



"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

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75 CENTS

U.S. ATTACKED

HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS AND REVOLUTION IN TRAUMA LITERATURE SPARKED BY DISASTER

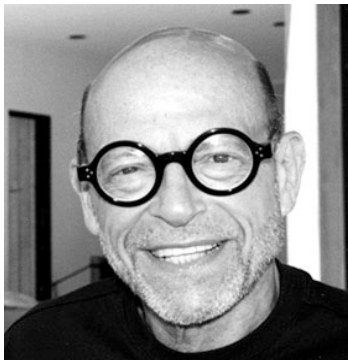
September 11th, 2001 sparked a revolution in trauma literature. The event traumatized the nation, but it inspired a swell in writing from personal essays, political opinion pieces, and testimonials to dramatic prose, fiction, and poetry.

In 110 Stories: New York Writes After September 11th, Ulrich Baer concerned himself with the latter of this literary flood and formed the first collection of creative responses to the tragedy.

Fallacies of Wonder

+

We All Saw It



=



effective sources for discovering new theories of mass trauma.

Witness

The effects of a mass trauma,
specifically looking at the
tragedy of September 11th,
triggers the creation of a
[WOUNDED MEMORY]
to which the mind is not able
to retain the true details of
an event, thus creating a
gap between the real and the
imaginary.

[WOUNDED
MEMORY]



Argument

A

[WOUNDED MEMORY]

is unable to record experience because the effects of trauma hinder the mind's ability to remember the events as they actually occurred. The incident of September 11th also produced fallacies in an individual's memory, causing the person to remember the event as a heightened experience. The reality of the tragedy becomes diluted and an individual's remembered experience transforms into a story, combining

[FACTUAL] incidents with [FALSIFIED] details.

The ability to rely on memory as a means to record the tragedy of September 11th essentially collapsed in tune with the disintegrating World Trade Center**.

