver, 2006).

In truth, the influence of such images may be much more subtle, as Hariman & Lucaites (2007) suggested, noting that iconic images of war may be most effective in "[reinforcing] already established beliefs" (p. 8). Andén-Papadopoulos (2005) argued similarly that the impact on public consciousness of images may be subtle but nonetheless significant in helping shape policy opinions over time (p. 11), an assertion calling to mind Casey's (2004) concept of public memory as a resource on the "outer

horizon" (p. 28) of public consciousness, there waiting "to be invoked" (p. 29) when needed. Hariman & Lucaites were explicit about the rhetorical uses of such images in contributing to the tacit, social knowledge which serves as the basis for persuasive arguments (p. 10). This is the "commonly held beliefs (*endoxa*)" (Aristotle, 2007b, p. 1.3.13) in Aristotle's conception of the enthymeme that stands at the foundation of all rhetorical discourse. One way to look at this is that arguments work best, or perhaps only work, for individuals who all share a common set of assumptions or are willing to accept the assumptions attributed to them (Farrell, 1976) by the discourse. It is in this way that, on the one hand, texts reveal their ideal auditors (Black, 1970/1999) and on the other hand call them into being as a constituted public (Charland, 1987). In Warner's (2002) terms, these audiences constitute distinct publics united by a set of shared discourse and, thus, a shared worldview that separates them from other publics. In other words, groups are defined by their shared social knowledge that is distinct from other groups' social knowledge, and thus "consensus" can only refer to those agreements held by individuals without a group, not consensus across the entire culture or a general conception of "the public."

The belief in the consensus of war images seemed to prompt the Bush Administration to suppress photographs of combat and suffering and replace them with a sanitized, triumphant set of images. Blood, suffering, and combat were far from prominent in the reporting on Iraq (Aday, 2004; Griffin, 2004; King & Lester, 2005; Silcock, et al., 2008), thanks in large part to the limited access of photojournalists to such scenes, but also to editorial decisions and cultural customs (Griffin, 2010; King & Lester, 2005, p. 632; Silcock, et al., 2008, p. 37). Instead of blood and suffering, the images dominating the news and public memory of Iraq tended to be highly political representations of photo-ops and "pseudo-events." Boorstin (1992) coined the term "pseudo-event" to refer to the kinds of orchestrated public relations events that exist for the purpose of being reported. For example, as scholars such as Schill (2009, pp. vii-viii), Bennett (2005, p. 174), and Anderson (2006, pp. xix-xx) have noted, the images of Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech aboard the U.S.S Abraham Lincoln were highly controlled, from the alteration of the ship's route to the positioning of cameras to the prepping of sailors in the crowd in attempt to produce a "self-fulfilling prophesy" (p.

12). The images of Bush looking heroic in his flight suit, or later speaking in front of the "Mission Accomplished" banner would seem to suggest a truth of the war, that it had been prosecuted by an able Commander in Chief who had achieved victory.

Even images of triumph, however, cannot claim to achieve consensus among all competing publics. For example, while the iconic image of Marines raising the flag at Iwo Jima in World War II may often be associated with, as Hariman & Lucaites (2007) argued, "egalitarian, nationalist, and civic republican appeals" (p. 21), it can be read differently and be employed by different groups for different purposes "across the attitudinal spectrum" (p. 117). An oppositional reading can be found in the folk song "The Ballad of Ira Hayes,"[45] which critiqued the "greatest generation's" failure to deliver a free and just society to all citizens, even, ironically, one pictured in the photograph. The song tells the story of the Marine at the back of the group, a Pima Indian named Ira Hayes whose community was destroyed by American Manifest Destiny but who enlisted to fight in World War II nonetheless. The song works because audiences are familiar with the image, but it also recasts the narrative of the image. Through this appropriation, the liberal folk music scene of the 1960s was able to challenge the dominant notions of America's claims to justice, calling on the image as a resource not with fixed, objective meaning, but one that could be challenged and put to different uses.

Iconic images such as Iwo Jima are particularly powerful in public memory because "the images remain in the public eye while almost all of the other documentation of the period disappears into institutional archives" (Hariman & Lucaites, 2008, p. 11). Their continuing circulation in history books, in retrospective films, in museums, and in other visual and verbally referential contexts keeps the images alive in the public imagination as resources for remembering the past, and in the process, they achieve an *illusion* of consensus not only in agreement of the meaning of the image but in agreement of which images will be called upon to remember the war. Because even the most controlled images are incapable of achieving actual consensus among diverse audiences, as images circulate, they become vulnerable to reappropriation and reinterpretation.

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[45]Written by Paul La Farge in 1963 and recorded by Johnny Cash, Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, and others.

3.2 Framing and Reframing

One of the contributions of Hariman & Lucaites (2007) to the study of visual communication and public culture has been their attention to both production and circulation of photographic icons, much in line with Warner's (2002) theory of publics as a form of stranger relationality constituted by circulating discourse that calls the groups into being as it addresses them. They argued that an iconic photograph's influence "comes from complex relationships between formal characteristics of the image, its circulation across a range of media, and varied appropriations by diverse actors, all within a rich intertext of images, speeches, commentary, and other texts" (p. 9). This intertextuality suggests a web of connected discourse that forms the context by which audiences receive and recirculate the images, and it is among this web of discourses that meanings are formed and ideal audiences are conceived and reached. Hariman & Lucaites's use of "appropriation" suggests not only that these groups can use the image for different purposes, but also that the meaning of the image is malleable. Thus, if one is to study the impact of imagery and what it reveals about public culture, it is important to look at how it is used in constructing arguments by different publics and at different times. Issues such as the context of production and reception may impact the ways in which the imagery is framed and the ways in which it is re-framed as groups challenge the dominant meanings and circulate their own interpretations.

In many ways, the meanings of images of war distributed in the news media are controlled by the same kinds of processes that operate in verbal political communication. Far from communicating objective truths about war, these images are framed to favor given meanings as they are received in accordance with existing schema. In Entman's (2004) cascading activation theory, schemata are the "clusters or nodes of connected ideas and feelings stored in memory" (p. 7) while frames are the ways that texts "[select] and [highlight] some facets of events or issues, and [make] connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation, and/or solution" (p. 5). Roughly speaking, frames are the way rhetors, especially media and political elites, present stories; schemata are the "knowledge networks" stored in individual long term memory that help members of the audience interpret stories. Entman took the term "knowledge

networks" from Kintsch's (1998) work in cognitive science, which argued that people construct meaning in response to propositions that cue the activation of selected nodes stored within a network of other related items in memory. For example, as Entman explained, a reference to "September 11" may activate the nodes for "the World Trade Center, airplane hijackers, Osama bin Laden, the New York fire department, and New York mayor Rudolph Guiliani (among others)" (p. 7). Many of these associations, of course, can be represented in the mind by single images, such as the image of smoke rising from the twin towers or firefighters raising the flag at Ground Zero. The examples Kintsch provided in describing the nodes within knowledge networks were quite simple associations of words with other words because he was interested in the ways machines could simulate human meaning-construction based on complex matrices of words collected from encyclopedia scans. However, Entman's application highlighted the ways in which the construction of meaning features a strong evaluative component. For example, in the knowledge network of "September 11th," audiences not only form associations of words but of emotions, such as positive feelings toward New York City Firefighters and negative feelings toward Osama bin Laden (p. 7). It is because of such schemata that discussants can still invoke "9-11" to appeal to such feelings, as part of the social knowledge that defines their shared understandings of the past, while discussing other issues even more than a decade after the attacks. What were initially frames produced by George W. Bush and other prominent officials—for example, calling the attackers evil—were internalized by many in the public, thus becoming schemata by which they would later interpret subsequent events and news stories.

In the cascading activation theory (Entman, 2004), the president and top administration officials have the first opportunity to frame the meanings of events by selecting information and details that will activate certain schemata, essentially helping to ensure that the initial—and according to Entman, most enduring—interpretation will favor the interests of the administration. However, it is possible for other politicians, the news media, and "the public" to challenge these frames, as long as they do so by reframing the events in accordance with other valid schemata. This process of activation of knowledge networks, then, has two implications for public memory of the Iraq War. First, when the news media frame stories about the war, they activate, or attempt to

activate, given associations stored in the memories of readers. Second, the framing of events has a sort of cumulative effect, as today's events are used to make sense of subsequent events tomorrow. In other words, the news media provide the initial frames by which publics remember the past, though there is always a possibility of establishing new schemata and new frames to compete with them as time goes by.

At the center of issues of framing in the media are questions of public opinion and the relationship between political and media elites. Entman's (2004) cascading activation theory and another prominent theory of the press and the state, Bennett's (1990) "indexing" hypothesis, both argue that the press takes its cues for the framing of stories from political elites, especially the White House. In Bennett's conception, the press offers opposing views only if those views are prominently expressed by other high-ranking officials such as party leaders. Entman argued that journalists are influenced in the ways they present issues by the circulating discourse in their closed, informal networks of media and political elites, arguing that "The more often journalists hear similar thoughts expressed by their sources and by other news outlets, the more likely their own thoughts will run along those lines, with the result that the news they produce will … confirm the same framing" (p. 9). This is one sense in which the mere *visibility* of a point of view can lead to a significant impact on the discourse, and so in order for publics to challenge the dominant frames presented by presidents and other elite officials, groups must find ways to publicize their views—through public protest, for example, or alternative media. In so doing, however, publics must either make their counterframes seem "more congruent … with schemata that dominate the political culture" (p. 14) or, I would argue, to establish enough publicity and credibility for their frames that they present viable schemata by which political and media elites can frame subsequent events. Frequently, however, dominant frames introduced by the White House must be challenged by congressional leaders in response to new information or new events in order for them to be taken seriously. From this point of view, then, the framing of meaning of images and events of war depends to a large extent on the political climate dominated by political elites and the challenges of oppositional publics to gain circulation, credibility, and visibility for their ideas to at least assure opposition elites that it is politically safe for them to express disagreement with the dominant frame.

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The question, of course, is how opposition elites or marginalized groups can gain the attention necessary to credibly establish a counterframe or build a new schema that will impact the way an event is understood in the dominant public memory. One answer may be that changing contexts give these groups the opportunity they need to be heard and be seen as credible. Such a view is central to much research on social movements stemming from McAdam's (1999) "political process model." He wrote that "*any* event or broad social process that serves to undermine the calculations and assumptions on which the political establishment is structured occasions a shift in political opportunities" (Italics in original, p. 41).[46] Similarly, Lawrence (2000) argued that "Events that crystallize deep political and cultural tensions can become 'news icons' that dominate the news and become etched in public memory while they 'mainstream' marginalized ideas" (p. 8). From these perspectives, it is apparent that the views of marginal groups may gain greater impact when events of the war suggest a failure of the policy they oppose or the falsity of the dominant frames they counter. This event-driven view must be tempered, however, with consideration of the power of elites on one side of an issue to downplay, obscure, or even suppress public knowledge of events that would open up a political opportunity for opponents.

3.3   Elite Framing and Abu Ghraib

Journalists in the 2003 war in Iraq did not face the kinds of censorship and limitations on their access to the battlefield that their Persian Gulf War counterparts faced twelve years earlier (Aday, 2004; Bennett, 1994; Patterson III, 1995; Woodward, G. C., 1993). However, the visual representations in 2003 were constrained in other ways by official policies set to favor the kinds of images that would serve the Bush Administration's interests. Among the policies employed to ensure that favorable images were distributed in the mass media were the government's practice of restricting photographs of soldiers' coffins returning to the United States, staging photo-ops, and embedding journalists with combat units, which, as scholars have argued, promised to

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[46] Although this theory is directed more at a radical break with the political system, the concept of political opportunity can certainly provide insight into more subtle breaks, as when partisan elites find it safe to oppose dominant frames.

skew journalists' objectivity (Artz, 2004; Kellner, 2004; Pfau, et al., 2005). The Abu Ghraib images were arguably the first photos to directly challenge the official view of the war, and they were an exception because they were private images produced by soldiers themselves and not meant for mass distribution. Thus, the emergence of negative counterframes only in not-officially-sanctioned reporting suggests the extent to which mainstream media frames supported the Bush Administration, a point consistent with the findings of much research on coverage of the war (Aday, 2010; Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Connolly-Ahern, 2007; Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Strömbäck, 2005; Schwalbe, et al., 2008). For instance, in their comparative study of published images in the first week of the Persian Gulf War and the first week of the Iraq War, King & Lester (2005) found that the images from 2003 overwhelmingly favored the military perspective and deleted the civilian images that were prominent in 1991. However, as Fahmy & Kim (2008) demonstrated, the initial focus on the war machine in the first week of the 2003 invasion soon gave way to the more human-centered frame that included many photographs of civilians. This is consistent with Schwalbe's (2006) and Schwalbe, Silcock, & Keith's (2008) findings that the "conflict" frame and the "human-interest" frame dominated the visual reporting on the war, noting that these were used to "support … the master war narrative, the idea that the United States has a moral imperative to go to war and play the role of global hero" (p. 458). Given such favorable press, the Bush Administration was well positioned to control the meaning of the war through photo-ops and staged images. Even the Abu Ghraib images were well-managed by the administration at first.

Although news of abuse of prisoners in Iraq had surfaced as early as November 2003 (Griffin, 2011), it was not until the appearance of a collection of photographs taken by Abu Ghraib guards in April 2004 that the story caught on. When the images were finally shown on April 28, after the Bush Administration asked CBS's *60 Minutes* to hold them for two weeks, military and Bush Administration officials expressed shock and condemned the actions of a few rogue soldiers.[47] Although the photos of humiliated,

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[47] Bush himself spoke in the Rose Garden on April 30th, saying, "I shared a deep disgust that those prisoners were treated the way they were treated …. Their treatment does not reflect the nature of the American people" (Shanker & Steinberg, 2004).

abused, and brutalized prisoners would seem to support a strong consensus that the images were reprehensible, they were still subject to competing frames about what they revealed about the war. They could be framed either as depicting the actions of a "few bad apples" or as symptomatic of a policy of abuse and torture extending all the way to the Commander in Chief as some on the left argued.[48] According to Bennett, Lawrence, & Livingston (2007) the difference between the frames can be identified by looking at the word selection in stories on the issue, especially whether reports used the term "abuse"—as the Bush Administration characterized it—or "torture"—as some critics called it. For example, Bennett et al. found that only 3% of the stories in the *Washington Post* used the term "torture" as the primary frame, while 81% used the term "abuse" (p. 474). Reporting on Abu Ghraib, then, overwhelmingly adopted the Bush Administration's frame, providing the text to help anchor[49] the meaning of the images by attempting to activate a schema that maintained the image of America as more "civilized" and less brutal than its enemies. In contrast, the dominance of the word "torture" would have activated an association of American service members with torturers such as Saddam Hussein himself and a history of torture that Americans believe the country had always disdained.

Andén-Popadopolis (2008) argued that the brutal Abu Ghraib images remained in tension with the dominant frames used to describe them, suggesting that although frames may be attached to images, they are far from permanent. As time passes and new events alter the contexts for interpreting the images or remembering the events, the initial frames may be subject to challenge or decay. Even though political and media elites seemed to have successfully established and/or accepted the notion that the images depict isolated cases, the incident would be seen as providing context for the stories of torture at Guantanamo Bay that became prominent later in the year. In other words,

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[48] As Griffin (2011, p. 35) pointed out, however, this frame was not taken up by prominent voices in the Democratic Party, including presumptive nominee for president John Kerry. On the one hand, the absence of this view in media reporting can be seen as evidence of the indexing hypothesis at work—not reporting on the alternative interpretation because there were no elites expressing it. On the other hand, it can be seen as evidence of the cascading activation theory because reporters framed the stories in such a way as to appeal only to the dominant schema.

[49] For Barthes (1977), one of the two functions of linguistic messages connected to images is the "anchoring" of meaning, helping the viewer to "choose *the correct level of perception*" and "focus not simply [her or his] gaze but also [her or his] understanding" (italics in original, p. 39).

while Abu Ghraib was generally accepted as *merely* abuse, the images of humiliation and dehumanization prepared the press and the viewing publics to see a pattern of abuse that indicated a policy of torture, rather than random, isolated incidents.[50]

In fact, contrary to conventional wisdom, as Griffin (2011) has pointed out, and as polls showed (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2008), approval of the war in Iraq had been falling sharply in the two months before the abuse photos were released. As Berinsky (2009) argued, it is difficult to claim that events of war, or even the images and reports of them, directly impact public opinion. Instead, it may be more appropriate to consider how the gradual coalescence of given schemata for given publics helped form a shared memory of the events and helped them produce a shared judgment of the war. Thus, while Abu Ghraib photos may not have directly achieved the measurable impact in public opinion polls they are assumed to have, they did aid critical publics in gaining greater voice in the larger discourse as their criticisms of the Bush Administration and the war became more salient over time. This is apparent in Andén-Popadopolis (2008) examination of the appropriation and re-circulation of the Abu Ghraib imagery throughout the U.S. and worldwide popular culture and—more importantly—in the discourse of critics of the Bush Administration.[51] In short, these and other images helped to produce a set of resources enabling individuals and groups to express critical views about the war that would seem valid and familiar to larger audiences.

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[50] Although the reporting on Abu Ghraib quickly faded from view by mid-May, it returned in late November as context in stories about Guantanamo Bay. This is well illustrated by a New York Times editorial published December 1, 2004, one day after the International Red Cross filed a report complaining of abuse at Guantanamo that was "tantamount to torture." The editorial equated the practices at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo, implying that the Bush Administration had been lying about Abu Ghraib, calling the Administration's assurances of respect for the Geneva Conventions following Abu Ghraib "hollow" ("Abu Ghraib, Caribbean style," 2004).

[51] As noted above Andén-Popadopolis (2008) argued that the impact of these images and their continued circulation and appropriation was less a direct change in policy and more an influence on historical consciousness. Although she presented her argument as a challenge to Entman's (2004) concept of cascading activation, it can be seen as supporting the theory when one considers the way in which the Abu Ghraib imagery helped legitimize or normalize the "Bush Lied" schema, which in turn provided a resource to support the counter-frame over time.

3.4   The Toppling Imagery

The rise of oppositional frames and schemata did not begin SAAwith Abu Ghraib, however. An understanding of how news media images impact the public memory of Iraq must also consider how earlier frames became weakened and allowed critical publics retroactively to reframe previously "incontrovertible" images. One of the most significant images from Iraq, both from the perspective of the American effort and from the view of the framing of the war, was the image—or rather imagery—of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein three weeks after the invasion. The initial framing and the subsequent reframing of that imagery offers insight into the ways the war will be remembered and the processes of circulation among multiple publics.

Artz (2004) argued that "Toppling" was the first image of the war to stand out from the daily "flow of comfortable images [that] massaged anxiety and calmed fears" (p. 83). Following two days that may be described as "bad news days,"[52] April 9th finally brought the images America needed to frame the war favorably. On that morning, major United States television news networks began broadcasting the events at Firdos Square as a group of Iraqi citizens presumably gathered spontaneously around the bronze statue of Saddam Hussein, at one point taking swings at its pedestal with a sledge hammer. For nearly two hours, they made no progress in their attempts to destroy the statue or its base until U.S. Marines arrived and dragged it down with an armored vehicle.[53] In what Kellner (2004) called a "semiotic slip," a Marine placed a U.S. flag over Hussein's face, "providing an iconic image for Arab [television] networks and others of a U.S. occupation and takeover of Iraq" (p. 72). However, the flag was quickly replaced with an Iraqi flag, giving the American media the icon they needed to fit the preferred liberation frame. Aday, Cluverius, & Livingston (2005) noted that the imagery served as an icon that "introduced a 'victory' frame into news coverage" (p. 315). For Kellner (2004), the images were exactly the kind of media spectacles the Pentagon wanted to see in the

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[52] On April 7th, a failed attempt to assassinate Saddam Hussein killed a number of civilians and on April 8th two journalists were inadvertently killed by U.S. forces in separate incidents (Griffin, 2011)

[53] According to a story in *The New Yorker* (Maass, 2011), the small number of Iraqis involved had given up attacking the statue by the time the Marines, who had to seek authorization from their commander, responded to the request to help them take it down. The take-down, then, was not wholly invented by military psy-ops, but it was re-initiated by the Marines, at least partially because of the spectacle it could produce in front of the journalists.

press, framed precisely to match their narratives (p. 75). The media even compared the fall of the statue with removal of statues of Lenin at the fall of the Soviet Union (Fahmy, 2007; Major & Perlmutter, 2005; Silcock, 2008).

Major and Perlmutter (2005) discussed the iconoclastic nature of the event in their analysis of what is perhaps its best-known photograph, or at least the one they thought to be the most widely-used on the front page of American newspapers. "A soldier watches toppling," taken by Goran Tomasevic, shows the statue broken at the shins and bent to about a 120 degree angle, spanning the horizontal center of the photo. The foreground is dominated by a U.S. Marine whose body is more or less square to the camera but whose face appears in profile as he looks over his shoulder. Major & Perlmutter noted, as has become a common observation of the imagery, that the tight cropping of the photo made the crowd look larger than it really was. Although they did not use the term "framing" in their analysis, they nonetheless drew attention to the way the shot was framed. In terms of the technical aspects of framing a photograph, they were interested in what appeared within the borders of the shot and what did not appear because it was outside the border. For instance, the photo does not show what is pulling the chain attached to the statue's neck because the armored vehicle is outside the shot. This deletion of the agent of causation and the position of the watching Marine makes it appear as though the toppling was an event merely witnessed by the Marines. Like a sentence written in the passive voice, then, the image suggests, "A Marine looked on as a statue of Saddam Hussein was pulled down in Baghdad."[54] It does not say who pulled it down or how many Iraqis were involved, and thus the framing of the image was ambiguous enough to support stories that framed the event—in the sense of an interpretive frame of news stories that activates schemata—as a spontaneous expression of iconoclasm by a newly liberated Iraqi people.

