NOT FORGOTTEN: THE KOREAN WAR IN AMERICAN PUBLIC
MEMORY, 1950-2017

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ABSTRACT

The “forgotten war” is the label most frequently used to recall the conflict that took place in Korea from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953, with variations of this phrase found in museum exhibitions and monuments across the country. Since the widespread presence of so many mentions of Korea clearly demonstrates that the Korean War is not forgotten, this project critically evaluates several forms of public memory (including museum exhibitions, historical scholarship, films and television shows, state and local monuments, and memorial infrastructure including bridges, highways, buildings, and trees) in order to explore how the war has come to be called forgotten. This project also seeks to examine the foreign policy issues of labeling the Korean War as forgotten, by exploring how it is recalled globally and why it is essential to remember details about the war. This project also seeks to fill a niche in the scholarly literature on public memory of American wars by examining Korea as prior studies have both WWII and Vietnam. In addition, this project intervenes in several more scholarly conversations ranging from the argument that the television series M*A*S*H was not primarily an allegory for Vietnam, as is often alleged, to the contention that a Korean Anti-War Movement was much more widespread than has been appreciated by academics interested in the history of activism. This dissertation is designed to highlight the ongoing need to remember the Korean War in detail, given the threats to world peace made by North Korea, and to make clear that it is vital to understand the enduring legacy of the war for twenty-first century diplomacy, which can only be done by examining how the war has been publicly recalled and why the forgotten war label persists despite evidence that Korea has been widely remembered.
For Sabrina, Furrious, Casper, and Candy
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I am extremely appreciative of the many who have contributed to the writing of this dissertation including teachers, all those who aided in my research, and my family. My AP Euro teacher, Dr. Richard Elmore, took a group of us to the DC Korea memorial on an Academic Team trip, sparking my interest. My undergrad professors at UVA (especially historians Brian Balogh, Herbert Braun, and Joseph Kett as well as anthropologist Fred Damon) helped me to refine my interest in American cultural history and memory studies. Without the graduate instruction I got at Temple this project would never have been thought up, let alone accomplished. In my second semester, while taking a War and Culture course with Beth Bailey, I decided to write my seminar paper on Korean War memory for an International History class with Petra Goedde. The next semester, while taking Seth Bruggeman’s Introduction to Public History course, I wrote a paper on Untold History for a class on Media Memory with Carolyn Kitch. In my last term of coursework I did an independent study on Memory Theory with Dieu Nguyen, and I decided to write my seminar paper on the Korean anti-war movement for a Social History class with David Farber.

After completing my course-work I then began the long process of research and writing, which also required considerable support from both Temple History faculty and the Department of History itself. I appreciate the insights offered both before and during my Prospectus Defense from two members of my Committee, Hilary Iris Lowe and Jay Lockenour, which influenced the direction of my project going forward. My chair and advisor, Seth Bruggeman, read numerous drafts and provided me copious comments that helped to re-orient my research mid-stream, then forced me to focus during end-stage edits. Carolyn Kitch and Seth Bruggeman both attended a Temple Talk I delivered in the fall of 2016 on my media chapter, and stayed long afterwards to discuss it with me. In addition, Petra Goedde provided valuable feedback on my state and local monuments chapter, which I wrote while a College of Liberal Arts Advanced Graduate Scholar and a regular participant in the Center for the Humanities at Temple (CHAT) Fellows Seminar. I
also need to thank the other fellows for their helpful feedback over Korean food one afternoon on what was then a really-rough draft, and CHAT itself for providing me with the funding to support several short road trips to interview curators in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

I had other sources of financial support as well, without which it would have been impossible for me to undertake the travelogue approach that I adopted, and I might never have made a single Korean War Memory Tour, let alone several. I funded my first trip to the midwest in the summer of 2015 through a combination of crowd-sourcing (for which I owe a number of family, friends, and colleagues) as well as by coordinating the trip (as I did in 2016 as well) to correspond to my annual jaunt to Kansas City to score Advanced Placement European History exams, which allowed me to put in for mileage and meal reimbursement that helped defer travel costs. Receiving the A. Charles and S. Nevada Adams Graduate Research Grant allowed me to fund a trip to the northeast as far away as Maine in the fall of 2015, several short trips through New Jersey and New York that same term, and a major trip through the southeast as far as the Gulf Coast of Alabama in early January of 2016. Moreover, funding for providing a plenary presentation at the 2015 “Collaborating Digitally: Engaging Students in Public Scholarship” conference in early November at Bucknell University let me visit upstate Pennsylvania and New York sites. Moreover, Temple University allowed me to complete the writing of this dissertation in a timely fashion by awarding me a Dissertation Completion Grant during the spring of 2018.

On many of these trips I visited museum exhibitions with curators, who are noted in the body of the text, and whose insights were uniquely valuable in helping me to create my typology. I also talked with several curators on the telephone or corresponded with them via email, which while not as much public history fun as seeing the sites with the people who put them together was perhaps just as valuable. On these road trips I often stayed with family members to save on costs including my brother Joe Clayon, my uncle Bill Glaser, and my grand-mother Ruth Fondi, who more than once left the door open even though I did not get in until after midnight, as I also
did in Chicago when my good friend Dan Krantz put me up (put up with me?) for a night. While in Hawaii we stayed with my girlfriend’s good friend Melissa Polcari, who also drove us around to historical sites that I would most likely never have gotten to visit otherwise. I must also thank the staff at the Swarthmore College Peace Collection, who showed me files I never knew to ask about in the first place, but which contained invaluable information that impacted my Korean anti-war movement chapter, and the Hamilton Township Historical Society, who seemed eager to assist in my research, as well as the many individuals who responded to my questions about their memorial activities. I also need to note that without the help of several veterans, elected officials, and active members of the local historical community I would never have made any progress on the “South Jersey Korea Vets Project,” a related public history project I hope to keep working on.

I also could never have accomplished this project without the help of family. My mother, Mary Fondi, a retired kindergarten teacher who instilled in me a love of learning at an early age, also acted as a research assistant and watched every episode of M*A*S*H while taking notes, which helped me to determine which I needed to examine more closely. My girlfriend Sabrina Torres has been with me every step of the way since I first applied to return to graduate school in the fall of 2011 and has offered more emotional labor than she will ever realize, as well as acted as a research assistant and watched every episode of Mad Men while taking notes, which helped me determine which I needed to view again. Sabrina also put up with my several long road trips, taking care of everything while I was gone while being available for frantic phone calls from the road asking for help in finding monuments and local NPR affiliates, and accompanying me on shorter trips as far away as Washington, DC. My dissertation would have doubtless taken much longer than it has were it not for the steadfast support (and many cups of tea) from Sabrina, and for our cats, who both provided me with an inspiration when I wondered why I was getting up at 4 AM to write and woke me up at 4 AM to write. They have all put up patiently with my lack of attention for several years, and it is with love and appreciation that I dedicate this project to them.
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CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION: WHAT IT MEANS TO CALL KOREA “FORGotten”

More Americans died per month during the war in Korea than during the war in Vietnam, which is far more readily associated with death and violence. Moreover, also unlike Vietnam, the American war in Korea continues on today along a De-Militarized Zone, nearly sixty-five years after an armistice ended active hostilities there. Because of facts like these, I have always found the phrase “forgotten war” to be equal parts ironic and problematic when used to describe Korea. On the one hand, it is ironic because while we call the Korean War forgotten, of course it is not, which leads to the question of why it has been so often labeled in this manner. On the other hand, it is problematic because this forgotten war trope, really a myth of erasure, has actually enabled Korea to be widely recalled in the abstract even while the specifics of the conflict, which included aerial bombardment beyond the scale of WWII and civilian massacres such as No Gun Ri as well as an active anti-war movement during the height of the McCarthy era, have often been forgotten.

This willful ignoring of many of the key details about the Korean War has in turn led to ongoing foreign policy problems, since the conflict is actively recalled in many other countries, including China and both Koreas. I call it willful ignorance because, as I demonstrate repeatedly throughout this dissertation, the Korean War cannot legitimately be said to really be forgotten in American public memory as manifested through museum exhibitions, academic scholarship, mass media objects, local and state monuments, and memorial infrastructure such as bridges, highways, buildings, and trees. Indeed, there are a myriad of local reminders and a wealth of information available about the Korean War, now more than ever thanks to the boom in monuments and memorial infrastructure over the last three decades as well as the focus on Korea in mass media objects and museum exhibitions (not to mention the spread of digital memory), yet the phrase still most often used to refer to the Korean War in all varieties of public memory is “forgotten war.”
Since Korea is clearly not forgotten, we must ask two other, more interesting questions: what are the mechanisms by which this forgotten war trope has been fostered and what is the contemporary impact of this attempted erasure of history. Throughout this dissertation, I seek to unpack this forgotten war myth and to understand the ways that public memory of the Korean War has changed over time, to evaluate why it is still called forgotten and what have been the results of this label.

Sites of War Memory: Exhibits, Media, Monuments, and Infrastructure

I became interested in the public memory of the Korean War for a few different reasons. First, I am the great-grandson of a WWI veteran who immigrated from Europe only to return to fight, and whose picture in uniform hangs in my home. I am the grandson of a Jewish man who fought in Italy during WWII. I am the son of someone who joined the Naval Reserve during Vietnam to avoid the draft. For all of these reasons, I have always been interested in the intersections of military history and public memory, especially in terms of the one major twentieth-century war in which none of my family served. Second, as someone who studies war memory this forgotten war label has long piqued my curiosity. Third, as a tour guide on the Atlantic City Boardwalk for several years I have always been struck by the fact that one of the most iconic structures there, amidst both century-old grand hotels and hyper-modern gambling palaces, is the official state of New Jersey Korean War Memorial, which since 2000 has been located at the intersection of Park Place and the Boardwalk. Indeed, as someone whose professional and academic interests intersect in the arena of heritage tourism this is most significant, since it suggests not only that the Korean War is widely remembered in Atlantic City, but that the war is consciously tied into the economic prosperity of the community, something I discovered to be common at Korea sites.
I discovered too that travelling—to, from, and between—sites of Korean War memory is itself an important method for understanding the range of ways in which Americans confront the past. Scholars of American wars typically situate their studies by weighing historiography, sifting through popular culture, and interrogating language before theorizing how such sources might impact public memory. I have opted to invert this usual approach. Indeed, because the Korean War’s legacy is largely visible via Sabre jets in front of VFWs, monuments in seemingly every park, and Korean War signs on highways in almost all states, I begin by interrogating “the public” and then seek to identify what is missing in these landscapes of memory, how they compare to other ways of remembering, and what is at stake for all Americans (and all residents of this planet) in how we recall the Korean War.

The fact that the Korean War is primarily recalled through landscapes of memory, while being widely talked about as forgotten, is why we must consider concrete everyday interactions with history such as those described by Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen in *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life* (1998). In this book, which represents the collective efforts of a small army of graduate student researchers and pollsters over more than a decade, Rosenzweig and Thelen note that although Americans generally place more trust in the narratives they are presented at historic sites and museums they are also much more likely to watch an historical film than they are to venture through an exhibit, suggesting a need to study both. Moreover, as Rosenzweig would likely agree given his primary post-*Presence of the Past* interest in the internet, American audiences today are much more likely to visit a memorial website than a brick-and-mortar monument. Therefore, in order to thoroughly examine how the Korean War has been publicly remembered in the United States since 1950, it is necessary to look at a range of containers of collective historical consciousness as I define these “sites of memory,” which is distinct from how both Pierre Nora and Jay Winter use that term, which I discuss later. Moreover, not all such sites of memory are the same, since they include both those linked to
physical landscapes such as museum exhibitions, monuments, and memorial infrastructure as well as those mass mediated forms such as films and television shows, and even new avenues of digital memory.

I see those sites of memory that are directly tied to landscapes such as monuments and memorial infrastructure as being examples of what I term in-stone memorialization. In contrast I see those sites of memory that exist only as mass media objects such as films, television shows, and web-based projects as examples of what I term on-screen memorialization, while museum exhibitions can include elements of both. Websites devoted to Korean War memory come in two broad categories: those that are associated with a physical location such as a monument, museum, or piece of memorial infrastructure and those that are affiliated with organizations such as veterans group or educational institutions. This first sort are most often simply informational rather than interpretive, such as crowd-sourced historical marker sites, although some virtual museums exhibits are worthy of study. The second sort are designed to connect visitors with resources and to teach the public about the Korean War, which indicates that, like museums, they are both sites of memory and examples of public history, while also being another kind of memorial infrastructure. However, the limits of this study prevent an in-depth assessment of Korean War digital sites of memory, one that might include the concept of user stories to test how different types of visitors interact with the various websites that seek to tell the tale of the Korean War, but this is just one of the limits of what I try to do in this dissertation, and another reminder of the fact there are many other ways of getting at public memory besides those that I study here.

Focusing primarily on museum exhibitions, mass media, monuments and memorial infrastructure forces a sublimation of many other important mediums of public memory including journalism and public education as well as tourism and literature. Much of this work is yet to be done, such as a national survey of newspaper coverage of key Korean War commemorative anniversaries that would include the 1950 outbreak of the conflict and the 1953 armistice,
suggesting a possible avenue for future research. Such a survey might deploy Jill Edy’s key
categories of the “Journalistic Uses of Collective Memory” to evaluate how the Korean War
functions as historical analogy and historical context in commemorative articles.¹

Beyond journalism, a quick look at existing secondary scholarship demonstrates some of
the other ways the Korean War has been widely recalled in America over the last sixty-five years.
A 1990 sociological study by Dan Fleming and Burton Kauffman concerning the coverage of the
Korean War in American high school history textbooks found that the “Korean war generally
receives very limited coverage” while the “specific details of issues are usually sparse and
inconsistent.” While a more recent study by several authors, titled “Whose History? An Analysis
of the Korean War in History Textbooks from the United States, South Korea, Japan, and China,”
examines the ways in which culture impacts education, no thorough assessment of American
textbooks has been attempted in over a quarter century.² Moreover, a truly comprehensive
examination of the Korean War in American education would not only survey textbooks but also
examine university catalogs and course syllabi to evaluate how frequently the Korean War comes
up in college classes. One could also explore the activities of campus organizations such as
Liberty in North Korea (LiNK), a group that is composed of second generation Korean-American
students and their classmates, to see how memory of the Korean War impacts their mission to
raise awareness and money for refugees. The activities of LiNK also suggest two other areas,
which will not be covered in this dissertation, in which the Korean War plays a role in American
public memory. Family memories and oral histories of Korean-Americans who were involved, on


both sides, of the Korean War are some of the most vivid and relevant recollections of the conflict. The Korean-American community actively works to remember the Korean War in many ways, often through the activities of churches, from youth choirs that participate in annual armistice commemoration ceremonies held at state monuments to the dedication of memorial trees placed along prominent roads.

Yet another area of research could be the ways that non-fiction books and memoirs about contemporary North Korea discuss the war as a background to understanding the current state of affairs. Numerous works detailing life in North Korea have been published over the last decade, most of them making mention of the war. For example, in *Escape From Camp 14: One Man’s Remarkable Odyssey from North Korea to Freedom in the West*, Blaine Harden notes that “defectors” to South Korea learn “that the Korean War started when North Korea launched an unprovoked surprise invasion of the South,” which is “a history lesson that flabbergasts most newcomers from the North” who grew up learning “that South Korea started the war.”3 One could conceivably also compare the representations of the Korean War in non-fiction versus fiction. Several scholars have written on the portrayal of the Korean War through the written or spoken word. Some of these works from the 1990s, such as *Retrieving Bones: Stories and Poems of the Korean War* edited by W. D. Erhart and Philip Jason, primarily exist as literary archives from the pre-internet era offering little analysis. Arne Axelsson’s *Restrained Response: American Novels of the Cold War and Korea, 1945-1962* offers a close reading of eight books about the Korean War, several of which were later turned into films, broken up into categories by branch of service and with a separate chapter on POWs. Joseph Darda provides an update on the state of the Korean War in American fiction in his March 2015 article “The Literary Afterlife of the Korean War” that looks at novels such as Toni Morrison’s *Home*, which he argues problematizes a “bifurcated

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understanding of history in which the past is either remembered or forgotten.” Chrisine Knauer examines another form of public memory in “A Victory After All: The Korean War in American Memory” (2012), analyzing the rhetoric of presidents from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush and asserting Bill “Clinton infused the history of the Korean War with multiculturalism and racial equality as an American quality” that enabled “victory over Communism in Korea,” which was presented as part of an “alleged calling to save the world from enslavement and economic deprivation.”

There are additional interesting avenues of research suggested by prior works written about World War II, the Vietnam War, and other American conflicts that this dissertation does not explore. For example, in Tours of Vietnam (2009) Scott Laderman offers an innovative look into U.S. tourism in Vietnam, which exploded during the 1990s (due to the economic reforms referred to as doi moi) and of the tourists’ guidebooks that he thinks “performed an instrumental role in mediating their travel experiences,” while noting that Americans were often channeled towards colonial French hotels and war movie themed saloons. A similar study could be done on South Korean tourism and memory, especially given the existence of organizations such as Military Historical Tours Inc., which offers trips to Korea for both veterans and their grandchildren that are subsidized by the South Korean government.

Although there are many areas of public memory that this dissertation does not cover, it does offer a brief history and historiography of the Korean War, and the anti-war movement

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which sprang up from 1950 to 1953, as well as a broad historical narrative of public memory through museum exhibitions, mass media, monuments, and memorial infrastructure. This study also responds to two other studies that have adopted similar approaches to understanding public memory of the Korean War and the Cold War; I discuss Suhi Choi’s *Embattled Memories* and Jon Weiner’s *How We Forgot the Cold War* in chapter one. I also avoid delving deeply into the history of the national Korean War Memorial in Washington, which has been discussed at length by scholars of public memory including Kristin Ann Hass, Patrick Hagopian, and Kirk Savage. I do note some of the more important insights of these scholars, such as Savage’s discussion in *Monument Wars* of how “the circular reflecting pool” has been “turned into a wishing well” by the public, since as he says “in therapeutic spaces, visitors following their own inclinations.”

The primary goals of this project are to evaluate how the Korean War came to be remembered as forgotten, why that remains the case despite so much evidence to the contrary, and what the results have been of this attempted erasure. My secondary goal is to fill a niche in the scholarly literature on public memory of American wars, by looking at Korea as prior studies have both WWII and Vietnam. This dissertation is also meant to respond to the argument that the television series *M*A*S*H* was not primarily an allegory for Vietnam, as is often alleged, and to contend that a Korean anti-war movement was much more widespread than has been appreciated by academics interested in the history of activism. However, the most significant contribution that this study might be able to make would be to increase recognition of the ongoing importance of the Korean War, given the continuing threats to world peace made by North Korea and by American reactions. It is vital to look at the enduring legacy of Korea for twenty-first century diplomacy, which can only be done by examining how the war has been publicly recalled, and why the forgotten war label persists despite evidence that Korea has been widely remembered.

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A Survey of The Korean War in American Public Memory

Achieving any of these goals requires creating order amidst an incredible diversity of Korean War memory. The number of museum exhibits focused on the Korean War, for instance, has spiked significantly over the last two decades. New facilities have been constructed to teach the public about specific parts of the conflict while older institutions have updated existing exhibitions in light of additional historical information and technological innovations. Moreover, with the planned construction of multiple new museums that will include displays detailing various aspects of the war, it seems likely that moving forward the public will tend to encounter even more exhibitions about Korea. Korean War exhibitions are most often located at national war museums or military academies and frequently found on or adjacent to active bases, although such exhibits can also be found at certain presidential libraries, national park sites, Smithsonian facilities, and a range of other locations. Moreover, because Korean War museum exhibitions use tangible artifacts and video screens to tell stories, often blending experiential exhibits meant to let visitors imagine they are a part of history with dynamic digital displays designed to capture the attention of visitors armed with cell phones, they share elements of both in-stone memorialization and on-screen memorialization.

Numerous media objects, such as films and television shows, on Korea have also been produced over the last sixty-five years which, like local monuments and memorial infrastructure, can be effectively analyzed in terms of the different periods when they were created. A majority of the narrative films made in Hollywood about the Korean War appeared during what I identify as a first memory phase from the early 1950s through the mid-1960s, an era which also saw the first documentary films made that concerned the conflict. During a second memory phase stretching from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s, fewer distinct narrative films were made about the Korean War, although the number of documentaries produced during this period that
focused on Korea increased in the wake of the Vietnam War. A similarly small number of narrative films portraying Korea were produced during a third memory phase from 1987 through 2003, although during this period the number of documentaries detailing the Korean War increased substantially, surpassing the quantity of narrative films actually showing the war in this era, although characters with Korean War backstories did begin to appear more often. During a fourth memory phase, since 2003, documentary filmmakers have used cable television and the web as avenues to distribute numerous new non-fiction films, while the Korean War has begun reappearing on small screens and in movie theatres, with two new films debuting in 2016. The fact that most of these documentaries only ever appeared on small screens, on television sets and computers, as have the narrative films that rerun endlessly late at night and on cable television, suggests the need to consider television as a separate but related category of Korean War public memory. To these we can add the made-for-television narrative films, documentary films, television programs such as *MASH* or *Mad Men*, and individual episodes of various other shows.

Monuments dedicated to Korean War veterans, or in honor of those who perished in the conflict, dot the physical landscape around the county and vary greatly. Most are built by city, county, and state governments although a great many are constructed by churches, high schools, and especially colleges. Many others are sponsored by local branches of national veterans’ groups such as the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the Korean War Veterans Association of America (KWVA). While city monuments are often located inside public parks or town greens, county monuments are usually found on courthouse lawns, and official state monuments can appear in a range of locations from capitol grounds to cemeteries.

Some Korean War monuments consist of simple granite markers listing a few local names next to a small cross, while others are glistening black marble towers including sandblasted images and complex narratives about the history of the Korean War. Some local monuments make use of jets, tanks, or other military machines as part of their displays, while
others are built along waterfronts and integrated into the local heritage tourism market. Many Korean War monuments also include extensive iconography or use innovative approaches such as sundials, tunnels, or abstract sculptures. Indeed, while many monuments center around stone slabs or human figures, others use non-human forms or modernist art approaches in order to represent how the Korean War is remembered. Beyond statuary, most Korean War monuments include some combination of engraved images, detailed maps, MIA/POW tributes, and the names of local soldiers who died in Korea during the early 1950s. Moreover, the architecture of many of these Korean War monuments seems to emphasize unique aspects of the war by including sharp angles and dividing lines, which remind visitors of the still ongoing divide between North and South Korea, as well as hollow forms and empty spaces, both suggesting the fact that the conflict technically remains unresolved today.

The rate at which Korean War memorials have been built has varied over decades and can also be divided up into memory phases. Numerous monuments commemorating the Korean War were built in the years from 1950 to 1967, the first memory phase, many of them dual memorials that also honor WWII vets, though a fair number are exclusively focused on remembering individuals who died in Korea. From 1967 up to 1987, the second memory phase, most Korean War monuments were co-dedicated to local soldiers who died in Vietnam with comparatively few specifically focused on the Korean War and almost no memorial infrastructure. From 1987 through 2003, the third memory phase, so many local and state monuments were constructed in this period (leading up to the dedication of the national monument in 1995 and then to the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice), which use the term forgotten war in some way that it may merit being called a “Forgotten War Memory Boom,” with many memorial infrastructure built as well. Additional local and state monuments using this phrase have been built in the years since 2003, the fourth memory phase, most often by chapters.
of the KWVA, while memorial infrastructure such as bridges, highways, buildings, and trees also continue to be created.

Memorial infrastructure dedicated to those who died in the Korean War also includes examples of sports stadiums, plazas, and parks but most often consists of bridges, highways, civic buildings, and trees. These memorial infrastructure projects are all designed as positive additions to their community, although the relative popularity of different forms of memorial infrastructure projects has also changed over time. Just as those who fought in WWII were often honored by having public works projects named for them in the late 1940s, from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s dozens of local stadiums, buildings, and parks were dedicated to Korean War veterans, or more frequently to specific local soldiers who never returned home. Memorial bridges dedicated to the memory of those who died in Korea have been built in all shapes and sizes over the last sixty-five years, from tiny footbridges in parks to multilane interstate causeways and everything in between, though individual states have dedicated bridges more frequently since 2000. Moreover, since the late 1980s, at least thirty states have adopted official resolutions designating roads wholly within their borders in honor of those who fought and died in the Korean War.

Chapter Organization

The organization of this dissertation is both a reflection of and an attempt to put order on the incredibly variety of Korean War memory that I have discovered throughout the United States and in its popular culture. Chapter two reviews the extent historiography on the idea of Korea as “the forgotten war,” on public memory of other so-called forgotten wars throughout American history, on both World War II and the Vietnam War, and on memory studies theory, before turning to the works that have inspired my own approach. Chapter three develops a typology of Korean War historical exhibition, adopting a travelogue or road-trip style method and exploring the ways that various museum displays use both tangible objects and digital screens as part of
their designs, thus existing both at intersections of in-stone and on-screen memorialization as well as of collective memory and public history. Chapter four looks at how the Korean anti-war movement was forgotten by examining the evolving historiography of the Korean War, the scant scholarly literature on the anti-war movement, and the consequences of ignoring the Korean anti-war movement for historical understanding of anti-war dissent in the years between the pacifism of WWII and the anti-Vietnam War movement about which much more has been previously written. Chapter five examines film and television representations of the Korean War from the 1950s through the 2010s, with an emphasis on the period from 2007 to 2016, paying particularly close attention to the Showtime documentary series *Oliver Stone’s Untold History of the United States*, the AMC network series *Mad Men*, and the films *Operation Chromite* and *Indignation*.

Chapter six looks at four phases of Korean War public memory through state and local level monuments: the period from 1950 to 1967 during which Korea was most often recalled alongside World War II, the period from 1967 to 1987 during which Korea was most often recalled alongside Vietnam, the period from 1987 to 2003 during which Korea was most often recalled all by itself on various local and numerous state monuments, many using the term forgotten war, and the period since 2003 during which Korea has continued to be recalled by itself on numerous local and various state monuments. Chapter seven explores the history of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees amongst other forms of Korean War memorial infrastructure, along with the history of Korean War veterans’ groups in the United States that helps to explain why the conflict has been commemorated in the ways it has been. Chapter eight compares how the Korean War is publicly recalled in America through local monuments, museum exhibitions, memorial infrastructure, and mass media with how the conflict is recalled through those mediums in various Allied nations including South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Great Britain, France, Colombia, Ethiopia, Phillipines, Thailand, and Turkey as well as among former—and in some cases, current—enemies, including North Korea, China, and Russia.
The conclusion first reviews the four phases of Korean War public memory and five categories of historical exhibition, then offers a reflection on those mottos of sacrifice which are most popular in American Korean War public memory, especially “Freedom is Not Free” and “All Gave Some, Some Gave All.” However, because the Korean War is not really forgotten in American public memory, we must wonder what the ramifications are for remembering it as the forgotten war. Therefore, an afterword at the end of the conclusion discusses the contemporary global geo-political consequences of continuing to understand Korea as forgotten despite all the evidence, and offers thoughts on the implications of refusing to recognize the politics of memory across time and around the world.
CHAPTER 2 – UNFORGETTABLE: WAR HISTORIOGRAPHY AND METHODOLOGY

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950 when North Korea invaded South Korea across the 38th parallel, unless you think that it started in 1910 with the Japanese occupation of the entire peninsula. The Korean War ended on July 27, 1953 with the signing of a peace pact in Panmunjom, except that this armistice agreement was simply a cease-fire rather than a treaty, resulting in the persistence of a so-called De-Militarized Zone requiring the presence of thousands of American and South Korean soldiers to patrol. Such disagreements over when the Korean War actually began, and whether it has yet ended, complicate American public memory of the conflict and contribute to its continued labeling as a forgotten war.

Conflicting information on the number of soldiers who died in Korea has further added to public confusion over the war. Until June 2000 official Defense Department numbers included in the grand total those soldiers who perished in places other than the Korean peninsula during the war years, arriving at a figure of 54,246 killed in action. However, the Pentagon now lists total in-theatre deaths at 36,574 with 2,835 non-hostile casualties, although current numbers are continually changing whenever any of the more than seven thousand American soldiers still unaccounted for are ultimately identified. Depending on when a specific Korean War monument was constructed it may list anywhere from thirty-three thousand to fifty-five thousand dead, while some individual memorials even contain contradictory casualty figures, such as the Philadelphia Korean War Memorial, dedicated in June of 2002, which includes a history of the early Cold War listing 33,742 deaths right next to a 2001 speech by George W. Bush counting 33,665 casualties.¹

Some of the memorial difficulties surrounding the Korean conflict may lead back to the decision by President Harry Truman to pursue United Nations support for a so-called police action in Korea rather than Senate approval for a formal declaration of war. As a result of this decision, soldiers killed in action had their graves labeled simply with the name of the peninsula on which they perished, while veterans who returned home were initially denied membership in groups such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Indeed, it was not until 2004 that the Department of Defense declared "all references to the Korean Conflict or Police Action” are “to Cease” and that it will henceforth be “described only as - THE KOREAN WAR.”

So while today WWII is recalled as “the good war” and WWI as “the great war,” if for very different reasons, the Korean War continues to be widely remembered as “the forgotten war.” Indeed, our habitual remembering of Korea as somehow forgotten itself has a history. My purpose in this chapter is to review the historiography of the forgotten war myth, in part by examining how historians have written about other so-called forgotten wars throughout American history. I look too at trends in World War II and Vietnam War historiography, as well as at trends in memory studies, which provide context for all of these. I conclude with a discussion of scholarship that has most significantly influenced my research methodology, including works that model travelogue as a tool of critical analysis.

What’s In a Name?: Historiography of the Forgotten War Myth

It is hard to miss the irony inherent in the fact that the phrase “the forgotten war” is the label that is most frequently used to commemorate the conflict in Korea lasting from June 25, 1950 to July 27, 1953. Variations of this phrase are engraved on local monuments of all shapes

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and sizes across the country. The Richmond Korean War Memorial in Indiana contains several elements shared by many other monuments including labeling as the forgotten war, sandblasted white imagery on a shiny black granite surface that includes maps as well as people, engraved memorial bricks surrounding the main monument, mention of the Allies who fought with us in Korea, and an emphasis on the number of those killed and wounded in the war. In the small town of Essex Junction, Vermont sits a sizable but undated memorial to “to honor those from the Essex Community who served their country in Korea,” which notes that while it was “initially called an United Nations Police Action, the Korean conflict became known as the Forgotten War.” The Greenville Korean War Veterans Monument in the Piedmont area of South Carolina asserts that, thanks to a myriad of local memorials, Korea is “No Longer Forgotten,” while the Lycoming County Korean War Memorial in Williamsport, the Pennsylvania town that is best known as the annual home of the Little League World Series, argues the conflict was actually “Never Forgotten” in the public memory.  

The relationship between the number of memorials recalling the war in various state to the number of residents from those states who died in Korea merits brief discussion. For example, even though West Virginia was ranked only twenty-ninth out of forty-eight states in the 1950 census, with a population of just over two million, a total of 801 West Virginians perished in Korea, meaning that one out of every twenty-five hundred West Virginians alive in 1950 died in the war over the next three years. In comparison, the state right below West Virginia in the census (Kansas) lost 415 residents to the war, while the state immediately above West Virginia in the

census (Connecticut) lost a total of 314 citizens. West Virginia clearly felt the human impact of the Korean War more heavily than did many other states, however, in contrast to Kansas and Connecticut, West Virginia is home to fewer memorials that remember Korea. Moreover, while both Kansas and Connecticut started commemorating the Korean War in the 1950s, all of the dated memorials in West Virginia that specifically mention the Korean War have been constructed since the town of Philippi became the first to build one in 1989, suggesting that the high local death toll may have simply made it too painful to remember the war for decades after.

West Virginia also provides an excellent case study in the variety of Korean War commemoration across the country. I first visited on Memorial Day of 2016, in order to see many of these monuments just as they were being used for ceremonies (and while they were covered with flowers), and I discovered that despite its relatively small number of monuments, West Virginia is home to examples of many types of Korean War memorials. For example, West Virginia has an official state monument as well as a Veterans’ Memorial at the state capitol which mentions Korea amongst several other conflicts. West Virginia is home to local memorials exclusively honoring Korean War vets and county multi-war monuments that mention other conflicts, as well as both a bridge and a highway, the two most common types of Korean War memorial infrastructure. Lastly, given its geography and regional history, West Virginia is also home to examples of monuments located at county courthouses (as often in the south), village greens (as often in the northeast), and public parks (as often in the midwest). Despite not having as many Korean War memorials as many other states, it is not a forgotten war in West Virginia.

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4 Counting monuments and memorial infrastructures, West Virginia has 8, Kansas 9, and Connecticut 18.