* * See Fig. 1

Before

Figure 1

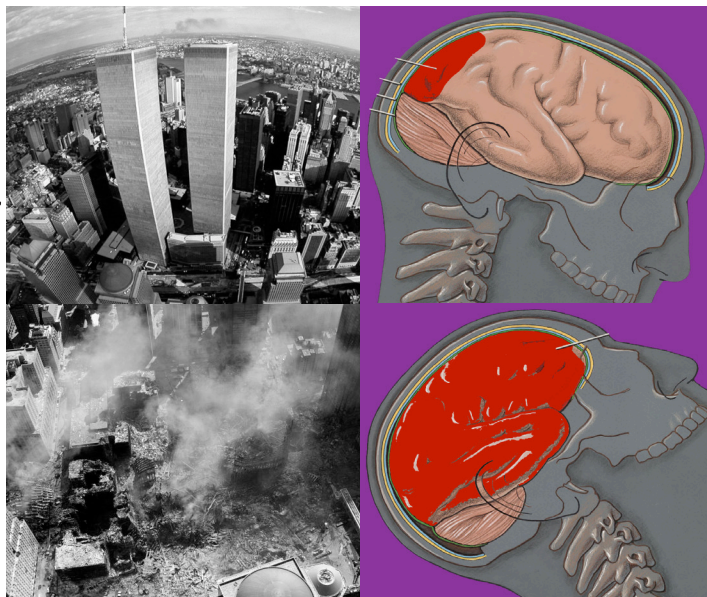
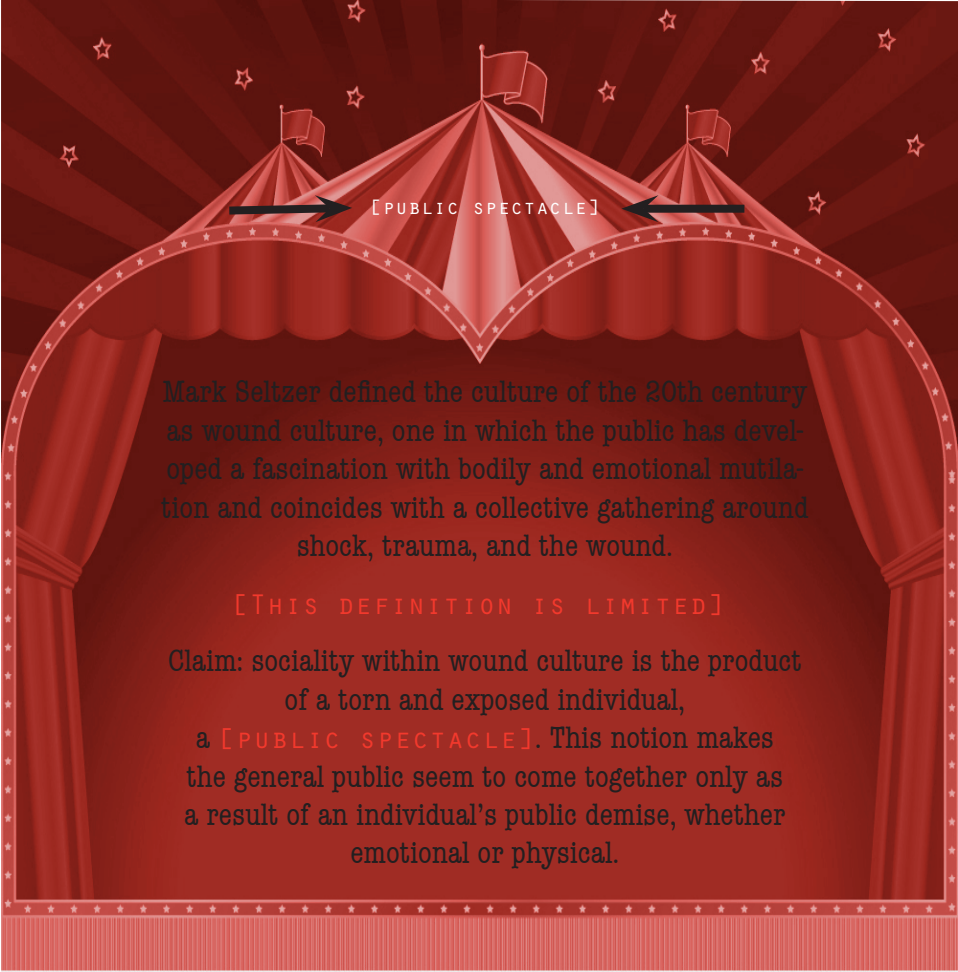


Figure 1

After



[PUBLIC SPECTACLE]

Mark Seltzer defined the culture of the 20th century as wound culture, one in which the public has developed a fascination with bodily and emotional mutilation and coincides with a collective gathering around shock, trauma, and the wound.

[THIS DEFINITION IS LIMITED]

Claim: sociality within wound culture is the product of a torn and exposed individual, a [PUBLIC SPECTACLE]. This notion makes the general public seem to come together only as a result of an individual's public demise, whether emotional or physical.

testimony

Sociality within
[WOUND CULTURE]
is not constructed because
of an individual's demise,
but rather sociality results
from a collective experience
of trauma.

[WOUND
CULTURE]

testimony



Those who witnessed ** the fall of the towers observed a creation of absence. This absence becomes a new structure replacing the World Trade Center and the individuals affected by this traumatic event can count on seeing them wherever he or she remembers them, no different yet never quite the same.

Seeing this destruction occur manufactured a mental gap between the real image of the Twin Towers and each person's memory of them, creating what I call the wounded memory.

** WITNESS REFERS
TO THOSE PRESENT

Quote

I AM ON THE PHONE WHEN THE FIRST BUILD-
ING COLLAPSES. A QUARTER MILE HIGH,
THE ELEVATORS TAKE YOU UP ONE-HUNDRED-
TEN STORIES IN FIFTY-EIGHT SECONDS.
IT CRUMBLES IN LESS THAN A MINUTE AS
THOUGH MADE OF SUGAR CUBES. THE TOWER
DROPS FROM THE SKYLINE, A

[SUDDEN AMPUTATION].