It would be an oversimplification, however, to suggest that this photograph and the related imagery offered only a flat, strictly-controlled representation. Analysis of

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[54] The *Los Angeles Times* ran the image on their front page on April 10th with the cutline, "A member of the U.S. military watches as a statue of Saddam Hussein is toppled in central Baghdad." Other papers using the image did imply or name the agent of causality, however, such as *The Hartford Courant*, which featured the cutline, "A statue of Saddam Hussein is dragged down by a U.S. armored vehicle Wednesday in central Baghdad." Other papers implied that the Americans *helped* the Iraqis or the Iraqis *helped* the Americans or that the two groups cooperated in the task.

other images that dominated the front pages of the more than 150 U.S. newspapers featuring one or more toppling photos the next day reveals that the imagery could emphasize multiple details of the scene and subtle differences of the narrative, yet virtually all of those printed in the U.S. on April 10th generally favored the dominant frames of victory and liberation. To begin, there were a number of common elements in the dozens of distinct images that may be collectively referred to as "the toppling." Many of the photos showed Iraqi people—all of them men—smiling, throwing their arms into the air, shouting, attacking the statue and its base, and expressing gratitude to the American Marines. Many photos depicted the statue itself in different states: standing, falling, and fallen down and/or in pieces—and a great many newspapers showed a sequence of images, documenting the fall of the statue. Many photos showed American Marines: preparing to pull the statue down, placing flags on its face, being embraced or cheered by Iraqis, or merely observing the scene. Of course, photos also depicted the scene, including the people, statue, and equipment, but also the landscape, blue sky, and the architecture of the square, with the minarets and the dome of a mosque particularly drawing attention in many of the shots.

These elements were often combined in a single photo, and multiple photos were often juxtaposed on the front page of a newspaper to create an apparent narrative of the event. The *New York Times*, for example, displayed four photos on its April 10th front page. The largest featured the statue set against the blue sky in the 120 degree position, bent at the shins. In this image, the statue seems to bend down toward the mosque in the background, with its minaret and pointed dome taking a prominent position in the scene and presenting what might be called "Islamicity" or "Arabicity," to borrow from Barthes's (1977) famous analysis of the "Italianicity" of a Panzani pasta advertisement. In this image, the crowd actually appears very small, distant, and passive—with none of the civilians holding their arms up or apparently moving. If this part of the image were viewed in isolation, it would scarcely offer any support for the Bush Administration's victory or liberation narratives. Rather, it may seem to signal a rise of Islamic government in Iraq as the secular regime symbolized by the statue falls before the

symbolism of the mosque.[55] However, in combination with the other elements of this image and with other text and images associated with the scene, the story is much different. For example, the position of the statue draws attention to the action of the event, or rather the soon-to-be action suggested by nascent motion. The statue is not fallen, but it is clearly about to fall, and what will happen in the aftermath has great potential that can be filled in by the viewer and/or satisfied by juxtaposed images.

On the *Times's* cover, the bending statue image is accompanied by three smaller photos immediately below it that break the stillness of the first. From left to right, they show (1) the statue, now severed at the shins in the midst of a fall. This more tightly-cropped framing shows only a glimpse of a few Iraqis in the background—still seemingly motionless—and none of the signs of "Arabicity." Next to this image is (2) a tightly-cropped photo of a Marine in front of the pedestal on which the statue had stood, now swarmed with smiling Iraqi men, several with their arms in the air, and one giving the camera two "thumbs up" while an Iraqi flag waves over his shoulder. Of greatest interest is that the laughing Marine is being embraced and kissed by an Iraqi man. The next image (3) is one of great motion. Four Iraqis are pushing the head of the statue along the pavement—the head has been fractured at the top of the skull and seems to be attached to a rope as if it is to be dragged. The background of the image is motion-blurred, suggesting great movement by the Iraqi people in the wake of Hussein's collapse.

This collection of images can be read as indicating a rising of the Iraqi people, but the associated text contributes to that meaning, as well, through a similar process of building the narrative in fragments. The caption below the images reads, "A symbol crashes down" and the cutline begins, "In a square in central Baghdad, American

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[55] While the symbolism would seem to support such a reading, the context of the war and U.S. politics would make such a reading difficult or unlikely for many U.S. viewers of the time. The fall of Hussein had been greatly anticipated by April, 2003, and viewers may have preferred to read the architecture as connoting "Arabicity" rather than "Islamicity" in light of the association of the Iraq War with the "War on Terror" and the "War on Terror's" association with battling Islam. In the "War on Terror," Islam was the enemy—and many Americans likely could not identify whether Hussein's regime was secular or Islamic, a fact that helped Bush imply a link between Hussein and Osama Bin Laden in the lead-up to the war—so the image would seem unlikely to activate such associations for many. However, this is more a testament to the shortsightedness of the Bush Administration and the American people, who did not know enough about the region before the war to foresee the coming factional conflict between Sunnis and Shiites in post-invasion Iraq.

marines (*sic*) lashed a towering statue of Saddam Hussein to their armored vehicle and pulled it down." This description gives the agency of the toppling of the statue to the American Marines, saying nothing of the attempts of the Iraqi people to take it down with a sledge hammer and a rope before the Marines took over with their chain and vehicle. However, the cutline continues, "Jubilant Iraqis … kissed Lance Cpl. Shawn Hicks, while others dragged the statue head through the streets." Here, the text anchors the meaning of the images, and even as the agency of the Iraqi people is minimized, the presentation nonetheless affirms the narrative of the Bush Administration: the American soldiers have been "greeted as liberators" (Russert, 2003), and they have set the Iraqi people free to become the agents of their own freedom.

It does not take a great deal of effort to recognize that since the statue was pulled down by an armored vehicle, Marines were the agents most responsible for its fall. However, almost no images on the nation's front pages actually showed Marines in action, and none showed the vehicle or the Marine pressing the accelerator in the vehicle that actually brought the statue down. The most action visible in the images of Americans is the Marine who placed the flags over the statue's face. Again, it is the action, not the agent who is most important here. Although the placing of flags on the statues is highly symbolic of the American victory—even in the shot in which it is an Iraqi flag placed over the face—it is a rather passive act compared to the shots of Iraqis swinging a sledgehammer, stomping on the statue, throwing their shoes at it, dragging it through the streets, cheering, and embracing. The imagery, then, supports competing narratives of liberation,[56] but what is certain from the most active images and the texts that influence their readings is that "the Iraqi people" are jubilant, rising as a mass to celebrate their liberation.

Although little of the U.S. television broadcast footage of the toppling is available online—most clips are only a few seconds long—the clips that can be found on YouTube and network homepages show a scene of furious activity at the moment by the Iraqi people, to which the American Marines are merely witnesses. In a clip of the Fox News original broadcast now available on YouTube (King Garcia, 2006), for example, the scene shifts between several different medium and close shots that emphasize the

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[56] Self-liberation of the Iraqi people or American liberation of the Iraqi people.

falling of the statue while the commentators call it an "incredible sight." At one point, the statue, still attached to the pedestal, rests in a downward diving position, but the truck stops pulling it, at which point about a dozen spectators rush forward and throw shoes and other items at the statue. The Fox News commentator says, "It's hard to keep the people away," a comment that seems to ambiguously suggest a massive crush of people, rather than the twelve or fewer who could not be kept away.[57] In fact, the shot on the screen when this was spoken shows the majority of the crowd standing still, many of them appearing by their posture and movements to be bored. A moment later, the statue finally releases from its base, and after its fall, the scene cuts between shots showing as many as two or three dozen people rushing forward to stomp and dance on the fallen statue. This fits well with the Fox commentator's claim following the separation of the statue from the pedestal that "Iraq has been liberated," though on the edges of these shots, the majority of the people—even some within about fifteen feet of the fallen statue—apparently remain disinterested.[58] What the visual and textual framing devices do in these examples is identify which details are important while others are de-emphasized. "Jubilance," for example, is emphasized verbally and visually as the camera zooms in to select those civilians who react to the fall of the statue apparently with great joy.

After the fall, movement in general and gratitude become the focus, while those in the crowd who seem to have little emotional response are relegated to the margins or cut from shots altogether. On the one hand, the tightly framed shots of the crowd help to frame the event as a massive uprising, but on the other hand, the glimpses at the edge of the imagery—the bored bystanders checking their watches and glancing around as others

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[57] Here, "the people" refers to a small group in Firdos Square, but it seems to imply that this small group can also imply the kinds of invocations of "the people" addressed by McGee (1975) in his work on the rhetorical construction of mass identity. Descriptions of "the Iraqi people" gives them greater unity than even Vice President Cheney did when he placed in passive voice his statement that he believed U.S. soldiers would "be treated as liberators" (Russert, 2003)—treated as liberators by whom? By how many? "It's hard to keep the people away" suggests that the mass of Iraqis far and wide are reveling in what the Americans have done for them.

[58] It is difficult to tell who are journalists in the crowd and who are civilians. Outside the inner circle of stomping celebrants, many seem to simply move to get a better view while others stay in place or even turn away. Certainly, there are those who danced and celebrated, but the description of one Fox commentator that "'Jubilant scenes' is too mild a word for what we're seeing in Baghdad" (King Garcia, 2006) seems unjustified.

cheer—draws attention to the weakness of the "Jubilant Iraqis" frame. Also conspicuously absent in the newspaper front pages or the brief Fox broadcast clip is any mention of the Weapons of Mass Destruction or terrorists that were alleged to be the reason for the war.[59] Therefore, not only does the framing of this imagery affirm the Bush Administration's positions, but it refuses to call attention to the inconsistencies of that position. Although there are elements that can be drawn upon to challenge the dominant frame in these images that were given prominent circulation in U.S. newspapers and television, a less-well circulated set of imagery and contextual information threatened to expose, as Twigg (1992/2008, p. 23) put it, the rhetoricity of the images.

3.4.1   The Image as Deception

As Major & Perlmutter (2005) pointed out, the images of the toppling showed an at least partially staged pseudo-event taking place *conveniently* in the immediate vicinity of the hotel that served as headquarters for a large number of journalists (p. 42). Unfortunately for the Bush Administration, however, there did exist wide-framed shots presumably taken from the hotel that revealed the crowd to be small and the major work of the toppling to be done by the U.S. Marines who controlled the area.[60] This meant that those groups with opposing views would only have to gain access to these images in order to present a counterframe suitable for challenging the Bush Administration. In fact, the preexisting schema of "Bush Lied" with which to offer such a challenge was already present but not yet prominent in the discourse. For at least several more weeks, the schema would remain at the margins of public culture, in the discourse of 9/11 conspiracy theorists and anti-war protesters who had been given little favorable coverage

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[59] Although this research was not an exhaustive study of television broadcasts and should not be taken as a definitive pronouncement of the absence of mention of WMDs in coverage of the toppling of the statue, Aday, Cluverius, & Livingston's (2005) content analysis of Fox News and CNN coverage indicated that the "victory" frame that dominated their presentation of the event did push other issues, including WMD, off the news agenda.

[60] These wide shots were, in fact, broadcast on CNN and Fox News in the first two hours of coverage, but as the day went on, despite the persistent repetition of the toppling video—CNN repeated it once every 7 ½ minutes between 11AM and 8PM, and Fox repeated it once every 4.4 minutes in the same period (p. 322)–the close-ups dominated the coverage, with wide-angle shots almost nonexistent (p. 323).

in the mass media (Brasted, 2005; Dardis, 2006; Fahmy & Kim, 2008; Hayes & Guardino, 2010; Luther & Miller, 2005).

The public opinion of Bush's trustworthiness is an important contextual factor in thinking about how the toppling imagery was produced and received. Polls in the fall of 2002 showed that Bush was considered trustworthy by over 50% of democrats and over 60% of independents, but by August of 2003, 68% of Democrats and 54% of independents said they thought Bush intentionally misled the American people to justify the war (Jacobson, 2008, pp. 148-149). That month, Al Franken's (2003) book *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them* was released, dedicating several chapters to Bush's lies from the 2000 campaign and the Iraq War. A month later, liberal commentator David Corn's (2003) *The Lies of George W. Bush* accused him of lying to attain power and support his policies at virtually every turn. This notion was clearly on the rise in the summer and fall of 2003, and by February of 2004, a Time/CNN poll showed that 82% of Democrats and 61% of Independents "had doubts" that they could trust Bush ("President Bush," 2013). To complicate matters for the Bush Administration's ability to frame the events of the war, according to Jacobson, trust in Bush's candor is the strongest factor in determining whether poll respondents would accept the premises of the Iraq War (pp. 158-159), and yet Jacobson reasoned that support for the war remained high through March and April thanks to low casualties, military success, and the "televised images of joyful Iraqis toppling Saddam's statue" (p. 131). In this sense, the images were what Bush needed to maintain support and trust, but the victory frame and the promise of a bloodless war would soon wear thin as "the continuing chaos, insurgency, and loss of American and allied lives began to sap support for the war, particularly among Democrats and independents" (p. 131). This would seem to suggest a link between bad news and a decline in credibility. As Bush's claims of victory on May 1st and the implications of the victory frame on April 9th proved hollow the news media seemed to grow more willing to acknowledge the opposition's claim that Bush had lied about the war.

A Proquest National Newspaper Database search reveals that major newspapers began expressing the "Bush Lied" frame in June 2003. Between January and April, any combination of the terms "Bush lied," "Bush misled," or "Bush deceived" appeared just

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once each month in national newspapers, with three of the five coming in letters or op-eds. Then, in May, the numbers showed a sign of increasing, with five articles using those terms, followed by a sharp increase in June and July, with 38 and 47 articles, letters, and editorials accusing or reporting on those accusing Bush of lying to justify the invasion. On April 9th, then, the U.S. news organizations had been free to present the favorable frame because there did not yet exist a credible, prominent "Bush Lied" schema to which to appeal. The imagery, of course, was far from forcing consensus among larger audiences, as evidenced by the tendency of foreign news organizations, especially those far from ideological agreement with the U.S., to resist the victory frame (Fahmy, 2007). This is true for representations within the mainstream media of different countries, but it is also true for circulation of the imagery in wider political discourse and vernacular spaces, especially in digital, user-created media.

3.4.2 Circulating the Fall

Blogs and online discussion boards are a rich source for viewing how many everyday citizens may have responded to and re-circulated the images of the fall of the statue they had found in the mainstream media. The blogosphere in 2003 was far less well-developed than it is now, and sites such as Wordpress and even YouTube did not yet exist, nor were existing blogs and discussion boards all equipped for embedding images directly. Still, there are a great many sites to be found in which participants linked-to, reposted, and commented on the toppling of the statue in the days following the event. This is true of more conventional political blogs and discussion boards, as well as less conventional ones.

In many forums, both political and apolitical in context, users commented on the toppling images and stories to which they linked, offering only brief commentary consistent with the victory frame. For example, a user on a cigar collectors website posted a screenshot of a television broadcast of the statue being pulled down and wrote, "Home sick from work today but plenty to watch on TV (*sic*) I don't think I would have went (*sic*) to work anyway until after this went down. Way to go guys kick his fuggin (*sic*) ass" (Jjohnson28, 2003). This and other similar responses on other sites (DrD, 2003; "Just rejoice," 2003) seemed to indicate media frames had successfully activated

associations with the celebratory ends of wars and the promise of a new beginning. Respondents to the "home sick" post took the opportunity to belittle the left for its criticisms of the war, seeming to believe the images vindicated the war effort. For instance, on one site, "Steve S" relayed a frame he had seen on an unnamed media source:

> One guy from some other country, commenting on the footage of the people dancing and laughing, flogging the statue and thanking the US and President Bush, said that "it is clear from what we see here that the anti-war protesters certainly weren't doing the people of Iraq any favors" and that President Bush was not only vindicated in his actions, but that he had demonstrated the qualities of a true world leader who could be widely admired. (Jjohnson28, 2003)

For both Steve S. and the source he cited, the victory frame was clearly powered by the image of a small number of celebrating Iraqis seeming to represent a mass movement. In the same thread, "DrMaddVibe" wrote, "There are no words in any language to compensate for [liberals'] in-action and ineptness towards that regime!"(Jjohnson28, 2003). The imagery, then, seemed to convince the viewers that all the Bush Administration's efforts had been justified and seemed to accept completely that the justification of the war all along had been to liberate the Iraqi people from a hated dictator.

Of course, in a public sphere as polarized, and as diverse, as that of the U.S., there will always be a set of ideas circulating among those who oppose the president on any given issue. The challenge for these groups is to find the resources with which to offer a credible counterframe and to make their views seem legitimate as an opposition to the dominant frame posed by political and media elites. In April of 2003, the antiwar left was certainly active in online and protest discourse, but, again, they were relegated to the margins with little positive coverage in the press and, therefore, little impact on the mainstream political discourse (Brasted, 2005; Dardis, 2006; Fahmy & Kim, 2008; Hayes & Guardino, 2010; Luther & Miller, 2005). Activists were left to fend for themselves in an attempt to raise awareness for their critical frames in public protests and alternative media organizations such as the Independent Media Center (IMC).

During the war, IMC writers not only represented the views of activists opposed to the war but also acted as a watchdog providing criticism of the way mainstream American news organizations were covering the war (Brooten, 2005, pp. 248-249). There are a few IMC stories on the toppling imagery available in the often-spotty and incomplete IMC archives, such as one posted on *IMC/Washigton, D.C.* on April 10, 2003 which criticized the media coverage of the event and accused the Bush Administration of staging the statue's fall as a publicity stunt complete with phony Iraqi civilians (Against Occupation, 2003). A similar article on the New York City IMC site caught the attention of one *Live Journal* blogger named "Kynn" who posted a link and pasted excerpts of the text which she or he said, "cautions us about reading too much into yesterday's big just-as-you-wake-up story where we heroically defeated Saddam's statue" (Kynn, 2003). While the link to the IMC story is broken and the link to the image is, as well, it is clear that Kynn was referring to the wide area shots of Firdos Square that were also featured on the Washington, DC site, revealing a small crowd, contrary to the illusion of a mass rally depicted in close-up shots that dominated the mainstream U.S. media.

Because the IMC, which had chapters in hundreds of cities around the world, was formed during the 1999 "Battle of Seattle" in which thousands of protesters converged to shut down the meeting of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, it was operated largely by activists on the left who, as conservative online discussants cited above pointed out, would be likely to resist the meaning of the images presented in the mainstream media. The IMC, then, would seem to have been part of the circulation of leftist activist discourse, thus constituting a receptive public critical of the dominant frames of victory and liberation. In other words, even though the mainstream media gave the impression of consensus, there were multiple publics constructing multiple interpretations and using them to support multiple positions even from the beginning.

In addition to those online commenters who participated in the IMC or cited them explicitly, there were other critical voices present in online discussions. In response to a user-created survey on the political discussion site *Open Debate* about the meaning of the images of Firdos Square, four participants selected "Nothing could make this war legitimate in my eyes." One user commented, "To (*sic*) bad it's going to take a tragedy

to prove that we should have had the support of the world in our effort in Iraq. Going it alone or with limited help will prove to be our undoing" (Rebel64, 2003). Unlike the IMC stories, such comments stopped short of expressing cynicism toward what the imagery depicted, even if they were still concerned about the success of the war and not yet won-over by the victory frame. Other responses anticipated, and even invited, counterframes while expressing a sometimes-cautious enthusiasm. In one political discussion board called *Politics Forum*, a user introduced the issue, saying, "(Although) most of you hate the U.S. and stuff, you all should admit that this is a very good thing for Iraqis" (KurtFF8, 2003). Among the responses were those that affirmed the success and the promise of liberation, though there were also many that were far more critical, expressing skepticism that the war would turn out well in the long run and resisting the victory frame while assuming the war was not yet over. One user commented, "Remember that the US put both Saddam and the Taliban in power. I bet in 10 years we will see the US fighting against another ruthless dictator in Iraq, the one that they'll put in power now." Another wrote, "A man was on TV last night and he pointed out that even though the statue was taken down, there's (*sic*) wasn't a lot of Iraqi people marching in the streets" (KurtFF8, 2003). Although some of these comments suggest some level of resistance to the victory frame, none goes so far as to question the authenticity of the imagery, suggesting that the "Bush Lied" schema was not yet a prominent resource by which to understand the imagery for these less radical opponents—in other words, the notion of distrusting the imagery did not seem to occur to a large number of online discussants. Only those who linked with groups like the IMC seemed comfortable with such direct resistance.

After the initial coverage of the toppling in mainstream media, it quickly began to fade from online discussion. However, in a sign of the agenda-setting function of mainstream news organizations, discussion of the imagery resurfaced in July 2004 when a *Los Angeles Times* story entitled "Army Stage-Managed Fall of Hussein Statue" (Zucchino, 2004) sparked renewed attention online. In response to the story, Kynn linked to and reposted much of her or his earlier post from April 2003 and recounted the types of abuse and arguments she or he got for rejecting the dominant reading. Challenging the victory frame or liberation frame in April 2003 had meant reading the

images of the toppling against the overwhelmingly positive television (Aday, et al., 2005) and newspaper (Fahmy, 2007) reports. Contesting the frame in July 2004, however, invited less harsh backlash from blog commenters and assumed greater credibility by linking to the mainstream news source, but such discussions were also credible because by then the "Bush Lied" schema had been well-established, thanks perhaps to such factors as the recent surfacing of Abu Ghraib photos, the continued accumulation of U.S. casualties, and revelations such as when intelligence officials came forward with stories that prewar intelligence had been wrong and improperly manipulated. In other words, the views espoused by marginal, critical publics such as those represented by the IMC since before the start of the war had become more mainstream as evidence and events showed the Bush Administration to be wrong on important issues. In 2004, bloggers freely composed opinion pieces such as freelance journalist David Neiwert (2004), whose post on military and political "Psy-Ops" responded to the *Los Angeles Times* by calling into question the Bush Administration's underhanded strategy, which he argued, "raises a serious concern about the fragility of democracy during wartime." This echoed comments by well-known liberal blogger Atrios (2004) from a few days before, and Neiwart went on to assert that "Most people have assumed that this [psychological] warfare would be directed against the enemy …. They have not stopped to consider that, by definition, it would also be directed toward the American public as well" (Neiwert, 2004) (Neiwert, 2004) (Neiwert, 2004) (Neiwert, 2004) (Neiwert, 2004) . The imagery of victory had been effectively reframed as imagery of deception symptomatic of Bush's approach to the war and the American people. The oppositional public had achieved salience for the critical frame, making stories such as the *Los Angeles Times's* bombshell acceptable reporting that would be well-received within the anti-war, anti-Bush climate thanks to the perceptible rise of such schemata.