5 Similarly, despite South Carolina having a long military commemorative tradition (and that 461 residents perished in Korea while the state ranked right ahead of Connecticut in terms of total population), the first monument in the state exclusively in honor of Korea vets, in Laurens County, was not dedicated until 1991.
Several prior scholars have explored the idea of Korea being a forgotten war. In *Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps* (2012) Aaron O’Connell devotes a full chapter to the question of how and why the Korean conflict first came to be known as “the forgotten war,” noting that “the label forgotten war emerged early on—in the first months of the fighting” after being first “coined” either by “Army General Matthew Ridgway” or “writer and former naval officer James Michener,” and ultimately concluding that non-Marine “military members worked both to forget Korea and to blame its forgetting on civilians.” In “Reluctant Crusades: Korean War Films and the Lost Audience,” which appears in the collection *Remembering the Forgotten War* (2000), historian Lary May asserts “government-sponsored reports ignored detailed descriptions of the war, leading to the ‘forgetting’ of the Korean conflict in the public discourse of the United States.” In an essay titled “Our Forgotten War: The Korean War in Korean and American Popular Culture” (1998) film scholar David McCann argues “the Korean Was has been a forgotten, invisible war in American popular culture” due to “the final deterioration of a literary and rhetorical tradition that glorified war.” Other scholars take for granted the idea Korea is ‘forgotten’. In “Mythologizing Memories: A Critique of the Utah Korea War Memorial,” the essay in *Embattled Memories* that largely inspired my own approach to state Korean War monuments, Suhi Choi asserts that “in the United States, the Korean War has been forgotten, uncontested.” Similarly, in a 2003 *Asia Times* essay titled “Korean War: The Problem of Memory,” Yu Bin discusses how, fifty years after the armistice, “a cursory survey of some

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prominent online bookstores quickly turns up a dozen or so titles about the Korean War with the term ‘forgotten’ or some variation of it appearing somewhere in the title. In contrast several other academics are much more critical of the idea that Korea is a forgotten war. In an unpublished 1994 English doctoral dissertation titled “The Korean War and American Memory,” James Kerin suggests that “there is too much material and there is too significant a movement of memorialization by the war’s veterans, for” the Korean conflict “to be called ‘forgotten.’” In To Acknowledge A War: The Korean War in American Memory (2000) Paul Edwards argues “to a very large extent the Korean War has been ignored” and “that the term ‘forgotten’ is often self-fulfilling” so that such labeling “may well be the cause for some of the lack of memory.” In War and Television (1992) historian Bruce Cummings argues “by calling Korea a forgotten war we both name it and we remember it- a paradox,” but what we “are remembering to forget” are details of the war, and therefore suggests “The Unknown War” as a more accurate alternative. Similarly, in Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall (2013) Kristin Ann Hass notes “in the discussions about building a Korean War memorial on the National Mall, the term forgotten war appeared everywhere” and that “remembering ‘the Forgotten War,’ in fact, involves vigorous forgetting of the details of the war itself” at Korea memorials such as the one in DC. Moreover, Hass’ detailed discussion of the origins of the national memorial, which is the most in-depth of the several essays that have explored the creation of the monument, has inspired my approach to exploring local monuments and inspired me to avoid exploring the DC memorial.


Forgotten Wars in U.S. History

It must also be noted that Korea is not the only war in American history widely remembered as forgotten. Commemoration of wars and other military actions has played a key role in American culture for more than two centuries, in no small part because the ways in which past conflicts are recalled can impact both current politics and future foreign policies. In addition to literature and the arts, American battles and wars have most often been commemorated by ceremonies, monuments, memorials, museum exhibits, and (more recently) movies, while web-based forms of memory have become increasingly important over the last two decades. Of these, national monuments to wars and war heroes in DC (both on and off the Mall), offer perhaps the fullest picture of the ways that martial memory has functioned for the last two centuries.

Moreover, a thorough examination of how other so-called forgotten wars, as well as two often-recalled twentieth century wars, are publicly remembered in America also affords an opportunity to review some recent academic scholarship on monuments, memorials, museum exhibitions, and war memory in general.

If those wars now seen as most unifying, such as World War II, or most divisive, especially the Vietnam War, are today most frequently referenced, other wars that once prompted much controversy including the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Spanish-American/Filipino Wars, and World War I are now largely forgotten in America. For example, at the Price of Freedom exhibit in the Smithsonian U.S. History Museum, WWI is recalled in but a single corner while the War of 1812, Mexican War, and Spanish-American/Filipino Wars are all grouped together along with nearly a century of conflicts with Native-Americans as wars of “Expansion.” In stark contrast, World War II and the Vietnam War both garner multi-room displays, since these wars are the two conflicts that seem to matter most in contemporary American public memory.

However, these other wars were not always so widely forgotten as they are now, with consequences for both politics and diplomacy. The War of 1812 is perhaps recalled most vividly
today by its associations with the Star-Spangled Banner, at sites such as Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, as a patriotically unifying conflict. However, at the time it threatened to tear the nation apart, as Federalists meeting at the Hartford Convention first proposed secession and were politically punished in the years afterwards by voters who remembered this seeming act of disloyalty. Today what was then called “Mr. Madison’s War” has largely been forgotten, while the unopposed election of James Monroe that resulted from the quick death of the Federalist Party is widely recalled as an Era of Good Feelings rather than a period of political acrimony.

In the 1840s and 1850s the Mexican War divided the nation both during the conflict itself, thanks partly to first term Illinois Whig Congressman Abraham Lincoln’s so-called Spot Resolution demanding to know exactly where American troops were first fired upon, and after it ended, largely due to the heated debate on Pennsylvania Whig Congressman David Wilmot’s proposed Proviso that no land taken during the war be open to slavery. Moreover, in Remembering the Forgotten War: The Enduring Legacies of the U.S.-Mexican War (2012) Michael Scott Van Wagenen argues that the legacy of the Mexican War continues to impact global politics a century and a half later. However, as Michael Kammen notes in Mystic Chords of Memory (1991), thanks largely to the efforts of groups such as “the Daughters of the Republic of Texas,” which was “formed in 1891” in order “to preserve historic landmarks” that “had been allowed to deteriorate,” children all across the nation learned to forget the war and to remember only the Alamo.⁹

While Americans in the 1890s were told to “Remember the Maine” in the initial ramp up to the Spanish-American War and urged to recall it afterwards through nationwide local “Hiker”

monuments depicting “a bare-headed GI casually holding a rifle,” as noted by James Loewen in *Lies Across America* (2012), today Americans forget the fierce opposition to the Filipino occupation by Mark Twain and Jane Addams among others. Similarly, the pacification of the Philippines is only passively recalled at sites such as the *USS Olympia*, anchored at Philadelphia, that according to Loewen “ignores historic meetings” which occurred “on its decks” and displays “old Filipino clothing,” presumably taken during the war, but “unlabeled except as to donor.”

This relative lack of public memory surrounding the Filipino Wars is even more significant since they set the stage for several additional twentieth century American wars in east Asia and because these wars include a prolonged U.S. military effort to put down Islamic inspired insurrections.

World War I has come to be increasingly ignored over the decades in the United States, though there is reason to hope that this may be changing. Jay Winter points out, in *Remembering War* (2006), that “the death of the last veterans of the Great War in Canada is front page news” and though World War I is oft ignored today in the United States (or at least it was until the recent one-hundredth anniversary of the start of the war), it was frequently and consequentially recalled in the 1920s and 1930s. Indeed, during the 1920s dozens of doughboy monuments and hundreds of shrines to local men lost during WWI were built in places like Atlantic City and Kansas City, while John Bodnar notes in *Remaking America* (1992) that “people did not normally parade on the Fourth of July or Memorial Day but they always did so, between the wars in Indianapolis, on November 11th.”

The shift from Armistice Day to Veterans Day, and the

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10 James Loewen, *Lies Across America: What Our Historic sites Get Wrong* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 1999) p. 136, p. 379. Loewen argues “if more memorials noted the Philippine-American War, Americans might remember it better” and had “most Americans recalled” the war “in the 1960s” then “that might have prevented” American involvement in Vietnam since the “parallels between the two wars are many.”

increased focus on Memorial Day as the start of the summer tourist season from the 1950s on, contributed to the forgetting of the details of WWI, although it was the second deadliest war for twentieth-century America.

Erika Doss suggests an added dimension to further understand war memorials to forgotten heroes. Beyond the rise of racially inclusive memorials such as the Arthur Ashe monument in Richmond and the spread of spontaneous public mourning, for example after school shootings, a third focus of Erika Doss’ landmark Memorial Mania (2010) is how battles with Native-Americans in the decades after the Civil War have been reinterpreted in recent memorials. Indeed, Doss argues her key idea “memorial mania is especially marked by rights claims and demands for respect” and that “the Indian Memorial at Little Bighorn, like many contemporary memorials, was created in order to confer recognition to previously ignored or underconsidered historical subjects.” Yet Doss also asserts that “the Indian Memorial embodies the sentiment that in today’s America ‘we’ are all warriors” and celebrates war instead of emphasizing the benefits of peace. Such an overt focus on heroism is evident in the evolving public memory of World War II, while the desire for peace is more often reflected in the contested memories of Vietnam.

Remembered Wars in U.S History

In contrast to these various “forgotten wars,” World War II and Vietnam have been much more frequently and much more thoroughly recalled in the public memory in the decades after they occurred. The ways in which Americans have remembered these two major conflicts reflects both concerted efforts on the part of the government to engender a kind of nationalistic fervor in citizens as well as grass roots collective memories running counter to dominant narratives, many of which have gained strength as a result of the social history revolution since the 1960s.

While many of the best novels that were written by veterans of World War II in the decades after, from Normal Mailer’s *The Naked and the Dead* and James Jones’ *The Thin Red Line* to Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* and Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*, depict war as cruel and even crazy, “postwar films generally offered positive images of the men who fought” while John “Wayne was able to establish his reputation as a warrior and a patriot in several wartime features” despite the fact that “he did not actually serve during World War II,” according to John Bodnar in *The ‘Good War’ in American Memory* (2010).\(^{13}\)

Another factor that transformed World War II into the “good war” was the ongoing dispute over the meanings of the Vietnam War from the 1970s through the 1990s, as many Vietnam War films focused on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and the difficulties of returnees reintegrating into society, painting all veterans as victims partly in response to news stories about My Lai portraying them as killers. In *Tangled Memories* (1997) Marita Sturken notes “in most Vietnam War representations, the ‘real’ war is portrayed as the war of the ground soldier,” often “an innocent protagonist who, either by circumstance or through misguided naivete, is drawn into the war and irrevocably altered by it.” Yet as Patrick Hagopian notes in *The Vietnam War in American Memory* (2009), 1980s television “shows such as *The A Team* and *Magnum P.I.* provided positive representations of Vietnam veterans—now they could be heroes working for justice, rather than ready-made villains for cops shows” as they had often been portrayed in the late 1970s.\(^ {14}\) For reasons such as this, evolving American public memory of these wars can best be analyzed in dialogue.

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\(^{13}\) John Bodnar, *The “Good War” in American Memory* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010) p. 135, 137. However, Bodnar notes many WWII films “did not shy away from raising questions about the entire experience and the need to resort to violence to resolve disputes” and argues that throughout the Cold War many Americans argued over the meaning of WWII. Bodnar asserts it was only after a resurgence of Holocaust Memory and fiftieth anniversary arguments over the proper way to recall the major events of WWII that it came to be viewed as a “good war” in films such as *Saving Private Ryan* and *Pearl Harbor*.

Although proponents of what became the national World War II Memorial argued in the late 1980s (in direct response to the dedication of the Vietnam Wall) that WWII had never been sufficiently memorialized, as Erika Doss notes, the American Battle Monuments Commission “built two World War II memorials in the continental United States” in New York and San Francisco as well as the Punchbowl Cemetery in Honolulu, “servicemen were similarly honored by two major national monuments: the USS Arizona Memorial” and the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, and they were also “honored with ‘living memorials’” such as “bridges, fountains, [and] flagpoles.” Moreover, in *A Date Which Will Live* (2003), Emily Rosenberg argues, as its meaning evolved in the 1970s and 1980s, “the Arizona Memorial became a national declaration that the war had a noble purpose and that the dead did not die in vain.”15

This may help explain some of the controversy surrounding memory of the *Enola Gay* in the early 1990s. In “Fred Wilson, PTSD, and Me: Reflections on the History Wars” (2009), Ken Yellis notes how “in the case of the *Enola Gay*, the public perception was that the National Air and Space Museum had taken an abrupt left turn from its customary stance—uncritical patriotism and celebration of technology—toward revisionist history and America bashing.” In “Contested Remembrances: The Hiroshima Exhibit Controversy” (1998), Vera Zolberg notes one reason for the backlash was a shift in global economics that led “to the rise of Japanese fortunes” alongside “a seeming decline in American economic dominance,” while reminding readers of the value of sociological analysis in answering collective memory questions. Finally, two contributors to *History Wars* (1996) discuss how Vietnam memory impacts how Americans tend to remember World War II; Marilyn Young, in “Dangerous History: Vietnam and ‘The Good War,’” concludes

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that the so-called “Vietnam Syndrome has spread to engulf all of America history,” including WWII by the 1980s, while Tom Engelhardt, in “The Victors and the Vanquished” argues the ambivalence of Vietnam films and monuments have made the moral clarity, and success, of World War II seem all the more important.16

In Carried to the Wall (1998), Kristin Ann Hass argues the offerings left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington and the creation of the “Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection” (which “was officially organized in 1984” and consists of “objects [that] are sent to an enormous warehouse in suburban Maryland to sit in acid-free” conditions) mark a major change in war memory toward increased visitor interaction.17 Meanwhile, Erica Doss—whose entire book is organized by the emotions she sees represented in her monumental subjects—notes that three mobile monuments called “the Moving Wall,” “the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall (a three-fifths scale version), and the American Veterans Traveling Tribute” have brought their versions of the Wall to cities across the country that rent them “for more than $400 a week.”18

Several other forms of Vietnam War memory are similarly localized, and/or mobile. Doss notes that “a number of memorials are dedicated to Vietnam’s ‘dogs of war,’” including one on the grounds of the Vietnam Era Museum and Educational Center in Holmdel, New Jersey. Patrick Hagopian provides perhaps the fullest description of the many modes that public memory of the

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17 Hass, Carried to the Wall: American Memory and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) p. 22. Hass’ book includes “A History of American War Memorials” from the Civil War, when naming the dead became important, through the Tomb of the Unknown soldier after WWI, and also discusses WWII memorial infrastructures that were meant to show the tangible results of sacrifice.

18 Doss, p. 222.
Vietnam War has taken over the last three decades, exploring the role of forgotten organizations such as the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program while offering numerous close readings of a wide range of local monuments. Hagopian notes that “scores of Vietnam veterans memorials were constructed around the country” in the late 1980s and early 1990s, while arguing that “although state and local memorials did not undergo as much public scrutiny as the national Vietnam Veterans Memorial did… they nevertheless faced some of the same pressures.” Jon Wiener, in How We Forgot the Cold War (2012), shows how memory of Vietnam is often softened for American audiences at many heritage tourist sites, such as at “The Boneyard” in Arizona where the guides often fail to “to say that the B-52s in Vietnam engaged in carpet bombing” and also ignore “the Christmas bombing of Hanoi in 1972” which included “the most brutal attacks on civilian targets since Hiroshima.” Similarly, James Loewen notes that at the USS Intrepid, which “served three tours in Vietnam,” there is “no display in the museum [covering] the Vietnam War” because “the board of retired admirals that vets (sic) the museum’s interpretive programs by order of the Navy” decided “Vietnam is too ’political.’” The Intrepid museum therefore interprets WWII, although the site “avoids giving visitors more than the briefest glimpse of the reality of the Second World War.”

The meanings of World War II and the Vietnam War became immediately relevant in the lead up to Operation Desert Storm, as the administration of George H. W. Bush worked to frame the conflict as a “good war,” with Saddam Hussein standing in for Adolf Hitler, rather than another Vietnam. According to Bruce Cumings in War and Television, “the Gulf War was a war fought to demolish a memory” and “Iraq was the perfect surrogate for the party of forgetting bent on wiping out a ‘Vietnam Syndrome’ that had hampered America’s global policeman role for twenty years,” while also asserting that “‘No More Vietnams’ became the battle cry of the

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1990s.” Similarly, in *The Spitting Image* (1998) Jerry Lembcke argues “that it was the image of the spat upon veteran which figured most prominently in the rhetoric of those supporting the Gulf War,” despite the lack of any hard evidence of such incidents, and “the story itself framed the linkage between the Vietnam War and the Gulf War in such a way that the treatment of the soldiers and veterans became *the* issue.” According to Marita Sturken “attempts to give the Persian Gulf War a neat narrative reinscribing master narratives of World War II—in which the United States liberated a desperate and weak country imperiled by a dangerous tyrant—are intended to chart the lineage of war directly from 1945 to 1991 in order to establish the Vietnam War (and its shadow, the Korean War) as aberrations.”

This was not the last time that public memories of WWII and Vietnam competed. After the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center in 2001, similar efforts were part of a strategy by the administration of George W. Bush to frame 9/11 and thus the War on Terror as similar to WWII rather than Vietnam, efforts aided by public memory. Indeed, as Emily Rosenberg notes in *A Date Which Will Live*, “in the first Persian Gulf War in 1991, the first George Bush had gone to great lengths to portray Iraqi President Saddam Hussein as a new Hitler” but “the widespread popular invocation of Pearl Harbor after 9/11, however, promoted the World War II analogies so thoroughly that the Vietnam words of ‘quagmire’ and ‘backlash’ initially disappeared” from public debate.

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21 Rosenberg, p. 187.
Memory Studies

This is but one more example of the ways in which war memory has been used to shape contemporary public policy, an issue that has been a major focus of the field of collective memory studies since its inception in France nearly a century ago, and has continued to be a major topic of interest among memory studies scholars right up to today. In his posthumous collection *The Collective Memory* (1980), Maurice Halbwachs argues that “a war or revolution may create a great chasm between generations, as if an intermediate generation had just disappeared,” yet, “on the day after the crisis, everyone affirms that they must begin again at the point of interruption, that they must pick up the pieces and carry on.” These lines, written by the founding father of collective memory studies, suggest that such scholars have always been interested in the impact of war. However, in an endnote to her essay on “The Faces of Remembrance and Forgetting” (2001), Hue-Tam Ho Tai notes that “since the appearance of Maurice Halbwach’s pioneering work, *Les Cadres sociaux de la memoire*, scholarly attention has focused on the social construction of memory,” while much “less attention has been paid to social amnesia, although it is a theme that reverberates in societies that have undergone divisive episodes such as” Korea.

Henry Em asserts, in *The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea* (2013) that from the 1910s to the 1940s “the Japanese colonial state” had “endeavored to produce Koreans as subjects” who would suffer silently, while Suh Hee-Kyung notes, in “Atrocities Before and During the Korean War” (2012), that politically motivated mass murders were common prior to the war in southwestern Korea as well as on Jeju.

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Island, and such “incidents before the Korean War” served as “the prototype of civilian massacres committed during the Korean War.”

Public or collective memory studies, which have grown considerably over the last three decades as an academic field, began largely with the work of Maurice Halbwachs drawing on multiple intellectual traditions. The two biggest influences on Halbwachs’ thinking were the collective identity approach of sociologist Emily Durkheim and philosopher Henri Bergson’s interest in individual memory, however, his ideas were also influenced by a long line of French intellectuals stretching from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries who were curious about questions relating to memory, though they never used the term collective, as documented by Nicolas Russell. As Jeffrey Olick notes, Maurice Halbwachs developed his concept of a collective memory over several decades, moving beyond ideas initially expressed in his first book, *The Social Frameworks of Memory*, partly in response to that book’s “reception, particularly by his colleagues the psychologist Charles Blondel (1926) and historian Marc Bloch (1925),” other early scholars of memory. Olick also notes Halbwachs is now almost universally cited by North American memory studies scholars, but that “very often such cites seem more totemic than substantive,” arguing he is so widely misinterpreted today because “there is relatively little scholarship in English illuminating the intellectual-historic context in which he was writing” or the arc of “his own intellectual development.”


24 Nicolas Russell, “Collective Memory before and after Halbwachs,” *The French Review*, Vol. 79, No. 4 (Mar, 2006); Jeffrey Olick, “’Collective Memory’: A memoir and prospect,” *Memory Studies* Volume 1 (2008) p. 25-26. Mary Douglas notes in her introduction to the 1980 English translation of *The Collective Memory* that Halbwachs initially moved toward ‘collective’ answers before WWI, for if “in 1913 he should have found the individual assumptions of utility theory inadequate” to explain “the social structuring of pressures to consume,” it is no surprise Halbwachs would similarly argue individual psychological theories of memory offered an inadequate explanation of how societies, and people who live in them, recall the past.
Halbwachs opens his 1925 study, *The Social Frameworks of Memory*, by arguing that “most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on,” that “the groups of which I am a part at any time give me the means to reconstruct” the past,” and that “it is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory.” In response to critiques of his first book, in his next work called *The Collective Memory* Halbwachs clarifies how he thinks social groups determine the frameworks by which we remember, even though individuals recall specific events differently. Halbwachs argues that the present “retains from the past only what still lives” on “in the consciousness of the groups keeping the memory alive” while “a remembrance is in very large measure a reconstruction of the past achieved with data borrowed from the present.” Halbwachs also alludes to the impact of war on the collective memory when he notes that he first “became aware of the world about a decade after the Franco-Prussian War” and so for him “the second empire was a distant period corresponding to a society almost extinct,” yet Halbwachs seems to downplay the impact of WWI. He states that “fifteen years separate” him “from the Great War” and while, for 1920s “children, the pre-1914 society of which they know nothing recedes similarly into a past not reached by their memory,” for those his age there seems to be “no break in continuity between these two periods” but instead a persistence of “the same society.” In her essay “Memory Gaps” (2005), Annette Becker suggests that Halbwachs downplays “the individual suffering which” WWI “brought and the tragic overall nature of the conflict,” (despite his visits to “battlefields a few days after attacks” and the fact that “his brother Georges, a professional soldier, had been seriously wounded and then taken prisoner” by Germans), because Maurice Halbwachs himself was suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress.}

In *The Social Frameworks of Memory*, Halbwachs asserts that “we are free to choose from the past the period into which we wish to immerse ourselves,” and that therefore “the most painful aspects of yesterday’s society are forgotten,” since “the great majority of people more or less frequently are given to what one might call nostalgia for the past.” Moreover, in the clearest reference to forgetting war trauma in all his works, Halbwach’s argues that “the military cast of mind reappears, without much change, the day a war is over even though it may have almost wiped out and then replaced the military personnel.” Yet Halbwachs has comparatively little to say about forgetting, perhaps because he saw it as simply the opposite of remembering, asserting that “the phenomena of forgetting is explained by the disappearance of these frameworks” of memory or else by “the fact that these frameworks change from one period to another,” rather than being due to the impact of collective traumas such as a major war on the public memory.26

With the posthumous publication of the French version of *The Collective Memory* in 1950, Halbwachs’ essays would influence a new wave of memory studies scholarship starting in the 1970s, most notably the work of Pierre Nora. As historian Peter Burke asserts “one of the most impressive French historical enterprises of recent years” (and one which marks “a return to the ideas of Maurice Halbwachs on the social framework of memory”), is “the collective work on *The Places of Memory*, edited by Pierre Nora, who combines the roles of publisher and historian” to produce a series centering on “themes such as the tricolour, the ‘Marseillaise,’” and “Joan of Arc.” In this work Nora asserts that “memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us

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to the eternal present” and argues that “modern memory is, above all archival,” while also noting that “what began as writing ends as high fidelity and tape recording.”

Nora introduces his key concept of “Lieux De Memoire,” usually translated as “sites of memory,” by asserting that they “are fundamentally remains, the ultimate embodiments of a memorial consciousness” and that they “originate with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives,” while later noting that they “have no referent in reality” but “are their own referent” though they “anchor, condense, and express the exhausted capital of our collective memory.” Nora provides a clearer definition of “lieux de memoire, sites of memory,” when he describes them as places “where memory crystalizes and secretes itself” after “a particular historical moment, a turning point” and notes that “there must be a will to remember” at these spots that are “bound intimately with life and death, with time and eternity.” Nora proposes that “memory and history, far from being synonymous, appear now to be in fundamental opposition” and provides another argument for focusing on physical locations when he asserts that public “memory attaches itself to sites, whereas history attaches itself to events.”

American historian John Bodnar, in “Pierre Nora, National Memory, and Democracy” (2000), argues “though Nora does not problematize the impact of war on national memory” very much, he does note “a ‘disintegration’ of the national myth took place at the end of both World Wars. Similarly, memory studies scholar Hue-Tam Ho Tai, in “Remembered Realms” (2001), admits “the issue of forgetting” is more often the focus of “American studies of memory,” but “Nora and a few of his contributors” do “bring up the issue of amnesia.” This focus makes sense given Nora’s argument, in his overall introduction that was published as a separate essay in a

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1989 *Representations* special issue on “Memory and Counter Memory” and which served as the initial entree to Nora’s work for many American public memory studies scholars, that “the most fundamental purpose of the *lieu de memoire* is to stop time, to block the work of forgetting.”

Prominent third generation memory scholar Jay Winter opens his essay concerning “Notes on the Memory Boom” (2001) by asserting “memory is in ascendancy these days” thanks to a “memory boom of the later twentieth century,” which he credits to the work of Pierre Nora. Yet in the more recent essay “Sites of Memory” (2012) Winter distinguishes between Nora’s definition of “sites of memory,” which he says can stretch “from legends to stories to concepts” and his own more limited emphasis on “physical sites where commemorative acts take place,” and parts ways with Nora on the relations between memory and history, which Winter views as complimentary, asserting “it makes no sense to juxtapose history and memory as adversarial and separate concepts.”

Winter also discusses the work of Maurice Halbwachs. Winter argues that “what Maurice Halbwachs meant when he wrote his seminal work on *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire* in 1925” was to describe “the process through which different collectives, from groups of two to groups in their thousands, engage in acts of remembrance together,” while also asserting that adopting “Halbwachs’ sense of the socially constructed nature of ‘collective memory’ is vital to historical study, since it precludes talking about memory as if it exists independently of the people who share it.” Winter also protests “the loose usage of the term ‘collective memory’---framed to mean virtually anything at all,” and is therefore critical of John Bodnar, (whom he calls


“among the leading cultural historians of twentieth-century America”) for using the term “cultural memory” without noting whether it “is intended to follow Maurice Halbwachs original usage” of “the term collective memory.”

In *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (1994), John Bodnar offers a useful working definition of his subject matter in arguing “public memory emerges from the intersection of official and vernacular cultural expressions,” such as monuments and movies, suggesting that “public memory is produced from a political discussion that involves not so much specific economic or moral problems but rather fundamental issues about the entire existence of society,” and finally concluding that “public memory is 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.” In this dissertation, I use a model like the one created by John Bodnar, “analyzing public history as political culture” while seeking to mediate between “multiple official histories as well as multiple vernacular memories,” by examining local and state Korean War monuments, museum exhibitions, memorial infrastructure, and mass media.32

Beyond Traditional War Memory Studies: The Travelogue as Research Method

So how can we respond to and advance this historiography in light of this wide range of different sites of memory where one finds mention of the Korean War? Confronted with such a diversity of evidence, and also wanting a way to analyze museum exhibitions, monuments, and memorial infrastructure within their own natural environments, I adopted a travelogue approach to my research, inspired by several contemporary interdisciplinary scholars who have made use of

31 Winter, ”sites of memory,” p. 5, 154, 188.

similar methods. Between May 2015 and March 2017, I embarked on several public history road trips as part of this project in order to visit Korean War museum exhibitions, monuments, and memorial infrastructure in three regions of the United States, to categorize them and evaluate how the war is presented to a public seeking heritage tourist experiences.33 I define such experiences broadly as a type of leisure travel focused primarily on connecting with the past, based on the definition from The Presence of the Past. Rosenzweig and Thelan assert that, according to their data, “visits to museums and historic sites made respondents feel extremely connected to the past” in part because it seems “Americans believe they uncover ‘real’ or ‘true’ history at museums and historic sites” while sparking “an associative process of recalling and reminiscing about the past that connected them to their own history.”34 Rosenzweig and Thelan document that over 40% of respondents (50 of 124) stated that “travel” was their primary reason “for visits to museums and historic sites,” with nearby “proximity,” “visiting relative/friend,” “taking child,” and “leisure” as the next most popular answers, all five of which could be classified as forms of heritage tourism broadly defined.35

Several scholars exploring the role of historic sites and heritage tourism in shaping contemporary public memory have adopted some form of a travelogue or road-trip approach including Tony Horwitz in Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War

33 I explored exhibitions in the northeast (northern Virginia to Maine) in a series of short trips from 2015 to 2017. I explored exhibitions in the midwest (Ohio to Kansas) primarily on two trips to the Kansas City area in 2015 and 2016. I explored exhibitions in the southeast (southern Virginia to Florida) in January of 2016.

34 Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelan, The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998) p. 32. They note this is despite respondents being wary of academic history.

35 Rosenzweig and Thelan, p. 264. I imagine “Travel” here refers to the fact that someone is traveling and therefore stops to see a museum or historic site that they might not ever again be in a position to visit, as I occasionally did while traveling to visit Korean War displays. “Visiting relative/friend” would likely also include sites further from home. In contrast I think “Proximity” most likely refers to heritage tourism experiences relatively close to home, while both “Taking child” and “Leisure” could cover local museums or sites as well as generational trips to places such as Colonial Williamsburg. I may be wrong, perhaps for some “Proximity” meant that a site was close by on a work trip, but all five seem heritage tourism related.
(1998), James Loewen in *Lies Across America: What Our Historic sites Get Wrong* (1999), Hilary Iris Lowe in *Mark Twain’s Homes & Literary Tourism* (2012), Carolyn Kitch in *Pennsylvania in Public Memory: Reclaiming the Industrial Past* (2012), and Jon Wiener in *How We Forgot The Cold War: A Historical Journey Across America* (2012). Horwitz adopts an almost ethnographic first-person narrative voice in discussing the views of Civil War re-enactors among other manifestations of memory, and structures most substantive chapters around those individual southeastern states that saw the fiercest fighting during the Civil War from Virginia to Tennessee and Georgia to Mississippi. Horwitz notes that his plan “was to spend a year at war, searching out the places and people who kept memory of the conflict alive in the present day.” Loewen also adopts a state-by-state approach, within a larger regional layout starting from the Pacific Coast and ending in New England, but dropping the first-person narrative tone in discussing dozens of displays ranging from historical markers and national park sites to exhibits aboard naval vessels and local memorials. Loewen also highlights the need to understand the people who are behind the creation of exhibitions and construction of monuments, since “much effort—personal, political, and physical—is required to put up a monument or preserve a house.”

Similar geographic approaches have more recently been adapted by scholars whose works also seek to move towards developing typologies. Lowe uses most substantive chapters as avenues to explore key issues of memory, opting to structure her narrative around four places where Mark Twain lived and which today commemorate his literary career through historic houses or scholarly archives, including the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum in Hannibal, Missouri and Mark Twain House and Museum in Hartford, Connecticut. Lowe also

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notes that, though it is likely not possible to provide any single answer as to why people visit sites of literary memory,” interviews with staff, scholars, and community members” that “do not appear in the book” helped her to understand “the history of these places” especially “who created them and why.” Kitch’s chapters are organized thematically, however, because these themes are based on the specific industries which were located in distinct areas of Pennsylvania, the end result is a place-based book that also reads like a heritage travelogue. Combining storytelling and site visits with historiographical context and scholarly analysis, Kitch offers a useful model for my own assessment of Korean War sites of memory as well as reminders that though people of all backgrounds “make their own sense of the past in ways that help them to understand their own lives,” publicly “shared memory” is influenced by social position, even to the point of crafting a “vision of the past that is markedly different” from reality.

Wiener, whose casual writing style is more in the vein of Horwitz but whose choice of sites (and the range of sites he examines) is closest to my own, places individual chapters that are both place-based and thematic, such as “Memorial Day in Lakewood and La Jolla: Korean War Monuments of California,” within a larger chronological structure broken down by decade in order to explore museum exhibits and historic sites in different places throughout the United States, which recall the era from the mid-1940s through the late-1980s. Wiener also offers a

37 Hillary Iris Lowe, *Mark Twain’s Homes & Literary Tourism* (Columbia, MO; University of Missouri Press, 2012), p. 9-13. My own views on Korean War exhibitions have been extensively shaped by conversations with curators and staff members at museums with Korea displays. I was ultimately able to meet up with curatorial staff to review exhibitions at sites in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Alabama, Illinois, and Missouri.

reminder that some seemingly Cold War themed museums, such as “the Churchill Memorial in Fulton, Missouri,” have shifted their focus “to more popular topics” including Britain in WWII.\(^{39}\)

Indeed, beyond Wiener’s useful study, only one other recent work has had more to say about the ways in which the Korean War has been recalled, Suhi Choi’s *Embattled Memories*. Published in 2014, *Embattled Memories* is in some ways the most similar work to my own in that Choi explores both Korean War monuments and mass media objects, while also detailing the No Gun Ri killings and why they have again been forgotten despite female survivors’ testimonies, a form of counter-memory, by which Michel Foucault meant “an individual’s resistance against the official versions of historical continuity” and which James E. Young adapted to Holocaust studies in his 1992 *Critical Inquiry* essay “The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany Today.” Where my study differs from Choi’s is in the different scopes of our engagement with commemorative landscapes. Indeed, while Choi’s book explores the collective memory of the Korean War through five discrete memory sites, for example by devoting a whole chapter to a single state Korean War monument, I consciously adopted a more comparative method, seeking to visit as many local monuments, memorial infrastructure, museum exhibitions as possible.\(^{40}\)

While the works of Wiener and Choi have helped me refine my approach to research, and to which sorts of sites to consider, there are other lessons from public history that prove more useful in seeking to understand Korean War museum exhibitions in particular. Indeed, in the next chapter, the method of classifying Korean War museum exhibitions I have adopted is adapted

\(^{39}\) Jon Wiener, *How We Forgot the Cold War: A Historical Journey Across America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012) p. 5. I spoke briefly to Timothy Riley, Director and Chief Curator of the National Churchill Museum in summer 2016, and while he admitted the museum includes little information on Great Britain’s involvement in Korea in what he termed Churchill’s “Second Premiership,” he seemed to like the idea of a temporary exhibit in the future on the role of Commonwealth countries in support of South Korea.

from Tammy Gordon’s *Private History in Public: Exhibition and the Settings of Everyday Life* (2010). Gordon posits a five-pronged typology that broadens the definition of what might be called exhibition by considering factors such as physical setting, purpose, and design. Gordon notes that academic exhibitions found in professionally run museums, which garner the most scholarly scrutiny, tend to feature stylized three-dimensional elements and function primarily as public educational resources. In contrast, although corporate exhibition stresses public outreach and sharing company histories, they tend to feature the same sorts of design styles. Gordon’s main interest concerns displays falling into three other categories: community, entrepreneurial, and vernacular exhibition. Gordon notes her category of community exhibition is “usually called ‘local history,’” in which curators with heavy investment in the topic” share “the history of their specific place,” while entrepreneurial exhibition is where the practitioners of a “craft explain its history to perpetuate artisanal cultures” while imitating “a small business.” Gordon’s category of vernacular exhibition is unique, since at such sites “visitors see the past as something to be felt or even experienced” instead of a subject “to be learned,” and because these displays are most often found outdoors and in other non-traditional spaces, as I demonstrate in the next chapter.41

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CHAPTER 3 - KOREAN WAR MEMORY TOUR: TYPES OF HISTORICAL EXHIBITS

The complex Korea memorial landscape predicted by the previous chapter demands a different approach than has been adopted by prior scholars interested war memory, which is why I used a travelogue method overall. However, in some cases, such as museum exhibitions, I found it necessary to adopt a secondary approach in order to categorize the varieties of Korean War displays I discovered. Moreover, I found that Tammy Gordon’s typology is the most useful model for creating my own categorization of the several distinctive varieties of Korean War exhibition most prevalent in modern America. Academic exhibition is, in many ways, the easiest category to translate since a significant segment of modern American Korean War exhibition can be found at Smithsonian Institution museums, national park service sites, and Presidential Libraries run by the National Archives and Records Administration. Community exhibitions with examples of Korean War displays, which focus on particular communities of memory, include aviation heritage focused sites such as the Southern Museum of Flight in Alabama, general regional history museums that stage temporary pop-up Korean War displays such as the Upcountry History Museum in South Carolina, and military run galleries such as the National Naval Aviation Museum in Florida that each tend to focus on narrower segments of the broader Korean War narrative in line with their locality, theme, or mission.