MY EYE STRUGGLES TO REPLACE THE BUILD-
ING, TO PAINT IT IN, TO FILL IN THE
BLANK.

WHEN THE SECOND BUILDING GOES, WHEN
THERE IS JUST A CLOUD OF SMOKE, I CAN
NO LONGER STAND THE STRANGE ISOLATION
OF BEING NEAR AND SO INCREDIBLY FAR -
I GO OUTSIDE.

Quote

Elaboration on the formation of

[THE WOUND]:

Seeing it with your own eye, in real time,
not on a screen, not protected by the frame
of the television set, not set up and narrated
by an anchor man, not in the communal
darkness of a movie theater, seeing it like
this is irreconcilable, like a hallucination, a

[PSYCHOTIC BREAK]



This [PSYCHOTIC BREAK] illustrates
the gap between the real and the imagi-
nary. The remembrance of the World
Trade Center is a zone which exists
somewhere between sleep and walking.

This zone is [THE GAP].

[THE GAP]

I am referring to is one that can be spoken, but
that lacks consistency in speech.

The individual afflicted with trauma post
September 11th, can recount his or her
experience, but falsely.

The more a person has recurrent thoughts about
the tragedy, the harder it becomes to distinguish
what actually happened from what they
remember happening.



Qunt

WE HAVE YET TO LEARN
THAT MEMORY IS A FALLA-
CIOUS MIRROR, RICH BUT
WRONG, USELESS AS RE-
CORD OF EXPERIENCE FOR
MEMORY IS EXPERIENCE.
IN THE END NOTHING RE-
MEMBERED CAN BE TRUE,
ALTHOUGH ONLY WHAT IS
REMEMBERED CAN BE REAL

Qunt

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HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS WOUNDED MEMORY AFFECTS WITNESSES

The "fallacious mirror," suggests that the image in a person's memory is a mistaken belief that is full of additive ornamentation; the memory is vivid, but it is not correct. It is not

a reliable source of experience. It is not the ability to remember that is lost due to trauma; what is lost is the ability to remember the exactitude of experience.



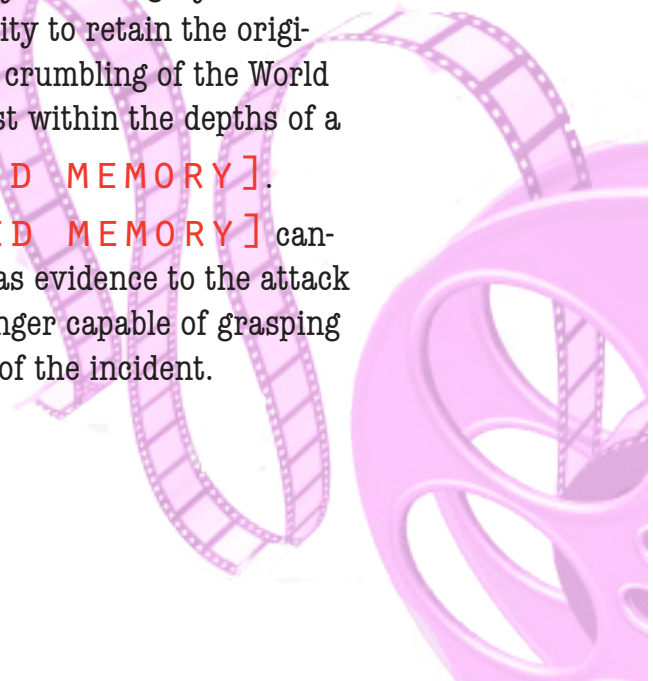
Memory is a [FILM] that can play the event on repeat, but each time the