3.4.3 Toppling as Public Memory Resource

A significant development in the life of an image arrives when it becomes a resource or referent in widespread social knowledge, as when bloggers draw on it to support arguments in other contexts. One context which elicited a number of allusions to

the toppling images was the Arab Spring uprisings beginning in late 2010. Among the significant uses of the toppling imagery were modifications, parodies, and direct commentaries which at once employed it to comment on both the current situation and the original by recontextualization. In one such use of the toppling imagery uploaded to the photo sharing site, *Twitpic* on January 25, 2011 by cartoonist Carlos Latuff (2011), a likeness of Egypt's Hosni Mubarak appears in place of Hussein atop a similar pedestal with a lightning bolt labeled "Jan 25"[61] severing his legs at the shins, just as Hussein's statue was. The image itself makes no explicit critique of the Iraq War or to the way the Hussein statue was brought down, but it implies a comparison which may bode well for the United States if one assumes the official frame of the toppling of Hussein's statue. On the one hand, associating the popular uprising in Cairo's Tahrir Square with the events in Firdos Square can be seen to affirm the notion that the toppling of the Hussein statue was a similar expression of democratic freedom. On the other hand, the lightning bolt can be seen as representing the Egyptian people, as the sole source of Mubarak's fall. In this reading, because there is no rope and no American armored vehicle pulling down the statue, the Egyptian revolution is different because the people would pull down Mubarak without the help of the U.S. Some publics, then, can deploy the ambiguity of the image to praise the United States for beginning the spread of democracy in the Middle East[62] while other publics may read it as criticism of the Bush Administration. In either case, the different readings rely on social knowledge—having familiarity with the Hussein image—and a preexisting schema activated by the image such as a positive or a negative evaluation of America's work in Iraq. In terms of public memory, this image is presented ambiguously enough to appeal to multiple publics, each able to bring their own social knowledge and their own evaluative frames and schemata to read the events in Egypt according to their memory of Iraq.

Elsewhere, a clearer critique of the United States can be found in other imagery that juxtaposes the Iraqi and Arab Spring photos. A February 2011 Slavoj Žižek

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[61] "Jan 25" refers to the first day of protests calling for the removal of Mubarak from power.
[62] However, this interpretation is less plausible if one considers Latuff's previous work, which included many illustrations lampooning George W. Bush and the role of the U.S. in leaving Iraq in chaos (Latuff, 2008).

interview with al Jazeera, for example, gained the attention of one blog, which quoted his comparison between Tahrir Square and Firdos Square:

> Is there not a sort of delicious irony here, that those pictures of Saddam's statue coming down, with 50 or 60 people there, were seen as conclusive evidence of the fact that the Iraqi people had had enough of him, whereas we've got these pictures of over a million people in Cairo, yet there's still doubt as to whether this is the right thing to happen? (Stanfordleft, 2011)

Other bloggers presented the aerial shots showing a small crowd in Firdos Square side-by-side with shots of Tahrir Square packed with demonstrators. For example, on April 9th, 2011 a user on the Historum.com discussion board created a post featuring three photographs. The first was the aerial view showing a small crowd that had been on the IMC in 2003. Annotations on the image drew attention to the size of the crowd and the American role in orchestrating the more tightly-framed shots initially favored by the media. Immediately below the annotated photo was an image of Tahrir Square filled with thousands of people, with the caption, "Real Democratic Revolution." Below that image was another of Firdos Square with the caption, "Fake Democratic Revolution" (CJones, 2011). In the context of the Arab Spring, this critique became common at various levels of discourse—mainstream news, mainstream blogs, smaller blogs, and other online discussions—which specifically called upon the image of the toppling of Hussein's statue as a symbol of the costly and undemocratic way to depose dictators (Applebaum, 2011; Cohen, 2011; Nakhoul, 2011). The praise for revolution in the Arab world activated ironic associations with the Hussein toppling imagery and thus enabled a praise of spontaneous revolutions while simultaneously relying on a critical public memory of the Iraq War.

3.5 Conclusion

Ultimately, once the schema of Bush as deceiver was firmly established, it became much more possible for the *Los Angeles Times* to publish a story revealing the deception in the scene at Firdos Square because it had also become easier for audiences to understand and accept the counterframe of the toppling as staged. Thus, the image became a resource for understanding the Iraq War and for making arguments about

subsequent events based on that understanding. The public memory of Iraq is represented here by a dominant frame, the frame belonging to a now-influential or now-dominant public whose criticisms of the Bush administration have been validated by events of the war, positions of political elites, and stories in the media. Together, these factors indicate how the war will be remembered by many, though not all members of U.S. culture. There are still those publics for whom the "Bush Lied" schema is considered a delusion of the left, and for these publics, the toppling imagery likely maintains the victory frame vindicating Bush. For these publics, the image can be used to support a whole different set of arguments about subsequent events based on that shared understanding of the Iraq War. It is in this way that when we speak of public memory, we must speak of the memory of distinct publics and the social knowledge, frames, schemata, narratives, and presumed facts about the past that serve as resources for arguments for specific audiences.

To say that the critical public has managed to make its views more prominent in public discourse is to suggest that this discourse has reached a wider audience and made the critical view seem more plausible. This has not necessarily affected which images are the most common symbols for representing the war, but it has affected the way common symbols are framed and evaluated. As it stands, the rise of "Bush Lied" has helped the Abu Ghraib photos maintain great impact on the memory of the war as a moral weak point in American history, and it has helped images such as "Flight Suit," "Mission Accomplished," and "Toppling Saddam" stand as symbols of Bush's failures, essentially focusing blame on him for a disastrous war prosecuted by a corrupt, deceptive Administration. Of course, the variability of these meanings indicates that there is no guarantee this critical memory of the war is permanent. Even after the war, as new events occur and the political climate changes, they may give new momentum to the pro-Bush publics to dominate the meanings of these images once again.[63]

In the next chapter, I continue this examination of how the discourse of the critical public continues to circulate and reframe the initial views presented in the news

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[63] Because the "Bush Lied" schema is fairly well established, such a change might require a dramatic series of events, like the discovery of a well-hidden and well-developed nuclear weapons program and a plan to attack the United States, in order to effectively shift the dominant public memory of the Iraq War.

media in an effort to perpetuate and make durable the critical memory of the war. I specifically look at docudrama films as attempts to bridge the gap between information media and entertainment media, appealing to viewers' demands for authentic representations of the war as they construct more enduring and potentially father-reaching texts than their news media counterparts. This movement to entertainment-based texts helps expand the discussion of the public memory of the Iraq War by drawing in those viewers who may have less interest in following politics and the news. Similar to the framing of photos of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein, these films position their viewers as witnesses to the war, seeking to influence what they see, how they evaluate events, and how they remember the war.

4. Durable Memories

As Chapter Two argued, public memory can be seen as an archive of images, narratives, attitudes, and facts that is available to be called upon in support of arguments about the past, present, and future. Literally, the archive is a collection of texts circulated through various media: in newspaper clippings, YouTube videos, DVDs, statues, museum displays, and other physical traces of the past. However, the ephemerality of much instantaneous digital media has led to a diminishing "number of unintentional textual traces we leave behind" (Hoskins, 2012, p. 102). Consequently, the archive of public memory exists more figuratively in the "public consciousness," not as artifacts in physical archives but as a collection of ideas at once in the minds of individuals and in the discourse that calls upon these individuals to piece together the fragments of opinion, fact, and memory to form meaningful and usable understandings of the past. These fragments are collected over time through exposure to media texts, though personal experience and reference group interaction certainly play a role as well.

As Chapter Three demonstrated, the news media play a crucial part in providing the initial images, narratives, attitudes, and information out of which memory discourse is formed, but because news reporting is ephemeral, these ideas run the risk of fading into obscurity unless they are preserved, remediated, or adapted to other forms in order to maintain resonance in public discourse. The newspapers from April 10th, 2003 discussed in Chapter Three, for example, were only delivered to people's doors or newsstands on one day, then were replaced by another set on April 11th. The images on their front pages survive, however, in libraries, archives, and digital scans. In other words, for ideas to persist in public memory, they must be durable, either in material form or practices that keep the discourse circulating. This chapter is concerned with propagation of ideas about the Iraq War as they are adapted from news media to narrative cinema and continue to circulate as images, narratives, and information about the war. I focus on docudramas that influence discourse through the recreation of the Iraq War experience, especially focusing on the films *Redacted* (Weiss & Urdl, 2007), *Battle for Haditha* (Broomfield, 2007), *The Hurt Locker* (Bigelow, et al., 2008), and *Green Zone* (Bevan, et al., 2010). Just as Chapter Three demonstrated how

representations of war in the news media become a site of competition among publics for the control of meaning of the war, this chapter looks at how publics engage in similar struggles in other media. Further, the chapter extends this view of the circulation of discourse across media by looking at how the movement from the news media to entertainment media enables ideas about the war not just to endure longer but to reach larger audiences and to influence judgments of war.

Ultimately, I argue that even commercially unsuccessful Iraq War films influence the way the war is remembered as they position spectators as witnesses of the costs of war and help foster the circulation of critical discourse to discipline the public recollection of the war and constitute critical publics. By examining both the rhetoric of these films and evidence of their reception in online discussions, I argue that the films do, in fact, contribute to the literal and figurative archive of images, narratives, and facts about the war that serve as inventional resources, primarily for publics and for rhetoric critical of the Iraq War. Success for such films is largely dependent on their ability to connect to ideas previously established in news media through docudrama conventions and present themselves as authentic depictions of war, in short, to transform the trust established by perceived authenticity into identifiable critiques that audiences take up and re-circulate in discourse about the war.

This chapter begins by posing reach and durability as central criteria for considering the potential of texts to impact public memory. These concepts then lead to an examination of films as more durable revisions of the ephemeral news media that build their claims to authenticity on this relationship to the presumed realism of the news media. Thus, I argue that these films succeed in positioning audiences as witnesses and pre-political subjects sympathizing with the common humanity of the victims of war to the extent that they are taken by viewers as authentic documents of events. That is, the films do not urge specific action but encourage viewers "to take the step that would be a necessary pre-condition to (political) actions" (Aufderheide, 2007, p. 61). Finally, I analyze the news media sources, rhetoric, and evidence of reception in discussions on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb)[64] forums responding to the film *Redacted* (2007) as

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[64] In a way, IMDb discussion boards are an ideal site for measuring viewers' responses to texts, not only because it attracts viewers interested in the media, rather than just those interested in the politics of the

an example of how even films with apparently little reach can continue to circulate their ideas beyond their initial theatrical presence and ultimately influence public memory. This chapter, then, is concerned with reach, durability, authenticity, and uptake, four key criteria in looking at how films present their arguments to large audiences across time who then call on those films to understand the past and make arguments about the past, present, and future.

4.1   Reach and Durability in Film and Public Memory

Reach here denotes the extent to which audience members are exposed to texts, while *durability* refers to the ability of a text to sustain itself or its ideas in the public consciousness, either through concrete physical form or through practices of use, reproduction, and distribution that ensure copies or remediations (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) of the original form or its ideas continue to circulate. Without extensive reach, the impact of discourse fades from public consciousness over time. The success of a text in influencing public memory can in part be estimated through an analysis of reach and durability and in part be measured by evidence of uptake which, in Warner's (2002) conception, is the basis of a virtual community, a public united by shared reception and creation of meaning (p. 88). Reaching many people, then, is important, but perhaps more important is reaching the "right" people, the ones who will take up the ideas and re-circulate them.

Kansteiner (2002) urged memory scholars to supplement their commonly-used interpretive methods with methods drawn from communication and media studies, arguing that in order to better understand collective memory, "we have to find out what stories about the past matter to whom and how they have been distributed" (p. 195). He indicated that paying attention to the popularity of texts indicated by such measures as polls, television ratings, and box office totals. However, one could argue that memory

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war—as opposed to discussions on a political blog, which would favor visitors with higher levels of political engagement. I have found IMDb to be a robust discussion space in which many users visit repeatedly and follow through on extended conversations with each other, calling on external sources to muster support for their arguments. In fact, this forum is almost a model for engagement online, admirably satisfying all the criteria for measuring deliberation according to Stromer-Galley (2007). The forum invites a variety of perspectives and gives users an opportunity to engage with others in a way that is not always done on sites that attract only like-minded users like partisan blogs (Perlmutter, 2008; Sunstein, 2001).

scholars have always implicitly responded to such considerations by frequently focusing on memory texts with large circulation. Scholars of film and public memory, for instance, have been interested in films that seemed to make a significant impact by their sheer popularity, as is evidenced, for example, by the abundance of scholarship on *Saving Private Ryan* (Auster, 2002; Biesecker, 2002, 2004; Bodnar, 2001; Bryce, Gordon, & Levinsohn, 1998; Ehrenhaus, 2001; Hasian, 2001; Owen, A. S., 2002). While the pervasiveness of such a popular film would seem to speak for itself, measurements of reach do seem to give some insight. *Saving Private Ryan* saw tremendous box office success, earning over $216M in domestic sales. The reach of the film, then, was extensive when it was first released, but because the theatrical screenings only went on for a relatively short time, attention to the box office figures highlights the ephemerality of the cinema as a theatrical viewing experience. It also highlights the need to consider how the reach extends beyond the initial release and in the process becomes more enduring, as well. Films have extended their lives by playing on television since the 1950s, following the antitrust suit filed by the Department of Justice in 1952 against twelve major Hollywood production companies for conspiring to withhold their 16 millimeter prints from television (Segrave, 1999, p. 37). The resulting release of thousands of titles by the end of 1956 was a boom to the television industry and led to a sharp increase of television viewership and a decline in theater attendance by early 1958 (Segrave, 1999, pp. 54-55). Following a period in the 1960s and 1970s in which the television networks began airing feature films in primetime and the early beginnings of cable television and pay channels came on the scene (Segrave, 1999), the home video market emerged as a growing source of film distribution as early as 1975 with the first Betamax machines. These forms evolved through VHS cassettes to the digital forms that include DVDs, Blue Ray discs, and the video files commonly ripped from them and shared—against copyright restrictions—among peer users online, as well as legally and officially distributed streaming video in sites such as Amazon and Netflix.[65] Klinger (2010) noted that the domestication of films in the home market brought on by DVDs

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[65] Of course, films continue to see extended distribution on television, including in retrospective channels such as American Movie Classics and HBO, as well pay-per-view offerings. See Segrave (1999) for a detailed history of Hollywood films on television and Klinger's (2007) chapter on the contribution of classic movie channels to the American cultural heritage.

and television cablecasts are among the things that lead to the repeat viewing and viewer control necessary for films to attain cult status. Although whether or not a film becomes "cult" is not the concern here, the indication is that as films move into the home, they are not only reaching new audiences, but they are under greater control by the viewers. As this leads to repeat viewing, it becomes a function not only of reach but of durability, and identification,[66] as well. Viewers who keep a copy and redistribute it through file sharing programs, for example, ensure that the film remains available for others and for their own viewing. The film, in effect, has a greater chance to remain a resonant reference point for understanding and thinking about, and most importantly, for agreeing with arguments based on its portrayal of events. Films like *Saving Private Ryan* expand on their theatrical success by continuing to circulate and even reaching younger viewers and other audience members who missed them the first time around. *Saving Private Ryan* has not only been successful in television broadcasts (de Moraes, 2001, 2004; "TV ratings," 2002)[67] and in the legitimate home market with rental earnings over $89M ("Box office/business," n.d.), but in peer-to-peer file sharing, as well. Fourteen years after the release of the film, there are over one hundred distinct copies shared by over 1,500[68] users—"seeders"—and downloaded by over 400 users connecting through the BitTorrent tracker site *The Pirate Bay*.[69] Although these numbers may seem to pale in comparison to the number of people who saw the film in theaters, this snapshot of file-

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[66] Klinger wrote, "Having a film on DVD, recording it on a DVR or downloading it onto a computer subjects it to playback's variables: pausing, rewinding, fast-forwarding, repeat viewing and copying. As a film is domesticated, scenes, characters and dialogue may be burned into the viewer's memory, becoming signature aspects of meaning and pleasure and, possibly, providing common ground for the title's collective appreciation" (pp. 3-4).

[67] ABC aired *Saving Private Ryan* uncut each year on Veterans Day from 2001 to 2004, but in 2004 many stations decided not to carry in fear that the FCC would levee heavy fines for the use of profanity in the film in the wake of tightening restrictions following the display of Janet Jackson's bare breast during the 2004 Super Bowl halftime show. Despite, or perhaps because of the controversy, 7.7 million viewers tuned in (de Moraes, 2004), reversing the decline in ratings for each of the previous two years since its high in 2001. The film continues to broadcast periodically, especially on cable stations and is available on demand.

[68] As of November 12, 2012.

[69] BitTorrent is a file transfer protocol that enables users to share large files across networks by distributing pieces of the files among multiple users. As users download part of a file, they also upload other parts to other users who are also downloading the file. The number of "seeders" indicates how many users continue to upload to others after they have finished downloading the whole file. If many users are seeding a file or a film represented by many different files, it may be assumed that they are endorsing the film and judging it highly enough to make sure it is available for fellow users. Therefore, it is not only the 400 active downloaders but the 1,500 seeders that indicate the continued popularity of the film.

sharing activity suggests enduring popularity and a persistent presence for prospective viewers. Thus, *Saving Private Ryan* offers an example of how the initial popularity of a theatrical release of a film gives only a partial indicator of its overall reach and overall impact on public memory.

This is good news for Iraq War films, none of which have done well at the box office. For example, Greengrass's *Green Zone*, the most lucrative film in this category, grossed only $35 million ("Green Zone - DVD Sales," 2012), while the most critically successful film, Bigelow's Winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture, *The Hurt Locker*, earned only $17M ("The Hurt Locker," n.d.). Other films have done even more poorly. For example, De Palma's *Redacted* earned only $68,000 in domestic sales ("Redacted," 2013) while Broomfield's *Battle for Haditha* fared even worse with $8,443 in its two-theater release ("Battle for Haditha," 2013). Some of these films have, however, met with secondary success as evidenced in peer-to-peer distribution. *Green Zone* was the seventh most downloaded film of 2010 with 7.7 million BitTorrent downloads and *The Hurt Locker* was the ninth most downloaded with 6.85 million downloads in the same year (Ernesto, 2010), and both maintain a strong presence in BitTorrent trackers. In short, these films have reached somewhat large audiences eventually, if not in initial theatrical release, and the presence of many copies and many seeders indicates that users have at least appreciated the film enough to maintain a copy on their computers and make it available for other users to download.

Again, the reach of these films slowly grows thanks to their reproduction in more durable forms than their original theatrical release, but upon closer inspection, this concept of durability appears more complicated. On the one hand, durability can refer to, as Blair (1999) noted, the physicality of the text and its material endurance, as with stone monuments that can last for centuries. A DVD copy of *Saving Private Ryan* is more durable than a theatrical screening in this sense.[70] On the other hand, Blair (1999) also

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[70] This comparison, of course, is between non-like elements since the DVD is the physical medium and the screening is the experience of the theater's media. The comparison attempts to address how the DVD represents portability and control of the viewing experience. The viewers can take it home and watch it whenever and however they like. The materiality-based theory of durability is easily complicated by pointing out that as a comparison of physical media, the film stock on which a cinema text was stored and from which it was projected in theaters will degrade more gracefully—i.e. it will still function as it ages, while the DVD will wear out within a decade or so—and is in a literal sense more durable than the digital

treated reproducibility as a separate factor in the materiality of texts, but reproducibility can be seen as another aspect of durability, especially with texts that lack an original copy.[71] It is not so much the original, physical artifact—a reel of film—that endures as much as the content, including images that can be reproduced and distributed even in paper or digital files, plus the ideas that can be reproduced through even more media, including in verbal conversation and writing. Perhaps the most significant evidence that a text has achieved this latter type of durability is when viewers demonstrate that they have taken up its ideas and proceed to make new meanings out of them. This is a form of reproduction and a form of durability, and it is also an extension of reach as the ideas of a cinematic text become ideas distributed in wholly other forms, like verbal discourse that moves among publics or even new mass media texts influenced or inspired, even in subtle ways, by the previous text. In this way, even people who have not seen a film can be influenced by its contribution to public memory as they receive messages in secondary, inspired or influenced discourse. In the case of *Saving Private Ryan*, for example, the durability and reproducibility help the text maintain salience, as evidenced in the discussions it still inspires, such as on IMDb message boards, where fans remain active nearly every day. For instance, in an original post dated June 25, 2012, a user asked why the Russian Front is never mentioned in *Saving Private Ryan* (Gort1200, 2012). The ensuing discussion featured 151 responses over five months and featured references to news articles, other films, and history lectures in an engagement over the public memory of the war. Essentially, the discussion surrounded the question of what has been forgotten and what should be included in public memory. That such discussions continue so long after the release of the film is evidence that it has reached a wide audience and remains a durable point of reference in public culture.[72] Even the least popular Iraq War films considered here also serve as inventional resources for engagement about the war on the IMDb message boards, a kind of attention that likely would not have existed for such box office flops in an era before digital media, the "long

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disc viewers purchase for home viewing. Thus, it is important to think of durability in terms more concerned with practice.

[71] See Eisenstein's (2005, pp. 78-91) discussion of "the preservative powers of print."

[72] Such engagement can be seen as an extension of what Hasian (2001) found in his examination of responses to the film, mostly in letters to the editor and newspaper articles, as "fragmentary elements … in the cultural wars … on issues of politics, power, and pedagogy" (p. 342).

tail" (Anderson, 2004) of niche audiences, and social media engagement.