The rough equivalent to Gordon’s entrepreneurial exhibitions in my system are what I term “in-reach exhibition” displays, which tend to focus on objects and captioned images, and have a clear mission of furthering the artisanal education of an in-group while often located on military bases, such as the JFK Special Warfare Museum at Fort Bragg in North Carolina or the campus of an institution such as the U.S. Naval Academy in Maryland. The rough equivalent to Gordon’s corporate exhibitions in my system are what I term “out-reach exhibition” displays using hi-tech elements and three-dimensional recreations to improve public relations such as at
the National Infantry Museum in Georgia. Lastly, vernacular exhibition in non-traditional spaces can either be indoors, such as at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial located at Arlington Cemetery in Virginia, or outdoors, like at the Ola Lee Mize Patriot’s Park in Alabama.¹

Each of these exhibition types problematizing the idea of Korea as a forgotten war in a different way. Academic exhibitions covering the Korean War seek to tell a broader narrative that attempts to be all inclusive, balancing the need to craft true-to-life displays for veterans and historians with ones that are relatable to students and heritage tourists, such as the Smithsonian’s Udvar-Hazy Center in Virginia. Community exhibitions focus on communities of memory, some of which are geographic while others such as the Air Mobility Command Museum in Delaware share a heritage based largely on in-group membership. In-reach exhibitions such as at the U.S. Military Academy in New York exist primarily to pass down institutional information on topics such as battle protocols on the Korean peninsula, essential knowledge for those who continue to fight in a conflict which cannot be forgotten since it is still ongoing. Out-reach exhibitions such as the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Ohio are primarily concerned with shaping the public image of the armed forces, while balancing the needs of multiple stakeholders. Lastly, vernacular exhibitions such as Sabre Jets staged outside as inspirational props, show Korean War public memory that has permeated society to the point that it becomes a part of the landscape and no longer stands out as any more-or-less forgotten than wars recalled by tank or cannon displays.

My purpose in this chapter is to develop a typology of Korean War historical exhibition through a travelogue approach, exploring the ways various museum displays can be categorized through their designs and missions as academic, community, in-reach, out-reach, and vernacular. All five of these common types of Korean War historical exhibition take for granted that the war is not forgotten, even if they use that term to refer to it, since they have content for and assume an

¹ While mapping Korea exhibitions onto Gordon’s typology, I realized many sites have missions of one category but display practices of another, and I needed to adopt a holistic approach and adapt two classes.
interest in their displays. At the same time, some displays, even traditional academic exhibitions, can actually further the forgotten war fallacy by using the label or minimizing Korea in exhibits.

Academic Exhibition: Smithsonian Museums, National Parks, and Presidential Libraries

As Tammy Gordon notes, of the five different display types she describes, academic exhibition gets “the most public scrutiny and scholarly attention,” and uses “commercial design styles and materials and high-end technology,” so that “the visitor gaze is highly managed within the gallery.”2 This duality, of being both frequently studied by visitors and spending considerable resources studying visitors, makes such displays useful on their own terms and as ways to explore key questions about the role of exhibitions in public memory. Examples of Korean War academic exhibition can be found in Smithsonian Museums, national park sites, and Presidential Libraries run by the National Archives and Records Administration.

There is almost no mention of Korea in the main Air and Space Museum gallery in DC. Indeed, the only aircraft on display at the capitol district site that alludes to the Korean War is a Douglas A-4C Skyhawk that is displayed in the “Sea-Air Operations Gallery,” which “was designed in 1950-52 as a lightweight attack aircraft” after the Inchon Landings, but was “first flown on June 22, 1954” after the armistice was signed.3 Heritage tourists looking to learn about Korean War era jet fighters and helicopters can instead find what they are seeking at a Smithsonian Institution branch located only a half hour’s drive outside the city.

As the crowds I saw on my visits to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum’s northern Virginia based extension (called the Udvar-Hazy Center and located in suburban Chantilly) seem to indicate, there exists considerable public interest in seeing Sabre Jets and Huey Helicopters

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2 Gordon, p. 16

from Korea as well as iconic items such as a Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, an original Air France Concorde, the largely decontextualized *Enola Gay*, and even the Space Shuttle *Discovery*. Although accessing the site requires one drive through the suburbs and pay a $15 parking fee, while the rest of the DC area Smithsonian branches are free, the Udvar-Hazy Center was packed on the day I first visited in the summer of 2015. However, despite the high number of visitors to the site, which saw 1.6 million people come through the turnstiles in 2015, the fact that the Korean War lacks its own exhibition at the Udvar-Hazy and is instead folded into a display alongside Vietnam makes it less likely tourists will gain much knowledge about the unique struggles of the Korean War, while increasing the chance that members of the public who see the exhibition will conflate the two conflicts, much as many believe *M*A*S*H* is set in Vietnam.\(^4\) Moreover, the section introduction not only implies the two wars were similar, but by focusing on the idea of a limited war it ignores the fact that more tonnage of bombs were dropped on North Korea in the early 1940s than fell in all of WWII. Despite such interpretive limitations, the size of the site allows for interesting approaches to display; one exhibit gambit used at the Udvar-Hazy that is also found at other sites is a Sabre jet facing a MiG it could have fought decades earlier.

The Udvar-Hazy has received considerable journalistic and scholarly study, focusing primarily on the controversy over how the *Enola Gay* would be represented by the Air and Space Museum, which as I found out from Korean War exhibition curator Dik Daso impacted the design of the display he worked on as well. As Mike Wallace details it, “the successful campaign to muzzle the Smithsonian” curators’ initial plan to display the *Enola Gay* with images of victims alongside a narrative that angered veterans’ groups and started a political fight as “a battle fought on the history front of America’s culture war”’ that, in Wallace’s words, “raises troubling questions about the future of public historical discourse.” Ken Yellis, notes “one of the main

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\(^4\) “Visitor Statistics.” Newsdesk: Newsroom of the Smithsonian, Accessed 8/9/2017, Available at: [http://newsdesk.si.edu/about/stats](http://newsdesk.si.edu/about/stats)
critiques of the proposed *Enola Gay* exhibition was” there was no way “the emotional impact of photographs of victims of the Hiroshima bombing” could be “mitigated by explanatory text alone,” a concern which I discovered also impacted the design of the Korean War exhibit at the Udvar-Hazy site, while as Henry Fountain notes, now “visitors can gaze down into the glass-enclosed cockpit of one of the center’s few celebrity aircraft, the *Enola Gay.*”

The connection between the *Enola Gay* and the Korean War display at the Udvar-Hazy became clear when I asked Dik Daso, who worked for over a decade as a Smithsonian curator after a two-decade career in the Air Force and now teaches public history classes as an adjunct in South Carolina, about why the exhibition he curated lacked much discussion on American strategic bombardment of North Korea. At first Daso suggested much of “the bombing that took place in Korea was not” strictly strategic since most of “the strategic targets that the B-29s were attacking were eliminated early” in the war, but then admitted the current display is “kinda weak” on the topic largely because it is not possible to tell a complex story with a simple panel narrative. Unprompted, Daso went on to explain that the staff had to opt for a minimalist story in terms of bombings since “people wanted to tell specific stories about bombing” that “range from the ultra-liberal to the ultra-conservative and you can’t do that at (Udvar-)Hazy” because it is an “objects based museum” that tells tales about artifacts rather than people. In response to a direct question, the first time that I brought up the *Enola Gay*, Daso admitted the controversy played a role in decisions about how to design exhibitions at the Udvar-Hazy before it opened in 2003, with the Sabre Jet versus MiG set-up one of an initial eighty aircraft display, noting “the original concept for (Udvar-)Hazy (Center) was that it was going to be open storage” and “a venue to get all of our

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big objects on display, because the public has a right to see them.” That is why, Daso asserts, “the area we ended up using for Korean war objects is driven by the objects.”

The governing decisions on how to design displays were very different at the other Smithsonian Korean War exhibition Dik Daso curated, the “Price of Freedom” housed at the American History Museum. I first visited the exhibition in the spring of 2013 with a graduate school class, and was struck by the lack of a separate Korean War section. Indeed, at the Price of Freedom exhibition the Korean War is relegated to one set of panels, including a map display and a comparison of warm versus cold weather uniforms, within a larger framework called “The Cold War.” In contrast, the Revolution, Civil War, World War II, and Vietnam all garner multi-room displays. As Beth Bailey discusses, “the Korean War is allotted, in its entirety, about the same amount of space as the who-used-the-dice; who-used-the-lye-soap section in the Revolutionary War” area. Daniel Kim, in comparing the Price of Freedom with the War Memorial of Korea, argues that there is an “infinitesimal degree of attention devoted by the” Smithsonian to Korea, and notes “it is one of the few sections of the exhibit that lacks a soundtrack.” This curatorial choice is striking considering the exhibition initially opened in 2004, closely following the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice that halted a war most frequently remembered as the forgotten war, supporting the idea that the term seems to function primarily as a memorial trope.

According to Daso this seeming simplification of the complex history of the Korean War at the Price of Freedom is because the display was constructed mostly with students in mind, noting they “had an educator on staff” during the design phase and were actively thinking about

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6 Phone interview with Dik Daso, (3/20/2017). Phone interviews after site visits with curators is the best practice to adopt to balance getting insights with documenting narratives. I did this at none of these sites.

how to create a “detailed educational plan supplemented by docent tours” of the exhibition. The focus on making it accessible for students, as well as the fact that the display was designed around “five major pillars,” including “the Cold War,” meant that Korea ended up being folded into the larger theme because “the nuances of the linkage between the Korean War and the Vietnam War” are so complex that “you can’t explain that [history] to 9, 10, and 11-year olds easily.” Daso also noted that Price of Freedom is effectively its own space within the museum, and that while about “5.5 million enter the museum” annually, estimates suggest only “about 3 million go through the Price of Freedom exhibit,” all of whom presumably pass by the Korean War area of the Cold War section, in contrast to the Civil War display area that heritage tourists can opt to avoid.8

Another venue where conflict over historical interpretation of one war played a role in display decisions about others is the National Prisoner of War Museum, run by the national park service, which is located on the grounds of the Andersonville National Historic Site in Georgia, which saw over 135,000 visitors in 2015. The exhibition at the POW museum offers a sharp contrast with the celebratory history offered at most Korean War displays; in fact, the critical perspective portrayed by the NPS at the POW museum even led to the softening of the original exhibit as it appeared when the site first opened in 1998. Indeed, as Tony Horwitz notes about the conflict, “one exhibit, which mentioned the large number of American POWs who collaborated with the North Koreans” was partly “rewritten after complaints by Korean War veterans.” Even in 2016, when I visited, there was still a section along one wall that seems like a captioned image of Korean War POWs was removed and nothing ever put in its place. Interestingly, the existence of displays about Korea at the site are a legacy of the strong reaction Andersonville long elicited, preventing commemoration of the site for over a century. Indeed, as Horwitz further details,”it

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8 Dik Daso interview. Daso noted that while Price of Freedom had a set script, the Udvar-Hazy docents each “had their own spiel,” which suggests that tour guides matter in terms of what the public really learns.
was until 1970 that a compromise was reached” where-by the former Civil War era POW camp at “Andersonville would become a national memorial” in exchange for the site also being a place that “commemorated POWs from all American Wars.” Accordingly, since the museum opened it has been a focal point for public history presentations on Korean War prisoners, like a November 2012 “special program in the theater” in which a “Park volunteer” told “the story of his father's 33-month [long] imprisonment in North Korea from 1950 through 1953, and how it affected his family.”

The central exhibition includes several mentions of the Korean War but, in contrast to the design of The Price of Freedom, it is purposefully set up to blend the experiences of prisoners across centuries, making it impossible to avoid Korea or any other conflict. Moreover, the main exhibition includes several interactive aspects that require opening drawers or panels, making it one of the most difficult Korean War exhibits to evaluate in terms of style and content. As the orientation panel “About This Museum” explains “the galleries you will enter next” are set up “as though you, the visitor, had suddenly become a POW” and “because of this unique perspective, you will find no exhibits grouped chronologically by ‘World War II,’ ‘Korean War,’ or ‘Vietnam War.’” The first mentions of Korea in the exhibit come as captions to three artifacts surrounding a discussion by a POW about how “all the POWs agreed they would starve before they would do any kind of work that would aid the Koreans in their war effort,” which included a box of “wood splinters” that “are replicas of ones used by a POW in North Korean (sic) to kill oxen for meat,” a set of “handmade fishhooks and line,” and a “tin pan for cooking dandelion greens.” Throughout the exhibit there are screens with rolling ball controls that allow visitors to click on the stories of

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individual Korean War POWs, which highlight specific themes drawn from broader oral histories, such as a discussion of how one group of “liberated POWs take parting revenge on their captors” or how another soldier engaged in “a dangerous labor of love – preserving the names of the dead.” Korea also pops up at the museum’s exhibits on “Propaganda,” “Torture,” and “Repatriation” as well as in a caption about two “hand carved pipes” that a POW used.

While the national park service shares the stories of ordinary soldiers who were captured in Korea at Andersonville, in Independence, Missouri it’s the view of President Truman that is the focus. I called ahead to the Harry S Truman National Historic Site so that they would hopefully hold a ticket for me, so I could make the last house tour of the day and see the spot where Truman was sitting when he got the phone call about the invasion of South Korea in June of 1950. Although the Harry S Truman National Historic site only received 32,000 visitors in 2015, it was up to 34,000 in 2016, and actually saw 100,000 visitors when it first opened to the public in 1984. The Truman house tour lasts a half-hour and only goes through the first floor of the home, which was occupied by First Lady Bess Truman until the early 1980s, but it includes both Presidential history and family stories. Visitors see a 1960s lime green kitchen and the place Truman left his hat and cane after his final morning walk the day after Christmas in 1972, which has been left undisturbed for nearly a half-century despite thousands of visitors touring the site. The “Phone Call Spot,” which my tour guide informed me he does not always mention to his tour groups, but another Ranger said he never fails to talk about when he brings visitors through the house, is located a few feet from Truman’s hat and cane, under a walnut staircase, where I was told there was both a regular phone and the secure line he used to learn of North Korea’s attack.

Another presidential site is a third NPS location to recall Korea. The Dwight Eisenhower National Historic Site in Gettysburg, opened by the park service to the public in 1980 after the

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10 “Annual Park Ranking Report for Recreation Visits”
death of Mamie Eisenhower, includes the house where Ike lived while he ran for President in 1952 on a pledge to go to Korea in order to end the war. At the site, visitors first tour the grounds then are let into the house for their own self-guided tour, starting in a parlor with a volunteer docent, who told my group about a lacquered table with Korean writing that was a gift to the First Lady from the wife of Korean President Syngman Rhee. The docent told me he does not always share that tale, but when I asked if any other objects in the room had a Korean connection he responded with a well-rehearsed spiel about a screen that was a gift to Ike himself. Korea also comes up in an exhibit with a timeline denoting the start and end of the war, while a display on Ike’s “Presidential Campaigns” includes a note on his pledge to end the war if elected. The site’s proximity to the Gettysburg Visitor Center doubtless adds to its number of tourists, but the fact visitors must pay a fee, and take a shuttle to see it, means it gets only a fraction of Gettysburg’s million annual visits; the site got 54,000 guests in 2015 and 55,000 in 2016, the year I went.\(^\text{11}\)

Korea shows up even less often at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and Museum in Abilene, Kansas. Indeed, Korea and much of Eisenhower’s presidency is ignored at the library’s museum, which focuses primarily on Ike’s military career, including a display about the 1919 road trip that inspired the interstate highway system, and his time as a General in World War II. However, the only discussion of Korea at the site focuses on Ike’s campaign pledge to “go to Korea” if elected alongside images of his post-election visit, followed by an assessment of the 1953 armistice. This lack of attention to Korea is unfortunate given the high attendance at the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, which drew over 185,000 visitors in 2014 thanks to the “80 or 90” programs the library now offers annually, according to the site’s Director.\(^\text{12}\)


\(^{12}\) "Presidential library museum attendance in past 40 years,”, Washington Post, Accessed 8/10/2017, Available at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/presidential-library-museum-attendance-in-
In contrast, the Truman Library and Museum in Independence, Missouri drew just 59,000 visitors in 2014, far below its high of over 320,000 in 1977, but those visitors can surely learn a lot about Korea. Indeed, the site is home to the largest single collection of material dealing with the Korean War anywhere in the country. The library has a huge collection of Korean War scholarship and one of the nation’s most complete archives of primary source materials from the early 1950s. Among the items I came across while spending a June 2014 afternoon in the archive looking for information on the Korean anti-war movement was a several-page telegram sent to the White House by Christian university founder Bob Jones, suggesting that the best way to end the Korean War would be to drop several atomic bombs on China, implying Jones would have supported General Douglas MacArthur in his conflict with President Truman. The topic of Truman versus MacArthur pops up in the Truman Library, as at many other sites. Indeed, Jon Wiener notes that “at the Truman Library the MacArthur controversy is given its own section, which includes wall-mounted soundsticks that provide-two minute audio excerpts” and that there is “a ‘Dissenting Views’ flip book on the Macarthur controversy” as well as a full “eleven documents about MacArthur, totaling thirty-three pages, whereas the rest of the Korean War gets four documents totally eight pages.”13 However, in my view, while the MacArthur controversy certainly gets a lot of space at the Truman Library, it is not at expense of the Korean War overall.

Korea is noted in the Truman Library even within those exhibits that do not ostensibly focus on the war. Indeed, within an exhibit about Truman’s daily itinerary, titled “The President’s Day,” is a news clipping noting that “U.S. Casualties in Korea Reach 105,841 Total,” which is linked up to a section of the schedule for “Intelligence Reports.” Moreover, on the other side of

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the-past-40-years/2015/02/22/7da8b778-bb0d-11e4-b274-e5209a3bc9a9_graphic.html?utm_term=.7136b2f588ee; Nausheen Husain and Alex Bordens, “10 ways to keep up attendance at a presidential library,” Chicago Tribune (8/26/2015)

13 “Presidential library museum attendance in past 40 years”; Wiener, p. 280
the site, outside a gallery that houses temporary exhibitions, sits a nine-hundred-year-old Korean vase gifted to President Truman by the South Korean government in appreciation for wartime aid and in honor of his opening of the very first Presidential Library in 1955. Yet the most in-depth discussion of the Korean War at the Truman Library is found within the exhibition on Truman’s presidency, which re-opened in summer 2001 after a two-year, 22.5 million-dollar renovation.14

I first toured the display in summer 2014, then returned on June 1, 2016 so I could review it with Clay Bauske, the site’s Museum Curator, who worked closely on the display’s design. The permanent exhibition on “Truman: The Presidential Years” includes images, artifacts, and text panels delving into the history of the Korean War. Wiener notes, “the Korean War gets one entire wall, which includes a video monitor showing documentary footage and photos of the war,” and a set-up letting “visitors listen to a four-minute loop of veterans recalling their experiences.”15 Yet, the Korea area of the exhibition really begins even earlier at a section called “The Cold War Turns Hot” that combines light, sound, video monitors, and a concave map of East Asia to detail the divisions between the Koreas that preceded the onset of the war. As Bauske explained, this section was designed, similar to a classroom set up at the Marine Corps Museum, with the goal of providing a primer, for students and heritage tourists, on the larger Cold War contexts of Korea.

The Truman Library also includes displays about domestic life during the Korean War, such as “America: 1952” which focuses on *Life* magazine, as well as displays that invite visitors to question the ethics of major historical controversies such as an immersive experience labeled as a “Decision Theatre” about “Spies in Government.” Moreover, there is a “Dissenting Views Flipbook” that includes historians such as H.W. Brands and Bruce Cummings, as well as ordinary


15 Wiener, p. 278
soldiers asking “Why We Are In Korea.” Bauske noted that elements such as the “Decision Theatre” and “Dissenting Views Flipbook” reflect his perception that a presidential library should be a place for critical analysis rather than veneration.16 Bauske also noted a planned expansion of the museum, which he said would not only include more exhibit space but also re-orient the building. Moreover, as Bauske informed me, in his time at the museum he has also curated multiple pop-up exhibits on Korea, and while he sent me “the text from our most recent temporary exhibit on the Korean War” in 2010, Bauske apologized that the “temporary Korean War exhibits in 1996 and 2003” which he designed are “not in digital format,” a reminder of how fleeting Korea exhibits can be.17

I first visited the Center for the Study of the Korean War, also located in Independence, in the summer of 2014 on the day after I initially toured the Truman Library, and had the chance to meet Korea vet and history professor Paul Edwards, who founded the Center in 1989. On my third visit to the site in 2016 I learned from Paul’s son Gregory, who manages the archive and was kind enough to open it up for me after hours, that I was likely to be among the last scholars to use the Center. Gregg told me the Center was currently in negotiations with the Truman Library that will most likely lead to their entire collection being moved to their much better funded new partner’s larger facility, to allow for the info housed at the Center to be digitized. In effect, the Center has been operating for more than a quarter century as a kind of “community archive,” and hopes to move its collection to a facility run by the National Archives so it can be professionally preserved. Once the collection moves I certainly will not be able to have the kind of casual access


17 Personal communication from Clay Bauske, (6/2/2017)
I was given, able to make an appointment to come in the evening mid-week, and allowed by a family member of the archive’s founder to freely pick through files with info about topics such as a “Proposal Summary” to create a “Korean War Memorial Floating Museum Project” in Pusan, South Korea. The files also contain newsletters from when the now-closed Korean War National Museum first opened. Despite its name and high-hopes the museum was a community exhibition.

Community Exhibition: Mnemonic Groups, Local Histories, and Niche Military Displays

According to Tammy Gordon one of the key characteristics which makes Community Exhibitions different from other types of display is they are “created by people who have lived the historical subject, who descend from those who do, or who identify strongly with the place.” 18 What she details also seems a fairly thorough encompassing of a community of memory which passes down the traditions of a particular place or group. While most community Korean War exhibitions are found in local museums, niche military sites, or as temporary exhibits that pop up in regional museums focused on heritage tourism, the Korean War National Museum was unique.

Perhaps no example of Korean War exhibition is as hard to classify, or has gone through so many iterations, as the Korean War National Museum that first opened in Tuscola, Illinois in 1997 then “moved to the former Chanute Air Force Base in Rantoul,” which caused a visitation issue according to one Korea vet, since “where is Rantoul?” In 2006, after moving again “to take advantage of tourism generated by the nearby Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum,” the Korea museum planned to construct a “multi-million dollar building in Springfield.” Yet, after learning “Lincoln tourists aren’t necessarily interested in visiting a Korean War museum,” in 2010 the museum unveiled a new plan, that was also later scrapped,”to relocate to Navy Pier in Chicago.” According to its website as of 2015, the museum’s future site would “be a world-class museum and state of the art facility located in the heart of Manhattan” at a cost of “$35 million” dollars

18 Gordon, 35.
that would “honor Korean War Veterans” and “educate future generations.” Yet, when I visited in May of 2015 Thomas Kenny, who was then the Museum Manager, told me that relocation plans had stalled due to fundraising difficulties. On St. Patrick’s Day of 2017 the Korean War National Museum unveiled a new exhibition on the role of Irish-Americans in the Korean War. On July 28, 2017 the museum posted a notice on its Facebook page that it was being forced to forever shut down immediately, which later reports revealed was in the wake of serious financial concerns.19

“No Longer Forgotten” was the motto of the Korean War National Museum while it was open, and it welcomed visitors at the outset with a statement that “the mission of the museum is to educate people about the historical significance of the Korean War.” Before closing, the museum occupied a storefront on a downtown mall block near the Old State Capitol, encouraging passersby to wander in and take advantage of free admission. Indeed, during my first visit in the summer of 2015 there was a group of young people already there when I arrived, and another couple still touring when I left 15 minutes prior to closing. Moreover, according to the intern I spoke with, the museum would often draw over 200 visitors a week during the tourist season.

Touring the museum with Thomas Kenny during my second visit to the site in summer 2016 was especially useful for understanding how its design was related to its mission, how its form followed its function so to speak. The entire museum was structured as one narrative exhibit that included text panels, artifacts, airbrushed photographs, maps, and a few video screens with additional displays interspersed within. Before even beginning the narrative, visitors were met with a green fatigue-patterned stretcher suggesting an interpretive lens focused on the plight of

American soldiers, although the larger narrative is balanced overall. Kenney explained this was so visitors would be met with the reality of the war right away. The narrative began with a display on “Korea—Before the Korean War” which included images, text panels, and artifacts such as traditional tea sets and several masks, then moved on to a discussion of the “Division At The 38TH Parallel” and Syngman Rhee. The next section explored “The Rise of Communist North Korea” before moving on to the June 1950 “Invasion And The Battle Of The Pusan Perimeter,” which included items such as sixty-five year-old film equipment and uniforms from all seasons. Kenney noted visitors tended to respond to the film equipment, which he said was a unique artifact, and they had more uniforms than they could exhibit, though not all were in displayable condition.20 The area labeled “Inchon” covered not only the invasion but “The First Liberation of Seoul” and “The Chinese Intervention,” further discussed in the next part of the exhibit titled “The Frozen Chosin,” which prominently featured the line “Retreat, Hell! We’re attacking in a different direction” while detailing the U.S. Marines’ difficult winter of 1950 movement south.

At this point visitors to the museum came upon an area with several displays that were not part of the larger narrative. For example, one display case held a bazooka with a text panel explaining the uses of the “Rocket Launcher in the Korean War” that sat next to equipment used by minesweepers, and below a panel of Korean War editorial cartoons and comics that Kenney mentioned veterans often commented on. This area also included a reading room with one of the largest Korean War book collections I had ever seen and a case full of objects from a “MASH—Mobile Army Surgical Hospital” unit. Perhaps the most interesting display within this section was the Thomas Levenhagen Children’s Zone, a play area complete with tiny toy soldiers under a monitor showing old episodes of Beatle Bailey on a loop that also included period equipment in poor shape that young visitors were encouraged to play with as a way of connecting to the past.

20 Interview with Thomas Kenney during site visit (6/8/2016)
Kenny informed me this section was designed as outreach to children and an attempt to fall in line with professional museum techniques, suggesting staff efforts to keep up with exhibition best practices.

The narrative picked up with a section called “Stalemate Along The 38TH,” which included text panels on “The Air War” and “The Naval War” as well as artifacts such as bomber jackets and naval attire. An independent display discussed Jose L. Martinez, the “First Mexican-American From Illinois To Get Wounded in Action in the Korean War,” one of many examples of exhibits focused on the ethnic diversity of U.S. soldiers in Korea I would see on my trips. The exhibit’s narrative ended with a section on “The Legacy of Korea” that discussed “The War In The Media” and “Prisoners Of War” as well as a staging of photographs highlighting the differences between contemporary North and South Korea. Kenny noted this section was thought of as key by designers since it explained the real stakes of the museum, which he then discussed in terms of the continued division of Korea today. This section of the museum also included info both on our Allies and opposition, while highlighting the continuation of the war up to the present by portraying episodes such as the Pueblo Crisis of 1968 and the Axe Murder Incident of 1976 that occurred in the decades after 1953. The last thing I asked Kenny before I left was whether the museum was still planning to move to another location; he told me that even if the Korean War National Museum opened a second site in the future the Springfield facility would still remain.

Other Korean War community exhibitions are only meant to be temporary, especially those found at regional history museums. One such regional museum, the Upcountry History Museum at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina, was home to a temporary exhibit titled “The Forgotten War: Korea, 1950-1953” that hung for just five months from September 2015 to the end of January 2016. The temporary exhibit, sponsored by Lockheed Martin (who also paid for a new gallery at the National Guard Museum in Washington), consisted of Navy commissioned paintings and period artifacts as well a map on the floor and several text panels,
created by then Curator of Collections Kelly Smith, who kept the site open an hour late so I could see the display after a desperate phone call from the road. Smith, the first curator of a Korean War display who I spoke to at length, had just recently taken the job only after curating the temporary exhibit, proving the perfect guide to explain design choices behind displays. Individual panels paired with themed paintings covered the “Background” of the war, the “Korean War Service Medal,” the “USS Los Angeles,” the “Invasion and Counter Invasion,” “Helicopters and Fighter Jets,” “Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH),” “Prisoner Exchange,” and the “Conclusion” of the war while two panels discussed the topic of “Racial Integration.”

The exhibition, which Smith said was also connected to an ongoing local oral history project, made use of laminated info sheets to provide additional context on “Key People From The Korean War” such as Generals Douglas MacArthur and Matthew Ridgeway, North Korean leader Kim-Il Sung, and South Korean President Syngmaan Rhee as well as “Key Artists From the Korean War” featured in the exhibition such as Russell Connor, Clifford Valentino Lee (“the only African American artist in this exhibit”), Hugh Cabot, and Herbert C. Hahn. Moreover, this was the second time in two years that Cabot and Hahn, “both U.S. Navy combat artists in the Korean War,” had their works featured, as from June to December 2014 the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island had staged a display titled Fire and Ice: Combat Art from the Korean War. As Smith explained, the goal of the exhibition was to provide a balanced narrative, as well as enough background for those unfamiliar with the war to understand the context of the paintings, while also offering opportunities to learn more through those info sheets and related museum programing.

I had planned to stop in June 2016 at a temporary exhibit in Covington, Kentucky at the Behringer-Crawford Museum (“The Home for Northern Kentucky’s Heritage”). However, when I

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22 “Title Page” caption of Korean War art and description of exhibit, Naval War College Review, Winter 2015
tried to make an appointment to meet with a staff member, I was told by Maridith Yahl, Curator of Collections, that the display was postponed until summer 2017. Yahl noted the “reason it was postponed was because the exhibit will be based off of Korean War interviews” which “have not been completed,” and because “the Korean War is already called the Forgotten War” they did not want to design a display that “reflected this nickname.” Yahl was also adamant that “we will be having this exhibit next summer, all of us here at BCM feel very strong about this” and gave me a preview, noting “as far as the exhibit itself, the veterans will be front and center” with “the story of the war…told through their eyes” by “a text panel featuring each of the veterans we interview,” alongside stories of “spouses, siblings and those left at home to get their perspectives.” As Yahl promised, when the exhibit “Korea: The Forgotten War” opened in June 2017 the stories of local vets were at the forefront. For example, “Ken Harper of Crestview Hills, KY” recalls he “walked down the street and joined the Air Force” after a Community College economics class one day in 1951 only to find draft papers “in the mailbox,” while “Ed Kleir of Ludlow, KY” remembers when he “returned from Korea to his job at Coca Cola, it was like he had never left” and it seemed as if his service “was no big deal” to those who had not served.\(^{23}\)

While such temporary exhibitions are one way to highlight the stories of community members who fought in Korea, many states maintain museums with displays designed to honor the contributions of their veteran citizens, while using material culture objects large and small to share local history and promote heritage tourism. The Militia Museum of New Jersey in Sea Girt, on the grounds of the National Guard Training Center, affords little wall space to Korea but maintains several Korean War era helicopters, jet planes, and tanks across the street in an open

field that reminds visitors to the site about the war, while underlying the popularity of military machines as centerpieces of public memory exhibition. Indeed, the Pennsylvania National Guard Military Museum in Annville, which opened in 1986, suggests that visitors “look for the Civil War Cannon and Korean War Tank” as a way of directing themselves to the building, in an example of items from the Korean War being used to facilitate broader heritage tourism experiences, and of outdoor tank displays in Pennsylvania directing visitors to indoor historical exhibits. In contrast, the U.S. Veterans Memorial Museum in Huntsville, Alabama has several cabinets of Korean War artifacts that might be found anywhere, such as the near ubiquitous cold weather uniforms, and unique displays on topics of local interest that can be found nowhere else, such as “Dottie Cutts Army Nurse, WWII-Korea.”

On Memorial Day of 2016 I visited the Mountaineer Military Museum, housed in the historic Weston Colored School (“the fourth school erected with public funds for black children in West Virginia” when it opened in 1882), a facility that a staff member confirmed was normally only open on Saturdays but was welcoming the public on this last Monday in May because of the significance of the holiday. The museum includes two sections that make mention of Korea: a gallery focused on individual soldiers from all wars which is organized only by when they donated their artifacts to the facility and a chronological exhibit area with a display on Korea that is focused on objects including skis, an anti-tank mine, and silk pajamas. Both have local flavor; the first part includes a Souvenir Photo Album and a Seabag donated by the wife of a Korean War sailor, while the second section includes a display of soldiers sitting in the snow with a note that vets “Remember The Cold,” and a discussion of ways they tried “To Combat The Cold,” as well as allusions to M*A*S*H, such as helicopter imagery and signposts indicating mileage to Weston.

24 “Museum Directions,” The Pennsylvania National Guard Military Museum, Accessed 12/30/15: http://pngmilitarymuseum.org/information/directions.html; The Army Heritage Center in Carlisle uses a Tiger Tank, which is visible from the interstate, to draw potential heritage tourists to its indoor displays.
Virginia is home to several community Korean War exhibitions. The Virginia War Memorial in Richmond is similar to institutions in Indiana and Wisconsin in that it has an attached museum, where the Korean War is recalled in two exhibits: one on “Prisoners of War” and the other on “Trophies” including a North Korean flag. I was allowed to tour the Virginia War Museum in Newport News despite arriving a few minutes after the last visitors are normally admitted at 4:30 PM. Their sizeable Korean War exhibit, titled “America’s Forgotten War” is heavy on text and images, though it also includes propaganda leaflets, North Korean flags, and a jeep as well as a separate section called “The Winter War” that displays cold weather uniforms and focuses on the first year of the war. Korea appears in a supporting role in two other exhibits at the Virginia War Museum: one on POWs throughout U.S. history and the other part of a panel in a display about black soldiers titled “The Korean War and the Beginnings of Racial Equality.”