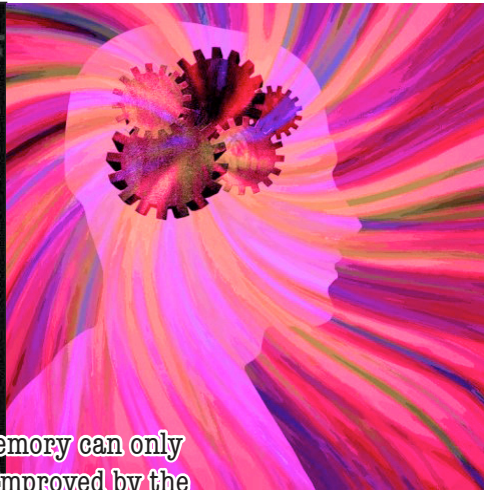
[UNRELENTING LOOP]

is being replaced by new imagery and new footage. The ability to retain the original footage of the crumbling of the World Trade Center is lost within the depths of a

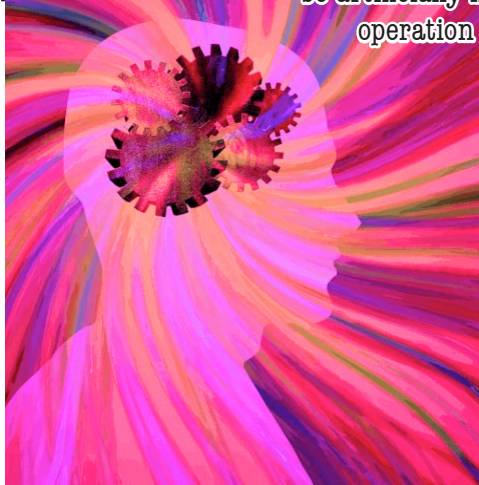
[WOUNDED MEMORY].

The [WOUNDED MEMORY] cannot be relied upon as evidence to the attack because it is no longer capable of grasping the facts of the incident.





A wounded memory can only
be artificially improved by the
operation of fantasy.

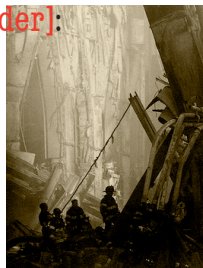


Blurred reality as
an effect of [THE WOUND] allows the
imagination to add false details in attempt to
improve remembrance.

The imagination creates an elevation of the
object of trauma, in this case the object being
the World Trade Center, causing that object to
be pedestalized and remembered as far greater
then it once was.

[MAGNIFIED MEMORIES OF
THE TWIN TOWERS]

The World Trade Center has become an [ancient wonder]:



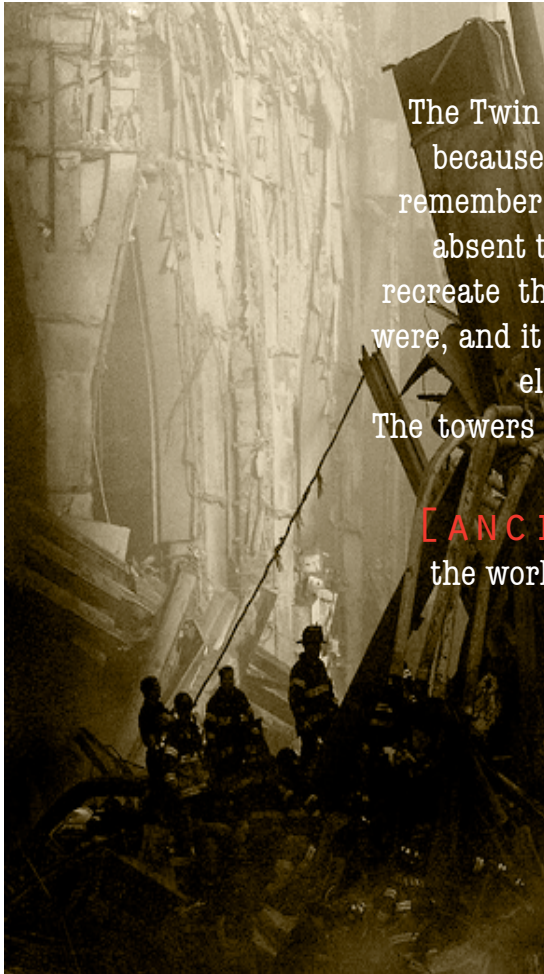
Quote

... NO LONGER SEEN

*BECAUSE, BEING THERE, REMEMBERED MERELY;
AND, NO LONGER THERE, REMEMBERED BECAUSE
NO LONGER SEEN. DID THEY HAVE TO BE
BEAUTIFUL?*

ALL ARE GONE BUT THE PYRAMIDS

ajonD



The Twin Towers are no longer seen
because an individual can hardly
remember them. Since the towers are
absent the individual is forced to
recreate the image of what they once
were, and it is in this recreation that the
elevation transpires.

The towers are now classified alongside
the many

[ANCIENT WONDER]s
the world that are now left in ruin.

If one remembers the towers as one of the wonders of the world, then the gap in his memory has fictionalized the absence of the towers.

Or...

One can amplify the World Trade Center on a celestial level, referring to them as “navigational points” as if the Twin Towers were a segregate North Star.

Or...

Humanize the Twin Towers by referring to them as his “night lights”

In A.M Homes' poem, the towers represented an image of safety; upon their destruction, the idea of the city as safe was lost.



An increase in the imaginary facts of an experience of mass trauma is a product of a wounded memory.



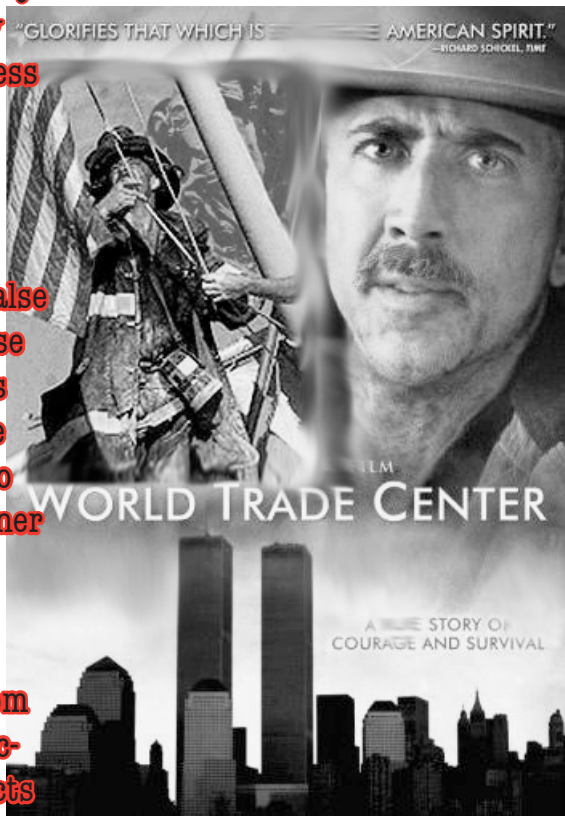
And the [VICTIMS]?

In America's
[WOUND CULTURE],
the effects of a
[WOUNDED MEMORY]
causes a tidal wave of sociality among the
people that share this collective trauma.
The fictionalization of each person's trauma
transforms these New Yorkers into
[STORYTELLERS],
and the telling of each individual's
aggrandized story becomes a personal
mechanism for coping.

The transformation of reality into fiction commends a story to memory more effectively than that chaste compactness which precludes psychological analysis.

The story's factual details serve as the basis for the false exaggerations, but it is these truthful bits of the person's own experience that incline the individual to repeat it to someone else someday, sooner or later.

Fictionalization essentially prevents the storyteller from coming to terms with the actual trauma because the facts are embedded deep within the lies.



The collective trauma of those who saw the World Trade Center fall on September 11th, 2001 produced [THE GAP] within the memory of each witness, leaving them incapable of distinguishing the reality of their experience from the imaginary details.