Saving Private Ryan also offers another example of how a film's ideas can spread and take on a life of their own seemingly separate from the film. It can be argued that, although common knowledge of it certainly predated the film, Saving Private Ryan helped make Omaha Beach a common reference in American public discourse. With the exception of major anniversary years, references to Omaha Beach were few and far between in major U.S. newspapers for several decades prior to Saving Private Ryan's release. A ProQuest National Newspaper Database search finds between thirty-nine and fifty-five mentions of "Omaha Beach" each year from 1990 to 1993, then 657 mentions in 1994, the fiftieth anniversary of the landing. The following three years saw a drop back down to as little as thirty-nine mentions, but in 1998, there were 268 mentions, with the largest spike corresponding to the July 24th release of Saving Private Ryan. This, in itself, is not surprising, since virtually all these articles were stories about the film. What is remarkable is that only 82 of the 250 articles the following year that mention Omaha Beach also mentioned Saving Private Ryan. Each year since, Omaha Beach has maintained a greater presence than it had before the release of Saving Private Ryan, with 1,815 mentions from 2000 to 2012, only 10%[73] of which also mention the film. This seems to suggest Saving Private Ryan helped make a relatively neglected historical place a common piece of social knowledge. A similar effect can be identified with release of the much less successful film, The Hanoi Hilton (Globus & Golan, 1987), which seemed to help the titular term, a name for the infamous Hoa Lo Vietnam POW camp, remain resonant in public discourse for more than a decade before it saw spikes with former inmate John McCain's presidential campaigns. The largely unsuccessful Iraq War films may hold similar potential as they continue to circulate among small pockets of viewers and help incidents like the Mahmudiyah Killings or the Haditha Massacre remain resonant, where the news media often fails to keep such stories alive.[74]

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[73]182 of 1,815

[74] The national newspaper term-search method is much less promising for these films because they were produced while the war was still ongoing, and in some cases even before the crimes they depicted were tried. Thus, a search for terms like "Mahmudiyah Killings" or "WMD" yield no easily-identifiable spike in usage corresponding with a concrete release date for the films. This is one reason it is necessary to pay greater attention to actual viewer discussions on the issue in order to get a sense of the films' impact on the discouse.

4.2 Authenticity from News Media to Docudrama

Makers of war films have looked to a number of sources for their material. Oliver Stone is well known for drawing on his personal experience in Vietnam to make *Platoon* (Kopelson, 1986). Other films such as *Jarhead* (Wick & Fisher, 2005) have adapted memoirs penned by veterans. Still others like *Saving Private Ryan* and the miniseries *Band of Brothers* (Spielberg & Hanks, 2001) have taken their stories from historians' texts. However, each of these types of sources depends on adapting something from the past, experiences which have been reflected on only after the war has ended. In contrast, films made about a war while it is still going on tend to draw their material from the news media. This is the case with *Redacted* and *Battle for Haditha*. Similarly, *Green Zone* and *The Hurt Locker*, as well as Simon & Burns's HBO miniseries *Generation Kill* (Calderwood, 2008), and Haggis's *In the Valley of Elah* (Haggis & Hayward, 2007) all adapted stories initially written by journalists, many of whom were embedded with American units during the Iraq War.

Of course, Iraq War films were not the first to have a close relationship to news sources. Certainly, *Bataan* (Starr, 1943) responded to news stories of the well-known battle in the Philippines just two years before its release, and De Palma's *Casualties of War* (Linson, 1989) was inspired by a news article from twenty years earlier. However, the connection to the news media is even more explicit in the earliest war films, dating from 1898. They depicted events related to the Spanish-American War and were seen as supplements to newspaper accounts (Eberwein, 2010, p. 7). The first "actualities" were soon followed by the first filmed war reenactments and the first war fiction films. Together, these early films represent the three main discursive modes that survive in the genre today: the documentary, the docudrama, and the narrative fiction film, all of which at their roots are descended from journalism (p. 9). In this section, I look at how documentary and docudrama films relate to journalism and how they draw on this relationship to establish a sense of realism that helps convince audiences of the authenticity of their depictions of war and, thus, their credibility as representations of the past.

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Scholars such as Zelizer (1992, 1998, 2008), Edy (2006), Kitch (2008), and Lang & Lang (1989) have demonstrated that journalism plays an important role in the construction of collective memory, often citing the cliché favored by journalists that the news represents the first draft of history. In this sense, journalists see themselves as witnesses to what the public cannot see, performing and enabling a kind of "media witnessing" described by Frosh & Pinchevski (2009) as witnessing *in* the media, *by* the media, and *through* the media. They argued that such practices can be traced back to war journalism, especially the work of "camp followers" and their present-day descendants, embedded journalists (p. 2). It is especially important to consider this journalistic witness-bearing and drafting of history in regarding the public memory of the Iraq War because the dominance of embedded reporting favored the military perspective, especially at the beginning of the war. Thus, the initial testimony of these witnesses not only favored the American perspective but focused on the American soldier as the face of the war (Hiebert, 2003; Lindner, 2009; Pfau, et al., 2005). As the combat progressed, however, the frame expanded to include witnessing of the Iraqi perspective, with, as Fahmy & Kim (2008) noted, unprecedented visual representations of civilian death and suffering over the first five weeks of combat. Added to this is the shift in American news outlets from initial reliance on Bush Administration officials' frames early in the war (Dimitrova, Daniela V. & Strömbäck, 2005; Hayes & Guardino, 2010) to alternative and competing views as time went on (Aday, 2010; Fahmy & Kim, 2008; Schwalbe, et al., 2008). Before long, the news media were beginning to grow more critical, corresponding to a steady decrease in public support for the war in opinion polls (Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2008). Although the coverage produced apparently significant images as addressed in Chapter Three, these images were not guaranteed to persist as indisputable representations of the meanings of the war or to continue to circulate widely. Often, however, such images do influence the production of films that serve many of the same purposes of journalism in a more durable form.

The documentary is the genre of film most obviously related to journalism because, although such films are often seen as entertainment, their form is primarily designed to communicate information about nonfiction subject matter. Documentary has been understood since the term was coined by Grierson (1947/1971) to refer to a kind of

film that "would photograph the living scene" (1947/, p. 147), favoring the spontaneity of real people's actions, rather than actors and staged performances, to better depict reality. In other words, the raw material for these films is footage taken from real life without the benefit of actors or reenactments. The use of actual footage gives the impression of objectivity and a raw representation of reality much like that assumed of journalism, but the documentary film has long offered more than an "unmediated" glimpse into real life. In the 1930s, British documentarians led by Grierson adopted an activist role, engaging in policy advocacy and filling in the gap where journalism failed to take an adequately critical stance on issues (Ellis, 1989). In this tradition, documentary film is a form of investigative journalism that seeks, in many cases, to expose the truth that has been obscured by official voices or even the news media. Perhaps because some documentaries are distributed as films rather than television broadcasts, many take on a more durable form and thus facilitate different receptive practices that would seem to enable a greater impact on public memory. For example, whereas one can order a copy of Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Moore et al., 2004) from Netflix or even download it with a peer-to-peer file-sharing program, a similar exposé on George W. Bush's first term in the White House and the Iraq War that appeared as a segment of a news program likely cannot be acquired in this way. One significant factor that separates journalism from documentary film, then, is the distribution, or rather the distribution *in practice*, as a potentially more durable medium that invites repeated viewing simply by presenting itself as more worthy or inviting.

The emphasis on the difference *in practice* highlights the fact that television news programs could easily be recorded and distributed officially as DVDs, but in practice the best news organizations do is archive selected clips on their websites or third-party video sites, often for a limited time.[75] One may compare, for example, the PBS documentary program *Frontline* to *PBS NewsHour*. Both are available for viewing on the PBS website, but *NewsHour* episodes are only archived for two weeks. In contrast, available *Frontline* videos date back as far as 1983 and are prominently

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[75]Although viewers may post clips for particular purposes, it is still rare to share entire episodes peer-to-peer as is done with other, entertainment media. For example, a search for "NewsHour" on *The Pirate Bay* returns two results, neither of which have any active seeders (and thus cannot be downloaded).

displayed with large thumbnail images on a single page for easy navigation. Episodes are also available for purchase on DVD, and they can also be streamed or rented from Netflix. One can easily locate the February 19, 2008 *Frontline* episode on the Haditha Massacre by scrolling down the page or searching the PBS site for "Haditha," which brings up a large thumbnail for the episode at the top of the page. In contrast, as of December 3, 2012 *NewsHour* clips for Haditha stories are only available as transcripts, many of which come up in a list below the *Frontline* thumbnail in a search for "Haditha."[76] Among the factors that shape the differences in receptive practices for these programs may be the routine-ness of news reporting. Because the news is always by definition "new," and because there are more news reports every day, they are not often seen as something that is to be preserved and re-viewed *in practice*. On the other hand, documentary programs are less routine, with a program like *Frontline* producing only about 26 episodes per year instead of the hundreds of news broadcasts. Thus, it is easier to single out each episode as justifying the resources to make them available for purchase or for viewing online. Also, because there are fewer episodes, the documentary programs tend to spend much more time constructing the stories, giving them greater depth and complexity, and also focusing on greater production values that make them more suitable for supplemental distribution. From this perspective, the distinction between news reports and broadcast documentary programs is not necessarily a distinction between discursive modes as much as production values and distribution. Because theatrical documentaries are even less routine and have even greater focus on production, they often become more durable in practice.

In addition to the numerous *Frontline* and other broadcast documentaries, the Iraq War gave rise to a host of independent political documentaries from 2004 through 2006 that fared poorly in the box office or went straight to DVD and yet represent significant extensions of the news reporting of the war. For example, films such as Scranton's *The War Tapes* (May & James, 2006) and Alpert & O'Neill's *Baghdad ER* (Alpert, Feury, & O'Neill, 2006) extended the kinds of storytelling of embedded

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[76] The *NewsHour* YouTube channel features 11,000 clips as of November 30, 2012 dating back several years, but the site's archive system is not designed to sort files for easy browsing for older videos. One Haditha video, from January 2012, can be found with a keyword search of the channel's videos.

journalists by showing the kinds of gory images and soldiers' criticisms of the war that would not be permitted in mainstream news media. Further, films such as Longley's *Iraq in Fragments* (Sinno & Longley, 2006) inverted even the most progressive news reporting by entirely privileging the Iraqi civilian perspective, with only occasional glimpses of American soldiers, always seen as imposing figures of an invading *other* rather than characters in the film. These films both resemble the news and extend it while producing potentially more durable texts.

If it is a short step from journalism to documentary film, it is an equally short step from documentary to docudrama. The distinction between these two is simple, as Rhodes & Springer (2006) suggested with their taxonomy of films: a film that employs the documentary form and documentary content is a documentary, and a film that employs a fictional form with documentary content is a docudrama (p. 4). Springer (2006), though somewhat tongue-in-cheek, drew attention to the distinction, noting that a docudrama reenacts "events the cameras had inconveniently missed" (p. 32), as if the preference is for actual footage and that a docudrama filmmaker reluctantly must reenact events she or he really wishes had been caught on film. The docudrama form gains its power largely from its claims to authenticity, by proclaiming to the audience either directly or indirectly that it is "based on actual events." For Paget (2011), it is a matter of these films doing what all dramas aspire to do, "[pointing] beyond the realm of fiction to a realm of nonfiction that is already-lived" (p. 9). The *pointing* to nonfiction does not necessarily mean that every scene, every line of dialogue, every gesture, and every shot is a faithful reenactment, however. Filmmakers are at liberty to create fictional content to fill in the gaps and illustrate the necessary relations between characters and between events that make up the nonfiction story. In fact, even the central events may not need to be strict adaptations of specific real-life events, a concept that introduces great ambiguity to the genre. For example, Springer (pp. 30-34) called Porter's *Life of an American Fireman* (1902) and *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) the first docudramas because despite their fictional nature, they served documentary purposes by hybridizing fiction and actuality. Although Porter did not reenact the burning of a specific house or the robbery of a particular train on a particular date, his hybridizing presented "a new dramatic form for documenting social reality" (p. 30). Certainly, it is debatable whether

Porter's work stands up to contemporary definitions of docudrama, but Springer's point prompts consideration of the level of realism that is required for a film to be considered in this category. It is along these lines that it becomes ambiguous whether a given war film is a docudrama or a pure fiction. Springer's inclusion of such films may be supported by consideration of Paget's definition docudramas as film that "[use] an invented sequence of events and fictional protagonists to illustrate the salient features of real historical occurrences or situations" (p. 120). Like Porter's films, even war films that do not reenact specific characters' actions in specific events still provide realistic depictions of the "historical situation" can be seen as docudramas. In this way, it is not only Iraq War films depicting actual events such as *Battle for Haditha* and *Redacted*, but also films like *The Hurt Locker,* and Peirce's *Stop Loss* (2008) that can be seen as docudramas. If Springer's examples and Rhodes & Springer's and Paget's definitions provide unsatisfying ambiguity about what can be considered a docudrama, then a more detailed description of common techniques in the form may provide a clearer picture.

Paget (2011) identified a number of ways docudramas establish their authenticity and make connections to reality. Among them are the uses of voiceover and captions to give information and locate the action in a real-world time or place. For example, the Vietnam War film *Hamburger Hill* (Nasatir & Carabatsos, 1987) opens with white text on a black screen reading "On 10 May 1969 Troops of the 101st Airborne Division engaged the enemy at the base of Hill 937 in the Ashu Valley. Ten days of bloody assault later, the Troops who fought there called it..." The text then fades, and the title screen appears, reading "HAMBURGER HILL." The captions "anchor [the] story in history" (p. 105) in an actual time and place for even the least-informed audiences. The authority of the caption's "voice" suggests an authentic truth-telling that promises a concrete connection between the description of history and the dramatized film to follow.

Iraq War docudramas use such text to assert their connection to real life events, as well. For example, *Redacted* provides perhaps the most well-known and meaningful use of this technique, which paradoxically disclaims its authenticity even as it asserts it. The film opens with white text on a dark background reading:

This film is entirely fiction, inspired by an incident widely reported to

have occurred in Iraq. While some of the events depicted here may resemble those of the reported incident, the characters are entirely fictional, and their words and actions should not be confused with those of real persons.

The word "fiction" in the first sentence and "fictional" in the second are then blacked out, suggesting that the film is more real than fiction but implying that it must pose as fictional for legal reasons. However, the viewer is not permitted to dwell on this text, as more and more of it is blacked out until all but the letters to spell out "Redacted" remain and float to the foreground. The film, then, not only stresses its connection to real life events but also suggests a cover-up of those events. This implies not only a critique of the politics of the Iraq War but the news media's inability to show the people the truth of the war. Through a simple use of titles that connect the film to real-life events, De Palma was able not only to assert the authenticity of his film, but also to direct his critique in rather subtle but effective ways.

Another technique in authenticating docudramas is the use of documentary material such as actual footage or news clips within the film. Again, such techniques give information and establish credibility by linking the story to actual events. Material of this sort tends to rely heavily on the news media for this information, and Paget (2011, p. 105) pointed out that the films even draw on the same archives as news organizations for such content. For example, in *We Were Soldiers* (Schmidt, Lemley, & Wallace, 2002) as Lieutenant Colonel Moore (Mel Gibson) is contemplating leading his inexperienced troops in Vietnam, a July 28, 1965 Lyndon Johnson press conference appears on a television set in Moore's office announcing the troop escalation that would require his deployment. The fiction world of the film is thus intertwined with and affected by the actual world in which Johnson escalated the war in Vietnam. Iraq War films employ this technique to connect them to real-life events, and often to make political connections, as well. For example, several films feature audio and video of press conferences given by President Bush discussing matters that directly impact the characters in the films. *Battle for Haditha* features an Iraqi character who tunes into the news to find reports showing devastation in Iraq, followed by a speech by President Bush insisting that the US will win the war because "every month more and more Iraqis are fighting for their own country. People we have liberated will not surrender their

freedom. Democracy will succeed because the United States of America will not be intimidated by a bunch of thugs." This character later detonates a roadside bomb that kills one Marine and leads to the slaughter of twenty four civilians. Because the character is responding to the real life Bush, his apparent motivations appear authentic representations of real-life Iraqis and insurgents.

Other authenticating techniques in docudramas might include visual approaches that strive to make the film look more like a documentary or more like news footage. For example, in films ranging from *Saving Private Ryan* to *Green Zone*, the use of a handheld camera mimics the behind-the-scenes witnessing that is characteristic of the cinema verité style. While, as noted above, journalists see themselves as witnesses to history, docudrama film makers produce other kinds of witnessing. By making films that represent the past realistically without relying on the testimony *of* witnesses, instead these films enable witnessing *by* and *through* media. This witnessing seems more authentic as films are made to feel more real by such techniques as the manipulation of lighting and color to mimic the footage of the events with which audiences may be familiar, as in Spielberg's matching of the film quality of *Saving Private Ryan* to the images of the D-Day invasion (Auster, 2002). In addition to the use of the aesthetics of documentary or news, authentication techniques include casting, set design, makeup, and countless other ways to attend to the details of not just the events the films recreate but the existing images of the events. Consequently, these aesthetic devices place the viewer in the position of witness, not just a spectator of a film but a witness of the behind-the-scenes, authentic events of the war.

To say that these films position viewers as witnesses is to suggest that they are asked to think like witnesses, experience the process of seeing, and to form opinions based on what they have seen. De Palma explained that he made *Redacted* to show the images, especially images of fallen American soldiers, that had been withheld from the public. He explained, "I'm showing something about the soldiers that has not been expressed in the mainstream media at all… And it's just trying to show what happens when you send boys into this particular situation" (as cited in Rahner, 2007). This is a fair description of what other Iraq War docudramas do, as well. One *Battle for Haditha* viewer on IMDb expressed the ideal witness's response, writing, "young men shouldn't

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have to be dealing with such grief and such wanton and reckless slaughter. The answer is simple: get the * beep* out of Iraq" (Bogwart-1, 2008). Films like *Battle for Haditha* and *Green Zone* also bring the viewer closer to the Iraqi people, presenting intimate images and compelling narratives that place civilians at the center of the war. Viewers get close enough to see the people in their homes and in romantic relationships and to hear them speaking passionately in their own voices and languages. This brings the film spectator closer to the war and its victims than many war films of the previous generation, which largely failed to depict the Vietnamese people as fully human. Like the women in Pontecorvo's classic *Battle of Algiers* (Pontecorvo & Solinas, 1967) with whom the spectator shares intimate space and close shots as they dye their hair and put on makeup to pass in the western style, Iraqis in *Battle for Haditha* are permitted intimacy that fosters identification. These are not mere props or the exotic *other* under the western gaze, but equals. Stam & Spence (2004) explained that the impact of the *Algiers* scene is a matter of positioning the spectator on the side of the women "not necessarily out of political sympathy but through the mechanisms of cinematic identification: scale (close shots individualise the three women); off-screen sound (we hear the sexist comments as if from the women's aural perspective); and especially point-of-view editing" (p. 760). As witnesses of images striving for authenticity in Iraq War films, viewers are positioned as what Aufderheide (2007) called a "pre-political public." She wrote that Iraq War documentaries "powerfully address us as a transnational public, a body of people who have their common humanity at risk" (p. 61). Unlike some other films that, according to Aufderheide, prescribe a specific political action when spectators are urged to take such as voting or joining protest groups, the positioning of viewers as "pre-political" actors means establishing the moral precondition for mobilization. Implied here is that in order to be mobilized politically, publics must first be moved emotionally. Because the images feel like authentic, behind-the-scenes glimpses into the suffering of the war, many viewers take this witnessing position and side with the films against the war.

This emphasis on the authentication of the "docu" side of the docudrama should not obscure the importance of narrative to the form because it is the dramatic narrative and the characters that raise the films from the status of information to the status of

entertainment. Consequently, the films add to the *in practice* durability by giving a more inviting reason for viewers to want to watch the film again and again over the course of months and years for the pure enjoyment of the drama. While such entertainment and repeat viewing is certainly possible with documentaries, the comparative success of narrative films over documentaries at the box office, home markets, and peer-to-peer sharing indicates a clear preference for narrative entertainment.[77]

As the films tell the stories of the war entertainingly and credibly, they have the potential to create the perceived *truth* of the war in the eyes of the viewing publics. Sturken (1997) argued that "claims to the authenticity and realism … reflect a desire to construct through them a particular set of historical narratives" (p. 86) that are the building blocks of public memory of the war. As Storey (2003) argued, this realism of Hollywood war films is what constituted the "regime of truth," or the "body of knowledge," about Vietnam on which George H.W. Bush constructed his justification for the Persian Gulf War.

Bush's argument was possible because films play a significant role in creating the archive of public memory—the images, narratives, attitudes, and facts that become the shared reference points in discourse about the war. As many scholars have argued, film has consequently become the most powerful source of memory and knowledge about the past in American society (Calder, 2004; Grajeda, 2007; Hansen, 2001; Kaes, 1990). This was the case with *Platoon*, as Sturken argued, as well as *Saving Private Ryan* (Auster, 2002; Bodnar, 2001; Ehrenhaus, 2001; Hasian, 2001; Owen, A. S., 2002), both of which were heralded as the most realistic war films up to their times and important public memory texts. Authenticity of a realistic production paired with an entertaining narrative often give films wide reach and lasting durability, but they also perform the rhetorical work of promoting a given set of views on public consciousness.

Thus, an examination of contemporary Iraq War films requires looking at the

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[77] Hoffmann (2006) argued that "DVD-sales and TV ratings indicate that fictional narratives account for the bulk of repeated exposures," adding, "This may be because the primary aims of repeated exposure are entertainment and enjoyment, which are often achieved by watching narrative fiction" (p. 392). In her survey of repeat-viewing among college students, Klinger (2007) found that the participants favored films that were "narratively and aesthetically exciting," among other criteria. All sixty of the films identified by the study as having a "critical mass"(p. 144) of between 5% and 15% of the respondents identifying them as films they view repeatedly were narrative films.

elements of realism and authenticity, as well as the kinds of images and narratives and the kinds of facts and attitudes the film presents about the war. This requires, in line with McGee's (1990) view on rhetorical critical methods, consideration of the sources of the film, namely in prior news media discourse; the culture with which the film interacts, as in the social knowledge and the existing schema to which the rhetoric appeals; and the responses of viewers to see the ways in which they accept or reject the films' depictions of the war. These structural relationships between the text and the context tend to draw attention to the larger discourse in which it operates, and for this reason, the success of the films is largely about the kinds of publics they invoke, the kinds of subject positions in which they place the viewers, and consequently the kinds of recollection they foster. The Iraq War films surveyed here largely position the viewers as witnesses and sympathizers acknowledging the shared humanity of the victims of war. Together, then, the films help constitute a critical public united in opposition to the war and to the political regime that produced the war.