I was running late in Newport News because I almost got lost trying to find my way to Norfolk’s waterfront after parking a few streets inland, until I saw a huge battleship down at the end of one block. The USS Wisconsin is officially connected to “Nauticus,” a Norfolk marine museum for all ages, and can be toured to multiple degrees from a self-guided deck tour to a costlier guided tour of the interior; visitors are even invited to spend a night aboard ship for sixty-four dollars per person according to a pamphlet I procured. Even without taking a tour, visitors can learn about the battleship by reading outdoor displays, watching a free seven-minute film, and viewing a small display, all three noting the only time the vessel was damaged in its long career was in Korea. The Hampton Roads Naval Museum, unlike the Nauticus facility in which it is located, is free to tour, making for an awkward arrangement including a dedicated elevator only going up one floor and a promise by naval museum staff to leave interpretation of the battleship

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25 Battleships are a frequent site of Korea public memory. At the Battleship New Jersey exhibit in Camden visitors can learn about the combat casualties suffered on the ship as it was engaged in fighting at Wonsan.
to the Nauticus, as I learned from a staff member. The Korean War exhibition at the museum, a branch of the national network of navy-run sites, includes a text panel titled “Crisis at the 38th Parallel” and a display case of just two items: a “Cold-Weather Mask and Foul-Weather Hat” needed because “Winters off the Korean Coast are severe.” Hosting a whopping 378 programs and 455 ceremonies, the site saw nearly 200,000 visitors in 2015.

No other site in the United States Naval Museum System has nearly the visitation of the National Naval Aviation Museum in Florida, which saw 900,000 heritage tourists in 2015 despite holding only 88 programs and 125 ceremonies. The museum, which includes both artifacts from and displays about Korea, is located inside the gate at the Pensacola Naval Air Station but sits adjacent to a Gulf Coast golf course and has easy public access. The exhibition opens with a slick looking timeline of “Naval Aviation In Korea” that includes both a map and a pointy pagoda, in contrast to the broader pagoda that frames the older-looking section of the display that is labeled (with quotes in the original) “The Forgotten War” and has artifacts including flags and flight suits. The exhibition also contains three aircraft that saw service in the Korean War and are not as well-known as army and air force vehicles: the FH-1 Phantom (whose wings fold upwards to save space on carriers), HO5S-1 Helicopter (“The First U.S. Helicopters to Have Metal Rotor Blades”), and the TV-2 Shooting Star (next to an adjacent display on the airplane’s engine). The museum also has a display, labeled “The Spirit of Naval Aviation,” that puts Korea at the center of a display featuring pilots from WWI to Desert Storm.

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26 That same docent, on learning of my interest in Korea exhibits, pulled out a pamphlet to tell me about a display at the U.S. Army Transportation Museum at nearby Fort Eustis, which then became my next stop.


28 Ibid, p. 28. It seems in 2015 the Naval Aviation museum was the most visited of any military-run site.
I had driven to Pensacola from nearby Elgin Air Force Base, home of the Air Force Armament Museum, which includes not only aircraft in its indoor and outdoor galleries but devotes extensive exhibition space to rockets and missiles. A Sabre jet is one of many aircraft outside, while inside is an exhibit on the “KOREAN WAR: The First Major Air War After World War II, 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953.” While it includes several text panels offering standard context about the Korean War, such as one on the “Invasion of South Korea” and one on the “Communist Offensive,” the museum also emphasizes “Combat Aircraft” (comparing the F-86 Sabre and the Soviet MiG-15) and “Sidewinder Development” in detail with displays of missiles with headings such as “Guided Weapons” and “Air-To-Air Weapons.” Indeed, just as the U.S. Army Aviation museum includes multiple exhibits on the Korean War era in part because of the many important innovations in helicopter design which took place during (and due) to the war, the Air Force Armament Museum focuses on Korea precisely because of missile design innovations that the war fostered.

The Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham, which opened in 1983, combines a geographical community of memory with a military specialty, housing an exhibit on Korean War jets that consists of a “unique diorama display of Kimpo Air Force Base in South Korea” with a Sabre facing off against a MiG that is explained through the story of “the defection of an elite North Korean pilot,” as well as models and paintings depicting planes from the war. Moreover, although the southeastern region of the United States is home to a disproportionate number of community Korean War displays focusing on aeronautical heritage these displays are present in other regions as well. The Virgil “Gus” Grissom Memorial and Museum in Mitchell, Indiana, was dedicated July 21, 1971.29 Housed within Spring Mill State Park, which charges admission but

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also includes an outdoor living history display, the museum tells the life story of the Korean War ace and Mercury Astronaut as well as a good bit about mid-twentieth century aviation history in general. One panel titled “Grissom: Fighter Pilot” details his wartime experiences and includes a map alongside several images of his F-86 as well as a three-paragraph textual description beginning with an outline of the war and an overview of the Soviet MiG’s capabilities. The narrative concludes with a note that “within six months” Grissom “had completed his 100 missions and returned to the United States,” and then pulls the visitors’ gaze towards a case full of artifacts, such as the “Distinguished Flying Cross” that Grissom earned in Korea.

Several examples of community Korean War exhibition can be found in aeronautical museums in the mid-Atlantic. The National Warplane Museum in Genesco, New York, which “is dedicated to the restoration, preservation, display, and flight of aircraft of the World War II and Korean War eras,” and the All Victory Museum in Trenton, New Jersey both includes a Sabre jet among artifacts on display. The Aviation Museum at the Naval Air Station Wildwood in Cape May County, New Jersey, housed in a part of the airport that was a military base in WWII, is home to a MiG jet, though the site has a much more extensive exhibit on Vietnam.\(^\text{30}\) In Horsham, Pennsylvania at the Delaware Valley Historical Aircraft Association’s “Wings of Freedom Museum,” which opened in 2004, Korea is on display, with a section about Red Sox Hall of Famer Ted Williams’ role as a jet ace, as well as jets and helicopters used in Korea in the site’s yard. Finally, since 1996, the American Helicopter Museum and Education Center in West Chester, Pennsylvania has been home to a H-13D “popularized by the hit television show

\(^{30}\) “Welcome to the National Warplane Museum,” National Warplane Museum website, Accessed 12/29/15: http://www.1941hag.org/index.html ; Across the street from the Aviation Museum, at the ironically named Forgotten Warriors Museum, most space is devoted to Vietnam, with only a corner for Korean War items.
Several of these sites also offer summer camps, lectures, and programs including info on the Korean War.

The Air Mobility Command (AMC) Museum, located on the campus of the Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, has a separate entrance specifically for visitors to the facility, so that they need not pass through base security. The museum tells the story of three specialized corps used for support services including airlift, air refueling, and medical evacuation. The museum includes an exhibit on Korea that seems straight from the site’s mid-1990s opening titled “We Remember” which is complete with three humanoid dummy figures and push-button audio defining the war as “A Conflict of Contrasts,” as well as aircraft such as the C-133 that saw action in Korea. However, as I learned reviewing the site with Collections Manager Deborah Sellars in March 2017, the display in fact dates to 2003, although she noted, “as one of our older exhibits, it could use a facelift” despite the museum having already “swapped out our three original gray foam mannequins with realistic ones.”

While the high ratio of volunteer docents, many retired members of the Air Force who had been stationed locally, to heritage tourists during both my visits in summer 2015 and in March 2017 suggests most people are guided in their interpretation of the displays, I cannot imagine a better guide than Sellars, who spent the morning explaining the exhibit and showing me some Korean War objects in the museum’s collections that are not on display. Beyond explaining the history of the current exhibition, Sellars spelled out why the Air Force museum system is set up how it is and where the Air Mobility Command Museum, which she noted was a


32 Personal communication from Deborah Sellars, 3/17/2017. Sellars taught me a great deal about dummies.

33 Sellars unveiled an adapted system of rolling closets, like those in law libraries, which held both clothing and other objects, including those viewable at: https://amcmuseum.org/collections/?fwp_eras=korean-war
“Field Museum” like the Air Force Armament Museum, fit into the system with the National Museum in Dayton at the apex and “Heritage Centers” as well as “air parks” at the bottom. Sellars, a part-time contractor at the site who has worked in several museums previously, explained how the museum recently started trying to promote itself by taking advantage of its proximity to the highway, which she admitted was inspired by the way a Georgia museum uses its proximity to Interstate 95. Sellars noted “you can’t miss knowing the Mighty Eighth (Museum) is there” and that for the “cost of a billboard on (U.S. Route) 1” the Air Mobility Command Museum had seen a rise in visits to over 70,000 per year.34

While Sellars herself is not a member of the Air Force, she clearly feels a part of the military traditions remembered at the Air Mobility Command Museum. Moreover, in addition to the time Sellars spent sharing personal knowledge about the Korean War display and offering a behind the scenes look at the challenges of a small museum, which on the day I visited included several gentlemen in coveralls who were attempting to fix a vital heating system in the artifact storage area, another aspect of her relationship to the site belays why it can best be classified as an example of a community Korean War exhibition. For Sellars, as for many who curate displays documenting the particular history of one community of memory according to Tammy Gordon, the museum is a family business; I also got to meet Sellars’ son, who was working at the site that day as a contractor photographing and cataloging objects which are part of the collection.

In-Reach Exhibition: Institutional Memories and the Passing Down of Military Traditions

Rather than wholly adopting Tammy Gordon’s category of entrepreneurial exhibition, as I did with academic and community, I have adapted it to Korea displays based on the qualities she describes. As Gordon notes, one of the reasons entrepreneurial exhibitions exist is that “part of training students for a new field means giving them the history of the craft,” and while she looks

34 Interview with Deborah Sellars during site visit (3/29/2017)
at displays connected to small businesses in fields like pharmacy and firefighting, her insights apply equally well to the military.\textsuperscript{35} At the same time, since learning the tools of the trade to go to war is very different from learning the skills necessary to carry forward artisanal small business traditions, the term entrepreneurial exhibition needs to be replaced by a term which explains how specific skillsets and traditions within the military are perpetuated through specialized training. I have therefore chosen “in-reach exhibition” to refer to those Korea displays that, though they may be available for public viewing, were not designed primarily with a public audience in mind, but created for those in the military to use as learning enhancements. These exhibitions are often found on military bases and require that tourists to pass through security before being permitted to visit, with the level varying from a simple questionnaire to a full-scale automobile sweep.

Near Fayetteville, North Carolina is Fort Bragg, home to the 82nd Airborne Museum, one of sixty-four museums in the United States Army museum system. To get onto the base I had to wait for a half an hour (after taking a deli-line ticket) to get a ten-minute background check, so was dismayed to discover the 82nd Airborne did not fight in the Korean War, thus it is completely ignored in a museum that discusses many more minor conflicts such as Grenada and was the site of a class for recruits about World War II on the day I visited, which was a lesson in the ways in-reach exhibitions in on-base museums frequently function as military teaching aides.

Fort Bragg is also home to the JFK Special Warfare Museum, an army museum that has been in its present form since 1985 but dates back decades as an educational institution, which does maintain an exhibition on the Korean War that includes info on psi-ops not found in most other museums. A display focusing on the “Psychological Warfare” carried out by “The 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company in the Korean War” is full of images, text panels, and artifacts including not only leaflets and a loudspeaker but a propaganda bomb. An adjacent case contains

\textsuperscript{35} Gordon, p. 61
materials more frequently found in Korean War exhibits such as “Map Cases,” shoes, a “Switchblade,” flags, and a winter “Cap” with ear flaps. The last of the three cases comprising the Korea display includes three rifles, two maps, and a “Partisan Forces- Korea” patch. While the primary purpose of the site is clear from “its use as a training tool for all newly indoctrinated special operations soldiers,” the fact it “has also proven itself to be a valuable recruiting catalyst” shows that while a display can be classed as in-reach based on its main goal, it often has qualities of other types as well.36

The strictest security that I encountered was at the United States Army Transportation Museum on Fort Eustis near Williamsburg, Virginia.37 While I had previously been questioned, and even subjected to a background check before being allowed to visit a military museum on an active base, I had never before been asked to step out of my car and open the trunk, the hood, and all of the doors so they could make sure I was not a threat. This process only took ten minutes, and the military police were quite polite, but such a search surely would deter some visitors, which is a shame given the size of their Korean War exhibition and the fact it covers topics rarely mentioned at other sites. Indeed, the museum has a large indoor display on “Rail Operations” and “Jeeps in Korea” as well as often-exhibited artifacts such as medivac helicopters and seasonal uniforms. Outside under a huge hanger rests a collection of trucks, tanks, and trains, many the precise models used in Korea, that the museum is currently aiming to enclose in the future as part of a planned expansion. Begun “in 1959 with displays left over from a recruiting event,” the museum has already undergone extensive renovation since being taken over by the Army Transportation Museum Foundation in 1976. Its missions include education, collecting,


37 I cannot say if all cars are subjected to the same screening process or if there is random selection in place.
preserving, and exhibiting military history, promoting “a source of pride and espirit de corps within the Transportation Regiment,” and highlighting “transportation heritage to military and civilian visitors,” and are what define it as an in-reach exhibition.38

One museum which can best be currently classified as in-reach exhibition would have tremendous heritage tourism potential but for funding and access issues, according to the curator of the U.S. Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker in Alabama. It was mid-afternoon in January 2016 when I headed to the site, hoping to make it before it closed at 4 PM. I had wanted to see the facility, which maintains the largest collection of military helicopters in the country, that day, and I would probably have made it in time too, except for a wrong turn that led to my driving around the entire base and through construction before locating an entrance that allowed visitors without a military ID. Having had success by calling curators previously I figured I would give it a try, which ended up working out for the best for two reasons: first, I learned about another exhibit on the Korean War that was still then under development and, second, though Bob Mitchell, Acting Museum Director, said he could not stay open late because of the budget “sequester,” he offered to let me in early the next morning so that I could keep to the rest of my southeast tour schedule.

Though I had made plans to meet Mitchell as early as 0730 hours, the base visitor center only opens at 8 AM, so I had to wait before getting my third background check in a week and the first pass that included a new photograph. In addition to displays on aviation advances during the Korean War (which according to Mitchell fall in line with the museum’s mission to tell the story of evolving technologies and innovations made by pilots in wartime), and on Army medical evac, the museum was then in the process of creating a third Korea exhibit when I visited. The exhibit

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focuses on a Korean War resupply helicopter, and has since been finished except for the fact they are “still working” on getting “the mannequins,” according to an email that I received in March 2017. Indeed, as I learned from another curator, mannequins can be the hardest things to get since high quality ones are costly and most other items are acquired via donations. The difficulty accessing the site due to restricted hours based on budget cuts, alongside the incomplete new exhibition that could very well draw crowds, are especially unfortunate since the museum saw 130,000 visitors in its first year after opening in November 1968, but only about 70,000 tourists per year more recently, according to Mitchell, although he noted “2017 seems to be beating that number” he believes because of the museum’s Facebook “page and our Foundation’s efforts to get the word out.”

While tourists need not pass through security before visiting, the West Point Museum in New York belays its status as a fundamentally in-reach exhibition in other ways. In 1988 the museum moved to its current location in Olmstead Hall, within an enormous gothic building, after over three decades in the smaller Thayer Hall. Established in the 1840s as an arm of the educational institution, the mission of the museum includes supplementing “cadet academic, cultural, and military instruction.” The site includes three galleries that discuss Korea: “American Wars,” the “History of the U.S. Army,” and the “History of Warfare.” The largest of the three exhibits is found in the American Wars Gallery and includes weapons, a period uniform complete with helmet, and other artifacts as well as pictures, an annotated map, and a lengthy set of text panels that begin by describing the war’s outset as a North Korean “Surprise Attack.”

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39 Personal communication from Robert Mitchell (3/10/2017)


The display within the History of the United States Army Gallery starts by referring visitors to the previous exhibition, a practice not friendly for heritage tourists, then shifts focus to the fact “it was during the Korean War that the armed services instituted a major social change—integration.” This exhibit also includes pictures and additional captioned objects that I tried but failed to fully document, because the museum not only has an odd closing time of 4:15, but shuts down different galleries at every 5 minutes starting sharply at 4 PM, resulting in the lights being turned off on myself and on two other visitors at precisely 4:05 PM, which might be interpreted as a message that the site sees no real reason to accommodate the public since it can survive exclusively through its role in cadet education. The smallest of the three exhibits at the museum that mention the Korean War, located in the History of Warfare Gallery, discusses the war as an example of “Limited War” with Vietnam being given equal space as yet another example.

Finally, the visitor center also has a small display, which seemed recently wall-papered over when I visited in fall 2015, mentioning Korea as a part of the Academy’s “Cold War History,” in the only display seeming to be created more for visitors than for cadets.

The Korean War, complete with the flags and rifles that are commonplace in many other Korea exhibits, is folded into a broader Cold War gallery at the U.S. Naval Academy Museum in Annapolis, an institution similarly used for teaching since the 1840s which was modernized in 2008 and today presents the history of both the U.S. Navy and the Academy itself chronologically while also containing a gallery of “Ship Models from the Age of Sail.” Despite holding only six programs and three ceremonies, the museum saw nearly 100,000 visitors in 2015. As a civilian, lacking military or government agency issued ID, I was asked to park in town and walk onto the campus using my driver’s license, in what was one of the easier security checkpoints I passed through in my research. A similar security set-up exists at the U.S. Coast Guard Museum in New London, Connecticut, currently “tucked away on the grounds of the picturesque U. S. Coast Guard Academy,” which tells the tale of “The Forgotten Service In The Forgotten War: The U.S.
Coast Guard’s Role in the Korean Conflict.” However, an effort is now underway to create a larger museum which ideally “will act as an economic boost to the waterfront and to downtown” New London, and is motivated by the fact “the Coast Guard is the only branch of the armed services that does not have a national museum.” In trying to transform itself from an in-reach exhibition of Korean War public memory, defined in part by a lack of widespread accessibility combined with a main goal to pass on the heritage of a particular military specialty, to what I term an “out-reach exhibition,” largely designed to influence public opinion by reaching as many heritage tourists as possible, the U.S. Coast Guard Museum is following in the path of others.42

The Naval Construction Battalions, better known as the Seabees, have been proactive in moving from an in-reach to an out-reach exhibition model. The U.S. Navy Seabee Museum in Port Hueneme, California, second oldest of ten museums run by the Navy Department which also manages the Seabee Heritage Center in Gulfport, Mississippi, “relocated to a new state-of-the-art building” outside the base gate in 2011 to better “educate visitors.” Despite holding 33 programs and 121 ceremonies, as well as maintaining a “Children’s STEM Center focused on Seabee Skills,” the Port Hueneme site has yet to realize the benefits of its move, counting just 20,000 visitors in 2015. The Seabee Museum and Memorial in Davisville, Rhode Island, which is instead run by a non-profit, opened in May 2015 on a decommissioned base after a seven-year effort with missions “to display significant artifacts and vintage construction equipment so the public can better appreciate the” Seebees’ past and “to provide a learning site for Rhode Island students”43


Even more successful in moving to an out-reach model was the Sub Force Museum and Library in Connecticut which initially opened in Groton under that name in 1969, and maintains a collection of “more than 33,000 artifacts, 20,000 significant documents and 30,000 photographs.” In April 1986 the museum received a major heritage tourism boost with the addition of *USS Nautilus*, the nation’s first nuclear submarine, whose “keel was laid by President Harry S. Truman at the Electric Boat Shipyard in Groton” in 1952. Doubtless aided by the 80 programs and 66 ceremonies it held, the museum garnered 125,000 visitors in 2015. Moreover, it is not only the military museums that have moved from in-reach to out-reach displays since opening.

I arrived soon after the National Cryptologic Museum opened for the day on March 16, 2017 to meet with Lou Leto, who handles Media Relations and Special Events for the site after having previously worked in public relations for the National Security Agency itself. Ironically it is one of the easier Korean War exhibits to visit despite being housed at the NSA complex in Fort Meade, Maryland yet poses a puzzle in terms of categorization. When the museum, located at the site of the former Colony Seven Motel that was bought by the NSA in the 1960s, was built it was designed as an in-reach exhibition “to house artifacts from the Agency and to give employees a place to reflect on past successes and failures” but since 1993 has been open to the public. When I first visited the site in summer 2015 I noticed right away the ample parking, free admission, and extensive program of tours for students and the general public, which I attributed to a desire to

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reach the next generation of codebreakers.45 Indeed, as Leto explained on my second site visit, while the education of codebreakers themselves is still a secondary function of the facility, the main goal of the site is now out-reach, which brings in 70,000 visitors a year including “school groups and scouts.”46

During my initial visit, I noted the museum made several mentions of Korea within its exhibits. A prominent placement appears on a large display asking “Does This Mean Anything To You?” followed by a sequence of nine groups of four numbers each and the phrase “It Did To Language Analysts During The Korean War,” before detailing the Chinese characters and codes represented by each set of digits. Moreover, I noticed in 2015 that while in many museums Korea gets less exhibition space than other wars, at the Cryptologic Museum the Korean War display consisted of many objects including some labeled as “Communist Memorabilia: Rare Artifacts of the Korean War Era” and five panels of maps, images, and text on a myriad of topics. Indeed, in 2015 the wide-ranging discussion of Korea at the site delved into “Cryptologic Support To The Korean War,” “Defense of the Pusan Perimeter,” “Army Security Agency COMINT Field sites,” “Air Force Security Service (AFSS) COMINT Support To Air Supremacy,” and “The Communications War,” and was the only place to find displays on some of these specialized topics. However, when I returned to the site in 2017 I was somewhat dismayed to discover that the latter three panels had been replaced by a display about the Battle of Midway during WWII.

I asked Leto about the change and he noted the older Korea panels, dating to 2000, had been rotated out due to their age and due to the fact that they strayed beyond the main interpretive directive of the museum to focus on code-breaking. Leto went on to point out some of the newer

45 “About,” National Cryptologic Museum, Accessed 8/6/2017, Available at: https://www.nsa.gov/about/cryptologic-heritage/museum/. Lou Leto noted the name of the motel is recalled by the museum being located on Colony Seven Road, and mentioned where the kitchen had been located.

46 Interview with Louis Leto (3/16/2017). Leto revealed he went to Temple University as an undergrad and seemed quite eager to help me in my project, although all the staff with whom I met offered great insights.
exhibits at the site, such as an interactive display on Revolutionary War cipher techniques, partly inspired by the AMC cable series *Turn: Washington’s Spies*, and a hi-tech display about the role of cryptology in global struggles since 1960 including Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The museum’s exhibit on the 1968 Pueblo Incident, which I had noted in 2015 was one of the few I had encountered, was also gone, but Leto explained this was due to a temporary remodeling, then went on to detail the National Cryptologic Museum Foundation’s long term plan. Constructing a state-of-the-art facility that is meant to “advance the public’s understanding and appreciation for the role the Cryptologic Community plays in America’s national security” is what lies ahead.

The current incarnation of the museum is both highly traditional and visitor friendly; in the words of Edward Rothstein, “when you enter, instead of facing evidence of untrammeled technological power, you are greeted with a rack of informative booklets and children’s activity sheets.” Although the amount of wall space devoted to the Korean War has diminished since I first visited, the NSA museum still tells a broad story; Jon Wiener notes the site “deserves credit for not doing what many other museums have done: de-emphasize the Cold War in favor of WWII.” What I now see is dynamic site that has already changed much, continues to change regularly, and plans to transform itself in the future as they move forward as an out-reach exhibition that is, according to Lou Leto, designed to include exhibits with much more space devoted to the Korean War.

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47 This new display is highly digital, while most of the Korea exhibition is image, artifact, and text driven.


Creating categories of Korean War exhibition suggests that there are hard and fast differences between different types of display, however, in reality many exhibits could fit into multiple categories. This is especially true of several out-reach Korean War exhibitions, which share some qualities of both in-reach and community exhibitions.\footnote{Vernacular Exhibitions are more distinct, while Academic Exhibitions mostly share stylistic similarities.} I choose to follow from Tammy Gordon’s description of corporate exhibition, the analog to my out-reach exhibition, to highlight the ways certain Korea displays attempt to use “history as indirect advertising” for the military. In the words of the History Factory that Gordon quotes, such exhibitions can serve as “the ultimate showcase of your organization’s history and an amazing-brand building tool,” one of the reasons all four branches of the military maintain museums devoted to telling their story.\footnote{Gordon, p. 21; Gordon, Quoted on p. 21.}

Moreover, it is not only the U.S. military that seeks to reach the public through such exhibitions. The Douglas MacArthur Memorial Museum located in Norfolk, Virginia has undergone a considerable change in its mission since its founding. There are MacArthur memorials throughout the country, from Los Angeles to Little Rock, but only the one in Norfolk is also the gravesite of the General and his wife. When the site opened it was designed as a celebration of MacArthur’s life and achievements, therefore it should be no surprise that when Tim Wiener visited the site he found “the MacArthur Memorial doesn’t have an exhibit on the Truman-MacArthur controversy” and “barely mentions Korea” at all. Yet when I visited in January 2016 I found quite a bit about Korea, especially in a display titled “The Life And Times Of General Of the Army Douglas MacArthur, 1880 to 1964” in which the war plays a prominent role. The first mention of Korea comes on a second-floor text panel about “The Cold War” as aftermath of WWII, then while descending stairs one sees propaganda banners that were dropped into enemy territory during the
Korean War, though it would be easy to miss these pieces given their location in a transitory area of the exhibition. After exiting the stairwell visitors enter the main Korean War gallery, which I found to be a fairly comprehensive display.\footnote{Wiener, p. 282. Visitors who pay too much mind to the banners in the staircase may risk taking a tumble.}

The centerpiece of the gallery is an animated map of Korea using lights to show different stages of the war, from Pusan and Inchon to the Yalu and the stalemate, with a large button which warns potential pushers that “the approximate running time for this display’s narrative is three minutes.” This digital display is flanked by text panels about the controversy between “General of the Army Douglas MacArthur” and “President Harry S Truman” that include original documents from each side. Read counter-clockwise (as seems to be intended by the set-up), the rest of the exhibit breaks the war into four sections with emphasis on MacArthur’s planning of the Inchon landings as well as specific topics including “Opposing Forces,” “Integration of the Armed Forces,” and “Prisoners of War” which is covered at most large Korea exhibits I encountered. The MacArthur museum exhibit, which like many other displays also includes uniforms and weaponry from both sides, concludes with a look at the post-MacArthur (and post-Truman) period of the Korean War as well as info on MacArthur’s post-military career, including additional references to Korea.

The explanation for this seeming discrepancy, as I learned from the MacArthur Memorial’s Archivist James Zobel during a phone interview on March 15, 2017, was that the museum had greatly expanded its exhibition in the wake of the sixtieth anniversary of the Korean War’s beginning in 2010. Zobel also noted that from 2000 to 2003 there were a series of events held at the museum, and directed my attention to a digital version of a 2010 temporary exhibit about the UN Special Command in Korea. I also learned from my conversation with Zobel that the museum is now run by the city of Norfolk, so must temper any desire to lionize MacArthur
with the needs of other stakeholders including both Korean War veterans and historians, which is why the site now is less a community of memory or cult of personality than a place that leverages public interest in MacArthur to tell stories about WWII, Korea, and most recently World War I.\footnote{Under One Banner: The United Nations Special Command in Korea,” MacArthur Memorial, Accessed 8/6/2017, Available at: \url{http://www.macarthurmemorial.org/DocumentCenter/View/522}; “Over Here, Over There: Current Special Exhibit Through December 2018,” MacArthur Memorial, Accessed 8/6/2017, Available at: \url{http://www.macarthurmemorial.org/196/Current-Special-Exhibit}}

In one case, a Korea exhibit being closed to the public during the busiest visitation times impairs its ability to aid the local heritage tourism industry despite a stated desire to do so. The National Museum of the U.S. Navy is housed at the Washington Navy Yard that was the site of a September 2013 shooting which left a dozen people dead. As a result, the Navy Yard, and bases nationwide that house museums with Korean War exhibits, have increased security and limited accessibility. For example, the site cannot be easily visited on weekends. Civilians are allowed on the base during the week, after undergoing a ten-minute background check and showing their driver’s license and vehicle registration, although this is subject to change based on security concerns. The museum still hosted 119 programs and 166 ceremonies in 2015, bringing in 100,000 visitors to the site, which is also “home to a robust homeschool program serving over 90 families per week,” a factor that cannot be discounted in evaluating its overall impact on the public.\footnote{Michael Shear and Michael Schmidt, “Gunman and 12 Victims Killed in Shooting at D.C. Navy Yard” \textit{New York Times} (September 16, 2013); “Planning for the Unplannable,” p. 4, 22.}

The museum maintains exhibits on topics from polar exploration to “The Forgotten Wars of the Nineteenth Century” covering “The QUASI-WAR with FRANCE,” “The BARBARY WARS,” “THE WAR of 1812,” and “THE MEXICAN WAR.” Excepting a few small pieces of art, nothing in the gallery dates from more recently than WWII, which I learned from a docent is because those items were moved to a new Cold War Gallery across the road. This new gallery has...
the look of a twenty-first century facility in contrast to the traditional nautical museum vibe of the main museum, and “will become one of the most exciting locations of a reenergized Anacostia River waterfront,” located “just minutes away from the National Mall, the U.S. Capitol, and the Washington Nationals’ new baseball stadium,” according to the new Gallery’s website.55

As you enter the Cold War gallery, a sign welcomes you into a foyer focused around a timeline, and after turning right you enter a hangar full of artifacts primarily from the Korean and Vietnam Wars, with smaller displays such as a POW/MIA symbolic table and photo-board on the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Korea exhibit is based around an open landing-craft with a jeep inside denoting the role of the Navy in the Inchon landings and uses video monitors on a loop, as well as uniforms, weapons, medals, letters, flags, and a bomb. The gallery has themed displays on topics such as mobilization, medicine, logistics, naval aviation, blockades, and the battle of Chosin, which is perhaps the most oft used exhibit topic nationwide. Though much smaller, the open-plan layout of this side of the gallery reminds me of the Air Force Museum in Dayton. The other side of the gallery, however, has a spare appearance as if several exhibits are missing between the foyer and a display on Cold War submarines, distinct from an exhibit on subs from the World Wars and earlier housed in the main facility. When I asked the docent, who had been sent over from the main facility when another had to leave even though I was the only person there, he informed me a loss of funding had halted the construction of the gallery midway. Indeed, though the site seems to have a good idea of what people want (subs and aircraft uber alles), it is impossible to count on heritage tourism success if an institution is not only inaccessible to the

public during prime visitation times but also suffers from lack of investment, which is one reason that the long-term plan for the museum involves building a new facility to be located off-base.\textsuperscript{56}

Dayton, Ohio is home to the state Korean War Memorial and National Air Force Museum, which housed one of the largest exhibits about the war anywhere in the United States when I first visited in the summer of 2015. Covering half-an-airplane-hanger the Korean War gallery includes helicopters, fighter jets such as the Sabre, and even Soviet MiGs brought with them by defectors as well as smaller artifacts. These objects, including uniforms and weapons, are mixed with text panels and images to construct a complex (and sometimes misleading) narrative about the Air Force’s involvement in Korea. The story is problematic from the start; a display highlighting “Air Superiority” that opens the exhibition suggests that American aviation tech was superior from the outset rather than overtaking the other side by the time the armistice was signed, while the display also downplays the extent of Allied bombings in the war’s latter half.

Despite these misleading aspects, the exhibition is also quite extensive, covering not only aerial combat and the plight of downed pilots but many of the more underappreciated aspects of the work the Air Force does, including a display on medical transport even more extensive than that at the Air Mobility Command Museum in Delaware. The exhibit concludes with a model of the Ohio state monument, about which the info desk also has pamphlets. The Air Force Museum, which normally gets one million visitors per year saw a dip in attendance in 2015, reporting only 850,000 tourists after getting over 1.1 million the year before.\textsuperscript{57} The online Korean War Gallery run by the museum is also quite thorough in its coverage of Korea, with several pages devoted to specific aspects of the war, while also emphasizing the need to visit the actual museum space

\textsuperscript{56} “Planning for the Unplannable,” p. 22

itself by noting “the conflict's two most striking symbols of air power on both sides -- the F-86A Sabre and the MiG-15 - are on display next to each other” at the physical exhibition in Dayton.58

I returned to the museum in the summer of 2016 to see a new hanger of exhibits that had just opened to the public the day before, which includes multiple mentions of Korea. The war actually comes up in a number of exhibits at the site, from a display on Bob Hope to a case depicting the “Evolution Of U.S. Air Force Fight Clothing,” as well as in the Eugene W. Kettering Cold War Gallery (which I had skipped the year before), a set up meant to reflect the conflict circa 1960 but which includes two panels noting the Korean War as a motivator for the changes seen in a particular planes and third substantially about the ongoing division of Korea. The “New Fourth Building,” as the many visible signs called it, has four galleries: Research and Development, Space, Global Reach, and Presidential Galleries. Korea comes up repeatedly in the Global Reach Gallery, specifically in a section of a larger display on Aeromedical Evacuation, which notes that “nurses and technicians were reassigned from hospital duties to fly” when the war began, and in another section describing the C-119 J Flying Boxcar. A panel notes “while the J Model was specifically developed to catch satellite film recovery vehicles, Flying Boxcars also played an important role during the Korean War carrying troops and supplies” especially “in the bitter winter of 1950 when USAF 119Bs air-dropped bridge sections to” American “troops trapped by communist forces at the Chosin Reservoir.” The presidential exhibition is set up so visitors walk through the Air Force Ones of Chief Executives starting with FDR, meaning Harry Truman’s Douglas VC-118 The Independence is just the second plane that visitors are given the chance to experience, provided they can fit through the rather narrow corridor. A text panel notes that “one of the plane’s most historic flights occurred in October 1950, when it carried President Truman to Wake Island to discuss the Korean War situation with Gen. Douglas MacArthur.”