This [GAP] created a [WOUND] in each person's memory, and it was through literature that these experiences were given a voice.



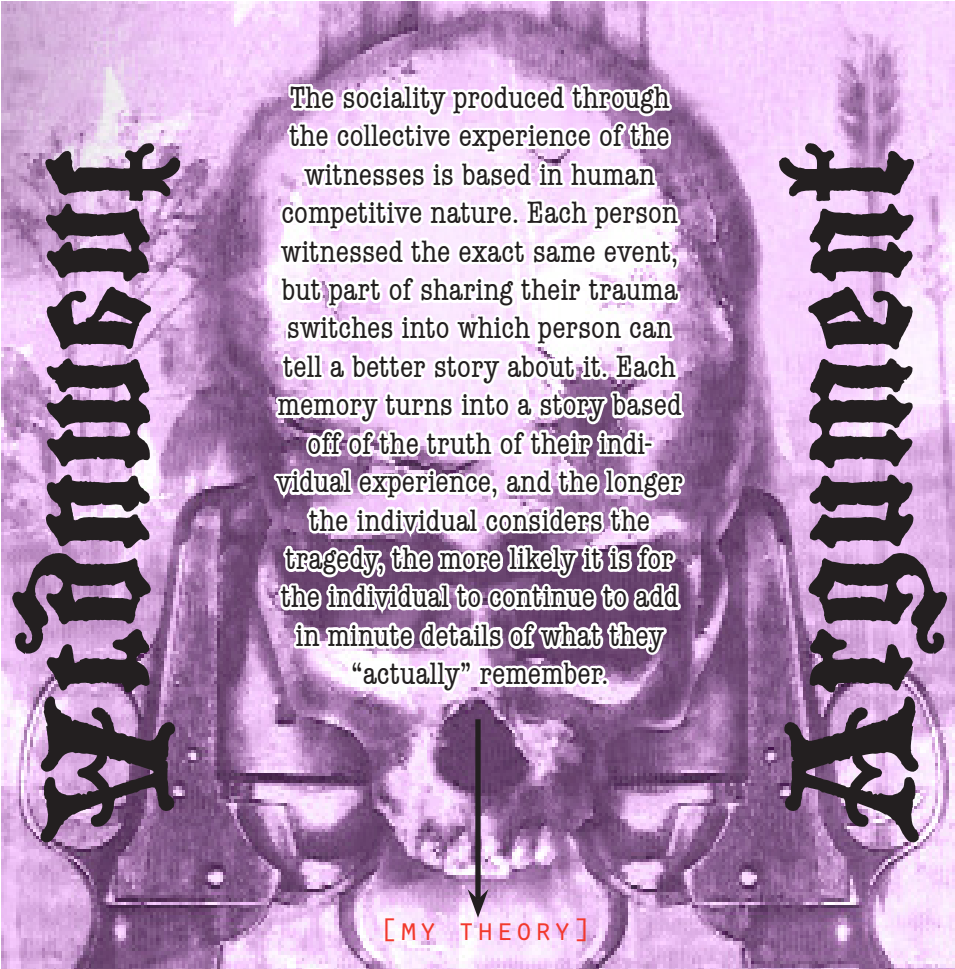
Howard and Homes' portrayals of the event led to the birth of my theory of a [WOUNDED MEMORY].



Through a [WOUNDED MEMORY], every New Yorker becomes a [STORYTELLER] as they combine the facts of the tragedy with the false details of their memories.



Storytelling thrives competition between the [STORYTELLER]s.



Insanity

The sociality produced through the collective experience of the witnesses is based in human competitive nature. Each person witnessed the exact same event, but part of sharing their trauma switches into which person can tell a better story about it. Each memory turns into a story based off of the truth of their individual experience, and the longer the individual considers the tragedy, the more likely it is for the individual to continue to add in minute details of what they “actually” remember.

Insanity

[MY THEORY]