4.3   Authenticity and Uptake: Responses to *Redacted*

To understand how viewers accept or reject the claims made by war films and how they interact with films as fragments of a larger context and a larger discourse, it is necessary to examine closely the sources of films, as well as the responses to them. In this section, I focus on *Redacted* as a case study of the movement of discourse from news media to film to online discussions that represent evidence of uptake—or rejection—of the ideas depicted in the film. This helps see the film and its receptive contexts as deeply intertwined with preexisting discourse and consequently entangled with future discourse as it becomes part of the larger context of war discourse and as the films and their ideas serve as inventional resources in arguments.

On March 12th, 2006, four US Army soldiers in Iraq raped 14 year-old Abeer Qassim al-Janabi, killed her, and killed three members of her family. According to their court testimony, the soldiers had planned their actions in advance and set out for the al-Janabi home in the remote farming village of Yusufiyah. Initial reporting on the incident surfaced on June 30, 2006 when Associated Press writer Ryan Lenz published a short piece on Army officials launching an investigation into the incident (Lenz, 2006a). The

story was picked up on the television news that night (Matthews, 2006; Williams, B., 2006) and spread quickly thereafter. The next day, Lenz also wrote a longer piece that gave details including the whistle-blowing by a soldier in a counseling session following the murder and beheading of a member of their platoon, the hatching of the plot after seeing the girl at their checkpoint, and other details (Lenz, 2006b) that would eventually become part of De Palma's film. For the next week, there was a spike in reporting on the incident, much of it focusing on the June 30th arrest of former Private Steven Green and the July 3rd charging of him with rape and four counts of murder (Associated Press, 2006a).

In the months that followed, hundreds of stories in American newspapers and on television programs not only reported the details of the so-called "Mahmudiyah Killings," but they also took the investigations as a prompt to reflect on the tragedies, atrocities, and horrors of war. Articles contextualized the war by referencing the infamous Abu Ghraib prisoner abuses, the Haditha Massacre, and even the My Lai Massacre in Vietnam (Associated Press, 2006b; Neikirk, 2006; Norman, 2006). Although these stories got some details wrong, like the location of the crime and the number of soldiers involved, they were fairly thorough in laying out the major parts of the story that would appear in *Redacted*.

It is not only in the details of the crime that the news reporting seems to have influenced De Palma's film, but also other perspectives seemingly gleaned from the reports. For instance, in a somewhat odd example, one reporter's focus on a Johnny Cash tee shirt Green wore to his first hearing seemed to have influenced De Palma to name the central character in the film after the song "Folsom Prison Blues." The article featured reference to the lyrics, "I shot a man in Reno just to watch him die" (Norman, 2006), and although it could be a strange coincidence, De Palma gave his character the odd and perhaps allegorical name Reno Flake. This illustrates the multiple and subtle ways the news media can be seen to serve as the likely source of the material in *Redacted*, and the relationship between the news and the film shows one way in which the news served as a "first draft of history" to be re-presented in the film.

In fact, relying on the "first draft" of the news media led to inaccuracies in the film, errors that would have greater likelihood to persist in public memory thanks to the

film's durability. Because Green had been discharged two weeks after the crime, his arrest and subsequent trial in civilian courts were given a much higher profile compared to the other soldiers. Consequently, the news media came to depict Green as the central figure in the horrendous plot, though court testimony would later suggest that, while Green was guilty of both the rape and murders, it was actually another soldier who had hatched the plan and initiated the action (Frederick, 2010, p. 259). Of course, this may be a trivial objection when it comes to De Palma's intention to amplify the narratives and the images of the horrors of war that he believed the press had been neglecting (Rahner, 2007). When asked about blending the staged with the authentic in his controversial use of documentary photographs showing the suffering of Iraqi civilians that had been kept from the American public, De Palma compared this distortion to those distortions of the Bush Administration, saying, "If they can do this for the last six to seven years and pursue an amoral war, shouldn't I have the right to tell the other side of the story—to tell a greater truth?" (as cited in Kaufman, 2007, p. 78). Zelizer (1998) described the type of collective memory formation at work here as that which "[allows] for the fabrication, rearrangement, elaboration, and omission of details about the past, often pushing aside accuracy and authenticity so as to accommodate broader issues of identity formation, power and authority, and political affiliation" (p. 3). From the perspective of docudrama film making, these inaccuracies can also be seen as the "telescoping" of events and compositing of characters which Paget (2011) described as "The folding of real-world events and individuals into convenient dramatic units … done principally to achieve the economy needed for a good narrative dynamic" (p. 114). Thus, as narrative efficiency requires the character of Reno Flake (Patrick Carroll) to come to the foreground and the sequence of events to be compressed, the film diverges from a faithful reproduction of events. The consequence, however, is that some viewers reject the apparent piling-on of character faults and unfortunate chain of events that tests viewers' suspension of disbelief. One IMDb user commented rather directly on the strain of telescoping and compositing on the film's realism:

> Some of the things shown in this movie did happen. The crime is to go and collect every bad incident that happened over there, combine them into happening by one group of soldiers, … making it seem like the soldiers will get

away with it, and the worst part: Make it look like a day-in-the-life of an average

soldier. (Daniel-l-kelly, 2009)

However, according to Frederick's (2010) research on the unit, the major incidents in the film—the check-point killing, the death of the senior sergeant, the kidnapping and beheading of a soldier, and finally the rape and murders—did all happen to/in that unit within several months, so this is a case of the film reporting accurately but failing to attain authenticity, at least in the eyes of some.

Redacted did succeed for many viewers who either had prior knowledge of the events or were won over by the film's authenticating techniques. Those with prior knowledge often took to the IMDb discussion boards armed with links to defend the film against criticism of its authenticity (Californiaconor, 2009; Hangenskyhigh17, 2010; Jack-1132, 2009; Superiorpsycho, 2009). In all cases in which viewers linked to external sources to defend the accuracy of the film, the source of that material was either directly or indirectly the news media (Californiaconor, 2009; MAX-78, 2009; Overninethousand, 2011b).[78] In other words, the news is the resource, or in McGee's (1990) sense, the source, of both the film and the social knowledge of the audience against which the film is read. What the film contributes is an affirmation of this social knowledge in a potentially entertaining text that may have greater reach and certainly greater durability than the original news sources while presenting the potentially engaging narrative.

There are some viewers, however, for whom the film fails because it fails to mesh with another kind of knowledge, not social knowledge of the events depicted but the sort of incidental details often measured against personal experience or specialized knowledge. This means that the incident itself is largely unquestioned except to the extent that viewers ask whether or not the narratives are, to borrow from Fisher's (1987) concept of narrative fidelity, faithful to the types of stories viewers "know to be true in their own lives" (p. 64). In other words, filmmakers must create believable characters and stories. It is also apparent that *Redacted* is viewed in context of other films, especially Vietnam War films, and especially De Palma's *Casualties of War*. For

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[78] Links to Wikipedia are counted as indirectly sourced to the news media because the article on the Mahmudiyah Killings is policed by contributors to ensure that all edits are supported by credible sources available for verification online, excluding blogs. This means virtually all citations on the page refer to mainstream news organizations.

example, one user indicated that, as a European, she or he "can't believe" what she or he had learned about American service members' lack of discipline from these films (Buraktheauthor, 2008). "I can't believe" was revealed to be a figurative expression as the user demonstrated that she or he actually did believe the films to be accurate portrayals of American soldiers and was merely surprised at Americans' behavior. The films' cumulative authority, with later films seeming to affirm the representations of earlier films, overcame a lack of fidelity to what the user knew to be true of her or his experiences with soldiers. Although this may seem a rather mundane example, it is emblematic of ways in which films create the perceived truth about war for viewers. In this and other discussions, American war films are taken to be authentic depictions of war and military culture that would serve as sources of social knowledge, and by extension public memory of America's wars.

In another thread, a user asked, "Why does this kind of thing [rape of local women] always seem to happen in war?" However, this is a different kind of example. The user wrote, "I know this film is a work of fiction, but I also read newspapers and I am familiar with the details of the Mahmudiyah atrocities perpetrated by US soldiers on 14 year old Abeer Qassim al-Janabi and her family" (Jack-1132, 2009). Here, the user disclaimed the authority of the film by privileging news sources, but one may ask, why then did he go to this message board to ask the question? Why was this site seen as an appropriate forum rather than—or in addition to, since it is possible that the user had gone to those forums—news sites and political discussion boards? There are, of course, many possible answers to these questions, but it appears that the film was treated as a secondary source of information, as entertainment, and as a rhetorical resource for engaging in public discussions on political issues. In the course of the discussion, no thread respondents disputed the assumption that such incidents do happen frequently or that this is the right place to discuss them, even though they are not frequently reported in the news media. This suggests that these films make the relatively uncommon—but no less important—appear common and produce a memory of American wars that is not always verified by the news media but is certainly useable in forming opinions and arguments about war.

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In many cases, however, films like *Redacted* are scrutinized according to the narrative logic of the film, production quality, or narrative fidelity in comparison to viewers' own experiences. Consequently, users often blend several objections to form a general resistance to the film. Some of the resistance to *Redacted*, for example, was directly opposed to De Palma's use of first-person, found, and surveillance footage to tell the story because it seemed to give cameras too much free range while the characters' actions seemed inauthentic for people who should have known they were under surveillance. One user objected to a particular scene in which one of the rapists bullies his fellow soldiers into not reporting the incident while standing immediately in front of a surveillance camera, a scene the user suggested was representative of a film in which he "can't remember a single scene which seemed even remotely genuine" (Philipknowles1, 2010). De Palma may be making a point about the ubiquity of surveillance and self-surveillance in the digital age, but it is used against him because viewers do not see it as realistic.

Often, viewers also respond to Iraq War films according to special or technical knowledge. For example, in a several-message exchange, one *Redacted* viewer called on technical knowledge of terrorist media to complain about minute details such as the choice of flags displayed on a supposed terrorist website featured in the film (Overninethousand, 2011a). However, the greatest source of special knowledge called on to evaluate Iraq War films is knowledge of tactical, cultural, or aesthetic details of the military claimed especially by veterans or armed service members. Although this is far more common in discussions of *Battle for Haditha*, *The Hurt Locker*, and *Green Zone*, several *Redacted* viewers measured the film's authenticity against their own military experience. One user described his or her experience, including serving in Iraq, and called the film "a total farce" because she or he had "never seen guys in our U.S. Military who act anywhere even remotely close to the characters you see in this pathetic inaccurate film" (Autojampilot, 2009). In contrast, another veteran wrote that most of his fellow soldiers were "jackholes" who "watched war movies and laughed when the native people were getting killed [and] were deeply homophobic" (JimmyZappa, 2009). He added that he thought one of his roommates was crazy, saying that in these respects, *Redacted* was accurate.

The biggest hurdle faced by *Redacted* in establishing itself as an authentic document of events was the production constraint brought on by its low budget. Many viewers criticized the film's production quality and based their judgments of veracity on their expectations of production standards. One user was quite explicit about the authenticity of the documentary mode and the film's failure, writing, "The fact that they try almost to pass it off as a documentary sickens me, the acting is so wooden [and] over the top" (Ztpt, 2009). Another user wrote that the film is "not disturbing, nor thought provoking. It is just bad movie making, acting, writing, etc" (Michaelcrouch, 2008). The implication is that the film must be well made and well acted in order to be believable, and it must be believable in order to be thought provoking. Much of this resistance was directed at De Palma, often as part of an attack on his "liberal" propagandizing. The same user who was sickened by the documentary style wrote that "most [parts of the film] were leftist propaganda aiming to undermine the [Global War on Terrorism]" (Ztpt, 2009). This represents much of the difficulty in producing an overtly political docudrama about war. Viewers will seek many reasons to resist the film, picking at its message, aesthetics, or any number of other levels of detail. However, there will always be those for whom the film works, either because they were predisposed by prior beliefs and experiences to accept the film or because they simply lacked the resources and/or motivation to resist and were thus won over.

If public memory is a shared sense of the past that serves as an inventional resource, then, the responses to *Redacted* online suggest that, in order for a film to help constitute a critical memory public, it must first convince viewers that it is an authentic representation of facts and second that the facts are enough to justify a critical stance toward the war. In general, these discussions provide evidence of uptake when users express agreement with or learning from the film and take it as a reason to oppose the war. One user described an acceptance of the positioning as witness and sympathizer succinctly, writing, "This film really shows the reality of War...and what animals people become for a supposed cause. The innocents always bear the brunt of such animals, be it US Soldiers or Islamic Fundamentalists" (Zahid2869, 2009). Such comments are not very common, but their presence suggests that the film does serve for some as a

reminder of the costs of the war and, consequently, as a source of social knowledge and an inventional resource for rhetorical claims against the war.

4.4 Conclusion

Much of this discussion has focused on how *Redacted* failed to be taken seriously, but for this and other Iraq War films to impact public memory, they must make an impression on viewers, either by communicating that they present authentic depictions of the war or at least by delivering images and narratives that will take on some cultural resonance and have a chance to endure as representations of the war. In some respects, *Redacted* would seem among the least likely to have such a lasting impression because its reach has been limited and because there is much resistance to the film in online discussions. *Green Zone* and *The Hurt Locker* would have greater potential because they were both more successful in theaters, the home market, and file sharing and because their higher budgets allowed for greater production value, and consequently perhaps more arresting images. *Battle for Haditha*, which was even less successful than *Redacted* at the box office and the secondary market could at least boast more positive reception since there is much praise and relatively little resistance to its claims of authenticity and realism in online reviews and discussions. How, then, might *Redacted* have a lasting impact on public memory of the Iraq War? The answer to this question must begin by considering who did appreciate the film.

Public memory conceived as the memory of publics is distinct from the public-ness of memory, so it is less about how many people experience a text and more about how a group shares the text as a common source of discourse and collective identity. Even films with small audiences, then, can have an important impact on the way their *ideal* audience remembers the war. Thus, it is less important to note that there is a vocal opposition to a film, and more important that it helps to affirm the collective identity of a group that holds, or is willing to adopt, the views expressed by the film. As such viewers are positioned as political or prepolitical agents, they have the greater potential to further circulate such discourse and even produce action in opposition to the war. Perhaps most significant is that, as Warner (2002) argued, publics are not constituted by a single text, but rather "the concatenation of texts through time" (p. 90). A film such as *Redacted* is

just one text among many circulating the discourse of the critical public, and it is not important for all of these interrelated, sometimes intertextual, texts to be equally popular. Rather, it is only important that the sum of the texts gives their shared public a sense of collective identity and a sense of rising prominence in the public sphere as more and more texts make them harder to ignore. In this respect, reach and durability are essential factors in public memory, but it is not the single text such as *Redacted* that must reach all members of the culture. Instead, it is the ideas on which the particular film and the other texts that help constitute the critical public are built that must have great reach and must endure. I argue that this was the case with the rising of the antiwar public in the U.S. during the Iraq War, and as their discourse moved from the ephemerality of the public protest to the news media to more durable texts such as films, they not only grew in power to impact the political discourse of the time, but their discourse grew in durability needed to impact the way the war would be, and will be, remembered as time goes by. *Redacted* is an important part of this rising discourse because its release in 2007 made it among the first narrative films to criticize the Bush Administration and the war. It could be argued that it took small budget films like *Redacted* and *Battle for Haditha* to pave the way for the higher quality films like *The Hurt Locker* and *Green Zone*. In turn, it may be argued that it took critical news stories—and, as discussed in Chapter Three, the slowly-rising critical discourse in the Summer of 2003 through the Spring of 2004 that made these stories acceptable—to pave the way for the critical documentaries of 2006, and it was both these news stories and documentaries that paved the way for *Redacted*.

Evidence of uptake in public discussions indicates that the film is not only successful in getting its message through to those readers but that it is successful in spurring them to pass the ideas of the film along, to re-circulate the discourse of the film. This is part of the contagion effect of the spread of ideas, and it is part of the repetition that, in the terms of Phillips (Phillips, 2010), disciplined public memory to help ensure that some publics would remember the war through such images and narratives. As viewers express support for the film, they are encouraging others to view the film and take it seriously. Slowly, momentum builds and it becomes safer and more normal to circulate and re-circulate this discourse because more and more people seem to be part

of that critical public open to such ideas. This does not mean that *Redacted* grows into a popular film, just that it has contributed to the discourse that becomes more and more prominent as more texts are produced.

Perhaps most importantly, *Redacted* served as a testing ground for what kinds of expressions could be effective in building a prominent antiwar discourse, especially a durable one in entertainment media. The point-of-view storytelling in *Redacted*, for example, was somewhat of a failure, coming off as gimmicky for many viewers, and so when subsequent films employed similar techniques, they did so much more subtly. The multiple screens of *Redacted* that have drawn praise from scholars (Philpott, 2010; Pisters, 2010; Provencher, 2008) also appeared in *Battle for Haditha*, *The Hurt Locker*, and *Green Zone* as brief glimpses of Iraq through the eyes of a soldier's video diary, a bomb-disarming robot, an Apache attack helicopter monitor, even a surveillance drone. In small doses, this is effective and compelling.

Redacted, then, can be seen to have a much greater potential impact on the discourse and a lasting impact on public memory than one would assume. Although it certainly missed its mark in some respects and alienated potential adherents, it did get through to many viewers, and it did take important risks that in some ways may pay off, if only indirectly, in public memory.

Viewers of Iraq War films become witnesses to the horrors of war, to the suffering of civilians, and the trauma of soldiers. Even those who reject the images as inauthentic and the narratives as propaganda still must confront the media environment in which such anti-war discourse became the norm, and thus to resist the criticism of the war, they must cling more and more to oppositional identities and minute technical knowledge to deny the memory of the war as a tragic loss of humanity. Hardcore conservatives and many military service members could reject the films based on their political identities, but many viewers with less investment in such opposition could walk away with the images, narratives, and facts of the war lingering in their minds as fragments of their understanding of the war. This is part of public memory because, as Zaller (1992) theorized of public opinion statements and Hoskins (2012) did of networked collective memory formed "on the fly," these fragments may be called forward by discourse that offers cues about which salient fragments to favor and how to

piece them together to form a given attitude toward the war. This discussion, however, is not meant to make claims equivalent to those of quantitative measurements of public opinion. Rather, I argue that the fragmentary images and narratives witnessed in films such as *Redacted*, *Battle for Haditha*, and other Iraq War docudramas, as well as in other kinds of discourse, generally make the critical view of the war seem to be the appropriate, "natural" position for many people to take.

In Chapter Five, I look at the contributions of another relatively low-circulation critical memory text, the Los Angeles Veterans for Peace temporary Iraq War memorial Arlington West. Building on the notion of prominence, I argue that AW performs a valuable function of "memory maintenance" that ensures even potentially disengaged viewers are reminded of the human costs of war that have been largely absent in the news media. Because this performance has been ongoing on a weekly basis since 2004, even extended beyond the end of the war, AW and the seven years-worth of visitor logs to which I was given access offer a unique opportunity to see how visitors have called on different contextual resources to respond differently over time. AW, then, extends this research to consider the limits of public memory texts to ensure a lasting critical memory of the war.

5. Sustainable Memories

This chapter examines the public memory of the Iraq War in the ephemeral war memorial known as Arlington West (AW), set up each Sunday at Santa Monica Pier by the Los Angeles chapter of Veterans for Peace (VFP).[79] This display of crosses arranged in a grid to represent the American dead in the Iraq War,[80] as well as photos and names of dead and injured Iraqis and American soldiers, is a unique memorial because although it is temporary or ephemeral, it is also recurrent. VFP has set up AW at Santa Monica Pier every Sunday since February 2004, and in that time it has not only grown to reflect the accumulating number of casualties, but also to include photographs, personal possessions, and other objects left at the site by grieving friends, family, and fellow soldiers. A small number—limited by the amount of volunteer labor each week—of the more than two thousand mementos are put on display along with name cards set up on and around the crosses. The mementos, then, represent an ongoing co-construction of the memorial by visitors and volunteers. There have been other additions to the Santa Monica display, as well, including the adoption of red crosses, grouped within the larger field of white crosses, each representing ten dead. There are also now coffins and blue crosses on display, each representing one death in the previous week. In an attempt to be more inclusive, VFP has also added a small number of Jewish Stars of David and Muslim crescents scattered among the crosses. They have moved to recognize the injuries suffered by service members in the war with the addition of a photo display showing wounded and disabled soldiers, and more recently, there was an addition of a tombstone placed among the crosses, which reads "MILITARY SUICIDES – 7 EVERY WEEK."

In this chapter, I argue that AW's impact stems from its physical and symbolic work that aims to corral, remind, and move "accidental" visitors to remember the human cost of the Iraq War. By appealing to visitors of the beach and the tourist attraction of

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[79] Santa Barbara and San Diego chapters of VFP produced memorials, as well, on a somewhat regular basis as early as November 2003 and January 2004, respectively. However, only the Santa Monica exhibit is still produced regularly.

[80] In recent years, the exhibit has broadened to display the costs of the Afghanistan War, in order to, as one volunteer told me, keep the memorial going as long as possible and draw attention to a war that they believed had been largely ignored in the media.

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the famous pier, AW helps ensure that the war is remembered by individuals spanning a wide range of political engagement. In this way, the memorial provides a form of what I call "memory maintenance" that not only educates the passersby on the human costs of war, but also keeps that knowledge present in public memory and thus available for subsequent arguments about war.

Just as previous chapters were interested in how media texts helped develop a figurative archive of images, information, facts, and feelings about the war, so does this chapter address how the public demonstration of AW does the same. Like previous chapters, too, this one attends to both the rhetoric of the text and its effects on the audience in order to gain insight into the kinds of memories of the war that it inspires. In the language of Entman (2004), these memorials frame the past and present in such a way as to appeal to existing schemata and shape new ones that will be available for thinking about the war and producing future rhetoric on the issues. For this reason, I am interested in determining the ways that the memorial is experienced and received in a collective, interactive engagement of public memory. Specifically, I note how comments in the seven years' worth of visitor log books to which I was given access reflect waves and trends in responses to the memorial. I suggest these responses signify a kind of influence that reflects the movements of public opinion within the larger public sphere.