The Museum of Aviation in Warner Robbins, Georgia is the second largest aerospace exhibit in the nation, after the Air Force Museum in Dayton, and “fourth most visited museum in the Department of Defense” system, bringing in 430,000 visitors in 2015. Just outside the gates of Robbins Air Force Base, the site is home to one exhibit about Korea and several mentions of the war in other parts of the complex, which focuses on flight in general rather than just military maneuvers. The main exhibition, “Korea: The Forgotten War, 1950-1953,” starts with a video display on “MiG Alley: The ‘Air Corridor’ In Korea” that visitors sit down and strap into mock pilot seats to view. One panel offers background to “The Korean Conflict” and several more focus on topics such as “The Build Up Begins,” “Logistics At Robins,” “The Quest For Air Supremacy” (making it one of the few displays to acknowledge initial aviation advantages of the enemy), and “Aircraft Support.” The exhibition ends with object focused areas on the “Korean Battlefront,” “Prisoners Of War,” and “An Uncertain Peace,” and a “Republic F-84E Thunderjet,” rather than the standard Sabre.

The story of the United States army is also told at multiple museum exhibits across the country, including at one of the most extensive displays on the war in Washington. The National Guard Memorial Museum, at 1 Massachusetts Avenue Northwest near Union station, tells the story of citizen-soldiers from the Revolution to the post-9/11 era. Dedicated in 1959 by Harry Truman, according to a plaque in the older section of the museum, the building contains the national offices of the organization and several extensive exhibits, two of which focus in part on the Korean War. Within an older exhibit on National Guard Medal of Honor Recipients sits a diorama depicting the heroics of Captain Lewis Millett alongside his framed bayonet. Millett’s

story continues upstairs in a newer gallery prominently sponsored by Lockheed Martin, using a
“Light and Sound Program” as part of an “Object Theatre” covering both Korea and Vietnam. In
addition to dramatizing Millett’s story, the show focuses on the role of women within the
organization in Korea while using the 1968 Pueblo Incident as a bridge to discussing the role of
the National Guard in quelling violence in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, while avoiding
discussion of Kent State despite a display on the incident at the other end of the room. The exhibit
also includes panels about aspects of the organization’s role in Korea, such as the Air National
Guard, and on wartime integration of the military.

Lewis Millet’s story is also told at the National Infantry Museum in Columbus, Georgia
close to the Alabama border and just outside of Fort Benning, which opened in 2009 as “a state-
of-the-art facility,” at a cost of “$100 million,” and including “numerous interactive multimedia
exhibits.” Millet’s charge is a key part of the museum’s central exhibition on the infantry’s role
over the “Last 100 Yards.” It was also while visiting the museum that I learned the tale of Luther
Story, namesake of two Korean War memorial bridges in Georgia, at the Medal of Honor exhibit.
Entry to the site requires visitors be checked via metal detector, though the fact that one does not
need to pass through base security to see the museum makes it more visitor friendly than many
others. Moreover, the museum moves to capture the attention of visitors even before they enter.
Indeed, one Stockton University student veteran noted “approaching the museum was captivating
because there was a statue of a soldier that seemed to be desperately yelling in a dangerous war
setting” and “the way this soldier was represented was symbolic of how heroic” soldiers can be.60

60 “Exhibits,” National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center website, Accessed 1/2/16:
http://www.nationalinfantrymuseum.org/exhibits/; “Visit at the National Infantry Museum,” Course blog
of Steven Austin (4/13/2017), Accessed 8/8/2017, Available at:
The full Korea exhibit at the National Infantry site is “Sponsored By” the “Samsung Corporation” and “The Korean Government.” The display begins with a light-up map showing the different stages of the war that is similar to but larger than the map used at the MacArthur Museum in Norfolk. The large exhibit includes artifacts appearing in many Korean War displays, such as rifles and seasonal clothing, as well as items less often found including bazookas; text panels similarly focus upon narrative elements such as “Breakout Inchon” and “China Enters the War” that are standard fare Korea exhibits as well as on topics such as “Task Force Smith” and the role of “The KATUSA” in “augmenting severely understrength U.S. combat units” with soldiers who “were conscripted by the Republic of Korea” that rarely appear in museums. The exhibition concludes with a wall mounted phone, next to an actual bugle, that visitors can use to listen to “That Chilling Sound’ of a Chinese Bugle call,” an experience like that at the Army Heritage Center is Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Indeed, the Infantry Museum, which often sees over 300,000 visitors per year, and was voted top free museum in America in a 2016 poll where the Air Force Museum in Dayton placed third, brings together many innovative approaches to Korean War exhibition.61

In Carlisle, Pennsylvania at the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, on the Army War College campus, visitors can see their destination from the interstate thanks to a bright yellow colored Tiger Tank dedicated in 2013 as part of a new Korea section of the outdoor heritage trail. This open-air exhibition also includes a display about “Corporal Eugene C. Rivera” who “bravely climbed a desolate hill” though “under relentless fire from the enemy” and artillery pieces such as an “8 Inch Howitzer” labeled as the “Defender of Pusan” in a text panel that includes images, quotes, and statistics about the weapon. The trail also contains markers on the Cold War, which offer a broader context for Korea, while highlighting ongoing hostilities and

divisions between North and South Korea. The story of the Army’s role in Korea continues with a display inside of the Visitor and Education Center, which I first visited in May 2015 and returned to review in March 2017, then accompanied by John Leighow, the Director of the Army Heritage Museum, one of the few curators I met whose background was in museum studies instead of military history, having previously been Director of the State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg.

The Soldiers’ Experience Gallery, which opened in 2012, has activities for tourists interested in experiential history, giving visitors a chance to follow the path of soldiers from various wars, including Korea, by scanning an encoded card at stops along the exhibit route, which winds its way chronologically. This card is needed to do some of the more interactive aspects of the exhibition, including for sniper practice with a full-weight rifle, while throughout visitors are encouraged to pick up period weapons to feel their considerable heft and towards the end are given a chance to lift the bulk of a loaded infantryman’s pack. Though Korea only garners a modest area compared to other wars, it includes one of the more interesting interactive aspects of the entire exhibit: a blacked-out tent in which visitors can experience a night-time raid by Chinese troops. Indeed, while the experience can be somewhat lackluster, the fact that the display portrays an attack by Chinese soldiers, rather than North Koreans, makes it one of the only places where the role of China in the Korean War is emphasized. It was this “experiential exhibit,” as Leighow labeled it, that most interested me in my conversation with the Director, who explained that the private company contracted to construct the display had first come up with the concept, and confirmed my suspicion that any veterans who suffered from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder might not enjoy this exhibit experience.62

62 Interview with John Leighow during site visit (3/28/2017). Leighow explained they want to show what it was like to serve and students, tourists, and historians benefit from the exhibit despite a negative impact on some vets. Leighow also shared a not-yet-open WWI display, helping me to understand exhibition creation.
Leighhow also took me through a temporary art exhibit at the site that opened in June 2016, titled “Sleepless Nights: Korean War Veteran John A. Cook’s ‘Midnight Drawings.’” According to the text of the “Introduction,” “working intermittently for forty-six years” Cook “coped with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder” in part “through what he termed his ‘midnight drawings’” of “haunting memories” that “came to him in the middle of the night prompting him to draw as a means of release.” Leighhow explained this exhibit was part of a drive to help the public understand the psychological impact of war and to diversify the site’s focus on military fare. The images are truly haunting, full of gaunt pencil-drawn figures in perilous predicaments, providing a view on a war that, in the words of Cook displayed over one image, was not at all like what “we had seen in the movies,” since “it didn’t always turn out like it did for John Wayne.”

The National Museum of the U.S. Marine Corps in Triangle, Virginia offers a different kind of experiential display as part of one of the most visitor friendly and extensive exhibitions on Korea that heritage tourists can find anywhere in the nation. Indeed, at the site the first mention of Korea comes in a display on post-Civil War international endeavors, which includes an entire panel devoted to a discussion of the 1871 landing at the Salee River and which ends with a note that “U.S. Marines would return to these same narrow channels and mudflats 79 years later to seize the port of Inchon in the Korean War,” displayed alongside artifacts from the expedition including a medal, a flag, and a sword. The museum also offers useful contexts in a video on the rise of WWII Japan, which notes the 1910 Imperial Japanese takeover of Korea, and in a panel outlining the post-WWII split of Korea into zones of “Occupation.” I visited the site in summer 2015, then returned to review it in March 2017 accompanied by three staff members: exhibition designer Robert Sullivan, Aviation Curator Ben Kristy, and Deputy Director Charles Grow.

The three took me through the main “Korean War Gallery,” which actually opens with a classroom set-up (complete with chalkboard, flag, desk, clock, Asian map, alphabet, and framed images of Washington and Truman), that even offers a looped lesson on how “The Cold War
Heats Up” in Korea, following info on the passage of legislation such as the National Security Act of 1947. Grow explained although the display was not designed by educators, the staff quickly learned from teachers who brought class groups through that the set up was especially conducive to student learning. Sullivan noted this section of the exhibit helped provide historical context for the Korean War which the design committee thought was necessary for the public to have to understand the experience of Marines in combat, a key theme throughout the museum.

The most innovative element of the site might be a room detailing the “Frozen Chosin” campaign that is climate controlled, and quite chilly (similar to an experiential exhibit in the Vietnam gallery where visitors exit a mock helicopter, and which feels right out of a 1980s movie, being heated). As Edward Rothstein notes “such immersion of course is aimed less at veterans than at visitors who have not lived through the trauma,” tourists “for whom the chill air of the gallery devoted to the battle at Toktong Pass during the Korean War” have no association.63 As Caridad de la Vega describes it in an exhibit review, “visitors enter a climate-controlled room where mural art, audio, lights, and lifecast figures simulate the harrowing conditions Marines faced during this battle.”64 Sullivan, since retired but the only one of the three to help create the Korean War display, explained the design committee asked the contractors to construct some sort of representation of extreme cold, although originally a docent was meant to offer added context.

Much of the rest of the gallery focuses on topics such as “Weapons of War” and battles including Pusan, Inchon, and “Seoul: Street Fighting” as well as themed displays on topics like “A Fully Integrated Corps,” “The Women Marines’ Third War,” and “Allied Marines,” suggesting the importance of inclusion at the site. Kristy noted more than once that the physical set up of the museum had not always worked out as planned, with some sections of the exhibition


being largely ignored by visitors who did not understand the path they were expected to follow. Moreover, while there is broad coverage of key aspects of the Korean War such as “The Marines’ Air War” and the “Fate Of The Prisoners Of War,” there are also sections of the exhibit about less often discussed topics such as “The Home Front” (although it mostly focuses on politics and pop culture), the role of “Republic of Korea Marines” in the Vietnam War, and “Sergeant Reckless” (a heroic, thirteen-hand-high mare with her own monument on the adjacent memorial trail), which Grow said was not part of the original exhibition but is now one of the most often photographed parts of any display at the site.

This extensive Korean War exhibition is seen by half a million visitors annually, as the National Marine Corps Museum quickly became one of the top heritage tourist draws in Virginia within just a few years of its opening in September of 2006. Moreover, while the home page of the Korean War Gallery of the National Museum of the Marine Corps website mostly advertises the brick-and-mortar site, noting “visitors ride with Marines to the sea wall at Inchon as part of General MacArthur’s strategic end run to attack the enemy’s rear” and can see “a Pershing tank,” the website also offers in-depth information and analysis on the war through nine pages covering everything from “The Cold War” contexts for Korea to the mental and physical “Casualties of War.” At their museum the Marines continue a long tradition of remembering Korea that, Aaron O’Connell notes, started in 1954 with the publication of the first of several Corps histories.65

One of the key goals of the museum, according to Curtiss Worth Fentress of Fentress Architects who designed the facility, was “to be accessible not only to all people on both a physical and a mental level, but also to all types of exhibits.”66 Indeed, as Kristy noted during the

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site visit, some of the displays were literally built around large artifacts including a tank set up as part of a display on street-fighting in Seoul. Kristy, whose specialty is aircraft and was easily the most interested in issues of exhibition lay-out and visitor interaction with the physical space of the site of any of the curatorial staff that I interviewed at the out-reach exhibitions I visited, also mentioned the museum is not conducive to aircraft displays, in contrast to other facilities like the Smithsonian’s Udvar-Hazy Center, which is also located in northern Virginia. Kristy’s follow up comment, about the Udvar-Hazy being set up to share the technological history of the aircraft themselves rather than tales of the wars the planes played a role in, helped spur me to try to better understand the relationship of Korean War display to debates about military history and public memory. It also made me re-evaluate my thoughts on Sabre jet displays in public places, inspiring me to class them as examples of vernacular Korean War exhibition, rather than as monuments or memorial infrastructure. Though the most prominent, these Sabre jets are only one variety of vernacular exhibition, which include displays located in outdoors spaces as well as in more traditional settings where one would not normally expect to find info about the Korean War.

Vernacular Exhibition: Finding Memories of the Forgotten War in Unexpected Places

Sabre jets have popped up at numerous outdoor exhibitions in locations from Greenup, Kentucky to Greenville, South Carolina and from Monroe, New York to Lakeville, Minnesota. Outdoor exhibits of Korean War aircraft have been around for over a half-century, with the very earliest example an F-86 Sabre dedicated July 4, 1964 in Brookfield, Illinois, but located on site since 1961 and restored several times. Other types of Korean War era jets have also been used as vernacular exhibitions on the war. In September 1985 South Whitley, Indiana dedicated an F-84 Thunder Streak that had seen service in Korea, while in 2007 the Aviation Heritage Park in

67 The comment inspired a quick trip to the Udvar-Hazy, so I could double-check my prior recollections.
Bowling Green, Kentucky began restoring a Korean War F9F Panther that was unveiled two years later as part of an exhibit on a local pilot who died in Korea. Perhaps the best examples are Sabre jets found at airports such as the Iowa City Municipal Airport, the oldest commercial hub west of the Mississippi, which needed to be restored in 2015 after decades of human interaction.68

The most interesting manifestation of Korean War public memory in Danville, Illinois is also an F-86 Sabre, located in front of the Vermillion County Airport and “Dedicated to the Pioneer Jet Aviators of the Korean War During the 50th Anniversary Commemoration and the Illinois State Convention of the KWVA” in December 2002. Though there is only a small commemorative display about the Korean War at the Vermillion County Museum, there is a much larger display at the nearby Vermillion County War Museum, which opened on Veterans Day of 1999 in an old Carnegie Library Building, both of which are examples of community exhibition in that they use traditional display approaches to tell a local story. Danville is also home to the Illinois Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, an Illinois Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge, a Korean War memorial tree at the local area community college which was rededicated in 2012, a joint Korea-Vietnam monument dedicated in 1984, a walking bridge

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dedicated in 1989 to local Robert Wurtsbaug, first state resident to die in Korea, and is also “the birthplace of the Illinois Korean War Veterans Association,” according a sign that visitors pass entering town. Home to vernacular and community Korean War exhibitions as well as examples of monuments and memorial infrastructure, Danville is clearly the capitol of Korean War public memory in a state where displays of military memory include Korean War license plates authorized in 1993, in yet another example of vernacular exhibition.69

Still, in a sense, I encountered no vernacular Korean War exhibitions in the way Tammy Gordon uses the term, to refer to grass-roots displays in non-traditional museum spaces or other unexpected places directly connected to and curated by businesses such as restaurants, bars, and barber shops.70 In another sense, most Korea monuments are vernacular exhibition in that they seek to educate visitors about the war in non-museum settings. Yet in adapting the category of vernacular exhibition to Korea displays, I opted to focus on Gordon’s notion of experiential history, and to classify as examples of Korean War vernacular exhibition all those displays in which people encounter the past in unexpected places and where tourists interact with history rather than just learning it, including non-traditional indoor exhibits and outdoor displays.71

One unexpected indoor location in which a Korean War exhibit once appeared is the conference area of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) annex in College


70 I can imagine a Korean restaurant or a church with a Korean War display that would fit this definition.

71 My assumption is individuals who encounter Korea exhibits without mentally preparing themselves to do so will have a different reaction to them than they would to displays in some sort of normal museum space.
Park, Maryland that in 2000 held a scholarly conference on “The Power of Free Inquiry and Cold War International History” which featured talks by Korean War historians including William Stueck. When I visited the site in May 2015, I expected to find an exhibition called “The Forgotten War Remembered—America and the Korean War” that “features 20 photographs tracing the war from the growing tensions in the late 1940s to the signing of the armistice in 1953,” according to the NARA website, which I double-checked the day before my visit. When I arrived at the actual site, however, I learned though it had been up for a decade, “The Forgotten War Remembered” was a temporary exhibit that had been taken down from its space across from the building’s conference rooms in 2013, following the sixtieth anniversary of the armistice. Through the help of a NARA archivist I learned a bit more about the exhibit including its creator, a NARA historian who had curated it as part of a residency at the satellite site. Yet this same inquiry likely led to the disappearance of the dated listing from the website, which no longer mentions it at all. Still, at least from 2003 to 2013 any individuals at the site, from the high school teachers there for a workshop as I saw on the day I visited to scholars of a myriad of subjects besides Korea, would have been exposed to the exhibition and likely to view it in the gaps between sessions or waiting to enter a room during a talk, since they would have little else to do in those moments but literally look at a wall across the hall, suggesting a potentially significant impact on opinion-shapers.


73 While most of the Korean War exhibitions I visited on my research road trips are permanent displays that focus on military history, there have also been a number of temporary exhibits staged which recalled the conflict, especially during the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversary eras of the early 2000s and 2010s, that it is no longer possible to view. Some of these temporary exhibits have focused on artistic interpretation of the Korean War even if they are staged within a military historical context. For example, in the spring of 2011 New York University put on an art exhibition titled “Still Present Pasts: Korean-Americans and The ‘Forgotten War’” in conjunction with a film festival and scholarly conference called “The (Unending) Korean War” that brought together several eminent historians including Bruce Cummings, Henry Em,
More than a million people likely learned about the Korean War at another unexpected location, the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio, which measures its yearly turnstile total in the hundreds of thousands. “Football and America: The NFL Responds During Times of National Crisis,” a post-9/11 temporary display which was housed at the NFL Hall of Fame for ten-months in 2002 after shorter stints at the Super Bowl and D-Day Museum in New Orleans, may have reached as many Americans as did many of the temporary, commemorative displays about the Korean War which were staged at local museums across the nation in the early 2000s.74

In contrast, at least one indoor Korean exhibit in an unexpected place that was meant to be temporary has become permanent. Sitting just outside of Arlington National Cemetery, at the ceremonial entrance to the site, is the Women in Military Service for America Memorial, which includes a dedicated area displaying “Images and Words from The Forgotten War,” using the Christina Klein. Although “Still Present Pasts” has not been staged since 2011, the Boston University based traveling exhibition popped up at sites across the country over several years, appearing in Massachusetts in 2005, New York and San Francisco in 2006, Los Angeles and Minneapolis in 2007, Seattle in 2009, and Honolulu in 2010 as well as making the trip to Seoul, South Korea in 2008. See: “Art Exhibition, Still Present Pasts: Korean-Americans and The ‘Forgotten War,’” unendingkoreanwar.org, Accessed 12/29/15, Available at: http://unendingkoreanwar.org/?page_id=41. In addition, some museums had previously prominently displayed Korean War artifacts but no longer do so. For example, from fall 2008 to spring 2012, the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum in New York maintained an exhibit of “an F3D Skyknight, a Korean War-era plane” as well as a Mig-15, that the “Restoration Manager…bought on eBay,” which was “decked out in the North Korean paint scheme that it would have had during the Korean War.” Both jets are now displayed in a museum upstate. See: Mark Yost, ”Voyage of Discovery: A shipshape USS Intrepid reopens to the public,” Press Release (11/8/2008); NYCA Admin,”Intrepid Museum Unloads Three Warplanes to Clear Room for Space Shuttle Enterprise,” NYCAviation.Com, Accessed 1/20/16, available at: http://www.nycaviation.com/2012/04/make-way-for-shuttle-intrepid-museum-unloads-three-warplanes-to-clear-room-for-enterprise/#_Vp-aPziSNlU. Other museums lack permanent displays on Korea but still occasionally hold special events about the conflict such as a 2009 lecture by historian Allan Millet on “The Origins of the Forgotten War: Korea 1945-1950” at the National WWII Museum in New Orleans. Similarly, the International Spy Museum in Washington, DC held a public program on “Dropping Spies from the Sky during the Korean War” in March of 2011. Thus, the analysis of the various types of Korean War historical exhibition that follows necessarily underestimates the actual frequency with which the forgotten war is remembered in contemporary American museum exhibitions, as does my analysis of local Korean War monuments and memorial infrastructure across the country. See: “Lectures: Allan Millet”, The National WWII Museum website, Accessed 1/2/16: http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/public-programming/lectures/allan-millett.html ; “Spycast: Cold War,” International Spy Museum website, Accessed 1/3/16: http://www.spymuseum.org/multimedia/spycast/category/cold-war/

74 “Football and America: The NFL Responds During Times of National Crisis Exhibit to Open at the Hall of Fame,” Pro Football Hall of Fame website (March 21, 2002)
diaries and photos of MASH nurse Nancy “Bing” Crosby to focus not only on medicine but the military’s role in soft-diplomacy, such as supplying clothing and helping care for war orphans. This exhibition was originally created in September 2002, and intended as a temporary display that would last only two months, but it was still there more than a dozen years later in June 2015, when I shimmied through a rope line to get pictures just prior to a private event. While this is not the only historic display in the memorial, its location in an area used for cocktail events and the way the pictures are presented around the existing structure betray its pop-up heritage and overall vernacular character.75

Korean War vernacular exhibitions also appear in traditional museum spaces where one would not expect to find a display mentioning the war. Across the street from the National Guard Museum sits the U.S. Postal Museum, at 2 Massachusetts Avenue Northeast, a Smithsonian branch devoted entirely to philately that garnered 350,000 tourists in 2015. The museum’s “Mail Call” exhibit details the processes by which soldiers overseas have been able to communicate with their loved ones in wartime throughout American history, and notes it was in Korea that the military perfected the process of distributing items, and established regulations concerning the size and weight of parcels. In addition, within the exhibit titled “Freedom Just Around The Corner: Black America From Civil War To Civil Rights” is a display detailing controversial selections for the Black Heritage stamp series including W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson, both active figures in the Korean anti-war movement, though that part of their careers in dissent goes ignored here, as it does most places. The Korean War also appears at one of the most frequently visited Smithsonian sites, the Natural History Museum, which got 6.9 million guests in 2015.76


Since June of 2007 the Natural History Museum has maintained a “Korea Gallery” which makes a subtle political argument about unification in claiming “to celebrate the country's distinctive art, culture, and 2,600-year history,” and prominently mentions the Korean War itself as a backstory at the exhibition that helps explain the transition between traditional art and contemporary South Korean culture. For example, one of several panels detailing the history of the peninsula in the “Modern Era” from “1910 to Present” notes that though it had been “unified for more than a millennium,” after WWII the nation “was divided into two countries, creating tensions that led to the Korean War (1950-1953).” Another panel that discusses a “Korean Artist from the North” mentions that “Korea became two separate countries at the end of World War II: a Soviet-allied North and a US-allied South,” while a nearby display about a “Korean American Artist” notes that “large groups of Koreans arrived just after the Korean War (1953) and throughout the late 20th century.” The division of Korea into two states is also the focus of two other exhibition elements.77

A flip-book that invites museum visitors to “Discover modern Korean ceramics and the culture that produced them” includes pages titled “South Korea develops its economy” by using “a mixture of market-friendly and state-controlled economic polices known as planed capitalism” and “North Korea preserves communist ideals,” which notes “a radically reshaped Korean society practices very simplified versions of ancient Korean ancestor traditions.” Moreover, maps throughout the exhibit portray the state of the Koreas, including a nighttime display comparing the lack of lights North of the DMZ to the well-lit cities of the South, while others detailing the natural environment and the pre-twentieth century historical era instead suggest a view of the peninsula as unified. Both these elements thus interject underlying linkages between North and South even while highlighting the historical context of the current state of two Koreas, seemingly

suggesting a need for re-unification perhaps more politically palatable in the U.S. than in South Korea. Moreover, this current display might be viewed as a cultural descendant of an earlier exhibition “held under the auspices of the government of the Republic of Korea, and organized with the cooperation of the Department of State,” at the National Gallery, which was staged from December 1957 to January 1958. Called “Masterpieces of Korean Art,” it showed “a cross section of Korean art from 200 B.C. to about 1900” and “was the first large exhibition of Korean art to be seen outside the Far East,” although held less than five years after the signing of the armistice.78

Some outdoor vernacular Korean War exhibitions even mimic the style of traditional museum displays, such as the kiosk in Gadsden, Alabama, at a Patriots Park and Museum named after Korean War Medal of Honor winner Ola Lee Mize. The complex includes displays on veterans of all twentieth century wars as well as historical markers, monuments, and artillery pieces. Yet, whereas the displays about the World Wars and the Vietnam War are more general, the focus of the section on the Korean War is Mize himself, which encourages a personal interaction with the past that is amplified by the fact that visitors are outside, perhaps during a cold rain or a hot wind, just as soldiers were during the Korean War, while the historical display itself sits safely behind plexiglass. Next to the large portrait of Mize himself is a map of Korea, while the display, dedicated on November 6, 2013 following almost fifteen years of planning, also includes postcard-sized pictures of Korean War era medical evac helicopters as well as images of Mize’s funeral, which were added after he died in 2014, a reminder even vernacular exhibitions are dynamic.79


Lessons Learned about Korea Exhibitions: Regionalism, Sites of Memory, and Dynamic Displays

Why are Korean War public history exhibitions found where they are? How well do American museums with Korean War displays manage to reach heritage tourists? These questions help frame my concluding analyses.

Exploring a wide range of states allows for some tentative conclusions about the role of region in how monuments and museums exhibitions publicly remember the Korean War. For example, though most local monuments in the southeast have been built on the grounds of county courthouses, in New England they are less likely to be located on the lawns of city halls than they are to be found on town green spaces, while in the midwest Korean War memorials often appear in public parks as well as the two other aforementioned possible placements. Although Korean War monuments are in fact widely present almost anywhere in the nation, museum exhibitions which remember the Korean War are harder to find and mostly clustered in a few areas of the country. Indeed, it seems the majority of Korean War museum exhibitions can be found within three distinctive regional belts: one through the lower midwest from southwest Ohio to eastern Kansas, another through the northeast from lower New England to metro Washington DC, and a third focused around military bases from southeast Virginia to the Gulf Coast of Florida’s panhandle.

A significant number of Korean War public history exhibitions are found at military museums, with most of these facilities located on current or former bases. As a result, such Korean War displays are more “sites of memory” (in the way that Jay Winter uses the term), than most Korea monuments in that they are directly tied to places where history happened. Although no battles were fought in the United States, the preparation that went on at each base to gear up for combat in Korea marks these locations in a way with the presence of the past. Moreover, most museums that are located on or adjacent to bases include info on events taking place at the base
during the Korean War as part of their exhibitions. Since the majority of such installations are located in the southeast, that region is home to the most sites featuring Korean War exhibitions. Korea exhibits in the northeastern region can also be found in museums located on bases and the grounds of military academies as well as facilities run by government agencies and branches of the Smithsonian system, and tend to tell a more national, and nationalistic, history. Yet the most thorough histories of the Korean War are found in the midwest, at those sites least directly tied to the memorial landscape: the site of the Truman Library was chosen by the then-former President to be close to his home in Independence, while the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force could have been located on dozens of bases nationwide that are part of the Air Force museum system, but Dayton was picked due to pre-existing Wright Brothers related aviation heritage tourism.80

The successful midwestern museums also offer quick entree to visitors from major metropolitan areas such as Kansas City and Cincinnati, and are among the easiest sites with Korea exhibitions to visit. Indeed, while the Air Force Museum in Dayton sits outside the gate of Wright Patterson Air Force Base, some museums sit behind barriers that require a background check to visit and may even be wholly inaccessible during peak tourism periods. Moreover, while the museums at military academies in West Point and Annapolis will survive regardless of their success as heritage tourism destinations due to their longstanding mission as educational sites, others such as the National Museum of the U.S. Navy in DC proclaim a desire to help their local economies but have unfinished exhibits and staff shortages that keep them closed to the public in the evenings and on weekends. Indeed, more than once I was told the reason a site had to close mid-afternoon was due to congressional budget sequestration, which impacts the heritage tourism prospects of cities that surround bases, many of which have already lost jobs since the end of the Cold War led to the contraction of many installations. In contrast, some sites such as the Infantry

80 Deborah Sellars of the Air Mobility Command Museum told me the origin story of Dayton as the choice.
Museum in Columbus, Georgia and the Marine Corps Museum in Triangle, Virginia that opened in the last decade have helped draw heritage tourists across state lines. Accepting that not all Korean War exhibitions are equally visited or offer equal educational content to tourists, the question then becomes what messages are presented at the most often viewed museum displays.

The best answer to that question may be, both celebratory and confusing. Korean War exhibits lionize men like Lewis Millet and the aviators who flew Sabre jets over MiG Alley, yet the most often exhibited aspects of the war are the plight of POWs. Moreover, visitors to the Smithsonian system can learn a lot about Korean culture but, based on the Price of Freedom and the set up at the Udvar-Hazy, could also have a hard time telling Korea apart from Vietnam or the rest of the Cold War. This issue of conflation, also present in films since the 1960s and the many dual Korea-Vietnam monuments, is a major problem because, in 2015, 6.9 million people total visited the National Museum of Natural History, 4.1 million visited the National Museum of American History, and 1.6 million visited the Udvar-Hazy Center which gives these Smithsonian galleries an outsized opportunity to shape Korean War public memory.81

While visitation numbers are hardly the only way to figure museum impact, a critical analysis of the types of messages portrayed in Korean War exhibitions must take into account the number of visitors a site receives alongside what sorts of audiences they seek to serve (be they veterans, students, or the general public), in order to evaluate exhibition impact. For that reason, the Korean War narrative told at the forthcoming National Museum of the United States Army, which anticipates an “estimated 750,000 visitors every year” due to its location “ten minutes from Mount Vernon” and “just two miles from I-95” matters a bit more than stories told at the Atlantic County Veterans Museum in New Jersey, which opened in 2017 in an isolated historic home far

from other heritage tourism sites and sees relatively few visitors. Moreover, these two museums remind us that displays can be dynamic both in their design and in the fact that they themselves change over time. Still, as of 2017 most Korean War exhibitions continue to reinforce a narrative of American heroism abroad against an evil Communist foe, and of unified support for the war effort at home, despite the fact that (as I show in the next chapter) the Korean War was widely opposed at the time it was being fought.

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CHAPTER 4 - FORGOTTEN PROTESTS: KOREA AND ANTI-WAR COUNTER-MEMORY

In the last chapter I demonstrated that, rather than Korea being forgotten in historical exhibition, displays about the war are ubiquitous, though they rarely represent the full and complex history of the period. For example, Korean War public memory as revealed through contemporary museum exhibition suggests that no Americans opposed the war in Korea, despite widespread dissent against the later war in Vietnam. Moreover, most of the scant academic scholarship on the topic has suggested that there were few protests against the Korean War, despite considerable primary source evidence to buttress the contrary argument. Indeed, it seems that in many ways the Korean anti-war movement has actually been forgotten, perhaps as a result of the forgotten war myth effectively erasing interest in public responses to the war at the time, showing one of the contemporary consequences of continuing to remember Korea primarily as forgotten.

One historical exhibition does publicly display strong evidence of a Korean anti-war movement. Beyond its sheer size and scope, what sets the Korean War exhibition at the Truman Library and Museum in Independence apart from other facilities with Korea displays is that there they document the existence of extensive anti-war sentiment which other exhibits completely ignore. Indeed, perhaps the single most interesting object which is currently on permanent display at the Truman Library is a dead soldier’s medal sent by a grieving father to President Truman along with a letter suggesting he wishes that the selective service system would be opened up to women specifically so the President’s daughter could be drafted to die, thus suffering the same fate as his son. As Jon Wiener describes the display in How We Forgot The Cold War, “the exhibit reports that ‘late in the war,’ Truman ‘received several bitter letters from parents of American soldiers killed in Korea’” including a case with both “a Purple heart sent to Truman by
William Banning” and what the Library’s website describes as “a poignant and stinging letter wishing that the president’s daughter had been killed in Korea as Mr. Banning’s son had been.”

While such a letter might today be seen as a death threat, the fact that it is on display at the museum for all visitors to see demonstrates not only how extensively the Korean anti-war movement had grown by 1952 but the apparent importance for the curators of the Truman Library and Museum to have a display documenting just how divisive the Korean War, which is usually recalled as a unifying conflict, really was to the nation at the time. I learned the hidden history of this display in June 2016 when Curator Clay Bauske was kind enough to spend a half hour giving me a tour of the Korean War areas of the exhibition on Truman’s Presidency, which he helped to design. Not only did this first-hand look into the thinking behind the exhibition give me greater perspective on how public memory of the Korean War finds its way into museum exhibits, I also learned that the medal and letter that so interested me were only re-discovered decades after the war, which helps to explain how the Korean anti-war movement could be forgotten. As Bauske noted, after Bess Truman’s death in October of 1982 she deeded the house (which was built by her maternal grandfather) to the United States, stipulating the second floor stay closed to the public until her daughter’s death because it was “too personal at this point,” while the national park service was able to inventory the President’s possessions. Bauske went on to explain that,

1 Wiener, How We Forgot The Cold War, p. 278; “The Cold War Turns Hot,” Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Accessed 12/26/15, Available at: https://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit_documents/index.php?tldate=1953-00-00&groupid=5118&pagenumber=1&collectionid=korea; Banning holds Truman “directly responsible for the loss of our son’s life,” saying he “might just as well keep this emblem on display in” his “trophy room.”

2 The fact this is one of the last objects in the Presidential Gallery makes it even more impactful, while also providing visitors the chance to think contingently about historic events, which is something the Truman Library does in several spots in this space starting with an exploration of his choice to drop atomic bombs.