Whereas previous chapters were concerned with the mass mediated circulation of representations of the war, this analysis indicates the ways in which even a local, relatively contained discourse can impact and interact with the wider discourses about war. Because AW is produced at a site of leisure, confronting "accidental" visitors with the truth about war, this text somewhat resembles the entertainment media discussed in Chapter Four since viewers come across it seeking not information—as with news media—but leisure activities. Thus, it is both the analysis of the interactions of accidental and "destination" visitors (Blair, 1999) within the physical space and their textual responses in the visitor log books that makes this a unique project capable of identifying the larger potential impact of such memorials and protests.

I will begin with a survey of research on physical and textual responses of audiences to public memorial sites in order to identify the importance of attending to both if one is to better understand how such texts can impact not just the highly engaged

audiences who tend to be the subject of inquiry into the public sphere, but also those who pay little attention to politics. Next, I will identify the rhetorical moves of AW based on the experiences I had and the observations I made in my three trips to Santa Monica to participate in the memorial, talk with volunteers and passersby, and digitally scan the nearly ten thousand pages of available visitor log books dating back to 2005. The next section of the chapter will examine these visitor comments as indicators of the effects of AW's rhetorical moves, paying particular attention to identifying where the memorial succeeds and where it fails to inspire the kinds of responses and the kinds of actions fitting the problems it addresses. Finally, I will consider how remediations (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) of AW in videos and blogs help extend the memory maintenance functions of the text and repeat the call for action initiated by the memorial.

5.1 Memorials and Response

Young (1993) wrote that "memorials by themselves remain inert and amnesiatic, dependent on visitors for whatever memory they finally produce" (p. xiii). His study of Holocaust memorials examined a number of counter-memorials that invited visitors to participate in the memorialization, including the Monument Against Fascism in Harburg, Germany, which asked visitors to engrave their names on the monument. As each section filled with names, the pillar sank into the ground, where it eventually disappeared with the final lowering in November 1993. Looking ahead to that point, Young wrote, "the vanishing monument will have returned the burden of memory to visitors: one day, the only thing left standing here will be the memory-tourist, forced to rise and to remember for himself (*sic*)" (p. 30). This is one of the most unique memorials examined by contemporary scholars of public memory, in part because of its high investment in the visitor's participation, the idea being that visitors perform the memory just by being at the site and contemplating what had been memorialized there previously by a physical marker.

The visitor's role has been of great interest to scholars of public memory at least since the 1980s when they began to examine the performances of visitors at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (VVM). In one of the earliest studies of the rhetoric of the VVM, for instance, Foss (1986) noted the practice of leaving objects at the wall and quoted visitors

whose interviews had been published in newspaper stories to support her analysis of the power of the memorial's visual features. Carlson & Hocking (1988) contributed perhaps the most in-depth study of responses to the memorial by looking at all the letters left at the Wall in a two year period while Berdahl (1994) complemented her study of the letters, poems, and other artifacts with interviews of visitors. Scholars have come to recognize that, as Blair, Jeppeson, & Pucci (1991) argued, these artifacts and the performances of visitors become a part of the overall meaning of the memorial and must be considered along with the permanent elements of the memorial site such as the Wall, memorial flag pole, Vietnam Women's Memorial, and Three Soldiers statue.

Another kind of audience response can be found in comments left by visitors in logs at memorials and museums, which some scholars have relied on to assess reception of such exhibits. Blair (2006) noted, rather in passing, that logs at the Civil Rights Memorial Museum provided evidence of the reception of the exhibit's main appeals. In a more deliberate study of the visitor logs at the Documentation Centre of the former Nazi Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg, MacDonald (2005) argued that visitor logs should be seen as part of any exhibit and should, therefore, be a part of any analysis of such exhibits. Reid's (2005) examinations of visitor logs at the controversial *30 Years of the Moscow Artists' Union* art exhibit in Moscow's Central Exhibition Hall argued that visitors created a deliberative public sphere within the pages. Evidence of reception has also been studied in work on more interactive texts that, as Blair & Michel (2007) argued of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt, blur the boundaries between invention and reception. In their examination of contributions to the Quilt's signature panels on which visitors wrote their names and other messages, Lewis & Fraser (1996) found that visitors saw the Quilt as a therapeutic device and political tool. As political tools, these memorials and their visitor performances are attempts to raise consciousness for issues and serve, as Blair (1999) argued, an agenda-setting function by marking the commemorated issue worthy of attention. Perhaps more importantly, it is not only visitors' attention that is directed at the issue, but also their actions.

Contemporary memorials inspire visitors not only to leave objects and notes at the sites but also to engage with others in the memorial space and interact with the physical materials. As Haskins (2011) observed of the American Friends Service

Committee's traveling exhibit Eyes Wide Open (EWO), visitors literally helped produce the text by assisting in the set-up and take-down of the materials, including a ritualistic reading of the names of the dead that, according to organizers, was a moving experience for which volunteers were grateful (p. 102). In this process of personalizing the dead through images and interactions, EWO not only added the cost of American and Iraqi lives to the agenda,[81] but it also fostered both physical and dialogic engagement on the issue. In her discussion of the materiality of rhetoric, Blair (1999) argued that "Memorial sites, by their very existence, *create communal spaces*" (italics in original, p. 48) by controlling the ways visitors interact and thus influence the kinds of responses they may have. Blair noted that the arrangement of walkways and fences at the VVM, for example, ensured that visitors would be positioned close to the wall, to see it at certain angles, and even feel its presence looming above them as they descended the slope toward its center. Others have noted the practice of visitors touching the wall, getting pencil rubbings of the names, and looking at their own reflections in the shiny granite (Berdahl, 1994; Blair, et al., 1991; Doss, 2010; Hass, 1998; Sturken, 1997). In contrast, Blair & Michel (1999) found the Astronauts Memorial at Kennedy Space Center to be rather limiting of visitor interaction owing largely to the fences that keep them at a distance from the memorial. However, it was not the physical layout of the space that they found impacted the visitors' experience as much as the context of the space. They argued that Kennedy Space Center's proximity to Disney World meant that a large number of visitors were, in essence, too distracted by their theme park vacations to attend to the commemorative work of the memorial. Along similar lines, many scholars have noted the significance of the VVM's location on the National Mall situated amongst other monuments of national significance to create a nationalistic context for viewers (Blair, et al., 1991; Foss, 1986; Sturken, 1997).

This previous scholarship, then, justifies paying attention not only to the symbolism of public memorials but to the interactions they foster. By attending both to the textual responses and physical reactions, one can get a sense of how these sites enact

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[81] Research on mass media coverage of the war indicates that the human cost of war has largely absent from reporting (Aday, 2004; King & Lester, 2005; 2008), though Fahmy & Kim (2008) did find what they called an "unprecedented … emphasis on the human cost of the war focusing on Iraqi civilians" (p. 455) in the *New York Times* and *The Guardian*.

public memory for actually existing visitors. However, while the research reviewed here provides a general framework for analysis, it has been rare for scholars to put together considerations of both types of visitor responses. As a consequence, the research has favored the highly invested viewers who have a personal stake in the issue being addressed. Carlson & Hocking (1988), for instance, were interested in the offerings of "pilgrims" who made a trip to the VVM for the purpose of visiting the memorial, or at minimum came upon it while visiting the other sites on the National Mall and, thus, engaging in some sort of civic tourism. For Blair (1999), it is an important characteristic of public memorial sites that they are destinations because they "Demand physical labor of their would-be audience members" (p. 46). When viewers with low interest were observed, as in the case of the Astronauts Memorial (Blair & Michel, 1999), their interactions were largely seen as completely disengaged and thus treated as unworthy of consideration beyond explaining the reason for visitors' disengagement.

In addition to looking at both the physical movements and the textual evidence of reception left at memorial sites, it is also necessary to note the engagement of both the destination visitors, who have a stake in the issues, and the accidental visitors, who represent a much larger, perhaps disengaged swath of the population and who are typically represented in public discourse only by their abstract fictional presence in estimates and constructions of "public opinion" invented by rhetors who seek to justify actions "in the name of the people" (McGee, 1975). For this population, public memory texts must position them to be reminded of and moved by issues in a setting where engagement requires little labor on their part. Thus, in this research, I am interested in the ways the physical site of AW "corrals" visitors and works to move them emotionally by presenting images and facts that remind them of the cost of war and give them resources by which to remember.

The Iraq War was much more "distant" from everyday life than Vietnam and other previous wars for most Americans, and many have had no personal connection to soldiers (Pew Research Center for Social and Demographic Trends, 2011, p. 14). Most went on about their lives every day without having to face the horrors of war or the havoc it wreaked on the soldiers' bodies and minds. For that reason, the space of diversion such as the beach beside the amusement park is precisely the right kind of

place for AW to reach an audience that had not been frequently reminded of the costs of the war. While Blair & Michel (1999) found the "theme park zone" to inhibit the commemorative work of the Astronauts Memorial, I argue that something of the opposite is true of the AW. Rather than the leisure setting controlling the visitors' interpretations of the memorial, the memorial has an effect of pulling many visitors out of the mindset of their leisure activities to confront what they have been able to ignore.

5.2 Arlington West Analysis

In Bitzer's (1968) highly contested description of the rhetorical situation, an "exigence is an imperfection marked by urgency" (p. 6) that can be changed by addressing an audience capable of correcting the defect. However, Vatz (1973) argued persuasively that "meaning is not intrinsic in events" (p. 156) and that it is rhetors who invent the exigency in constructing the rhetorical situation to justify their arguments.[82] I cite Bitzer cautiously here to acknowledge that, as the VFP constructs the situation against which they produce their rhetoric, it is valuable to consider what "imperfection" they see as needing to be addressed. At first glance, it seems clear that AW seeks to address the senseless and continuing deaths of American and Iraqi people for seemingly little purpose. Ostensibly, then, the memorial represents an attempt to stop the war. However, it would be unfair to suggest that VFP believes the display itself will bring about the end of the Iraq War or wars in general. Instead, it may be more accurate to say that the memorial responds to the exigency they identify in a citizenry lacking awareness of the war.

In her brief attention to AW in her chapter on gratitude and war memorials, Doss (2010) criticized memorials ranging from AW and EWO to the National World War II Memorial, writing that they "are agents of national thanksgiving and cannot transcend the limitations and obligations of gratitude" (p. 251). She went on to conclude that memorials such as AW and EWO "do not question the huge economic and political appeal of militarism in today's America; they do not consider why military service is often the only job option for some Americans or how armed conflict and imperialism

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[82] See also Consigny (Consigny, 1974) who identified a middle path whereby rhetors both respond to events and construct them rhetorically.

largely define American national purpose today" (p. 251). Doss was correct insofar as such objectives are difficult to put in practice. VFP's intention with the memorial is much less direct and perhaps much less radical, but much more sustainable and designed to appeal to a larger audience, engage more viewers, and thus better influence public opinion and public memory than the arguments she favored. The stated mission of Los Angeles VFP for AW suggests as much. Their mission is "to remember the fallen and wounded, to provide a place to grieve, to acknowledge the human cost of war, to encourage dialogue among people with varied points of view, [and] to educate the public about the needs of those returning from war" (Los Angeles Veterans for Peace, n.d.). Although, as Chapter Three showed, the war did receive a fair amount of attention in the mass media, the AW mission is dedicated to filling a void that has been created by the government's obfuscation, the media's irresponsibility, and even the people's contentment.

The first rhetorical function of AW is to "corral" its audience. VFP takes advantage of the fact that it is in a highly visible space that is heavily traveled by tourists and local beachgoers. These represent the "accidental" visitors who make the trip to Santa Monica State Beach to surf, swim, and sunbathe while visitors to the famous Santa Monica Pier ride the amusement park rides, play games in the arcade, visit the aquarium, and engage in other leisure activities on the pier. When beachgoers park in either of the two largest parking lots or in the free street parking on the south side of the city, they approach the beach by walking down from the entrance to the pier. As they do that, they follow the wooden pathway through the sand that cuts right through the AW memorial. On the left side of the path—the ocean side and thus the side that is likely to draw the most attention—are the crosses and signs representing the number of casualties in the war, while on their right side are the "supplemental" materials featuring photographs of wounded veterans, the visitor log books, and the makeshift "pillars" listing names of dead Iraqis, followed by the VFP pop-up tents in which are displayed an array of antiwar literature and VFP and AW materials such as shirts, stickers, and newspapers. Behind the tables sit the VFP members who answer questions and engage in conversations with passersby. At the same time, other members circulate along the walkway and throughout the memorial, also talking with visitors and tending to the memorial.

It is on this path, surrounded by representations of the costs of war that the AW "corrals" its visitors. By this I mean that the symbols of the memorial surround "accidental" visitors who go to the beach for fun and are instead faced with a truth about the war in Iraq that many of them may not normally consider. Pier visitors are corralled much less directly. Often, groups of them gather by the railing on the north side of the pier and look out over the crosses, especially when the weekly mock funeral procession is occurring. When this happens, the gathering of the crowd itself signals an attraction, and the size of the crowd multiplies. These visitors have not been surrounded by the memorial as much as called to it by the spectacle. Once their interest is piqued, they may descend the steps and walk down the wooden path to get a better view of the signs that cannot be read from the pier. At this point, of course, they have been corralled.

This is not to suggest that only those who come close enough to be corralled are confronted with AW's symbols of the cost of war. Anyone who is close enough to identify the crosses and the military iconography of the flag-draped mock coffins, icons of military helmets on some signs, or even the VFP members' clothing asserting their veteran status is aware that this is a reminder of the cost of war. Even the avoiders who steer clear of the memorial and choose to trudge through the soft, slow sand behind the VFP pop-up tents instead of the easy walkway through the exhibit give the war some form of attention. Simply altering their routes to the beach means visitors have faced the fact that the war exists and chosen to attempt to ignore it, but at Santa Monica State Beach on Sundays, forgetting the cost of war is harder work than remembering.

This is only a reminder, of course, since few visitors of near-adult age are likely to have no idea that the war ever happened, and surely they all understand that people die in war. For many accidental visitors, AW tells them something they may have known but did not have to consider at length, and in so doing helps maintain the memory of the war. This is "memory maintenance" in the sense that it rebuilds a schema, image, or narrative that had faded or perhaps never fully formed in the minds of the viewers. As a consequence, the war becomes a salient point of reference for them—again or for the first time. This is an important part of a study of public memory because in order to build a significant movement within the public sphere, groups such as VFP must create a visible public that is addressed by and re-circulates the discourse, the counterframe, or

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the oppositional schema they present. Although, as previous chapters have argued, discourse critical of the war is now dominant, getting to that point required the effort of many voices to respond to the events of the war and challenge the Bush Administration's frames. Once established, however, the discourse requires continuing circulation to maintain that position in public consciousness and public memory. Memory maintenance occurs whenever a public text establishes or reestablishes an idea as important, credible, or salient in the minds of large groups of people. When that is done, the given view of the past (re)established by this memory maintenance makes that past *usable*. In the example of AW, a usable past makes it possible for visitors to both produce and receive arguments about the war in other settings based on the knowledge of the costs of war the memorial establishes.

The crosses arranged in rows and columns on the beach are the most potent reminder of the cost of war. The spectacle of a field of more than four thousand crosses with a red stripe through the center is itself an appeal to remember. This becomes an image in the individual memory shared by many who chance upon the exhibit, even those who never come close enough to understand what each cross represents. The verbal signs on the beach are the next feature of the memorial that promotes memory maintenance. They both remind at the general level and instruct at the specific level. Reading the signs, visitors learn the exact number of dead Americans, an approximate number of dead Iraqi civilians, and other information about the suffering of veterans who have returned from the war. It is not, however, as if visitors are unaware that war inflicts casualties, but the signs work in conjunction with the crosses to provide a numerical figure they will be unlikely to remember and a visual image they may be unable to forget.

The small, handwritten signs on the crosses, too, direct attention to even greater detail, pointing out that each soldier who dies in war is not a mere abstraction but is actually someone's son, daughter, spouse, or parent. This is perhaps one of the most powerful features of the memorial, and it not only attempts to remind the visitors of what they may have already known at some cognitive level, but it attempts to move them emotionally. The names, photos, and mementos placed on the crosses often express or imply the love felt by friends and family for the deceased soldiers. For example, one

such note reads, "In loving memory of <u>Shane C. Swanberg</u> Thank you baby... I miss you sooo much..." This note accompanies a photograph of Swanberg with a young woman, presumably the person who left the note, smiling at the camera and leaning in close to each other. Through such mementos, the memorial is co-constructed by the VFP and the people who lost loved ones in the war. The inscription appeals to visitors' sympathy and invites them to imagine what it must be like for the woman in the photograph to lose her beloved. In this way, the memorial attempts to move visitors emotionally, but the movement does little to transfer feelings of empathy, sadness, grief, or love into a larger critique of the war.

In order to oppose the war, AW must translate grief into critique and ultimately into action to stop the war. One way it attempts to do so is by juxtaposing the images of the American costs of the war with the Iraqi costs. Much like the Eyes Wide Open exhibit which according to Haskins (2011) provided a visual perspective by incongruity when it juxtaposed military boots representing dead soldiers with civilian shoes symbolizing dead Iraqi civilians, AW presents references to the dead Iraqis alongside the symbols of U.S. casualties. Although the VFP members often debate how to do this more effectively, at the time of my research, civilians were represented primarily by makeshift "pillars" made of plywood listing the names of civilians who had been killed in the war and a sign that read:

> This small memorial represents only a portion of the more than one million Iraqis killed since 2003. Imagine walking with one foot in front of the other, toe to heel. Each step is one Iraqi life. If you took one step for each Iraqi life, you would walk 190 miles.

Another sign puts the number of Iraqis killed at "655,000 +", citing a 2006 study by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Burnham, et al., 2006). This figure is significantly higher than estimates visitors may have heard elsewhere, but the fact that it is traced to a well-known university gives it more authority, even if visitors are unlikely to check up on the numbers. Another sign, this one on the side of the walkway where the crosses are set up, reads "If we were to acknowledge the number of Iraqi deaths, the crosses would fill this entire beach." This highlights a weakness in the memorial. Whereas the dead Americans are represented visually, and thus more

powerfully in terms of emotional appeal and impact on individual memory, dead Iraqi people are only represented by text. It would, indeed, be powerful to fill the beach with symbols of the Iraqi cost of war, but VFP does not have the labor power or the time to complete such a task each week. In this respect, the higher the cost of war, the harder it is to commemorate and the more abstract the commemorations become. Unfortunately, the emotional appeal that serves as a central feature of the rhetoric of the memorial suffers from this lack of visual symbols of Iraqi suffering.

On the other hand, a greater presence of visual depictions of Iraqi suffering may elicit more negative reactions to the memorial. As Jasper (2011) suggested, emotions are not always positive or helpful for social movements (p. 12), and according to VFP members to whom I spoke, there were many occasions in the past when AW visitors reacted negatively to what they saw as a misguided and manipulative protest. As VFP Volunteer Coordinator Michael Lindley explained, "Hardly anybody comes locked in their ideas. Pretty much everybody listens now" (personal communication, July 22, 2012), but he and others recounted stories of veterans and family members who were angry about the way they thought AW depicted soldiers as "monsters."[83] In such cases, emotions worked against the VFP, though their anecdotes suggest that, as the organizers of EWO found (Haskins, 2011) the calm, rational discussion—and listening—was often successful in soothing the angry opposition. What this suggests is that while emotion and rationality are sometimes at odds with each other, it is not always clear which one leads the way in influencing the audience in the desired direction. It also suggests that while the emotional responses to the exhibit may vary, the object of the emotion is also somewhat unpredictable. At times, the emotion—gratitude, grief—may be directed at the soldiers represented by the grave markers, photographs, and mementos; at other times, the emotion may be directed at the organizers—sometimes gratitude, sometimes outrage—and at times it may be directed at the policy makers who are responsible for the deaths—usually outrage or indignation. Therefore, attempts to control the message and increase the rhetorical uses of emotion are no small challenge. In order to produce an effective antiwar text, VFP is faced with the task of activating previous knowledge,

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[83] These stories were remarkably similar to those recounted by Haskins (2011) about responses to Eyes Wide Open and Doss (2010) about the Lafayette Hillside Memorial.

focusing viewers' attention first on the symbols of the memorial then on the causes of the deaths the symbols depict, and finally directing the emotion against a particular target. The factors involved in such a complex set of movements are bound to go awry somewhat frequently.

The rhetorical logic of the memorial is not simple. The focus is on presenting a sense of the sheer number of casualties in the war, through the visual and imaginary appeal of filling the beach. However, despite claims to the contrary (Mueller, 1971, 2005), knowledge of casualties alone does not translate into opposition to war (Berinsky, 2009). The most costly war in human history was World War II with between 65 and 70 million deaths, more than half of which are believed to be civilians (Leitenberg, 2006), and yet that war is remembered in American mythos as "the good war." The loss of 400,000 American soldiers between 1942 and 1945 is seen as a national sacrifice for the good of the country and the world, so the loss of 4,486 U.S. soldiers in Iraq cannot by itself prove the war a mistake. From this perspective, it is unclear what appeals AW makes to argue against war. References to peace are present throughout the memorial, mostly in the name of "Veterans for Peace," but as countless visitor comments expressing admiration for the soldiers' sacrifice for American freedom and the wish for peace reveal, hoping for peace is not the same as opposing war. As Doss (2010), Browne (1999), and others have pointed out, American public memory is dominated by gratitude toward the martyr soldiers who "gave their lives that others might live in liberty" (Browne, 1999, p. 179). Thus, lacking a concrete refutation of the purpose of the Iraq War as a war for American citizens' freedom, AW suffers from another rhetorical deficiency, though one with which the VFP is content. As Michael Lindley explained, he prefers a text that allows for multiple interpretations and encourages critical thinking (personal communication, July 22, 2012).[84] Those who believe these deaths are in vain, then, may be more critical of the war while others with perhaps less familiarity with or interest in the politics may tend to see it more as a tribute to sacrifices.

However, the larger text of AW does feature some cues to lead less opinionated visitors to critical conclusions. This rhetorical movement begins with the dual focus on

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[84] There are others in the group who disagree with this and think there should be a more direct antiwar message, though the general consensus for now is to maintain the ambiguous presentation.

military and civilian deaths. For some, the knowledge of civilian deaths, especially in great numbers, may be enough to cause them to question the justness of the war, but for others, the rhetorical appeal to lead them to that conclusion is quite complex because the emotional response to soldier deaths and the emotional response to civilian deaths may tend to be in conflict with each other. On the one hand, the soldiers are at least partially responsible for civilian death since they are the ones who pull the triggers.[85] Visitors who seek to point the blame for the deaths of the innocent thus have to work out how to sympathize with civilians while maintaining grief and gratitude for the soldiers. A reasonable way to resolve this conflict is to see both groups as victims of the war, a point many VFP members often emphasize in discussions with visitors. The rhetorical appeal of AW, then, not only corrals visitors, reminds them of the truth of war, and moves them emotionally, but for some, it confronts them about their ideological blind spots. As the war progressed and opposition to the Bush Administration became more prominent and acceptable, it also became more common for more people to accept the juxtaposition of emotions that leads to a critique of the politics while respecting the soldier and the civilian dead. To gauge whether or not visitors make this connection, it is important to look at the responses to the memorial, especially the emotional responses.

5.3 Responses

Doss (2010) argued that public memorials express and mobilize different emotions depending on different types of memorials. Of primary interest in her research are the emotions expressed by war memorials and the temporary, often spontaneous memorials set up at the sites of tragic events. The former, Doss argued, tend to express gratitude for soldiers who fought the wars in service of the nation while the latter express grief for lives cut short, such as memorials at the sites of mass shootings. Her framework is not without complication, however. The attention she paid to the VVM in her discussion of gratitude, for example, provided its own ambiguity, as she implied the memorial led to a rise in gratitude toward Vietnam veterans, and yet she also suggested that, "Unlike the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the new [Visitor Center] is intended as an

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[85] Of course this premise is itself complicated, since viewers may realize that many of the civilians have been killed in attacks by insurgents, many of them directed at killing the coalition soldiers.

unwavering expression of national gratitude to America's soldiers" (p. 243). If that is the case, one might ask, then, what does the original VVM communicate? Research on visitor responses to the VVM by Carlson & Hocking (1988) and Berdahl (1994) identified a number of emotions expressed or demonstrated by visitors of the VVM, primarily grief and guilt, with no mention of gratitude in either study. Doss herself seemed to acknowledge the presence of grief at the VVM when she briefly compared visitors' offerings at the site to those at the temporary memorials dedicated to grieving at Columbine High School. She cannot be blamed, of course, for finding multiple emotional appeals in and responses to the VVM because one cannot assume that any text is capable of eliciting a uniform response from the diverse audiences that visit public memorials. In short, the classification Doss used to organize her book was too neat. She did not account for the multiple interpretations, the multiple positions, and the multiple emotional responses visitors have to memorials, and yet her classification provides a useful cue for considering the responses of visitors to AW.

Although these visitor logs do not appear to be the sites of deliberative engagement in an ad hoc public sphere as Reid (2005) found in responses to the Moscow Artists' Union exhibit, one prominent pattern in AW comments is a textual interaction among visitors. Throughout each visitor log book, expressed sentiments seem to cluster together and move in waves, as if visitors are cueing each other about how to respond to the memorial. Sometimes a dozen pages go by without a single expression of thanks, for example, followed by a cluster of them across a handful of pages. This kind of interaction can be seen as an alternative to the direct engagement Haskins (2011) found in her analysis of EWO, which she argued, "encourages strangers to enter a dialogue over the meaning of the memorial" (p. 102). While dialogue is perhaps the ideal form of interaction at such sites, it is perhaps a rather uncommon experience for the large majority of visitors. Instead, as scholarship on attitude influence and public opinion suggests, expressions of, and indeed formations of, personal opinion may be to a larger extent based on social cues in such phenomena as reference groups and opinion leaders (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955; Lazarsfeld, et al., 1948), the irrational contagion spread of ideas as attention suggests credibility and thus justifies more attention (Bartels, 1988), the spiral of silence—including its amplification of what turns out to be minority

voices—(Noelle-Neumann, 1974), and the cueing of considerations in forming opinions from fragmented notions "on the fly" (Zaller, 1992). This may especially be the case for those visitors who do not arrive with a strong, fully formed opinion about the war or a high amount of information or interest in it. In other words, many accidental visitors holding multiple, often competing fragments of opinion about the war search for cues in the memorial, the movements of fellow visitors, and in the comment logs for how to respond.

It may be, in fact, that the greatest cue comes from those who are heavily invested in the war—the veterans and family members who come to grieve or the passionate peace activists who come to voice opposition to the war, for example. This influence is apparent when mourners venture in among the crosses, often tearfully embracing one another, praying, and leaving nametags and mementos at crosses. As these actions become part of the spectacle of the memorial, their visible grief cues audience members to treat the site as a sacred space for mourning, much like the temporary memorials often set up at sites of tragedy. Similar cues are provided by the VFP when they enact a funeral procession, carrying coffins out to place at the front of the crosses. During my visits, these moments drew the largest crowds of onlookers of the day, with many looking down from the pier and many along the walkways through the memorial. These crowds also tended to be quiet, as if passersby adopted the decorum of a funeral.[86] It may be that these actions—the funeral procession and the performances of grieving families and friends—cue viewers to make comments in the visitor logs. This might explain the high prevalence of comments that speak specifically to the families of the deceased, offering sympathy and thanks to them, and even assuring them that their loved-one is now in heaven.

In any case, this clustering of comments suggests a form of collective spectatorship at work, leading to common circulation of ideas within the limited discursive space of the comment log that mirrors the performances in the space. It also provides a concrete example of what Haskins (2011, p. 108) saw as a self-conscious co-

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[86] Some visitors even think there are bodies in the coffins, as suggested by visitor log comments, accounts of visitors asking question of VFP members, and conversations I overheard in the crowd when I participated in the procession.

presence between strangers at the EWO memorial. Although these ephemeral performances shared by a small number of people do not constitute publics by themselves, they do offer hints of which kinds of ideas are seen as viable responses to the war at a particular time. The rise in the circulation of an idea over time would seem in one sense to signal a certain validity of that idea for many individuals, an indication that it is safe to express because it is apparently rising in popularity, much like the rise of the "Bush lied" schema in the spring and summer of 2003, when it became common in blogs, books, protest signs, bumper stickers, and other media.

The AW comment logs offer glimpses of the shifts in attitudes, though the logs only date back to 2005, by which point the antiwar, anti-Bush frame had already been well-established. The absence of pro-Bush voices across all seven years indicates the dominance of the critical opinion, perhaps suggesting a spiral of silence that led Bush supporters to keep silent in fear of isolation and ostracism. An example of the anti-Bush contagion on the small scale of the visitor logs can be found in a series of comments from June of 2006 following a page that contained the comment, "Don't kill these people in Iraq. Please kill Bush." As the pages were turned, four visitors filled the following two facing pages with comments that built on each other. The first comment reads, "Please send the army back home. Fuck what Bush says," followed by the next, which says, "All he wants is oil. Don't kill Iraqis, kill Bush!" The pronoun, of course, indicates some interaction between the two comments on this page, and the violent hostility toward Bush of the second comment seems to build on the previous page's "Please kill Bush" commenter's permission to do so. On the top of the facing page, a visitor wrote, "Oil is not … as important as lives," and finally, another wrote, "Fuck Bush. All he wants is oil, and he is killing people instead!" Here, the memorial prompted a response from visitors, but fellow responders cued what seemed to be appropriate feelings to express. Together, these viewers created a very small community, presumably of strangers, united by their shared reading of AW and their shared opinion of the war.

The clustering of comments can also reveal the limits of collective action inspired by the memorial. This is well illustrated by an anti-Bush cluster appearing in December 2005, in which facing pages contained two comments, one reading "Peace?

Wait for a sensible president" and the other apparently responding both to the cue of the previous comment and the symbolism of the memorial, saying, "2000+ innocent Americans; 30,000 innocent Iraqis… No reason… Bush should be charged with war crimes." On the next page, a visitor who noted that she or he is not American, wrote, "I don't want more war. I don't want innocent people getting killed. Hopefully Bush will not be elected next time. Hopefully someone does who cares if people get killed. Shame on Bush!!!" Although this person was not aware that Bush would not be up for reelection again, the comment seems to respond to the previous sentiment of "waiting for a sensible president" and taking the cue to not only oppose the war but to think in terms of stopping it by electoral means. The next commenter echoed only the last part of this comment, writing, "Bring them home!!! Shame on Bush!", and the following comment reads, "I'm not American but it's shameful for Americans to have this kind of president. Like you said, Shame on Bush!" Here, the author not only echoed the citizenship disclaimer from a few pages back, but also directly addressed previous commenters who cast shame on Bush.[87] Again, such critiques have been prominent in discourse about the war since 2003, but their presence in these log books is a testament to the ability of the memorial to do more than evoke gratitude or grief, as Doss (2010) suggested. Although the anti-Bush discourse was still quite healthy in 2005, this can be seen as a performance of memory maintenance, as visitors reminded each other that the appropriate response to the war is to blame Bush.

However, this practice largely faded away as time went by. Earlier in the war, when visitors searched for somewhere to place blame, in order to maintain gratitude toward soldiers and sympathy for civilians, they easily settled on Bush. With Bush out of office at the beginning of 2009, the target of the anger had disappeared, and the antiwar argument of the memorial may have become more difficult to follow for many visitors. The presence of expressions of gratitude rose sharply in this time, eventually appearing in over half of the comments in log books from 2011 and 2012. In essence, AW seemed to become in the eyes of visitors a monument to the costs of war that the people had

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[87] Although I am not a handwriting expert, it appears as though all of these comments were written by different visitors, despite the repeated messages. In some visitor logs, it is apparent that a commenter has placed a message or related messages on multiple pages, such as one visitor who scrawled "Only cowards say no war" in large letters across seven pages in a visitor log from 2007.

already taken action to solve. The solution was to elect Barack Obama instead of John McCain, who had been depicted by the Obama campaign as representing a continuation of Bush's policies. Whenever visitors turned their attention to politics in the logs, especially in 2008, the aim was always to elect a candidate who would end wars. For most comments leading up to the election, the solution was to endorse Obama, but Hillary Clinton, Ron Paul, and even McCain also received endorsements. After Bush left office, grief and gratitude dominated, and the war seemed to be a thing of the past to be remembered, not to be stopped.

This limited conception of responses prompts a reconsideration of the concept of rhetorical audiences discussed above. Again, Bitzer (1968) argued that a rhetorical audience is one that is capable of solving the problem or purifying the imperfection that prompts the rhetors to speak, or that the rhetors construct in order to justify their speaking (Vatz, 1973). Los Angeles VFP's stated mission for AW is to oppose the Iraq War, and the AW's link to the national VFP mission of abolishing war ("Our mission," n.d.) indicates a larger goal of opposing the very presence of military intervention as a viable foreign policy option. However, looking at both the short- and long-term trends in responses to AW, it is apparent that the audience saw itself as being called upon to solve a smaller, more manageable problem of keeping war-mongering politicians out of the Presidency. In this way, visitors could adopt the critical frame without feeling they had to develop a plan of action to radically challenge the political status quo.

In responses to the appeals of AW, there is no shortage of emotion, but there does appear to be a lack of action, or rather a lack of ability to conceive of appropriate or effective action to stop war. Those who express anger look ahead to a rather narrow form of action in the form of voting in presidential elections. Others who "promise" some sort of action in response to the exhibit say they will pray for the soldiers, pray for peace, or "remember" the soldiers. Still, others promise to join the military to be just like the "heroes" that have fallen for the country. Less frequent are comments that promise quite the opposite, such as one from 2006 that reads, "I was … thinking of becoming a Marine. Now I see what happens to soldiers in Iraq. I thank you and hope to see all those soldiers back home from Iraq soon." The sentiment here seems to be that it is noble to

fight for one's country but that the Iraq War is so mismanaged that the sacrifice of soldiers and Marines is a waste.

Lacking a clear form of action to which they can inspire their viewers beyond presidential elections, the best the VFP can hope for is to help maintain the visibility of antiwar publics long after the Iraq War has disappeared from the national agenda. The attention AW continues to receive and the number of comments they still collect is at minimum an indication that they are performing the memory maintenance necessary to help keep the Iraq War on the horizon of public consciousness, to borrow a term from Casey (2004). This is observable when the spectacle of the memorial becomes a resource in arguments about war after visitors leave the space. Visitor comments can give little indication of how the imagery will serve as a rhetorical resource for this audience in the future, so it is necessary also to attend to the representations of the memorial in other media—what Bolter & Grusin (2000) call "remediation"—as a form of response, and an active one, by inspired viewers.

5.4   Action and Remediation

Many visitors are inspired by AW to produce texts that reflect on the memorial, share sentiments with others, and—most frequently—take a stand against the war. When this happens, the reach and durability of the exhibit are extended as its images and narratives can now circulate beyond the beaches of California. One YouTube video featuring footage of the memorial with a voiceover of a poem read by Carly Sheehan— antiwar activist Cindy Sheehan's daughter—has received over 100,000 views (Arlingtonwest, 2007), while others have received as many as 7,400 views. Perhaps the most significant example of remediation in terms of the work that went into creating an enduring text is the film, *Arlington West* (Marr & Dudar, 2006), which was produced by local artists Sally Marr and Peter Dudar. The film, which is available on DVD and VHS and has been screened in classrooms and local public events in the Los Angeles area, documents over one hundred interviews spanning three years with veterans, family members, and other visitors to AW layered with images of the exhibit, grieving visitors, and other related imagery. The DVD also includes two short films documenting local peace activists set against the backdrop of issues of immigration and Los Angeles

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antiwar and Chicano activism. The context for the *Arlington West* film, then, is undeniably antiwar,[88] and the content can be read equally so. From the opening voiceover by "Gold Star Mother"[89] Jane Bright accompanying images of a military funeral and a soundtrack of the national anthem, the message is explicit that the war must be stopped:

> I was very, very opposed to this action before it started, but all the demonstrations that were occurring before the war just went flat after [the Iraq invasion]. We are watching our young die. I've buried my oldest child. I don't want to see any other parents go through this, and the only way to stop it is to rise up in protest and stop this madness.

Words are not enough to make up for this loss, and so Bright exhorts the audience to act, to transform grief into action. Unlike the films considered in Chapter Four, this speech positions viewers not as prepolitical subjects but as political subjects mobilized for action because words are not enough. In addition, unlike the memorial, the film is clear about the kind of action it inspires viewers to take.

The remediation of AW, then, not only extends its reach and its durability, but it does so in a way that seems to counter Doss's (2010) criticism of such protest-memorials favoring expressions of grief and gratitude over larger political and economic issues. This is apparent in one of the most emotional moments in the film, when a woman tells the story of a veteran to whom she was close who committed suicide after being tormented by the memories of what he saw and did in Iraq. She explains, "he did things that were not good and he killed kids, children. He would see murdered children on the sides of the streets, and they would go past in their humvees, and it's just a lot of horror and misery." She then explains that the military focuses its recruitment in poor neighborhoods, enlisting people who have nothing to return to when they come back from war scarred. In these scenes, the message is clear, not only that war is hell but that there is a politics behind it that destroys innocent children and poor Americans. The woman describes a soldier who admitted to killing children, and yet, the indictment is

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[88] This, in fact, is an example of the weakness in Bitzer's (1968) view of the rhetorical situation addressing an objective context. Here, the makers of the film constructed an antiwar rhetorical situation more in line with Vatz's (1973) challenge to Bitzer.

[89] Gold Star Mothers is an organization of mothers who had a son or daughter killed in war.

not of that soldier but of the politicians and the political and economic system that created the war and put him in a situation in which he could neither act in a way he knew to be right nor live with his memories.

In addition to the larger-scale projects produced by those associated with AW and VFP, there are also many photographs, blog posts, and videos created apparently by more casual visitors who were inspired by the memorial's imagery, almost always to speak out against the war or wars. For example, photographs of mementos set out for Shane C. Swanberg, who was discussed above, appear in several blogs, including *LA Progressive* (Winograd, 2008) and *Veterans Today* (Hanafin, 2010), where the authors make explicit the relationship between grief and opposition to the war. In each case, the image supplements an article about ending the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, indicating that as the memorial is transferred to other media and re-circulated in new forms, its appeals become flexible, allowing some aspects to be brought to the foreground. In the case of the *Veterans Today* article, the photo is annotated with a banner reading "Pray for permanent peace!" According to the author, veteran Robert L. Hanafin, the image was chosen because it is among those that help express a motto of "Honor the Warrior, Not the War." This is an illustration of the transference VFP hopes for, acknowledging patriotism and gratitude while also turning the argument against war. Like the distrust for the power of words expressed by many AW visitors, Hanafin explained that he had struggled to find his words to produce an article for Memorial Day in support of an initiative to reform Memorial Day observation to focus more on peace—and prayer— rather than on war. The images of grief and gratitude, again, were mobilized to argue for a kind of action beyond the beaches and beyond the ballot box.

The idea of desiring action but settling for more calls for action appears frequently in many of the AW-inspired videos on YouTube, as well. Almost all of them adopt a generic style similar to the opening of the *Arlington West* film, invariably panning across the field of crosses, then showing close-up shots of signs that pause long enough for viewers to read them. Two signs that are almost always featured in succession are one that tells the U.S. death toll in Iraq, followed by the one reading, "If we were to acknowledge the number of Iraqi deaths, the crosses would fill this entire beach." The common form of these videos highlights an important aspect of the

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physicality of the memorial. The videos provide a controlled experience that makes it much easier for the filmmakers to draw attention to the salient features that make the memorial an antiwar protest. In one such video by a YouTube user named InsidetheEmpire (2012), the camera approaches the "Iraqi deaths" sign, then the frame pauses for five seconds before a fade out. Like many AW videos online, this one also features an interview with a VFP organizer, who explains:

> Many people think that we're just honoring [soldiers], and they went over there and killed innocent people, but we like to think of them as victims of war. They just got duped into thinking they were doing something for freedom and to save us. I can't call them war criminals, but there are people who feel that we're not being antiwar enough, that we're honoring these guys too much. I don't know how subtle our message is. We kind of worry about that. We don't want to look like we're glorifying wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Based on my observations, this seems to be a common conversation VFP members have with visitors at the site, and so in some ways the video, like other remediations, presents an ideal interaction with the memorial. It directs attention to the deaths and an evaluation of the deaths pointed at the political system of the U.S. Of course, what is missing is the physical interaction with the space and fellow viewers, but similar cues can be found in the comments section of YouTube or the blog into which the video is embedded. Further, the "accidental" visitors of Santa Monica Beach are likely quite different from the "accidental" visitors of YouTube or blogs who likely come across the videos while perusing related topics in which they are interested. Nonetheless, these texts are a significant part of the overall experience of AW and its memory maintenance functions. As the exhibit spreads out across multiple discourse forms, it joins the other discourse that remembers the war critically and helps to ensure that these ideas continue to be prominent in the public sphere.

5.5 Conclusion

AW provides a unique memorial and an extended record of visitor comments that sheds light on the rhetorical processes of public memory. As the exhibit draws casual audiences into the space, it appeals to them with a number of simple and complex

gestures. It invites them to interact, to learn, and to remember. In the process, it provides them with both information and imagery that help evaluate the war. What the display does not do, however, is tell the audience what to think. Instead, it opens up a space for different forms of direct and more subtle engagement among strangers to work out a collective understanding of the war and its contexts.

As AW provides a resource for remembering the war to thousands of visitors of the popular leisure site each week and countless others through the remediations it inspires, it helps maintain the war's currency in public consciousness, creating compelling symbols that can be called upon to make arguments about the Iraq War and other wars in the future. As it continues to exhort its audience members to act against wars, they become alert at least to the electoral process and the responsibility of the people to call for leaders who will avoid the mistakes of George W. Bush. It is the circulating discourse such as this that has still made the Bush name forbidden in the Republican Party, even throughout the 2012 presidential campaign.

At the foreign policy level, the continued circulation of this discourse helps to create a situation resembling that of the post-Vietnam era when Ronald Reagan lamented the hindrance of the so-called "Vietnam syndrome" on the people's resolve to engage in militarized interventions in foreign countries (Reagan, 1980). In essence, this was a perception of public opinion against going to war that existed in the circulating discourse of a critical public that remembered Vietnam as a low point in American history. As the public memory of Iraq maintains a similar position, it may continue to impact the decisions of political elites to avoid sending American troops into harm's way where they and many innocent civilians may lose their lives for dubious political gains. AW is a small part of this discourse that reveals a great deal about how it circulates and how public memory is built and maintained.

6. Conclusion

In a piece on Director Kathryn Bigelow and writer Mark Boal's film about the hunt for Osama bin Laden, *Zero Dark Thirty* (Boal, Bigelow, & Ellison, 2012), *Washington Post* film critic Ann Hornaday (2012) wrote, "In an era when legacy media are on the ropes and genuine investigative reporting is becoming increasingly rare, journalism will surely keep migrating into other popular forms, creating a new audience of citizen-spectators." This position highlights a central point in this dissertation, that in a public culture as large and diverse as that of the United States, it takes a variety of media to activate a "national debate" on important issues and gradually lead to one view attaining apparent dominance. In late December of 2012 and in the early months of 2013, the film spurred the circulation of discourse in a web of interconnected media texts to give the impression that "everyone" was talking about torture, the issue at the center of the film. Circulating discourse is the site of struggle among competing publics to gain greater prominence for their respective positions with the outcome of gaining legitimacy and ultimately dominance on the issue so that one position becomes the apparent consensus opinion and the public memory. As I argued in Chapter Four, films have the reach and durability to continue circulating and have a much greater lasting impact on public memory than ephemeral news media, and thus *ZDT* is uniquely positioned to frame the extended memory of torture and the war on terror.