3 Gail Driskell, “Truman’s ‘Summer White House’ Opening Doors,” The Oklahoman (5/6/1984); “Truman Home Second Floor Photo Tour,” Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, Accessed 8/12/2017, Available at: https://www.nps.gov/hstr/learn/photosmultimedia/truman-home-second-floor-photo-tour.htm. On tours of the Truman House, the fact that the Truman’s did not actually own the house until 1952 (alongside Harry Truman’s frustration with that situation), is a major topic, though they do not always fully explain why the
concealed in a dresser drawer which likely had not been opened since Harry Truman died a decade earlier, researchers re-discovered the medal and letter that the President apparently had decided he needed to keep (and needed to keep hidden) for two decades after receiving them.4

As Raymond Geselbracht notes in “Creating the Harry S. Truman Library: The First Fifty Years,” one of the key goals of Director Larry Hackman’s redesign for the Presidential Gallery was “to convey a sense that the work of interpreting the past is forever ongoing, never reaches consensus, and involves essentially everyone” by creating an exhibit letting visitors “participate in the contingencies of history.”5 This governing philosophy, which recognizes not only that scholarly views on history have changed but that they will continue to change, is not often encountered in museum settings, which tend to reflect historiographical insights from previous generations that were mostly focused on military matters rather than cutting edge scholarship exploring the impact of war on culture, in part because it can take decades between display redesigns and years for new exhibitions to be crafted.6 Still, scholarly debates about the Korean War often suffer from some of the very same gaps encountered in museum exhibits, especially when it comes to the history of anti-war protest. Indeed, in many ways it seems that academic historians and exhibition curators are similarly guilty of having a limited perspective on the history of dissent during the early 1950s era of the Korean War. This chapter thus serves two

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4 Interview during site visit with Clay Bauske, (6/1/2017). Bauske noted while this display often elicited strong reactions from visitors, they tended to be sympathetic to Banning rather than upset by his message.

5 Rayond H. Geselbracht, “Creating the Harry S. Truman Library: The First Fifty Years,” The Public Historian, Volume 28, Number 3 (Summer 2006), p. 71. Hackman also developed a White House Decision Center display meant “to put secondary school students in the roles of President Truman and his advisors.”

6 This estimation of the time between exhibit re-installs is based on info I gleaned from curator interviews, many of which indicated their Korea displays were over a decade old and any update plans still years away.
purposes: to provide a historiographical background to understand how scholarly memory of the Korean War has shifted over the last sixty-plus years as well as how historiographical holes led to the forgetting of the Korean anti-war movement, and to offer an alternative history of the Korean War, a counter-memory of sorts, focused on these protests.

In this chapter I argue that, contrary to the view expressed by most academics and in the vast majority of museum exhibitions, a mainstream and widespread Korean anti-war movement did develop during the early 1950s. This movement consisted of a network of like-minded individuals who joined a myriad of diverse groups with the collective goal of bringing the Korean War to a swift and peaceful conclusion. These varied groups in turn shared information as well as publications designed to both broaden the movement and to advise potential dissenters while also organizing peaceful protests and more radical actions including hunger strikes, even as the mainstream movement spread throughout the nation to include college students in Indiana, socialists in California, Protestant farmers in Nebraska, African-Americans in Pennsylvania, Reformist rabbis in New York, and middle-class mothers in Illinois among many others.

Beginning in mid-1950 as a coalition of historic peace churches alongside radical pacifists with longstanding leftwing political ties, 1948 Progressive Party voters, and the few United World Federalists (including a young Kurt Vonnegut), a nascent Korean Anti-War movement grew rapidly by early 1952 to include coalitions of Mothers Against War and Save Our Sons committees as well as a myriad of start-up groups from coast to coast who lobbied legislators and put out publications to persuade people of the need for global peace. Indeed, while the Korean anti-war movement was marginalized during the first two years of its existence, by the latter half of the war it had grown to encompass mainstream members of society who could not

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7 The key term is develop, as in the first half the war voices of anti-war dissent were mostly marginalized, but by the latter stages of the war public opposition in the U.S. ran the gamut across the political spectrum.

8 My idea of this as a broad movement is based on the sentiments shared by otherwise unaffiliated groups.
be so easily labeled as Communists simply for voicing their distaste for death. My purpose in this chapter is to examine the evolving historiography of the Korean War itself and the scant scholarly literature on the anti-war movement, to show how the movement truly was forgotten and consider the consequences for historical understanding of anti-war dissent between WWII and Vietnam.

Two Korean War Historiographies: Shifting Scholarly Paradigms and Forgotten Protests

In a 2004 “Review Article” on “The Korean War” for a *Journal of Contemporary History* special issue on “Collective Memory,” Jeffrey Grey noted that “writing on the Korean War has passed through several phases” of scholarly study but that “there remain enormous gaps and great unevenness in treatment,” even though “multi-volume reference works on the war, several multi-part television documentary series” and a spot in high school textbooks all show “that Korea is no longer an unknown war” and “no longer a forgotten war.” Indeed, academic scholarship on the Korean War has proceeded in waves, the first one starting in 1952, even before the armistice. I.F. Stone’s *The Hidden History of the Korean War, 1950-1951* (1952), in which Truman is influenced by members of the Asia First movement and *This Kind of War: A Study of Unpreparedness* (1963) by T. R. Fehrenbach, which largely blames the stalemate on the perception that post-WWII culture had weakened America, are two examples of this first wave of highly critical studies seeking to blame someone for the war’s outcome, according to Allan Millett’s “A Reader’s Guide to the Korean War.” As Stanley Sandler notes in a “Select Bibliography of the Korean War,” the military also crafted their own narratives of the war during this period with the Marine Corps became the first branch with an official history when Lynn Montross et al wrote a *History of U.S. Marine Operations in Korea* in 1954, which was followed
several years later by a study of the United States navy written by Frank A. Manson titled *Sea War in Korea* that was initially published in 1962.⁹

After the death of JFK and a rise in public concern over Vietnam, as Millet notes, scholarship on the Korean War in the 1970s often focused on longer term or broader stories especially in several edited volumes of essays that were sometimes combined with oral history interviews such as *Without Parallel: The American-Korean Relationship since 1945* edited by Frank Baldwin (1973) and *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* edited by Nagai Yonosuke and Akira Iriye (1977). Moreover, according to James Matray, in “Korea’s War at 60: A survey of the literature” (the most recent review essay on the conflict in Korea), “historical analysis of the Korean War experienced a fundamental shift in the 1970’s” thanks to scholars gaining access to previously secret records, leading many to reject the typical “characterization of the conflict as the consequence of external aggression” in favor of focusing on Korean peninsular politics.¹⁰ Matray also notes that it was during the 1970s that the first examinations of the Korean War’s impact on American society were written, singling out John Wiltz’s 1977 article which explores “The Korean War and American Society” while mentioning works by two political scientists: John Mueller’s 1971 *American Political Science Review* article, “Trends in Popular Support for the Wars in Korea and Vietnam,” and Alonzo Hamby’s 1978 *Wilson Quarterly* essay, “Public Opinion: Korea and Vietnam.”¹¹

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¹¹ Matray, p. 100, 118. The write-up of the Responses and Discussion of the presentation of Wiltz’s paper to the Harry S. Truman Library Institute for National and International affairs is revealing of changes in how students perceived the MacArthur vs Truman controversy and offers a glimpse at how conferences were published in decades past. See: Francis H. Heller *The Korean War: A 25-Year Perspective* (1977).
During the 1980s and 1990s, two new waves of scholarship started that re-interpreted Korea as first a civil war and later a key event in the Cold War. This historiographical shift started with publication of the first half of Bruce Cumings’ two volume *Origins of the Korean War*, in 1981, and was accentuated by Cumings’ involvement in a six-hour BBC documentary in 1988 called *Korea: The Unknown War*, which was accompanied by a companion volume. Cumings and Jon Halliday note, in the introduction to this book, that it “draws upon recently declassified archival documentation and interviews with” a “broad range of participants” including “Korean and Chinese soldiers.” Cumings further describes the project, and the research underpinning the documentary, in his book *War and Television* (1992), where he also analyzes several prior Korean War documentaries and details the difficulties of converting the original BBC production into a version acceptable to American audiences. Cumings above all argues that North Korea’s invasion of South Korea in June of 1950 should be understood not as an aggressive international action prompted primarily by Soviet and Red Chinese support but rather as the logical culmination of a forty-year effort by leftist nationalist Koreans to expel all Japanese imperialists and their collaborators.

In the 1980s when, Matray argues, “left-revisionism peaked in popularity,” many historians took to Cumings’ argument about Korea being more a civil war than a struggle against global Communism. Yet even if the Korean War started as a civil war, it quickly devolved to a wider war involving dozens of Soviet MiG pilots and hundreds of thousands of Red Chinese soldiers as well as the twenty nations that sent troops or medical aid to assist the South Koreans. This makes it a multi-national conflict that was, for decades during the Cold War, examined

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13 Matray, p. 107. This point of view rarely makes its way into exhibitions, which often fail to delve into the causes of the war at all, and runs starkly in contrast to the position staked out on most monuments, which especially during the Cold War framed Korea as a part of a larger struggle against Communist aggression.
almost exclusively from a bipolar diplomatic point-of-view with a heavy emphasis on American and Allied perspectives and little focus on South Korean or enemy points-of-view, in part due to source limitations. Indeed, Philip West argues in a 1989 AHR review article titled “Interpreting the Korean War,” even Max Hasting’s The Korean War (1987), then one of the most recently published books on the topic, suffers from an inability to access Chinese or Russian sources.\textsuperscript{14}

One historiographical consequence of the end of the Cold War, as Matray discusses, was that “access to Soviet documents renewed emphasis on international factors” in explaining why the Korean War started, resulting in “a right-wing revisionist perspective on the conflict” the best example of which was William Stueck’s 1995 book “The Korean War: An International History, where-in he argued that American involvement in Korea was a positive for global peace since it prevented the Soviet Union from engaging in similar future actions. Moreover, Millet argues that Inside the Kremlin’s Cold War: From Stalin to Krushchev by Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov (1996) owes much “to the Russian sources,” and notes Cumings’ collaborator Jon Holliday had “been active in interviewing Russian veterans,” while asserting “the recent release or leakage of Chinese sources,” most notably Mao’s own papers, led to texts such as Zhang Shu-gang’s Mao’s Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War, 1950-1953 (1995) and Chen Jian’s China’s Road to the Korean War: The Making of Sino-American Confrontation” (1994).\textsuperscript{15}

Beyond allowing scholars access to old Soviet and Chinese records, the end of the Cold War, as Sandler asserts, lifted a veil of secrecy on American special operations in Korea enabling the publication of works such as Ed Evanhoe’s Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War (1995) and Shadow Warriors: The Covert War in Korea by William B. Breuer


(1996). Still, as Grey details, in a 1995 Eisenhower Lecture in War and Peace (a biannual series at Kansas State University that previously had invited scholars such as John Keegan and Russell Weigley), which was titled “Understanding is Better than Remembering: The Korean War 1945-1954,” Allan Millet suggested that the perspective of South Koreans and their contributions to the war effort have largely been ignored. Jeffrey Grey also asserts that “one sign of a field’s scholarly maturity is the appearance of serious reference works devoted to” it, and argues that by the 1990s Korea had reached this “stage of development,” citing James Matray’s *Historical Dictionary of the Korean War* (1991) and Stanley Sandler’s *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia* (1996), but oddly not Lester Brune’s *The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research* (1996).  

A second sign of a field’s scholarly maturity might be the staking out of firm analytical positions, often in opposition to other academics. For example, in his own much more recent historiographical review, Matray asserts that “flaws of fact and interpretation appear throughout the works of Stanley Sandler,” while seeming to dismiss David Halbertam’s *The Coldest Winter: American and the Korean War* (2007), a best-seller following the author’s death in a car crash a week after submitting final revisions, by noting merely that Halberstam and three other scholars “have also written full studies of the Korean War.” In contrast Matray here asserts that “future historiographies of the Korean War will assign prominence to the recent work” titled *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950-1953* (2008) in which Steven Casey asserts Korea posed problems for both Truman and Eisenhower in terms

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of public perception in part because Americans tend to demand total victory in war, suggesting historians anticipate even more paradigm shifts, another sign of the field’s scholarly maturity.\textsuperscript{18}

Despite this graduation of Korean War historiography, the availability of new sources and the trend toward more internationalist history meant that suddenly there were a multitude of new Korean War stories to tell, especially thanks to the publicity accorded the conflict by the numerous ceremonies commemorating it during the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversary periods of 2000 to 2003 and 2010 to 2013. Indeed, even some contemporary scholars whose focus is broader than the Korean War have cited it as a key event in recent American history, such as investigative journalist Tim Weiner and military historian Paul Kostinen. Weiner’s \textit{Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA} (2007), locates the Korean War at the center of his broader narrative, asserting it was the first major challenge for the new CIA. Kostinen’s \textit{State of War: The Political Economy of American Warfare, 1945-2011} (2013), similarly argues that it was the Korean War which led to permanent militarization of the nation, while pointing out that the amount of money spent on American national defense nearly quadrupled from $13 billion in 1950 to $50 billion in 1953.\textsuperscript{19}

Matray concludes his survey by noting the “April 2010 issue” of “the \textit{Journal of Strategic Studies} commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the start” of the war by putting together six articles which “presented the conflict as international in character” such as an essay in which Robert Barnes “described how the Commonwealth, when acting in unison, limited US escalation in Korea.” Barnes opens the 2014 book into which this essay evolved, \textit{The US, the UN, and the Korean War: Communism in the Far East and the American Struggle for Hegemony in the Cold War}, by arguing that “to describe the Korean War as ‘forgotten’ or ‘unknown’ is now an

\textsuperscript{18} Matray, p. 100. Historiographical phases can be thought of in terms of Thomas Kuhn’s Paradigm Shifts.

unwarranted cliché” since over the last thirty-years a myriad “of research has been conducted into a wide array of aspects of this complex confrontation.” Many other scholars working over the last half-decade have tried to tell more international tales about the war, such as Arthur Mitchell in Understanding the Korean War: A Ground-Level View (2013), which is mostly a work of synthesis, where he asserts that due to language barriers Turkish POWs were not indoctrinated by their Chinese captors about Communism, and also notes that the sizeable Turkish contingent, “discovered that marijuana grew wildly all around” which “became a source of solace and enjoyment for many POWs.”

One area of recent research looks at war crimes committed against American POWs during the Korean War, in works such as Cold Days in Hell: American POWs in Korea (2012) by William Clark Latham Jr. and Brian McKnight’s “We Fight for Peace”: Twenty-three American Soldiers, Prisoners of War, and “Turncoats” in the Korean War (2014). Latham notes that, though military “service members from nearly every member of the United Nations task force,” especially the British and Turks, “endured communist captivity” and though most “prisoners captured by the enemy were soldiers of the Republic of Korea,” his study “focuses primarily on the ordeal of American POWs before, during, and after their captivity.” McKnight adopts an even narrower approach by analyzing the fate of two American POWs who at first announced that they “were refusing repatriation, preferring to remain with their Chinese captors” but soon “rethought their decision to stay with the Chinese and returned to United Nations lines” and later “became

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scapegoats for McCarthy’s America,” even getting jail time back home in the U.S. for failing to persuade “the remaining twenty one” of “their comrades” to return home with them.21

On the flip side, another important area of recent research on the Korean War examines the war crimes that were committed by American soldiers, Japanese troops, and South Korean anti-communist forces both before and during the war but then were covered up for decades after. For example, Henry Em, in *The Great Enterprise: Sovereignty and Historiography in Modern Korea* (2013), asserts that from the 1910s to the 1940s “the Japanese colonial state” had “endeavored to produce Koreans as subjects” who would suffer silently, while Suh Hee-Kyung notes, in his 2012 article “Atrocities Before and During the Korean War,” that mass killings for political reasons were common, especially in the peninsula’s southwest as well as on Jeju Island, and that violent “incidents before the Korean War” would be “the prototype of civilian massacres committed during the Korean War,” the most well-known occurring in July 1950 at No Gun Ri.22

Charles Hanley discusses the July 1950 massacre that he and others first reported on in 1999, and the fresh cover up by the American military a half-century after the fact, in an essay titled “No Gun Ri: Official Narrative and Inconvenient Truths” which begins with an account of those “events that took place early in the Korean War,” drawn from “the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.” Hanley here asserts that instead of being transparent, the “Army of 2001, in an investigation of the large scale killing of South Koreans” in 1950 “did not report the existence of at least fourteen Army documents showing” that at the very least American officers “authorized


the shooting of civilian noncombatants during the early months of the Korean War.” Hanley concludes by arguing, in contrast to South Korean media, American news reports “tended to view the survivors as almost casual and unreliable observers” instead of “what they were: first-hand witnesses to the deaths of those dearest to them” that had actually “first told their story publicly within a decade of the event” and “who passed by the site countless times over the years,” and also “renewed their remembrance each year in ancestral rites.”

Many others have also written on events at No Gun Ri, such as Suhi Choi, one of the most prolific Korean War memory scholars. In “Silencing Survivors’ Narratives: Why Are We Again Forgetting the No Gun Ri Story?” Choi further analyzes issues created by the fact that “No Gun Ri was recalled through oral testimonies.” Choi discusses how, after nearly fifty years of politically motivated silence, American and South Korean newspapers covered the story of the No Gun Ri bridge massacre in 1999 by utilizing analysis of military records, interviews with veterans, and the testimony of survivors who (until the 1988 Olympics pushed for political changes in South Korea) had long “been afraid to share their traumatic stories “ lest they should “be accused of being Communist sympathizers,” and notes that despite the journalists who wrote the initial story being awarded “the Pulitzer prize for investigative reporting” the U.S. Army claimed it could not “uncover what really occurred at No Gun Ri” and therefore “the U.S. government decided not to give a formal apology to the South Korean people.” Choi also notes that “the bridge’s presence with its many bullet holes has served as a mnemonic object” reminding villagers of the tragedy and inviting them to talk about the events despite persistent political obstacles. Citing Maurice Halbwachs, Choi argues that a process of “collective amnesia” has allowed the Korean War, much “more than any other” U.S. military conflict, to be “shaped by the act of forgetting” and to be “portrayed as an anticommunist quest.” Choi concludes that the No Gun Ri bridge massacre has again become

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forgotten in the America because “the barren landscape of U.S. collective memories” of Korea “could not embrace No Gun Ri survivors’ testimonies” that contradict their own recollections.  

In contrast, many fewer works have analyzed American protests during the Korean War. Moreover, most historians who have written about anti-war protests during the early 1950s have done so either through biographies, which can easily obscure the longstanding linkages between individuals, or within centuries-long surveys of pacifism, which have led to an overemphasis on the two World Wars and the Vietnam era to the detriment of deeper exploration of dissent during the period of the Korean War. Yet despite the fact that scholars have published very few journal articles or book chapters, and no full-length monograph, on the topic of public protest during the Korean War era of 1950 to 1953, a number of works written since the late 1960s have explored this subject in some way, starting with the Lawrence Wittner’s Rebels Against War in 1969.  

Wittner sets the paradigm for scholarly misunderstanding of the Korean Anti-War Movement in asserting that the outbreak of war in Korea “dealt the final hammerblow to the fragile postwar peace movement,” in large part thanks to the decision by prominent pacifists and Progressive Party members including Norman Thomas and Henry Wallace to support American involvement in Korea, and by stating that at the time of the Korean War “the peace movement consisted of little more than a small band of isolated pacifists.” Because Wittner’s argument has been so frequently cited by other scholars in the years since, his assertion that there was no real anti-war movement has become the standard interpretation. Yet, like many later scholars who

24 “Silencing Survivors’ Narratives: Why Are We Again Forgetting the No Gun Ri Story?” Rhetoric & Public Affairs 11, no. 3 (2008) p. 368, 369, 371, 377, 385. Choi’s argument as to why No Gun Ri goes unrecalled, that there is simply no space in U.S. public memory for it, also applies to Korean War dissent.


uncritically cite him, Wittner seems to downplay evidence of a more widespread movement that he himself provides, such as the fact that over two million Americans signed the Stockholm Peace Appeal, in order to minimize and marginalize the Korean anti-war movement.²⁷

Among the scholars who have cited and repeated Lawrence Wittner’s arguments are Charles DeBenedetti, David Adams, Maurice Isserman, and George Flynn. DeBenedetti, in The Peace Reform in American History (1980), explored the role of post-WWII radical pacifist dissenters, who he says sought “to attack war and injustice through disciplined cadres” which brought together “democratic socialist politics and a nonviolent spiritual vision” but which “failed to sustain any organizational momentum by 1950.” David Adams, in American Peace Movements: History, Root Causes, and Future (1985), uncritically reiterates Wittner’s view just before asserting “the American peace movement was weakened and isolated in the Fifties,” despite arguing immediately after that “peace movements in the rest of the world were developing rapidly,” without questioning how that might be, or if “the two million in the United States” who signed the Stockholm Peace Appeal “in a campaign directed by W.E.B. DuBois during” what Adams also admits “were the worst days of the anti-communist hysteria of McCarthyism” might actually be evidence demonstrating the existence of a widespread Korean anti-war movement.²⁸

Isserman’s If I Had A Hammer (1987) also rehashes Wittner’s assertion that those few “pacifists who opposed the Korean War” included “only the Peacemakers, the Catholic Workers, and the War Resisters League” who all only “occasionally ventured out in small public protests” for fear of becoming “suspect as a subversive” during the heyday of McCarthyism. Flynn in The Draft: 1940-1973 (1993) downplays the many appeals for status reclassification that he himself

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²⁷ The Stockholm Peace Appeal was a petition to ban nuclear weapons signed by tens of millions globally.

documents, while ignoring the role of COs and arguing that “there was no protest during the Korean War” because “the draft worked and was popular with both the public and Congress.” However, all of these interpretations fly in the face of the evidence that a movement did exist.

Another strand of scholarship on Korean War dissent, largely forgotten since a pair of dissertations from the 1970s went unpublished, argues that there existed a Korean anti-war movement which was in fact much more widespread than Wittner and his followers suggest. In “Opposition to the Korean War: A Study in American Dissent” (1973) Matthew Edwin Mantell points out that Wittner “devotes only three pages to anti-war dissent” in the early 1950s and argues Wittner only “superficially treated the efforts made by members of the anti-war movement to secure peace in Korea.” Although somewhat weak on argument, which is perhaps why the work was never published, Mantell’s dissertation offers up considerable evidence, including court records and newspaper accounts from the Wall Street Journal to the African-American run Pittsburgh Courier, which show the existence of a Korean anti-war movement.

A few years later, Zelle Andrews Larson asserted in her own dissertation, titled “An Unbroken Witness: Conscientious Objection to War, 1948-1953” (1977), that the issue arose because “Wittner concentrated on the fluctuating fortunes of pacifist” groups “as they gained or lost supporters with the changing climate of the times” rather than on the spread of anti-war ideas beyond these organizations. Indeed, Larson argues that, in reality, “during a period when pacifist organizations lost many of their members” there is “evidence of increased strength in the ranks of


pacifists” that contradicts “the appearance of decline in American pacifism between 1948 and 1953.”

Larson was herself a social justice advocate, a co-founder of the Honolulu branch of NOW as a graduate student who later played a role in New York state LGBT political activism before her death in 2016. Unfortunately, based on the lack of citations of their dissertations, it seems that relatively few later scholars have considered the research done by Mantell and Larson.

Those historians since the 1970s who have argued for a reappraisal of the place of the Korean anti-war movement within American history either cite these two studies or tend to mimic their approaches by casting a wide net and focusing more on legal cases than on public protests. Stephen Kohn cites Larson prominently in *Jailed for Peace* (1987), in which he asserts that “despite McCarthyism and Cold War hysteria, draft resistance grew during the 1950s;” noting that by 1952 there were “over ten times the percentage of inductees receiving” CO “status than had even applied” for it during WWII” while arguing that the Korean anti-war movement was continuing a tradition begun in WWI. Similarly, Robert Mann, in *Wartime Dissent in America* (2010), cites Mantell’s dissertation when he argues that “the various peace activists, pacifist organizations, and liberal political parties” who were “opposed to the war found little public support,” yet despite these difficulties “some dissidents” still managed to “speak out” publicly.

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Not all of those scholars who cite Mantell and Larson agree with them. For example, in Charles Howlett and Robbie Lieberman’s massive *A History of the American Peace Movement from Colonial Times to the Present* (2008) they conclude that “the peace movement reached rock bottom in the early 1950s” only a single paragraph after observing that “the Korean War quickly became the most unpopular war fought up until that time in American history.”35 At the same time, some scholars who fail to cite either Mantell’s or Larson’s works, such as Scott Bennett in “Conscience, Comrades, and the Cold War: The Korean War Draft Resistance Cases of Socialist Pacifists David McReynolds and Vern Davidson” (2013), still follow in their footsteps while moving beyond groups to examine individual legal cases. In this article, Bennett focuses on Los Angeles area peace protests, anti-war publications including *The Blaze* and *The Spark*, legal challenges to an existing CO policy that upheld religious but not political refusals to fight, and what he sees as a “tiny socialist pacifist current that opposed and resisted the Korean War.”36

35 Charles Howlett and Robbie Lieberman, *A History of the American Peace Movement from Colonial Times to the Present* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008), p. 355. The book includes an invaluable bibliographic essay that lists Mantell and Larson’s unpublished works while pointing the way towards dozens more dissertations both on well-known groups such as the Catholic Worker movement and lesser remembered organizations including the Committee for Non-Violent Action. However, Howlett and Lieberman’s synthetic approach and their uncritical acceptance of Wittner’s argument leads them to fall into the familiar trap of ignoring protests of the Korean War even after documenting several examples of the movement including war tax resistance, the WRL, the FOR, and the PIC. Howlett and Lieberman thus offer additional evidence supporting the argument that there did indeed exist a broad Korean anti-war movement, while also noting how it was connected both to earlier WWII CO protests and later Civil Rights actions, even as they themselves seem to fail to pay close attention to their own evidence (p.351-355).

36 Scott Bennett, “Conscience, Comrades and the Cold War: The Korean War Draft Resistance Cases of Socialist Pacifists David McReynolds and Vern Davidson,” in *Peace & Change*, Volume 38 Number 1 (January 2013) p. 84. Bennett’s article is also useful in that he focuses on political objections while most prior scholarship has focused specifically on religious objectors, such as *The Politics of Conscience: The Historic Peace Churches and America at War, 1917-1955* by Albert Keim and Grant Stoltzfus. Keim and Stoltzfus’ book is especially useful as background given their focus on legal changes brought about by new draft laws in 1948 (which granted members of historic peace churches military deferments but included a “Supreme Being” clause that greatly limited those eligible) and in 1952 (which required even religious COs to perform some form of alternative service). While Keim and Stoltzfus focus exclusively on the religious pacifist element of the Korean anti-war movement they do document the hostility faced by some groups of resisters (such as the Hutterites in Montana) as well as the impact of one form of political activism, when they note “the historic peace church lobbying was so persistent” by 1951 “that it began to irk committee members” in Congress and Selective Service Head General Hershey (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1988).
also disagree with these works, however; in that I see many tiny currents of protest coming together to form a large stream of Korean anti-war protest which has largely been forgotten.

Creating a Korean Anti-War Movement: 1950s Pacifists, Progressives, and Protesters

How do we explain these parallel historiographies? Why has the Korean War continued to be labeled as the forgotten war despite the lengthy historiographical treatment that the subject has garnered over the last sixty-plus years, while the widespread anti-war protests which grew out of opposition to the conflict in Korea have largely been forgotten by both scholars and the public?

The single best answer, to the latter question at least, seems to be offered by the forgotten historiography already discussed, combined with the fact that many established leftist leaders backed the war effort. Indeed, another key reason why the Korean anti-war movement has been forgotten is because many of the people who might have been expected to support the movement instead backed the war, while some well-known individuals who dissented against the war did not participate in the movement. For example, while socialist Norman Thomas and progressive Henry Wallace supported the Korean War, some isolationist Republicans including Herbert Hoover and Joseph Kennedy spoke out strongly against it. Indeed, the number of Republican Senators who attacked President Truman for his policies, especially during the retreat south in the late fall of 1950 and following the firing of General MacArthur, as well as the fact that Dwight Eisenhower’s 1952 campaign promise to go to Korea and end the war contributed to his election, led to one of the first studies of dissent during the Korean War focusing on the way the conflict was used politically by the Republican Party. Published in 1968, Ronald Carcidi’s The Korean War and American Politics: The Republican Party as a Case Study further obscured the idea there was a coherent left-wing Korean anti-war movement by emphasizing the degree to which older conservatives opposed the conflict at least as frequently as young liberals. However, it was not isolationist elements representing the Old Right but internationalist individuals within a nascent
New Left (each facing their own personal wars), who came together to create the Korean anti-war movement. Moreover, a fuller answer requires both a better, revised account of the Korean anti-war movement in the context of the conflict as well as an exploration of why the movement was marginalized by scholars in the first place.

A better, revised account of the Korean War might look something like this: although the Korean peninsula had long been unified before becoming a Japanese colony in 1910, following the end of World War II it was divided into two political units, and by the late 1940s South Korea was experiencing a cycle of left-wing revolts and right-wing repression. The Korean War itself began on June 25, 1950 with the invasion of South Korea, backed by the United States, by the North Korean military, supported by the Soviet Union and China. The North Korean military, many of them fresh from having fought successfully on the communist side of the recently concluded Chinese Civil War, quickly pushed the inexperienced South Korean troops to the area around Pusan in the southeastern part of the peninsula. After establishing a defensive perimeter by moving in American troops from Japan, General Douglas MacArthur executed an amphibious landing at Inchon that led to an American invasion of North Korea in the fall of 1950. As American troops approached the Yalu River border with China, so-called Chinese volunteers intervened, forcing a retreat south in the final months of 1950, and setting the stage for a second phase of the war.

While Gallup Polls indicate that American public opinion supported the Korean War during the early months of the conflict, by January 1951, as the Chinese and North Koreans captured Seoul for the second time in a year, nearly half of those polled opposed American involvement in the war. Although American, South Korean, and UN troops again pushed north to the original border, the thirty-eighth parallel, within a few months, public opinion would never

fully rebound. Armistice negotiations began in mid-1951 but would take two years to conclude, largely due to disagreements over the repatriation of Prisoners of War who claimed that they did not wish to return to the Chinese or North Korean militaries. If the first half of the Korean War resembled World War II in its rapid troop movements, the second half more closely mirrored World War I with its trench warfare and thanks to aerial dogfights over MiG Alley. The Korean War formally ceased on July 27, 1953 with the signing of an armistice ending active hostilities, though no permanent peace treaty has ever been negotiated and U.S. troops still remain in Korea.

On June 25, 1951 several individuals who would become better known for activism in the 1960s came together in Times Square, in New York City, to speak out in opposition to the Korean War on the anniversary of the start of what was then called a police action. The first and second speakers, Michael Harrington (of the Catholic Worker) and Sidney Aberman (of the War Resisters League) were both too young to have been Conscientious Objectors during WWII, but two of the other speakers at that event had been jailed for dissent a decade earlier: Bayard Rustin (then of the Fellowship of Reconciliation) and David Dellinger (representing the Peacemakers, who had organized the protest). Although relatively few dissenters seemed to have been actively engaged in the events of that day, many passersby viewed and reacted to the protests, violently in one case that (in my mind) makes the entire event quite memorable.

Despite being organized by committed pacifists who strongly opposed communism, the various protesters at the 1951 rally in Times Square faced accusations that they were really Soviet pawns, prompting Dellinger to respond. According to several sources, including Harrington in his own memoirs, “Dellinger descended from the platform and confronted” a heckler, asking the man to hit him, which “the ‘maniac’ obliged, knocking him cold and continuing to pound him as he lay senseless on the ground.” Rustin soon stepped in to put a stop to the violence, but by that point “Dellinger’s jaw had been broken and his eye severely damaged,” yet he still forgave his
assailant after learning the man “had recently lost a son in the Korean War.” Despite these dramatics no major media outlets covered the protests, leaving little in the way of a primary source record beyond the later recollections of these protesters, which is yet another reason why most historians since the 1960s have argued that there was in fact no Korean anti-war movement.

In contrast to this perspective, my research at the Swarthmore College Peace Archive indicates the Korean War was immediately opposed by activists, who soon faced their own wars due to blowback for their views. W. E. B. DuBois’ Korean War began when he was asked to chair the Peace Information Center (PIC) after a career spent spearheading progressive policies for racial justice starting with his sociology scholarship and the creation of the NAACP. DuBois was already well connected with a number of other individuals who would play active roles in the Korean anti-war movement, beginning decades earlier in many cases. DuBois had also long been the focus of several political attempts to damage his credibility by labeling him as a Communist; such efforts accelerated after the start of the Korean War and culminated in his indictment days before his eighty-third birthday in February of 1951. DuBois was officially indicted for failing to register as a foreign agent despite being classified as such by the State Department because of his stewardship of the PIC, though it was really his Korean anti-war activism that was on trial. A few days later (amidst the annual Negro History Week events that had been begun by historian Carter Woodson in 1926 and which predated the establishment of Black History Month by decades), DuBois was arraigned in Washington DC, but his court date was pushed back to early November.

DuBois was quickly aided by other participants in the Korean anti-war movement, including his longtime personal friend and PIC colleague Paul Robeson, who became co-chair of Dubois’ legal defense committee along with the former Minnesota Governor Elmer Benson. The

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nine-month delay, carefully arranged by DuBois’ attorney, former New York Congressman Vito Marcantonio, gave the committee time to garner public support for his cause, often in the form of op-eds by famous figures such as Langston Hughes. Marcantonio volunteered to serve as DuBois’ lawyer after losing a 1950 bid for re-election due to his outspoken opposition to the outbreak of war in Korea and despite DuBois’s backing; DuBois had campaigned for Marcantonio in 1950, even becoming State Senate candidate of the American Labor Party to appear on the same ticket. By the time the trial began, after a few more delays, DuBois had raised thousands of dollars to publicize his plight and was acquitted, according to many because of Marcantonio’s legal skills.39

At the same time that he was striving to help his friend and mentor DuBois to elude prison, Paul Robeson had his own Korean War. A scholar-athlete at Rutgers University and well-known singer-actor as an adult, Robeson had first become involved in leftist politics decades earlier during the Depression, at a time when Communists were easily the most anti-lynching and pro-civil rights of any political party. By the late 1940s he regularly lent support to progressive causes such as anti-lynching, and like Benson (and a number of other members of the Korean anti-war movement), he had supported the Progressive Party presidential campaign of Henry Wallace in 1948. Robeson, like DuBois, would also run afoul of the federal government during the Korean War; the State Department denied him a passport in 1950 after he was labeled as a Communist agent, and he faced a concerted smear campaign in black newspapers spearheaded by J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI. Robeson’s repeated public criticisms of both the Korean War and the federal government would lead to his becoming one of the most famous performers to be blacklisted in the early 1950s, a list that also included his friends the anti-war folk singers The Weavers. Just days after the start of the war, Robeson spoke to 18,000 people about Korea in

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Madison Square Garden at the Civil Rights Congress, opening with the statement that “a new wind of freedom blows in the East.” A month after DuBois’ arrest Robeson penned a tribute to him that focused in part on the Korean War, and he would go on to give dozens of speeches and interviews over the next several years focusing on the need for global peace and on the particular plight of black soldiers then serving in Korea.\(^{40}\)

Long before New York Congressman Vito Marcantonio sprung to the defense of W. E. B. DuBois, successfully delaying the case for months and speaking so persuasively at the trial that Dubois was easily exonerated, he fought his own Korean War. Representing a predominantly Italian (and from the early 1940s increasingly Puerto Rican) East Harlem district, Marcantonio campaigned under the banner of the American Labor Party and staunchly advocated socialist principles. After barely being elected in 1948, Marcantonio was (according to his biographer Gerald Meyer) “the only Congressional voice opposed to U.S. intervention in Korea” in late June of 1950, a few months before his final campaign. Marcantonio argued that “the American people will not want this action when they think it over” once they learn that it is American “blood spilled in defense of tyranny in a conflict similar to our own Civil War.” Despite the support of DuBois, and other members of the Korean anti-war movement, Marcantonio lost a tight race in 1950 to a Democratic and Republican coalition united against him. Many were surprised he chose not to run again in 1952, and even more when he died suddenly in 1954. At the funeral Robeson even compared Marcantonio’s civil rights commitment to that of abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens.\(^{41}\)


Dr. Clementina J. Paolone was already an experienced activist (as well as the author of a book on approved birth control methods for married couples) when her own Korean War started in August 1950 with the founding of American Women for Peace, an organization which called for an immediate end to American military involvement in east Asia and would remain in existence until 1954. Only a few short months later Dr. Paolone, a New York obstetrician, would also appear on the same ticket with DuBois and Marcantonio as the American Labor Party nominee for Lieutenant Governor in 1950, although her stand against the war would continue long after her short stint in electoral politics ended. Paolone was also one of the most clarion voices in the Korean anti-war movement, continuously advocating peace.

In a statement reflecting both the high level of information held by many within the movement as well as the particular policy positions for which many pacifists pushed, Paolone argued against “the authorization for United States troops to go beyond the 38th parallel in Korea” and stated on behalf of the AWP that “as mothers, sisters, and wives we recognize that such action will make for a bitter and prolonged war.” Paolone went even further in her June 1951 appeal by advocating for “the immediate cessation of hostilities in Korea and the withdrawal of all foreign troops so that the Korean people may freely exercise their democratic right to select their own government,” and concluded with the assertion that her words reflected “the desire of the majority of American women for peace.” Indeed, much of Paolone’s statement reads as if it could easily have been made two decades later, only with Vietnam substituted for Korea, showing just how much the anti-war sentiment of the early 1950s was like that in the late 1960s.42

Many groups opposed to war in Korea had women in key leadership posts such as lawyer Frieda Lazarus, the Executive Secretary of the New York City based Metropolitan Board for

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42 Press Release of the American Women for Peace, Miscellaneous Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)
Conscientious Objectors (MBCO). No other member of the Korean anti-war movement held as much power as Frieda Lazarus; at the same time, perhaps no other participant in the Korean anti-war movement stuck to their religious heritage like Lazarus. Lazarus fought hard to uphold the traditional tenets of faith-based Conscientious Objection, at a time when political objections to war were still illegal and only membership in an historic peace church or a letter from a pastor, priest, or rabbi could save you from the draft, against all those seeking to aid anyone opposed to military service for any reason.\(^{43}\) Lazarus, in her role as the Executive Secretary of the MBCO during this period, personally corresponded with dozens of groups and hundreds of individuals across the country who were interested in Conscientious Objection, acting as a human clearing house of information at the same time as she served as the lynchpin of the single most vital local organization within a burgeoning national network of individuals and groups opposed to the war.

Although the majority of Lazarus’ correspondence reflects cooperation between different groups involved in the Korean anti-war movement, Lazarus would also occasionally clash with her colleagues, as she did with Sidney Aberman of the War Resisters League (WRL) over the content of a pamphlet she argued was really little more than a veiled “appeal to non-pacifist youth to avail themselves of an avenue to escape conscription via claim to conscientious objection.” Lazarus went on to rhetorically inquire “what has the WRL come to when it prostitutes the whole cause of pacifism to the mere process of counseling individuals to save their skins” and ultimately concluded that she was “further amazed to see the listing of NSBRO, FOR, AFSC, and the Catholic Worker” list as organizations supporting the pamphlet but that “for once we appreciate your failure to include the Metropolitan Board as an agency advising conscientious objectors.”\(^{44}\)

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\(^{43}\) These historic peace churches include the Society of Friends, Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren.

\(^{44}\) Metropolitan Board for Conscientious Objectors, Series C: Files of Freida Langer Lazarus (Swarthmore College Peace Collection, DG 060) “Correspondence re: WRL Pamphlet “Which Will It Be- G.I. or C.O.?”
This conflict with Freida Lazarus over the ten-panel pamphlet “WHICH WILL IT BE- G.I. or C.O?” was only one part of Sidney Aberman’s Korean War. Aberman also played a role in another aspect of the Korean anti-war movement as a key participant at the June 1951 protest in Times Square, planned to coincide with the anniversary of the start of the Korean War. Aberman had taken over leadership of the WRL in the late 1940s and oversaw an ideological split that led many longtime members of the group which dates back to after WWI (including Freida Lazarus) to leave due to concerns over “direct action projects” such as the ones Aberman advocated in his June 1951 speech at the protest.\textsuperscript{45} The pamphlet itself, which opens with the argument that “as A REALISTIC STUDENT, you can’t discuss your future anymore without discussing the draft” and includes quotations from “Robert M. Hutchins, former chancellor of the University of Chicago,” Pearl Buck, General MacArthur, and Frederick the Great, does seem to focus more on the perils of military life than on the religious reasons for pacifism. Yet the tone of Aberman’s response to Lazarus suggests that this argument was merely one manifestation of the deep divisions amongst some individuals who had been well acquainted for many years before they found themselves as part of the Korean anti-war movement. Aberman wrote back to Lazarus that he was “sorry that [her] reactions to the ‘GI or CO’ leaflet were generally unfavorable” but “that so far the responses have been without exception quite favorable,” and although he was also “sorry that a preliminary draft was not sent” to Lazarus and the MBCO for advice, he noted “only national organizations were included” in the process, seemingly marginalizing the efforts of the MBCO, which operated

primarily in New York City. Aberman continued to lead the WRL through the rest of the Korean War before resigning in 1954.

Aberman was the second speaker scheduled for the June 25, 1951 protest, striding up to the podium immediately after Michael Harrington’s speech. Only 23 years old and eligible for the draft, Michael Harrington’s Korean War was in many ways much more immediate than it was for most other members of the Korean anti-war movement. Harrington, who a decade later would become famous for revealing the depth of poverty in *The Other America*, was himself in the midst of a personal crisis over what to do about the war when he spoke at the June 1951 protest as a representative of *The Catholic Worker* (the name shared by the group and its newspaper). Long headed by Dorothy Day, whose own career in dissent has recently received renewed attention thanks to a recent book, the radical religious organization used its media presence to protest the Korean War from the very beginning in large part due to concerns over the fate of young men like Harrington becoming casualties of the war. Classified at the start of the fighting as fit for active duty, Harrington initially joined the reserves as a medic, a commitment of only an evening a week and two weeks a year, “but when he arrived at Fort Drum” for his summer 1951 fortnight “he discovered that the army was not concerned with his moral scruples” about being involved in violence. Along with his experience at the June 1951 protest (which occurred only weeks earlier) his time at Fort Drum helped to confirm his commitment to the Korean Anti-War Movement, and led him to formally file for CO status less than a year later. Harrington also wrote about the June 1951 protest, especially his meeting Bayard Rustin, with whom he would collaborate for nearly two decades.

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46 Metropolitan Board for Conscientious Objectors, Series C: Files of Freida Langer Lazarus (Swarthmore College Peace Collection, DG 060) “Correspondence re: WRL Pamphlet “Which Will It Be- G.I. or C.O.?”
Bayard Rustin’s Korean War was different from most other members of the movement, though it was most certainly shared with many individuals who served within the United States military in the early 1950s. Indeed, Rustin then faced persecution for his sexuality as part of the Lavender Scare, as well as for his politics as part of the Red Scare and for his race. Rustin had earlier worked with Civil Rights leaders such as A. Philip Randolph and would carry forward the concept of Ghandian non-violent resistance through his later role as advisor to Martin Luther King Jr., however, during most of the Korean War he worked with religious conscientious objectors under the leadership of A.J. Muste at the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). That partnership ended abruptly in early 1953, after Rustin’s arrest in Los Angeles for engaging in sexual acts with two men in a parked car, when “Muste promptly drummed Bayard out of the FOR” which then “released an official statement that portrayed Rustin’s sexual orientation as a moral failing.” While still imprisoned in California, Rustin was visited by David McReynolds, a Los Angeles based Korean War CO who managed the legal defense fund of draft resister Vern Davidson and moved to New York in the late 1950s, then (according to historian James Tracy) “upon his return to New York, Rustin was given a staff position with the War Resisters League,” a group run by a “younger generation of radicals,” including Sidney Aberman, who “were far more accepting of homosexuality” than were many of the older activists.48 Although Rustin first met Harrington at the June 1951 protest, he had long previously met the last speaker at the event, David Dellinger, when they (like many members of the movement), were jailed as WWII COs.

David Dellinger, the final member of this loosely interconnected set of Korean anti-war protesters which I have dubbed the “New York Nine,” would face his own violent version of the Korean War at the June 1951 protest despite his personal pacifism. Dellinger was slated to be one

of the final speakers at the protest, which was planned by an inter-group coalition consisting of younger liberal members of the WRL, FOR, Catholic Worker committee and others who called themselves the Peacemakers. Dellinger had a long association with the Peacemakers group, living with his wife and child on the Glen Gardner communal farm in New Jersey which they sponsored (and where a hunger strike began in July 1950 to protest the Korean War), and later travelling to Europe on a bicycle trip that they organized. However, “Dellinger did not get very far in his speech before he was rushed by a man brandishing a stick” leading to that “famous moment in the history of mid-twentieth century American pacifism” described earlier in this section. Indeed, this incident reminded Dellinger of the very real stakes involved in resisting warfare, leading to a particularly long career in pacifism during which he mentored the next generation of anti-war activists. Dellinger’s continued commitment to peace would lead, less than two decades later, to him becoming the oldest member of the so-called “Chicago Seven,” who collectively faced trial for conspiring to start riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention despite them having had minimal prior involvement with one another. Indeed, one could easily argue that this proposed Korean anti-war protest group, the “New York Nine,” of W. E. B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, Vito Marcantonio, Dr. Clementina J. Paolone, Freida Lazarus, Sidney Aberman, Michael Harrington, Bayard Rustin, and David Dellinger were at least as linked as was the later, more famous group.

From New York Nine to National Network: Organizations Opposing War in Korea

Why have these protesters been forgotten and what do we as scholars stand to gain from highlighting their centrality to the Korean War era? Several factors played a role in this process of historical amnesia, some due to how the early 1950s and Communism (as well as the starkly anti-

49 “Five on Hunger Strike Over War in Korea,” The New York Times (July 7, 1950); Isserman, The Other American, p. 95.
communist ideology of the era) are remembered, and others due to the mnemonic erasure faced by African-Americans, religious minorities, women, and members of the LGBT community.

One factor consists of the intersections between American popular cinema and the cultural frameworks of memory. While films such as *Pleasantville* (1998) and *Goodnight and Good Luck* (2005) have suggested that the early 1950s was a time of cultural repression, Hollywood has largely ignored the Korean War over the last three decades and has only rarely shown the Korean anti-war movement, despite crafting numerous portrayals of anti-Vietnam protests.\(^{50}\) Indeed, at far as it concerns the 1950s, American public memory seems to be much more focused on domestic policy (such as Civil Rights protests and Beatniks) than foreign policy. Memory theorists since Maurice Halbwachs, who first posited the idea that cultural frameworks of memory impact individuals’ abilities to remember, have argued that societal categories shape our ability to conceptualize past events. Thus, one key reason the Korean anti-war movement has been ignored is likely that American public memory has no niche which fits dissent during the era of McCarthyism.

Another factor relates to the ways in which widespread groups, who were marginalized in their own time by politicians and the media, can come to be largely forgotten over the following decades due to a phenomena of forgetting like Stephanie Coontz details in *The Way We Never Were* (1992). Whereas most Americans during the early 1950s would have been well aware of the existence of a broad Korean anti-war movement, even if the mass media marginalized it (just as Coontz argues they were aware in 1950s that television families were far from accurate portrayals of contemporary society), by the late 1970s the existence of this widespread anti-war movement had passed from the public consciousness to be replaced by period news misrepresentations that

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\(^{50}\) The TV series *Mad Men* and 2016 film *Indignation* both include overt questioning of the Korean War.
suggested the movement was minimal and marginalized at the time. This structural forgetting of the movement has had another important political consequence since then, because it has helped foster an artificial contrast between a peaceful, prosperous 1950s and a tragic, chaotic 1960s (upheld by many films such as Forrest Gump (1994)) which is blamed for all those changes in mainstream society since the 1970s that conservative Americans see as culturally destructive.

A third factor relates to the reality that many members of the Korean anti-war movement had once been members of the Communist Party, while even avowedly anti-communist pacifists were often labeled as communists just for their opposition to the war. In Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America (1998), Ellen Schrecker discusses the oppressive impact of the second Red Scare on American society, subtly suggesting that one reason why the Korean anti-war movement has been forgotten was through a concerted effort to discredit those individuals involved in the movement. Schrecker also notes that, from the early 1920s through the late 1930s, many Americans (especially African-American activists) either joined the American Communist Party or at least attended events sponsored by the organization. However, by the early 1950s any association with communism (either past or present) was enough to discredit those involved in the Korean anti-war movement, leading to its marginalization within the mass media and public memory, and reinforcing the idea that only fringe groups in America protested the Korean War.

Beyond their politics, many members of the Korean anti-war movement were memorially marginalized due to their race or membership in a religious minority group including historic peace church congregants, Jews, and Catholics. Moreover, women and members of the LGBT community, who as Margot Canaday discusses in The Straight State (2009), where at that very moment being forced “into the closet” due to the Lavender Scare, have similarly been omitted


from the historical record of Korean anti-war protest. In *Lies Across America: What Our Historic sites Get Wrong*, James Loewen discusses the mnemonic erasure of certain groups when he notes the annihilated town of Rosewood, Florida is commemorated only with simple signs naming the place without detailing what happened there, while asserting that “representations of real women from history are much less common than men,” before concluding that “women, workers, people of color, and others whose stories have not been told” are ripe for renewed attention by scholars and the general public, a prescient prediction from nearly twenty-years ago. Indeed, relocating the Korean anti-war movement to the center of our scholarly conversations about the Korean War era would also help to emphasize the important contributions of these often forgotten groups.53

Yet another reason why the Korean anti-war movement has been forgotten by both scholars and the public is that most members of the movement were not as famous as many of the New York Nine; most members of the movement were young men who faced the real prospect of being drafted and the mothers who feared for the safety of their sons. The movement included Quaker college students in Guilford, South Carolina and Whittier, California that were subject to being arrested for refusing military service after being denied classification as COs, and who frequently sought advice from Lyle Tatum, the Iowa-born Executive Secretary of the Philadelphia based Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (CCCO). The movement also included midwestern Mennonite Professors such as Atlee Beechy, Dean of Men at Goshen College in Indiana, who actively corresponded with A. Stauffer Curry of the DC based National Service Board for Religious Objectors (NSBRO). The movement even included some Nebraska farmers such as Don Reeves, who sought CO status despite being brought up Baptist.54 Alongside these

53 Loewen, p. 49, 267. Loewen’s discussion is relevant in light of renewed public disputes over the fate of Confederate memorials, which as I write this (several days after the terrorist attack in Charlottesville) have again become the focus of heated national debate and grass-roots action by groups that pulled down statues.

54 Correspondence with Lyle Tatum, Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Correspondence and Telegrams, National Service Bureau for Religious Objectors
religious objectors, the movement also included avowed communists at the height of the McCarthy era, especially in major east coast cities such as Philadelphia.

In *Being Red in Philadelphia: A Memoir of the McCarthy Era*, Sherman Labovitz notes that after “the ‘Korean Conflict’ (it was never called a war) broke out, we communists were open and unequivocal in our opposition,” noting that they “demonstrated for a cease fire” partly out of concern “that the fighting in Korea could escalate into a third world war.” The movement also included a number of fellow travelers who were often labeled as communists such as historian Staughton Lynd, who opted to serve as a medic until he was discharged as part of a McCarthyist purge of Fort Dix (and held “premature New Leftist sentiments” regarding war according to his biographer Carl Mirra), and Australian-born San Francisco based labor leader Harry Bridges, who eventually served jail time after being one of the few union activists to oppose the Korean War. In short, the Korean anti-war movement included famous and largely forgotten individuals from a wide range of ideologies, regions, religions, races, ages, and occupations. Yet what qualifies these individuals as being part of a single unified movement is their active involvement in a myriad of anti-war organizations that put out a series of varied publications protesting the Korean War.55

At the outset of the Korean War there were already a number of established organizations that opposed the conflict as part of larger crusades for peace (such as the FOR), racial justice (such as CORE), or religious liberty (such as the American Friends Service Committee). Yet, over the course of the war dozens of additional groups were founded with the express purpose of

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protesting the conflict, many of whom disappeared as quickly as they had sprung up and have left
nothing more than a name behind in the Swarthmore Peace Collection, such as the Committee for
Peaceful Alternatives, the Minute Women for Peace, the U.S. Committee Against Militarization,
the Women’s Committee to Oppose Conscription, and the National Council on Conscientious
Objection. Established groups (such as the WRL which was first founded in the 1920s and the
NSBRO which acted as a clearing house for Conscientious Objectors during WWII), more
recently founded groups (such as the CCCO, which was started in 1948 so as to provide an
alternative to the more established organizations, or the PIC which was chartered only months
before the outbreak of the Korean War), and organizations that sprang up directly in response to
the conflict (such as Mothers Against War and the Wisconsin Council for Peace) all produced
pacifist publications, planned protests, lobbied the government for regulatory changes, or engaged
in other actions meant to help bring about a quick end to the Korean War and they thus together
constitute a coherent Korean anti-war movement.

The WRL, one of the oldest organizations actively involved in the Korean anti-war
movement, experienced considerable internal tension during the late 1940s and early 1950s. A
mere two months after the start of the war Jim Peck “strongly critiqued the League’s inaction”
arguing that it “had failed to issue a statement, publish a leaflet, or participate in several pacifist
initiatives that had garnered antiwar publicity,” thus encouraging acts by individuals within the
WRL such as when “league members picketed the atomic installation at Oak Ridge, Tennesee.” 56

The WRL also extended across the country through its network of members including Roy
Kepler, a student at the University of Colorado at the start of the war who would found the San
Francisco bay-area based liberal radio station KPFA in 1952 before starting the world’s first

56 Bennett, p. 191
bookstore specializing in paperbacks. The WRL was also connected to other groups within the Korean anti-war movement through personal ties, such as Jim Peck’s wife Paula, who in late 1950 founded Mothers Against War which advertised itself as “a pacifist, interracial, non-communist group.”

Although Mothers Against War was a small organization, consisting of nine women, its emergence so early in the war demonstrates the degree to which the Korean anti-war movement quickly coalesced in the summer and fall of 1950. The most memorable action of these Mothers Against War might well be their distribution, in December of 1950, of 3,000 leaflets titled “Don’t Buy Military Toys,” which argued “WE WON’T BRING UP OUR BOYS TO BE SOLDIERS” by enabling violent play, and suggested “STARTING XMAS! TELL THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR TOY STORE WHY” you will no longer purchase military toys. Such an attempt to use consumer boycotts to shape public policy should come as no surprise in light of Lizbeth Cohen’s discussion in A Consumer’s Republic (2003), yet the action was not greeted with rave reviews by all members of the Korean anti-war movement. Frieda Lazarus, for example, criticized the action as ineffective, asserting it will only “result in some personal satisfaction and an exciting day” but have little impact. Paula Peck’s response emphasized her desire for action, arguing “through the

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57 Michael Doyle, Radical Chapters: Pacifist Bookseller Roy Kepler and the Paperback Revolution (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012). Doyle details Kepler’s early career as a member of the WRL and as a protester against the Korean War while a college student in Colorado. While continuing his correspondence with members of the NYC based group after first moving to Boulder in June 1950, after the Korean War began Kepler invited COs to contact him, “formed the University of Colorado’s Peace Action Committee,” and “wrote to the university’s Silver and Gold student newspaper regularly” about “Korean War developments” as well as “pacifist theory.” In addition to noting Kepler’s actions in Colorado, Doyle details his continued commitment to the Korean anti-war movement even after leaving college, first as a Fulbright scholar in late 1951 connecting with international branches of the WRL and then running a San Francisco radio station in 1953. Kepler’s activities in Colorado suggest there might have existed dozens of university-based branches of the Korean anti-war movement across the country during the early 1950s.

58 “Don’t Buy Military Toys” Leaflet of the Mothers Against War (1950), Swarthmore College Peace Collection

59 Ibid. This document spoke to me because my mother refused to let me play with G.I. Joes in the 1980s.
leaflets alone, aside from whatever newspaper publicity we may have gotten” she “presented our viewpoint to at least some people, which seems to [her] more effective than if we had presented it to none at all” and concludes that Mothers Against War would welcome the MBCO’s “aid in the future.”

In contrast to the terse tone of her communications with Paula Peck and Sidney Aberman, MBCO records are full of friendly letters between Lazarus and many colleagues, including A. J. Muste at the FOR, Lyle Tatum at the CCCO, and A. Stauffer Curry at the NSBRO. The NSBRO, under the guidance of its Executive Secretary Curry and its Associate Secretary Elmer Neufield (another midwestern migrant to the east coast who moved to work for his group, like Tatum of the CCCO), maintained an office on K-Street in DC and devoted considerable attention in their quarterly meeting minutes to sit-downs with military policy-makers. Curry corresponded with many individuals involved in the Korean anti-war movement including Lazarus at the MBCO, with whom he enjoyed a good working relationship, and Tatum at the CCCO, with whom he sometimes disagreed over the question of whether their two organizations were cooperating or competing for COs. In contrast to Curry, Neufield seems to have spent most of his time on the legal cases involving Korean War Conscientious Objectors and checking on the conditions that they faced in prison.

Neufield noted in the NSBRO minutes from March of 1953 “that some forty-five conscientious objectors, besides Jehovah’s Witnesses, are now in prison” and mentioned “one warden was very cold, questioned whether ours was not a communist organization, and had resolved to refuse any visits.” The starkly different focuses of these two leaders from a single

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60 Letter from Paula Peck to Freida Lazarus (January 4, 1951), MBCO Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

61 Correspondence with Lyle Tatum, Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)
group within the broader network of the Korean Anti-War Movement demonstrate the range of activities, from lobbying to legal advice, in which these organizations engaged. Various groups within the Korean anti-war movement also collaborated more directly to put out publications, and to plan protests such as the June 1951 event in Times Square.

In late July of 1950, while still working for FOR but less than a year before becoming the co-chairman of the CCCO, Muste casually wrote to Lazarus about together sending information to Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and United Nations Secretary Trygvie Lie. Yet, perhaps no set of professional letters from Lazarus reflect a stronger spirit of cooperation than her correspondence with Lyle Tatum, who moved from Iowa to become Executive Secretary of the CCCO in early 1951 following the resignation of Caleb Foote. To offer just a single example, in October 1952 Tatum wrote that “the correspondence has been well worth while” since “we are getting a little closer together in our discussion” of Korean War protest processes, while Lazarus responded a week later that they “seem to be developing a lively correspondence, due partly to the fact that our organization is doing a land-office business, and reports are being rushed to you” before quickly “putting levity aside” to tell Tatum “that some legal history has been made.” In addition to her warm correspondence, Lazarus seems to have had no issues with two publications which were put out by the CCCO, Muste’s Of Holy Disobedience and Tatum’s The Handbook for Conscientious Objectors.

In her 1981 biography of Muste, Jo Ann Robinson asserted that “the heating up of the Cold War in Korea prompted him to compose a minor pacifist classic which pushed the rationale for nonviolent protest to its furthest limits” that was first “published as a Pendle Hill pamphlet in

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62 Minutes of National Service Board for Religious Objectors, March 1953 (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

63 Letter from Lyle Tatum to Freida Lazarus (October 15, 1952) NSBRO Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Letter from Freidza Lazarus to Lyle Tatum (November 5, 1952), NSBRO Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)
1952.” In *Of Holy Disobedience* Muste argues that “the draft now gets the young man at the very age when it is most difficult for him to stand out in any way from the mass of his fellows” so that even those who might be inclined to pursue a religious objection are afraid to do so for fear of peer disapproval. That same year the CCCO published the *Handbook For Conscientious Objectors*, which was revised by Lyle Tatum from Caleb Foote’s earlier pamphlet about “Conscientious Objectors Under Selective Service.” Set up to be useful for young men in the early 1950s, the short book begins with a page of questions (such as “What happens if I refuse to register?” or “How do I appeal my classification?”) leading to specific pages which provide the answers. Tatum personally authored an extensive essay on “The Supreme Being Clause” where he asserts that “any objector who has arrived at his position through religious training and belief” should “not be ruled out by the Supreme Being clause” unless they do not believe “in the existence of God.” Tatum goes even further to address potential political objectors by suggesting that, while “it may appear useless for non-religious objectors to request C.O. classification,” that “sometimes a liberal local board will” grant his request and that “in every case, it gets the man on record as to his reasons for refusal.” While the CCCO was offering advice to conscientious objectors, Dr. Clementina J. Paolone’s American Women for Peace engaged in mass protests.

According to an AWP statement, “of the 5,000 delegates attending the Chicago Peace Congress the weekend of June 29th, 30th, and July 1st it has been estimated that more than half were women” including “housewives, farm women, trade union women, professionals, mothers, wives, sisters, women with sons in Korea, mothers of small children, Negro women from the North and South, Puerto Rican women, Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish women.”

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year old at the time, this nationwide movement of concerned women had by mid-1951 already achieved some successes locally, especially in California, such as sending “a delegation to a local school which resulted in the A-bomb drills being stopped” and holding “a Peace Parade on Mother’s Day in Los Angeles with 2,000 people and 400 cars participating.” Moreover, like many organizations that made up the Korean anti-war movement, the AWP was also interested in issues of civil rights and social justice, supporting the cause of anti-lynching through their publication of the poetry of Mrs. Beulah Richardson. By 1953, according to Harriet Alonzo “American Women for Peace had branches in Chicago, Salt Lake City, Boston, Los Angeles, and five New York City neighborhoods,” which is not surprising given the general geographic growth of the Korean anti-war movement.67

Local level organizations opposed to the Korean War proliferated in places like Maryland and Wisconsin over the last two years of the conflict with the founding of “Peace Councils.” The Maryland Peace Council, based in Baltimore, regularly put out a newsletter called “Spotlight on Peace” over the last two years of the war. In their inaugural issue the editors admit “of only one bias: a firm conviction that peace can be achieved through negotiations between nations” while highlighting the role of labor protests and dissent in Great Britain. Like most local organizations opposed to the war, the Maryland Peace Council aimed to place itself within a broader network of anti-war groups, both at home and abroad. Indeed, in the broadside’s second issue the editors argue “World Opinion Cries ‘Halt’” to “the continuing tragedy of the war in Korea,” while in the third issue the editors assert “that the margin of Eisenhower’s election victory was the result of his pledge to go to Korea in an effort to end the war quickly.” Later issues from summer 1953

stress the need to stop “the senseless killing that continues every day in Korea” and make sure “a negotiated peace in Korea” becomes “a first step in the world-wide settlement of differences.”

Much less info remains available about the Wisconsin Council for Peace, which put out “Wings of Peace.” Based in Milwaukee and headed by Marquette Mechanical Drawing Professor F. W. Bentley, the Wisconsin Council for Peace put out at least one edition of its newsletter in the spring of 1953. In “Wings of Peace: Newsletter of the Wisconsin Council for Peace,” Bentley asserts that “The $64 Question” is “Prisoner Exchange,” which suggests at least some members of the general public were fully aware that for the last two years of the war the issue of voluntary repatriation was the single sticking point that caused the conflict to continue. Alerting readers to the fact that “600 Wisconsin Youth Have Died In Korea,” the Wings of Peace reflects concerns held by members of state organizations across the country, and extols the federal government to “Declare a Korean Cease Fire at Once!” before any more local boys must “Die for a Tie.”

At the same time, the involvement of Professor Bentley further implies that college campuses may have been a particular hotbed of anti-war sentiment during the Korean conflict, just as they would be during the Vietnam War, suggesting a potentially fruitful ground for future research on the subject. Indeed, in an article titled “The Draft and College Deferments During the Korean War,” George Flynn explored the role of academic lobbyists in helping to craft liberalized college deferment policies in the early 1950s allowing most undergraduate (though not all graduate) students to delay military service, while in “Student Organizations and the Anti-war

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68 Spotlight on Peace (Vol. 1, No 1), Miscellaneous Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Spotlight on Peace (Vol. 1, No 2) and (Vol. 1 No. 3), Miscellaneous Papers (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Spotlight on Peace (Vol. 1 No 7) and (Vol. 1, No 8), Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

69 Wings of Peace: Newsletter of the Wisconsin Council for Peace, Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)

70 I imagine Quaker colleges such as Earlham in Richmond, Indiana (which today is home to two Korean War monuments) may have housed student protesters who had been raised as committed pacifists in WWII.
Movement in America, 1900-1960” Patti Peterson notes than in a single 1953 poll of college students “26 percent indicated they were strongly opposed to the Korean War.” Still, before drawing broader conclusions about student involvement, more research is needed both into local organizations opposed to the war, especially on-campus branches of national groups dissenting against it, as well as the roles of both students and faculty in the Korean anti-war movement.

Another grass-roots group that grew up in the latter half of the war focused on parental instinct. Founded in late 1952, the Save Our Sons committee was created with the goal of shifting public opinion against the Korean War through whatever means necessary, including cover art depicting an American military cemetery under the tagline “While row on row… the crosses grow.” Clearly designed to tug at the heart strings of its readers, the newsletter also contains considerable content concerning the progress of the Korean anti-war movement on both the local and the national levels, including reports about the roles of ministers in the movement and on planned lobbying efforts in Washington, DC and Illinois. Another issue details a lobbying trip to Washington, DC by “a delegation of parents of MIDWEST area GI’s in Korea” who “left scrolls bearing thousands of signatures urging a CEASE-FIRE and the immediate return of boys from Korea” and met with congressmen and senators from Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Oregon. The final issue of Save Our Sons is eerily prescient, as the editors celebrate (and claim credit for) “the POW exchange” but worry “our boys are yet a long way from home… a long way from safe,” since they fear that American soldiers may soon “be sent back to South Korea Front Lines,” or even “sent to Indo-China to help France subdue her rebellious colony.”


72 Save Our Sons (Issue 2), Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Save Our Sons (Issue 3), Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); Save Our Sons (Issue 4), Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection)
W.E. B. DuBois’ Peace Information Center put out its own newsletter through late 1950. Called Peacegram, it focused on the organization’s wider efforts on behalf of international amity. Stressing the need for “we as individuals and as local peace groups” to pass on their “convictions to all those who make the final decisions which determine our fate,” the newsletter asserts that “Leading Americans Call For Korea Peace” including college professors, black ministers, and rabbis. DuBois would also put out another important book, *In Battle for Peace*, which according to Herbert Aptheker “formed a substantial part of the anti-Cold War and anti-McCarthyite literature circulated in the United States” in the early 1950s. Although focused on his indictment and trial (as well as his eighty-third birthday celebration) the book includes extensive discussion of fundraising efforts across the country in support of his cause, and thus suggests considerably more research needs to be done on the ways that pacifists, and other mainstream members of the Korean anti-war movement, supported the causes of their communist colleagues. The alliances between groups opposed to the Korean War also suggest a need for scholars to reassess the place of dissent in this era within the broader history of twentieth century American protest, as well as a different historiographical lens through which to re-imagine museum displays describing such dissent.

Conclusion: Relocating the Korean Anti-War Movement in U.S. History and in Museum Exhibits

The Korean anti-war movement was an important pivot point in the post-war progression from an Old Left to a New Left, setting up a foundation and serving (quite literally in some cases) as a training ground for future Vietnam anti-war protesters. Yet, this movement has been largely forgotten in the decades since, both by scholars and among the broader American public, leading to a fundamental historical misunderstanding of the arc of anti-war protests in the United States.

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73 Peacegram (Vol. 1, No. 4) Miscellaneous Folder (Swarthmore College Peace Collection); DuBois, p. 12; Widespread financial support for DuBois’ cause would suggest an earlier osmosis of anti-war sentiment.
over the course of the twentieth century and an inaccurate periodization of the post-WWII rise of the New Left. Indeed, rather than seeing the actions of conscientious objectors during the World Wars as being distinctive from the later protests against Vietnam, a realization that both older individuals (who began their careers protesting in the 1910s) and younger radicals (who would continue to engage in a range of social change movements over the next several decades) were engaged in the Korean anti-war movement suggests that there is in fact considerable continuity between early and later twentieth century progressivism. Moreover, this research suggests that many of the individuals who first became politically aware during the Korean War continued to push for social changes for the next quarter century, implying scholars should start looking back as far as 1950 to locate the cultural origins of the New Left and the so-called “Long 1960s.”