The film sparked controversy even before it was made. In August of 2011, part of Boal's research included meeting with Obama Administration officials, which prompted Republican lawmakers to object that he might be given access to classified information as part of a plan to release a pro-Obama propaganda film on the eve of the 2012 election (Jonsson, 2011). By the time the film was released—two months after the election—it was clear that this was far from a story of how Obama defeated Osama bin Laden, and it was in fact largely Democrats who objected to the final product. Senator Dianne Feinstein, who heads the Senate Intelligence Committee, teamed up with fellow Democrat Carl Levin and Republican John McCain to send a letter to Sony Pictures, arguing that the company should consider correcting what they called "grossly inaccurate and misleading" portrayals of the role of torture in tracking down bin Laden.

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In fact, Feinstein's committee had just completed a six thousand page report on CIA interrogation techniques that, according to Feinstein, found so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" played no significant role in helping to find bin Laden (Shane, 2012).

In defense of the scenes of torture in the film, Boal takes the position of a journalist, that deleting them would be "whitewashing history" (Kaminski, 2013) and a failure to report the whole story. He and Bigelow claimed a close connection between the film and journalism, so much so that they even rejected the term "docudrama," instead preferring to call it "reported film." Bigelow explained, "'Reported film' is like 'found art' to me …. The event happens, then it's reported on, and then there's an imagistic version of that reportage" (Hornaday, 2012). While this can be seen as little more than a promotion strategy selling the film as a unique and important work that transcends genres, the claim does deserve some attention for its potential significance to a study of public memory. What Bigelow described is the kind of denial of the rhetoricity that documentarians aim for when they portray their work as transparent and objective representations. However, a case can be made that this film is different from many previous films because it depicts an event that was still fairly recent in people's minds, and one that was seen as having great importance in the nation's history, and yet, the press had been unable to answer many of the major questions about it. The impetus to make the film seems to have been generally the same as each of the texts considered in this dissertation: to show the people what the news media had been unable to show.[90] Bloggers critical of the Bush Administration wanted to show the version of the toppling of the statue of Saddam Hussein that had been deleted from the mainstream news media; filmmakers like Brian De Palma (Weiss & Urdl, 2007) and Nick Broomfield (2007) wanted to show the horrors of war that they believed had been ignored by reporters ("Nick Broomfield discusses," 2008; Rahner, 2007); the Veterans for Peace wanted to show the human cost of war that had been absent from the media. *ZDT* did much of the same and, in a sense, did what investigative journalism does in general. The script was based on independent research and relied on access to political and military officials

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[90] Of course, it must be acknowledged that a significant part of the impetus for this and other commercial films is also to make a profit.

familiar with the story to get the details. Some of this information had not been previously available in the press, nor in the memoirs of people involved.[91]

Like the films discussed in Chapter Four, including Bigelow and Boal's previous collaboration, *The Hurt Locker* (Bigelow, et al., 2008), *ZDT* features many of those docudrama conventions that help establish credibility of the depictions of the past. For instance, documentary footage and sound appear in the backgrounds and layered over scenes to help establish the connection between the fictional characters and real-life events viewers may recall, including horrific sounds from September 11th set over a dark screen at the opening of the film and apparently indicating that the quest of the protagonist in the film was set in motion by the tragedy of that day. In a later scene, Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech can be glimpsed playing on a television in the background, followed later by an Obama interview appearing on a television while three intelligence agents discuss their mission. The characters' dialogue quiets, and Obama's words become audible just as he is saying, "I've said repeatedly that America doesn't torture. And I'm gonna make sure that we don't torture. Those are part and parcel of an effort to regain America's moral stature in the world." Of course, the audience has witnessed horrific scenes of torture up to this point, so Obama's election signals a change in intelligence practices—and, in fact, there is no more torture in the film following this scene. Much like the Omaha Beach scene toward the opening of *Saving Private Ryan*, however, the early graphic scenes dominate the story, both as arguably the most compelling visuals in the film and as the origin of the narrative on which the rest of the story and all the other intelligence work is built.

In fact, the images of torture provide an example of another docudramatic technique that appeals to spectator's sense of realism and helps connect the film to the outside world. In one scene, a tortured detainee is sexually humiliated in front of an American woman when his pants are pulled down in front of her and he is helpless to

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[91] The book *No Easy Day* (Owen, M. & Maurer), the memoir of Mark Owen, one of the Navy SEALs who participated in the raid on bin Laden's compound, was released three months before the film came out, and author Mark Bowden's (2012) investigative book, *The Finish: The Killing of Osama bin Laden* was released two months before the film, but neither is cited as a source of *ZDT*, which was in post-production by the time either came out. Similarities between the stories in all three texts suggest some level of corroboration, as perhaps access to the same sources might account for. Boal may have even met with Owen as part of his research.

pull them up. He also has a dog collar placed around his neck and is walked around on his hands and knees. These images seem to make a rather direct allusion to the Abu Ghraib photos and rely on spectators' familiarity with these techniques to establish a sense of realism. There are also other images that call forth those that have been circulated in the news media, including the scene in the White House Situation Room, with its recognizable long conference table and high-backed chairs. The three-story house inside the compound where bin Laden was found and killed also bears a strong similarity to the one pictured in news photos of the actual house. These subtle claims to authenticity combined with the use of on-screen time and location titles to assert that the places and events depicted are familiar and real, even if they are sometimes mysterious, such as the several titles that identify scenes as set in so-called "Black sites" that audiences may have heard about in reporting on detainee extradition programs. Together, these techniques suggest that many of the important details of the film have been attended-to with great precision to ensure accuracy, and thus it presents itself as a true account of actual events, even opening with the common docudrama assertion that it is "based on firsthand accounts of actual events." Perhaps this is why the film has received so much attention, because it presents such bold depictions of the world the viewers live in, but a side of that world they have only glimpsed in the past then were allowed to forget or ignore.

This discussion of *ZDT* would seem to confuse the issue of the separation between the War on Terror and the Iraq War that has been maintained throughout this research. While the Bush Administration led the nation to war based on the link between Saddam Hussein and terrorism, it has long been clear that the Iraqi President posed no threat to the U.S., that he had no Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and he was not connected to Al Qaeda or September 11th. Thus, I have intentionally avoided discussing Afghanistan, for instance, in this research. As I conclude the dissertation, however, I turn to *ZDT* because it provides a unique lens by which to look at the public memory of the Iraq War and to think about how public memory is formed, maintained, and challenged.

Although the film is set mostly in Pakistan and there is no direct allusion to the Iraq War as a concurrent event at any time during the film that spans from 2001 to 2011, the memory of Iraq is nonetheless present in the film, if only subtly. Among the subtle

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references to Iraq is the clip of Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech noted above. Its presence in the film would seem to highlight an image of Bush's deception, which I have argued had been well-established since as early as the summer of 2003. In this sense, the "Mission Accomplished" speech—minus the sound—is included here as a form of memory maintenance, that reminds the viewers of the mistakes of that administration. The irony is that the mission after September 11th to capture Osama bin Laden has been all but forgotten by the Administration, leaving only this small group of agents chasing weak leads and torturing prisoners for information they may not have.

At the same time, the image supports one reading of the argument of *ZDT* that is contrasted by the parallel scene later when Obama's interview appears in the background, though this one is given greater attention and includes the sound. The juxtaposition would seem to suggest that Bush was to blame for Iraq, which was the source of the failing of moral righteousness, an error corrected by Obama's moral leadership. This is one interpretation, anyway, and one that requires a fairly close reading of subtle details—a reading many viewers may be uninterested in pursuing. Iraq appears elsewhere more explicitly in the film, as well. In several instances, the memory of Iraq serves as a hindrance to the intelligence agents, first because they remember the WMD intelligence errors and second because they know the people remember Abu Ghraib. WMD are mentioned twice in the film, by different characters, both to urge or explain intelligence officials' caution in acting on intelligence. In one scene, the Deputy Director tells the Director of the CIA as they are discussing the degree of certainty that bin Laden is the person in the compound they have been surveilling, "I remember Iraq WMD very clearly, I fronted that and I can tell you the case for that was much stronger than this case." The deputy's caution implies that not only was there a problem with the intelligence, but it led to disastrous consequences—the Iraq War. In another scene, the head of the Counter Terrorism Center complains that "Abu Ghraib and Gitmo fucked us," indicating that the bad press has led to changes in policy that make it difficult to work some of the channels that once could work—namely, this is a reference to Congressional oversight, but again the implication is that the mistakes of Iraq have limited the ability of even high-level officials to fight the War on Terror. This could be read to support an argument that intelligence officials feel they need to be able to torture

in order to do their jobs, and thus the problem with Iraq for them was merely one of public relations. In any case, while there is a certain level of variability of the memory of Iraq drifting in the background of this film, the judgment of the war as a mistake seems to be fairly clear.

There is another sense in which *ZDT* can be seen to be linked with the public memory of Iraq, though this one requires a particular reading of the film that has been quite common in viewers' responses. If the film is read as an endorsement of torture and seems to indicate that torture did play a role in the hunt for bin Laden, then this would seem to justify an aspect of Bush's approach to the war on terror that was a major source of the shift in public opinion against the Iraq War. As I argued in Chapter Three, the Abu Ghraib photos provided a source of credibility for publics critical of Bush to accuse him of dishonesty, corruption, and incompetence. However, if the scenes of torture in the film, which may be seen to include visual allusions to Abu Ghraib, can be linked directly to the successful killing of bin Laden, then the film provides a key resource by which a pro-Bush public can unravel the "Bush lied" schema and even the dominant frame of Iraq as a moral and strategic failure. Such a public can rise in prominence as texts such as *ZDT* provide resources for the reexamination of events and the appropriation of images and narratives previously used to support a critical public now to support a pro-Bush public. Just as the Abu Ghraib photos enabled the appropriation of the imagery of the toppling of Saddam Hussein statue to support the view of the war as a failure rather than the success the Administration and the press initially framed it as, so may the "torture led to bin Laden" narrative support a reexamination of Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, "Mission Accomplished," and "toppling." The purpose here is not to predict the rise of this perspective, but rather to take a cue from the example of *ZDT* to think about how shifts in the web of discourse across a variety of media *could* lead to a shift in the dominant public memory of the Iraq War, the War on Terror, and the Bush presidency.

6.1 Contributions

This dissertation contributes to the study of public memory by focusing on the processes by which groups are constituted by circulating discourse and how that

discourse helps particular views of the past rise in prominence while others fall. By focusing on the Iraq War, I am able to look at the processes as they played out while the war was still going on and how they have continued to play out since the war. Because I have analyzed a variety of texts from across different media, including textual evidence of viewer responses, I have been able to identify the ways in which the rhetoric of public memory calls on particular associations and invites viewers to see the war from particular perspectives that individuals then test against the knowledge of personal experience and the social knowledge that constitutes them as members of a particular public. This means that, as discourse circulates across and between news media, film, the blogosphere, and even public memorials and public protests, it constitutes publics with particular stances on issues and gives them the resources by which to further participate in the public discourse and gives them the potential "security" of identifying with an ascendant, prominent, or dominant public organized by individuals' shared vision of the past. As more texts across different levels of public discourse—from "wonky" news media to feature films to critical interventions in leisure spaces—begin circulating or continue circulating these views, they serve a role of maintaining the memory, and by extension maintaining the public as that public remains prominent in public discourse. The prominence of texts, in short, makes the particular views seem "natural" to many who come to identify with the discourse. This, I argue, is a way to understand how the critical public memory of the Iraq War rose against a dominant opinion that supported the war in March 2003 and how that memory is maintained, and must be maintained, by the continued circulation of critical discourse that recalls the failures and manipulations of George W. Bush and his administration. This research, then, offers a model for analyzing the formation of public memory by looking at the material and symbolic rhetoric of texts and their reception among audiences that read them in the contexts of contemporary events and other discourse. This rhetorical approach makes it possible to identify the processes by which public memory is formed and negotiated not by powerful groups that exist prior to the discourse but by groups that are constituted by the discourse as it circulates. In this dissertation, I have followed this approach in three case studies that help identify the ways in which memory is made malleable, durable, and sustainable in this maintenance-heavy process.

6.2 Dissertation Review

Each chapter in this dissertation has highlighted the multiplicity of interpretations, schemata, narratives, and frames that unite individuals into an identifiable, if imagined, community. This is a public constituted by shared circulation of discourse and shared images, ideas, and evaluations of events in the past. It is in this way that public memory is the competition over the memory of publics. In chapter two, I outlined the ways different groups coalesce around such discourse and how the expressed views within that discourse are subject to the influence of such factors as the visibility of ideas. This model of opinion influence can be seen as a processes by which publics "discipline public memory" (Phillips, 2010) and how they are built on the subtle, social influences on how individuals form and become comfortable expressing particular opinions. Consequently, the groups composed of the individuals form their own social knowledge and their own figurative archive of ideas about the war that are available to be called on in subsequent discourse. This view of public memory supported my approach to three case studies of public memory processes stemming from different types of texts.

In chapter three, I examined the circulation of imagery of the fall of the statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad's Firdos Square as a site of contestation among groups, noting that different images of the same event supported multiple meanings for competing publics. Consequently, the meaning of the event was dependent on the preferred interpretive schema for a given group, with the tightly-cropped images of jubilant Iraqis favored by the war-supporters and the wide shots revealing the emptiness of the square favored by war critics. The images apparently depicting jubilance were favored in the media, both resulting from and perpetuating the dominant frame of the toppling as a symbol of victory. Thus, this chapter provided a study of the influence of issue framing in the news media on the initial reaction to events, but I also acknowledged the possibility of resistance through other discursive and psychological resources and identified the processes by which marginal views could become prominent and lead to a larger reframing of imagery over time. Namely, I argued that as events largely beyond the framing influence of the Bush Administration's discursive control

came to light, the counterframe of "Bush Lied" began to see greater circulation in the larger public discourse, and it thus became a credible schema to which the news media and oppositional voices could appeal. In turn, this led to a greater prevalence and wider acceptance of interpretations of Firdos Square imagery as a deception by the Bush Administration to conceal the political failures of the war. The image, then, could be part of the archives of Iraq War memory for both pro-war and anti-war publics as it became a *usable past* or *inventional resource* capable of supporting arguments on both sides of the issue. However, as the critical view became dominant, the Firdos Square imagery came to support more easily arguments critical of the Bush Administration, as exemplified by imagery-based arguments that criticized the Iraq War in contrast to the democratic uprisings of the Arab Spring in Egypt. The shift in the dominant meaning of the toppling imagery reveals the way in which texts, and public memory itself, depend on their relationship to other texts and the larger public discourse.

From this study of images initiated in news media, I moved on to look at docudrama films as sources of more enduring, and potentially farther-reaching representations of the war. I argued that because narrative films are distributed in the home market as DVDs, files available in peer-to-peer file sharing trackers, and other kinds of "durable" forms, they have the potential to greatly impact public memory by maintaining a persistent resource for audiences to view again, and for new audiences to view for the first time, long after the film's initial release. Whereas imagery initiated in the news media can endure through recirculation online at least as easily as films can be circulated, films have the appeal of providing entertainment value which means they often have a greater durability *in practice*. In Chapter Four, I focus on docudramas as sources of information and entertainment about the war, arguing that they build on the stories often previously reported in the news media, essentially revising and retelling them in entertainment form. As the study of De Palma's *Redacted* (Weiss & Urdl, 2007) suggests, such films attempt to convince their viewers that they are authentic representations of war in order to position them as witnesses of what has been kept from the public view. My analysis of online discussions of the war shows that while many viewers resist these representations, the film nonetheless impacts the larger public memory discourses because it affirms the views of publics united by their critique of the

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war and their critical memory of the war. This affirmation is an important part of critical publics' ascension to prominence because it helps them see themselves as a visible virtual community with presence, and rising influence, in the public discourse about the war. As such films, even unpopular ones, offer increasingly credible resources for understanding and arguing about the war, they help to ensure that larger groups of people will take those views seriously.

Finally, in chapter five, my study of the Los Angeles Veterans for Peace temporary Iraq War memorial and protest, Arlington West, reveals yet another way in which groups engage with wider audiences to reveal what has been kept more or less invisible from the wider public. Like De Palma's use of docudrama film to expose the costs of war on both sides, Arlington West attempts to make up for the absence of imagery of the suffering of war in the mainstream media by representing the deaths and suffering of soldiers and civilians. In this case, because the memorial is put up and taken down in a single day, it would appear to be more ephemeral, and thus have little durability or reach to impact public memory. However, because the memorial is put up regularly in a highly-trafficked tourist space that draws "accidental visitors," its reach and durability are actually much greater than most temporary memorials. To assess the memorial's appeal, I examine the responses in visitor comment logs spanning more than seven years to look at the effects of the memorial's rhetorical appeals on audiences. The responses reveal that as the text does important work in "corralling" visitors with potentially low interest in following the war, and it also reminds them of the cost of war and provides images that will help that information remain salient in their memories into the future. However, the complex argument of the memorial, which by design leaves room for multiple interpretations, means that many visitors will see it more as a tribute to fallen "heroes," rather than a challenge to the politics that has led to the loss of many young lives. In part because the conflict between soldier deaths and Iraqi civilian deaths requires a complex shift in emotions in order to place the blame on American politics in general, most viewers who respond critically to the war do so by identifying George W. Bush as the object of anger. As a consequence, when visitors are inspired to promise action in response to the appeals of the memorial, they tend to favor personal responses such as praying or "remembering"—both important parts of public memory—but they

are limited in their conceptions of further, concrete actions that can be taken to ensure such lives are not wasted in the future. Those who do identify such actions almost exclusively focus it on participation in presidential electoral politics. As a consequence, once George W. Bush left office, responses to the memorial tended to approach the war as a problem that already had been solved by the election of Barack Obama, not as a continuing problem against which the American people must continue to remain vigilant in the future. While the memorial performance itself does provide important work of "memory maintenance" by ensuring many accidental visitors will be aware of the costs of war as time goes by, the reach of Arlington West is extended when it becomes the subject of other media distributed online and in other forms that provide a more controlling representation of the costs of war in support of arguments about Iraq.

These case studies offer a rich site for the analysis of the material and symbolic rhetoric of a variety of texts and a rich site for analysis of the way individuals and groups receive these message. It is in this examination of production, reception, and context of multiple discourses across time that I am able to make my contributions to the understanding of the processes of public memory.

6.3 Limitations and Future Research

This dissertation lays out an approach to the study of public memory that considers the circulation of discourse as the struggle among publics for influence on public memory. It shows the ways audiences call on additional discourse as a resource for understanding, challenging, or accepting public memory texts. In this way, the project lays out a model for future research on public memory and public culture in general. In a sense, this is a method by which to study the way publics interact and how individuals are folded into the collective merely by accepting the appeal of prominent discourse.

However, there are a number of significant limitations to this project. The first is that, although my inquiry into the discourse of the Iraq War took a somewhat wide view, expanding out to include a number of sources of discourse, there are nonetheless important ways in which the parameters can be further expanded. Absent from the study is any attention to representations of the war in music, new media texts such as video

games, entertainment television, and campaign rhetoric. One specific area of study, for example, would be the practices of silence among Republican candidates during the 2012 presidential campaign in comparison to Barack Obama's tendency to bring up the Iraq War as a caution against military action in Iran, especially in the foreign policy-themed debate with Mitt Romney. Future research following this model should seek to expand widely enough to be able to make an account for any number of sources of discourse that elicit a great many responses from publics, and the scope should also be extended to consider a wider variety of evidence of response, whether the image macros, tweets, and internet memes that were so common in responses to the presidential campaigns or the face-to-face conversations in coffee shops and other public spaces.

Another limitation is the specificity of the Iraq War as an object of inquiry. Whereas this research found a connection between events and the turn of publics against George W. Bush, further work needs to be done to consider whether this was a special case of a political official drawing unique levels of blame in a highly divisive political climate or if the pattern appears in other situations in which publics rise to build momentum at the expense of a scapegoat. Much of the discourse critical of the war is tied directly to negative evaluations of Bush, and, therefore, more work needs to be done to discover what other types of figures, events, and revelations can lead to turning points in the competition over public memory.

In addition, although my deliberate choice of texts with relatively low circulation had advantages, it also present a limitation on levels of controversy and intensity of debate I was able to observe. This is one advantage of thinking about *Zero Dark Thirty* as a way of extending the research of the dissertation. Although the film's focus lies outside the parameters of the study, its popularity and the conversation it has inspired suggests an area for further research into the power of high-impact media texts to foster immediate, intense debate that invites many different groups to compete for control of the issue. The fact that there was no film about the Iraq War that was as popular as *ZDT* is also worth considering. This may be because there were simply no hot-button issues that filmmakers were positioned to address before the larger discourse had already gotten out in front of them—*Green Zone* (Bevan, et al., 2010), for example, addressed the absence of WMDs, but it did so six years after the issue had more or less been settled

for many people. Other explanations might have something to do with the marketing of films or the budgets devoted to them. In any case, such issues should be considered in future research on public memory and the discourse of publics.

There are a number of issues on the horizon that have the potential to stir the kinds of public discourse examined in this research, in addition to the matter of the War on Terror. The ever-looming tensions between Israel and Iran may lead to regrettable actions on the part of one or the other. North Korea has recently been escalating its rhetoric and even threatening nuclear attacks against the U.S. and South Korea. Meanwhile, the bloodshed continues in Syria as the Assad government cracks down on rebels. The threat of war means that this approach to the study of public memory could be tested in the very near future.

6.4 Conclusion

This dissertation does not claim to offer a model by which marginal groups can effectively find their voices in the public sphere and influence public memory and public opinion, but it does acknowledge the benefit of attending to different voices coalescing among groups at different levels of power. Further, this study of the rhetoric of public memory suggests that, although elite-centered discourse tends to achieve great momentum in the public sphere, the power of elites is largely rhetorical and, thus, open to contestation. Contesting such power requires a great deal of work to circulate ideas widely and prominently enough to catch on as a viable alternative.

There are always many publics circulating their many sets of discourse through countless texts throughout the public sphere. This cacophony of voices holds great promise for understanding the rhetoric of public culture and the rhetoric of public memory. Sifting through it to identify the processes by which these groups struggle for influence can lead to great rewards and glimpses into where the culture has been and where it is going.

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