Van Goss provides a useful chronological definition of the New Left to include “all the struggles for fundamental change from the early 1950s to 1975” and notes that “the next task is to trace the New Left’s origins” in the “confrontation with the existing political, social, and cultural consensus in American life during the 1950s.” Unfortunately, in Rethinking the New Left Goss seems to accept Wittner’s idea that dissent was absent during the early 1950s, and so does not begin his search for the beginnings of the “Long 1960s” until the middle of the 1950s. Similarly, in “At the Hands of Historians: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era,” Charles Chatfield asserts that “The Next Narrative” about the Vietnam anti-war movement will “be grounded in antiwar dissent well before 1965.” Moreover, noting that “a peace movement coalesced in the 1950s around a critique of global anticommunism,” Chatfield goes on to argue that this nascent “movement was a loose coalition of liberal and radical peace groups that had evolved since World War I, and it shared a repertoire of protest actions with the concurrent civil rights
movement.” 74 One would be hard pressed to offer a better definition of the Korean anti-war movement.

One final reason why the various protests of the Korean anti-war movement have been largely forgotten is because they were so successful, unlike those against the Vietnam War. Although more American soldiers died per month in Korea than in Vietnam, the former ended after only three years, thanks to the election of an anti-war candidate, while the latter stretched on for nearly a decade, rather than ending in 1969 as it might have had an anti-war candidate been elected. 75 Once the armistice was signed, members of the Korean anti-war movement were then free to engage in activism to bring about other forms of social change, most notably the Civil Rights movement of the late 1950s which pioneered in using television to shape public opinion. Moreover, the development of mass media in conjunction with these late 1950s and early 1960s protests meant that, by the time of the Vietnam War, dissenters were much more skilled in using the mainstream press to publicize their causes, guaranteeing that the Vietnam anti-war movement of the late 1960s could not be so easily marginalized as the similar early 1950s movement had been. Ultimately it is because of the vast visibility of widespread dissent during the Vietnam War that scholars have not felt the need to look for deeper roots of that movement into the early 1950s, yet more research into the role of students and teachers, soldiers and military families, and local and state groups within the Korean anti-war movement can only shed further light on the roots of pacifist dissent during the Vietnam War era and further on into the second half of the twentieth century.


75 Eisenhower’s promise to go to Korea to end the war if elected in 1952 is noted both at the Eisenhower National Historic Site in Gettysburg and at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library and Museum in Abilene.
The medal and letter that are displayed at the Harry S Truman Library and Museum in Independence take on fresh interpretive meanings when viewed through the lens of a broader Korean anti-war movement, suggesting new audiences could be at play if this element of the exhibit is highlighted when the museum expands. I can especially imagine the Truman Library, with its history of asking challenging questions of its visiting public, being a place where the broader history of the Korean anti-war movement, from the early role of those within the New York Nine to the nationwide network that grew up during the latter half of the conflict, could be told in a way that would encourage empathy and a drive to learn more than what is noted in the display. Such a re-imagined exhibit could then also serve as a forum for protesters from different generations, and from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, to come together and to share their experiences, as well as a place to highlight the frequently-forgotten protests of groups which have often suffered mnemonic erasure. Finally, using the Truman Library exhibition to recall both the Korean War and the anti-war movement that it spurred side-by-side would reaffirm it as a space where curators create critical history displays confronting heritage tourists with the tough stuff of public memory that is still relevant today.
In previous chapters I have demonstrated how both Korean War historical exhibitions and most academic scholarship promote certain strains of public memory and omit others. In this chapter I explore whether on-screen commemoration of Korea, through film and television, does a more effective job of promoting public memory of all aspects of the war, which is especially important given the ways in which media objects such as films and television shows function as a reflection of broader cultural trends and of popular understandings of the past. Indeed, in “Black and White Memories of War: Victimization and Violence in West German War Films of the 1950s” (2012) Jay Lockenour argues that “films as ‘collective’ products” that “are the result of the work of multiple ‘creators’” (much like museum exhibits) offer “an even better insight into cultural norms and historical memory than other cultural products, such as novels” or histories. Lockenour admits “early war films, dating from the first half of the twentieth century, were typically little more than propaganda aimed at bolstering a nation’s fighting spirit” but argues “after the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950” a new wave of WWII “films helped Germans to integrate their memories of the war into a more coherent, satisfying national narrative.”

Similarly, for four decades film scholars and historians have been trying to grasp how cinema and television representations have impacted audiences’ understandings of the Korean War, but they have frequently focused on a limited selection of mass media objects and ignored the big picture.

This chapter serves three purposes. First, it offers a review of the extent historiography on Korean War films. Second, it outlines a brief history of on-screen memorialization of the Korean War from the 1950s through 2016 in the context of key cultural events over the course of several decades and with an emphasis on the role of cinematic auteurs in the production of Korean War films.

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films. Third, it looks at M*A*S*H within the context of other television shows which mention the Korean War. Fourth, it provides an update to the extent historiography by offering an in-depth analysis of several media objects that portray the Korean War, most produced between 2007 and 2016. At the conclusion of this chapter, I suggest some ways in which Korean War films from the 1950s and 1960s may have impacted the larger history of Cold War cinema. I then advance a chronology of four phases of public memory by which the history of public memorialization of the Korean War can be divided, which I plan to test in the following chapter to assess if the history of in-stone memorialization through building public monuments follows a similar pattern.

The Scholars’ (Not) Forgotten War On-Screen: An Historiography of Korea Film Studies

Cinema scholars and historians have been writing about the Korean War on-screen since the late 1970s. Lawrence Suid’s landmark Guts and Glory: Great American War Movies (1978) focused on how the military had cooperated with Hollywood since the 1910s to produce films largely designed to function as propaganda. Although Suid has little to say about Korea compared to other wars, asserting Hollywood had a hard time “portraying a conflict shaded in gray,” he does note it was during the Korean War that the individual service branches reclaimed control over their media relations, which had been centralized by the Department of Defense under Douglas Forestall, and that “one of the rare instances of the military’s solicitation of Hollywood in the whole history of their” decades-long partnership took place during the Korean War.²

Suid offers insight on the making of several films, noting the pace of when movies were released was related to military concerns while in some cases military intervention helped bypass censors, such as when Retreat, Hell! was at first forbidden to keep its title, and also establishes a scholarly paradigm for understanding early Korean War films that would be frequently written

about by other academics over the next several decades in his discussion of two 1950s films: Steel Helmet and The Bridges at Tokoi-Ri. Suid notes Samuel Fuller’s 1951 film Steel Helmet was sped “into production and hastily completed,” asserting as a result “the combat” sequences “portrayed could just as easily have taken place during World War II,” suggesting one way early Korean War films tended to conflate Korea with the Pacific Theatre of WWII. Of the 1953 adaptation of the novel The Bridges of Toko-Ri, Suid asserts “though the Navy loved the film because” of its portrayal “of carrier aviation” it was “the first true anti-war sentiment in a post-World War II Hollywood film” due to its “showing the futility of combat.” Suid adds to his interpretation of the film in a chapter called “The Navy and Korea” in Sailing on the Silver Screen, his 1996 book on naval films.3

During the 1980s several additional scholars would investigate movies about Korea produced in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as films from this era focused on the larger Cold War. According to Lester Brune in The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research (1996) “Korean War-based movies of the early 1950s are part of the reference works” from the 1980s “such as Arthur F. McClure’s Research Guide to Film History (1983).” In 1984 Daniel Leab wrote “How Red Was My Valley: Hollywood, the Cold War Film, and I Married A Communist” for the Journal of Contemporary History, which provides context for understanding Korean War films of the 1950s and early 1960s in explaining how Hollywood tried to stave off post-blacklist attacks from the House Un-American Activities Committee by making overtly “anti-communist films” as well as sci-fi movies that were Cold War allegories and historical films with Russian villains.4 Leab’s essay evolved into the article “Hollywood and the Cold War, 1945-1961,”


which he contributed to a 1993 volume edited by Robert Brent Toplin that also included a piece exploring early Cold War films, "Hollywood Laughs at the Cold War, 1947-1961” by John Lenihan. Lenihan’s contribution focuses on how 1950s comedies advanced anti-communist agendas and, according to his CV, started as a “paper delivered at the Popular Culture Meeting” in Montreal that occurred in March 1987.5

Several works about media representation of Vietnam in the late 1980s and early 1990s reshaped scholarship on war films generally, and studies of Korea in particular, starting with Daniel Hallin’s now-classic *The “Uncensored War”: The Media and Vietnam* in 1986. While Hallin’s book focuses on the television news media in the 1960s, he notes “there had been TV cameras in Korea” but asserts Vietnam was “in effect the first televised war” because “TV news was in its infancy” in the early 1950s. A 1988 conference turned into a text edited by Joan Dittmer and Gene Michaud called *From Hanoi to Hollywood: The Vietnam War in American Film* that includes an introduction asserting “the commercial film industry sets the agenda for scholarship” on war films.6 Michael Anderegg’s *Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television* (1991) highlights “the reciprocal relationship between real life and the movies” that raises the question “not simply where fact begins and fiction leaves off but” which “derives from the other,” that leads to a blurring of fiction and the realities of war present to a similar degree in Korean War movies.7

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Perhaps the most useful insights for better understanding Korean War films offered by a scholar studying public memory of Vietnam comes from Marita Sturken, who published an essay in 1991 called “The Wall, the Screen, and the Image: The Vietnam Veterans Memorial” in *Representations* which she would later transform into a chapter in *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering* (1997). Sturken here uses “the concept of the screen,” as both “a surface that is projected upon” and “also an object that hides something from view,” as a way to investigate “questions of public remembrance.” Sturken goes on to analyze Vietnam War films as “forms of memory that function to provide collective rememberings, to construct history, and to sublime within them the experience of the veterans,” but “are limited by the nationalism of the American cinema” which she argues must ultimately “make way for the next war.” The same year her book was published, Sturken would directly contribute to Korean War cinema scholarship in her 1997 essay “Oliver Stone’s Docudramas,” in which she argues that “having actor Anthony Hopkins reenact Richard Nixon’s most famous moments of image history” such as the “kitchen debate,” live coverage “of the Checkers Speech,” shots of “the endless campaign, and Nixon’s late night visit to debate politics with antiwar protesters at the Lincoln Memorial” (scenes that she says “might have been laughed out of the script had they not been based on fact”) all add to the film’s credibility, despite the fact that it was “often characterized as being historically contaminating.”

Bruce Cumings, who gained a reputation as a radical left-wing Korea historian during the 1980s, had already written a chapter about “Documentary and Docudrama” in his 1992 book *War and Television*. While Cumings notes potential problems for any documentary that “fools the

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viewer because it seems like ‘an open book,’” he asserts that “the television medium is at its best with the documentary form” while “often at its worst with docudrama,” which he argues “is crooked because it deceives people into thinking they are getting the ‘real thing.’” Cumings also delves briefly into what he considers the most important mass media representations of the Korean War, arguing that *The Manchurian Candidate* is “the one and only classic film of the Korean War” because it wrapped “the Orientalism and communist-hating of the 1950s in the black humor of the 1960s” and that “with the exception of Sam Fuller’s *Battle Helmet*, there is barely a memorable film among the many produced in the 1950s” in part because he believes films like *The Bridges of Toko-Ri* “just happen to be set in Korea” rather than really being about the Korean War.9

The most comprehensive scholarly treatment of Korean War films to the mid-1990s is an unpublished 1994 University of Pennsylvania English Ph.D. dissertation titled “The Korean War and American Memory” by James Kerin in which he comments on several 1950s and 1960s films as well as on the television series *M*A*S*H*. Kerin, whose manuscript also includes analysis of literary fiction and memoirs detailing the war, reminds readers that many of these early films are based on novels and plays. Kerin makes observations about several films, suggesting “only *Pork Chop Hill*, ably depicted the futility of the violence” that marked the latter half of the conflict, while asserting “Hollywood did not create much that was memorable on the basis of Korea” with several exceptions including Samuel Fuller’s *The Steel Helmet* and the film version of *M*A*S*H* directed by Robert Altman. Kerin’s study also suggests some of the ways that Korean War films have tended to be conflated with movies about World War II and the Vietnam War in discussing *War is Hell*, the film Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested in Dallas while watching in 1963, which Kerin asserts “points straight ahead to Vietnam and the practice known as ‘fragging’” while

simultaneously looking backward with “an inspirational introduction by the most famous soldier-
hero of World War II—Audie Murphy.”*10

War vet Paul Edwards offers some of the most in-depth analysis on both individual media objects
and the total arc of Korean War cinema, the somewhat haphazard structure of the book limits its
usefulness. In a chapter titled “The War Films: The Slacker to Hamburger Hill” Edwards opens
his discussion of early Korea films by noting The Steel Helmet, which was shot “in only twelve
days for a cost of slightly more than $100,000,” depicts a realistic “clash between the ‘tough-guy’
professional of the regular army” and “short term less committed” draftees, laying out his idea
that not all Korea films are alike.11 Edwards then discusses how this realist theme is also “found
in Retreat Hell!(1952),” about “a Marine colonel leading his troops in defeat from the Chosin
Reservoir,” in one of the many air war films, “Sabre Jet (1953), where the American pilots
commute from their homes in Japan for their nine-to-five jobs in Korea, bombing cities they
cannot see,” and “in Hold Back the Night (1956), where the officer lures his men through enemy
territory with promises of a bottle of Scotch.” In a chapter titled “The Isolation of the Korean War
Film,” Edwards offers overarching observations on “the character of the Korean War film” such
as that “Korean War films were generic,” that “films portray the Korean War as one fought by
governments, not as a people’s war” like WWII, that it was “a war without heroes and without
victory,” and that it “was portrayed by Hollywood” primarily “as a bland war” sans excitement.
In a chapter titled “Why John Wayne Never Made a Korean War Film” Edwards says “it is hard
to believe, looking back on Hollywood of the 1950s, that Wayne” never starred in a movie about

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10 James Kerin, “The Korean War and American History,” (University of Pennsylvania PhD Dissertation,

chapter called “Action and Tension,” Edwards posits four types of Korea movies: what he sees as realistic
the Korean War, suggesting the answers lies in the films, since a war having an ambiguous outcome lacked a role for “the character people knew as ‘the Duke.’”

In 1998, in *America’s Wars in Asia: A Cultural Approach to History and Memory*, a book co-edited by Philip West, Korean literature scholar David McCann contributed a piece titled “Our Forgotten War: The Korean War in Korean and American Popular Culture.” In his essay McCann mostly focuses on South Korean media objects, but does assert *The Manchurian Candidate* is one American film that seems to have “resonated with the public sentiments of this period” because, he argues, it successfully “played to the anxieties of the American people” and “to a mood of national paranoia.” In 2001 another book co-edited by West was published, *Remembering the “Forgotten War”: The Korean War Through Literature and Art*, which includes an essay by Americanist Lary May called “Reluctant Crusaders: Korean War Films and the Lost Audience.” May here asserts that “what was most important about these Korean War films” was that they were designed to help “forge a cold war consensus at home,” but while movie “producers identified the Korean War with victory culture,” he argues, film “audiences did not make that same association.”

Cinema studies scholar Rick Worland starts to sketch out a typology of early Korean War films in his 1999 essay “The Korean War Film as Family Melodrama: ‘The Bridges at Toko-Ri’ (1954).” Worland asserts that many Korean War films can be best categorized as examples of situationally set melodramas, a broader sub-genre of cinema that was popular in Hollywood

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12 Ibid, p. 11-12, 23-25. Edwards, founder of the Center for the Study of the Korean War in Independence, Missouri, mentioned this chapter in discussing my idea for Oliver Stone to make a Korea film in June 2014.

during the 1950s era, rather than as traditional combat pictures. Worland notes that “The Bridges of Toko-Ri was the most commercially successful Korean War movie” of the 1950s and “was honored with two Academy Award nominations for Film Editing and Special Effects, winning the latter.” Worland also points out that “issues of gender and generational conflict, the steady ground of Family Melodrama, repeatedly assert themselves” in the film, and notes these melodramatic elements “would in fact become characteristic of Korean War movies.” Worland suggests that there are at least “two major tendencies of the Korean War” on screen: “pure combat films” which “beat the drum against Red barbarians at the Golden Gate” and movies “in which romance rivaled war in dramatic interest,” while mentioning a third category of POW picture in a note, but choosing not to build on the work of Edwards and Kerin, who had both noted that sub-genre.14

Christian Appy, who had previously written about Vietnam, also argues The Bridges at Toko-Ri should be considered a sentimental film in the 2001 essay titled “‘We’ll Follow The Old Man’: Strains of Sentimental Militarism in Popular Films of the Fifties,” which he contributed to Rethinking Cold War Culture, co-edited by Peter Kuznick, who later collaborated on book and film versions of Oliver Stone’s Untold History of the United States. In Working Class War (1993) Appy focused on his work with a “Rap Group” of Boston-area veterans suffering from PTSD, asserting “Vietnam veterans have carried the heaviest sense of responsibility for the conduct and outcome of the war.” Appy’s essay argues “popular fictions of the early Cold War construct the values and assumptions attending the permanent militarization of American society,” asserting “films like The Bridges at Toko-Ri” helped to “support the militarization of Cold War culture” and by the film’s end audiences “may well have forgotten” the protagonist’s “initial dissent.”15


15 Christian Appy, Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993) p. 8; Appy, “‘We’ll Follow the Old Man’: Strains of Sentimental Militarism in Popular Films of the Fifties” in Rethinking Cold War Culture ed. by Peter Kusnick and James
The most thorough work to date on films and television shows about the Korean War is Robert Lentz’s encyclopedic 2003 text *Korean War Filmography: 91 English Language Features through 2000*, which not only includes in-depth commentaries on each film and an assessment of the arc of Korean War cinema as a whole but also contains several especially useful appendices. For example, Lentz notes Samuel Fuller’s *Steel Helmet* was “the first major Korean War film to play in theatres” while arguing that it moves beyond “traditional heroism in favor of stressing plain, simple survival” and stands out as a realistic film able to “examine war as it is without trying to make grandiose statements,” but suggests Samuel Fuller’s second Korean War film *Fixed Bayonets* “is far different and much more traditional” as an example of patriotic propaganda in which “flag waving is evident.” As Lentz describes it, another of Fuller’s several Korean War films, *The Crimson Kimono* (1959), is a clear example of a melodrama in that two “detectives—who were best buddies and survived the Korean War together—both fall for the same girl.” Lentz also notes that several Korean War films can best be categorized by their focus on the psychological impact of the war on veterans, such as the 1956 movie *Toward the Unknown*, which is focused on “the guilt that still racks veterans who cracked under the pressure of torture,” or the 1958 film *The Fearmakers* that looks at the “psychological problems of veterans who have not yet recovered from their stays in Communist captivity” in Korea.

Lentz’s several appendices, which list films broken up into categories such as Level of Accuracy or Propaganda, for example, are especially useful for scholars attempting to understand the bigger picture in terms of Korean War cinema. Lentz defines “Historical Accuracy Level” as containing action scenes that “reflects circumstances which could have or would have occurred

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Gilbert (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2001) p. 96-7. Appy notes that more people saw *Bridges of Toko-Ri* than either *Steel Helmet* or *Pork Chop Hill*.

during the time of the war” such as in the film *Cease Fire* (1953), which he says eschews “excessive flagwaving in favor of low key realism,” and *The Great Imposter* (1960), which he asserts was “perhaps the most unusual true story from the Korean War” to actually be made into a film. Several films that made Lentz’s list of most historically accurate also appear on his list of Korean War films having a high “Patriotic Propaganda Level” including *The McConnell Story* (1955), the tale of “the Korean War’s first triple Jet Ace” which he asserts is so propagandistic that it “could double as a recruiting poster for young Air Force fliers,” and *Underwater Warrior* (1958), which Lentz says is more “low-key and realistic” in its depiction of the history of “the Navy’s Underwater Demolitions Team.” Indeed, according to one of the few overarching assessments in the book, Lentz asserts that “nearly half” of Korean War films “contain a high degree” of propagandistic material “intended to spur public support for the fighting troops as well as the military machinery” and to “promote patriotic ideals, which at the time were largely in favor of halting the spread of communism.”

In the mid-2000s, two scholars discussed the 1957 film *Battle Hymn* in larger works. In *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (2003), Christina Klein argues *Battle Hymn,* “based on the true story of Air Force Colonel Dean Hess” who “arranged a mass evacuation and adoption of Korean War orphans through the Christian Children’s Fund,” was seen “as a success story in the fight against Asian communism” based on changes in the definition of family. In a chapter titled “Hollywood Goes To Korea,” from *Hollywood Asian* (2006), Hye Seung Chung argues that the film is a sort of melodrama because “*Battle Hymn’s* unprecedented gravitation toward Korean themes” has made it “the best-known Hollywood Korean film” in South Korea “with the possible exception of the 1955 melodrama, *Love Is A

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Many Splendored Thing.” Chung notes one way “Battle Hymn differentiated itself from other Korean War films” was “allowing twenty-five orphans from the Cheju orphanage to represent themselves,” including “indigenous dialogue, dance, and songs.” Yet the clearest marker of Battle Hymn as melodrama is “unlike many grim Korean War films,” it “ends on an overwhelming upbeat note” and “reaches a self-affirming conclusion.” Chung also argues “Samuel Fuller can be claimed as a Korean War auteur” for directing four films either set in Korea or using the war as a primary backstory over the dozen years from 1951-1963.19

In 2010 two cinema scholars penned articles that classify the 1959 film Pork Chop Hill as a most memorable piece of film propaganda. In “War, Cinema, Prosthetic Memory and Popular Understanding: A Case Study of the Korean War,” Australian scholar Judith Keene argues that “the 1959 combat film Pork Chop Hill, directed by Lewis Milestone” and with Gregory Peck as “a patriotic soldier and a commander with integrity,” is as “well known” as any other Korea film, and is an example of “USA-as-Melting-Pot” propaganda in portraying a “Japanese-American ‘retread’ from” WWII as “patriotic and utterly reliable in combat.” Similarly, in “Revisiting Cold War Propaganda: Close Readings of Chinese and American Film Representations of the Korean War,” Paul Pickowicz argues that there is “no doubt, the most memorable American propaganda film on the Korean War produced in the 1950s was Pork Chop Hill (1959),” which he argues is “a classic 1950s early Cold War work of propaganda on the meaning of the Korean War.”20

Since 2012 multiple works have returned to the topic of how Prisoners of War were portrayed in Korean War era films of the 1950s and 1960s. According to Aaron O’Connell, in

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Underdogs: The Making of the Modern Marine Corps (2012), starting as early as 1954, movies like Prisoner of War and The Bamboo Prison “reframed POW collaborators as falsely accused patriots or American double agents,” yet just two years later the film The Strange Intruder “depicted veterans as shell-shocked psychopaths.”21 According to Charles Young in his 2014 book Name, Rank, and Serial Number, the 1956 film The Rack was “the first Korean POW feature film that satisfied the Defense Department enough to give full assistance,” but that it also did suggest “that honest men might collaborate.” Young also asserts that, “like The Rack, Time Limit built sympathy for a man accused of failing his duty, yet still” was still backed by “the Army’s Motion Picture branch.”22

In 2014, in Embattled Memories: Contested Meanings in Korean War Memorials, Suhi Choi returns to the topic of non-fiction films on the Korean War when she notes several new “documentaries came out right before and after the fiftieth anniversary of the Korean War” such as “The Korean War: Our Time In Hell (Discovery Channel, 1997), Battle for Korea (PBS, 2001), Korean War in Color (Goldhil Home Media International, 2002), and The Forgotten War (ABC, 2003).” One book “chapter undertakes a textual analyses of Battle for Korea,” which as Choi details it “is a 120-minute compilation documentary of black-and-white visual archives that relates the story of the Korean War” largely “using newly arrived visual archives from the Soviet Union and China.” Choi argues that “MacArthur in Battle for Korea is glorified with substantial narrative support as well as with tension-filled battle scenes” and says that the film “frames the


Korean War as a battle for the Western powers after the Second World War, in which America is surely the protagonist” and “ignores the domestic context of the Korean Peninsula.”

Early Korea films have continued to be a topic of interest for scholars. In his plenary address at the Philippine Korean Studies Symposium in November 2015, titled “Intrigues, Maneuvers, Interventions: Screen Images of the Korean War and Its Aftermath,” Joel David asserts Samuel Fuller was “one of [the] favorite auteurs” of The Cahiers du Cinéma group of critics” and notes he “directed a couple of Korean War combat movies in 1951, Fixed Bayonets! and The Steel Helmet.” Yet in David’s view “it was a later Fuller film depicting the consequences of the war, Shock Corridor (1963)” which “is now regarded as his masterpiece,” and “led to a subgenre of the combat film” that he terms “the prisoner-of-war or POW film.”

Several preliminary conclusions can be drawn about prior scholarship on Korean War films. Though no individual has sketched out a single typology including the four major types of Korea film most frequently identified (propaganda, realistic, melodramatic, and POW pictures), the composite work of several scholars suggests all Korean War fiction films can be assessed by using such criteria. Moreover, multiple scholars have asserted the importance of studying both directors and audiences to understand the often-conflicting perspectives held by the creators and the consumers of popular culture. Several scholars have also argued that Korea has tended to be conflated on-screen with the Pacific theatre of WWII or Vietnam, which has hurt broader cultural knowledge about Korea since, as others have noted, mediated images of war often get conflated in public memory with the realities of any given conflict. This double-conflation, of mass media representations of the Korean War with either WWII or Vietnam alongside confusion of fictional

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films with realities of war, may help explain why Korea is still called a forgotten war. Moreover, those scholars that study Korean War mass media objects have tended to stick to individual films which premiered in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as the TV series MASH (which I look at in a separate section), rather than exploring the overarching history of Korea on-screen or evaluating contemporary representations of the war in terms of the types established in studies of earlier films, which are among the goals of the remaining sections of this chapter. The next section offers a fresh narrative of Korean War films from the 1950s to the 2010s, while the sections that follow explore specific media objects in depth: the television series M*A*S*H, Mad Men, and Oliver Stone’s Untold History of the United States, and the films Indignation and Operation Chromite.

A Brief History of the (Not) Forgotten War On-Screen: American Films about Korea

Of the more than one hundred English language films mentioning the Korean War that appeared from 1951 to 2016, more than two-thirds were produced in the first fifteen years after the start of the war. Based on the work of previous scholars studying this era, this initial wave of films can be classified into four main types: propaganda, realism, melodrama, and POW pictures. These films often featured major Hollywood stars, such as in the 1966 comedy Not with My Wife, You Don’t! starring Tony Curtis and George C. Scott as “womanizing fighter pilots who battle” for an “Italian nurse in Korea.” Many of these films were based on 1950s books, such as The Bridges of Toko-Ri by Doylestown, Pennsylvania native James Michener, who was already well known for the musical version of his Pulitzer prize winning book Tales of the South Pacific when the Philadelphia based Saturday Evening Post hired him to cover the Korean War in 1951. Traveling aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Valley Forge, Michener reported on Navy jet and rescue helicopter pilots, which became the focus of his next novel then the basis for a film.  

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In addition to frequently starring famous Hollywood actors and often being based upon books by well-regarded authors, many Korean War films were shot by directors who are considered to be cinematic auteurs. For example, “an existential 66-minute war picture called *Shape of Fear* that would eventually be given a slightly more salacious title, *Fear and Desire*” prior to its release, was Stanley Kubrick’s 1953 directorial debut, though it “lacks the specificity of the settings of *Paths of Glory* (World War I) and *Full Metal Jacket* (the Vietnam War).”

Another Korea film shot by an auteur is *Battle Hymn*, directed in 1957 by Douglas Sirk, who is today most widely recalled for his 1959 version of *Imitation of Life*. One director, Samuel Fuller, an auteurs’ auteur according to a scholar of his movies, directed four early Korean War films.

*The Manchurian Candidate*, directed by John Frankenheimer (a cinematic auteur who had previously shot *The Birdman of Alcatraz* and would later go on to direct stylish thrillers such as *Black Sunday* and to win Emmy awards for his television docudramas), plays upon widespread cultural concerns over whether or not POWs back from Korea can ever be truly trusted. The film stars Frank Sinatra, who was also credited as a producer, playing a Korean War veteran who is plagued by nightmares about his time as a POW, in one of the most iconic openings in all of Hollywood history. Moreover, the movie itself was forgotten for years, in a way, as Roger Ebert noted in 2003; after JFK’s death and a dispute with the movie’s other producers, Sinatra bought the film rights and kept it from the public eye for two decades until it was re-released in 1988.

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Cinematic concern over sleeper agents played directly into post-WWII worries about masculinity, clear in such films as Rebel Without A Cause (1957), and patriotism, as represented by a majority of films made about Korea in the decade afterward that celebrated the military. Psychological studies and critical histories blaming post-war culture for defeat in Korea reflected the idea that in a consumption dominated society where women played a larger role than ever before men might no longer be able to withstand the hardships of war, or might be seduced into helping the enemy by “exotic” women (playing upon concerns about the first integrated Army) or even men amidst the Lavender Scare of the early 1950s. The Red Scare of the era, the peak of Joseph McCarthy’s career, exacerbated concerns over if Americans could trust their government or military. Private companies and states created loyalty oaths and interrogated people, while the loss of China in 1949 and Soviet test of an atomic bomb that ultimately resulted in the execution of the Rosenbergs in 1953 (during the last weeks of the Korean War), led some in search of secret Communists. In The Manchurian Candidate a number of these larger cultural concerns played out in a political drama.

The early 1960s saw a revival of Hollywood interest in this POW sub-genre with The Nun and the Sergeant, War Hunt as well as The Manchurian Candidate in 1962, then in 1963 the film The Hook. These early POW films helped mediate larger concern over POWS, PTSD, the effects of the war on the veterans who fought in Korea, and the impact of those vets on American society. Indeed, almost a quarter of the fifty Hollywood films on Korea made in the decade after the armistice dealt with issues of memory before the sub-genre faded following JFK’s death. In November 1963 War is Hell was released to limited venues, including the Dallas theatre where Lee Harvey Oswald was arrested after JFK’s assassination. Some conspiracies even suggest

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that Oswald, who had lived in the USSR and married a Russian woman, was really a Soviet agent brainwashed to kill Kennedy in a plot that could have come right from a Korean War POW film.

While the assassination of JFK at the hands of a Marine marksman who had lived in Russia was the major event that led to Hollywood backing off its interrogation of POWs and PTSD issues, there were other political, social, cultural, and international issues in the 1950s and early 1960s that led to American audiences losing interest in Korea films generally. The rise of Civil Rights in the American consciousness, and the foreign policy drive to repair relations with developing nations after the 1955 Bandung Conference, made depictions of a racially distinct enemy politically and socially problematic. The launch of Sputnik in 1957 and fall of Cuba in 1959 turned Americans away from an interest in Asia, even as Eisenhower was sending military advisors to Vietnam. The rise of the teenager as cultural icon and closely divided 1960 election, in which Kennedy campaigned on his youth and the future of America, encouraged the nation to look forward instead of back to Korea. The Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis, and building of the Berlin Wall focused the nation on Europe and Latin America even as Kennedy set up Strategic Hamlets in South Vietnam. Indeed, it was in the mid-1960s, as the public did begin to focus in earnest on Vietnam after the Gulf of Tonkin resolutions, that the Korean War entered an era when it was less often depicted in films.

After playing a key role in the big screen for almost two decades, Korea nearly disappeared after the late 1960s. The only major Hollywood films of the 1970s about the Korean War were M*A*S*H in 1970 and MacArthur in 1977, yet in different ways both of these movies obscure the memory of that conflict. David Halberstam and many other scholars have argued that while the cinematic auteur Robert Altman’s movie version of Richard Hooker’s 1968 war novel MASH is “ostensibly about Korea, the film was really about Vietnam.”

Indeed, with the lone

29 David Halberstam, The Coldest Winter: America and the Korean War (New York: Hyperion, 2007) p. 4. Sadly Halberstam, who is better known for his The Best and the Brightest and The Fifties, died shortly after
exception of the opening crawl containing the word “Korea” there is no mention of the geographic context of the subject war anywhere in the script. Meanwhile, *MacArthur* “devotes relatively little attention to Korea” in comparison to WWII and the late 1940s in a movie that “traces the developing conflict and power struggle between the five-star general and President Harry Truman” according to James Kerin, while Lawrence Suid also notes other issues with the film’s accuracy.30

During this period, public memory of the Korean War was further obscured by the overarching political, social, cultural and international focus of the United States on Vietnam from the mid-1960s, when the first major anti-war marches and public draft card burnings began, through the early 1980s, when the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall on the National Mall in Washington was completed. Richard Nixon’s decision to end the draft in 1973, amidst the twenty-year anniversary of the armistice, helped to shift public focus away from the specifics of the Korean War even as it still encouraged generalized commemoration, while Nixon’s visit to China (and recognition of the People’s Republic as the legitimate government of that nation), would end one of the ongoing foreign policy issues that had long-lingerred from the Korean War. Moreover, Nixon’s demands for the return of all Vietnam POWs, a persistent cultural concern reflected in early 1980s films such as *Rambo: First Blood, Part II* would lead to renewed calls for an accounting of Korea POWs but nothing like the focus on the issue that occurred in the 1950s. Additionally, it was only after the Vietnam Wall was built in 1982 that the drive to create a similar national memorial for Korean War Veterans began, although it took a decade to finish.

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30 Kerin, p. 348; Suid, p. 303-304. Suid notes Truman is shown living at the White House when he did not.
The last major Hollywood film that would be set in the Korean War for the next several decades, *Inchon* (1981), was so poorly received that it won the Third Annual Razzie Award for Worst Picture of the Year, presented on the same night as the Oscars.\(^{31}\) The 1986 Dutch film *Field of Honor* --which Lentz says “stands virtually alone among Korean War films” in that “nobody in the story is trying to be heroic” but instead “it’s about survival and returning home intact”—debuted “at the Cannes film festival in 1986 and played briefly in American theatres later that year.” Moreover, according to Paul Edwards, while the 1986 film *Heartbreak Ridge* starring Clint Eastwood as “a foul-mouthed Congressional Medal of Honor gunnery sergeant” is “a movie only peripherally related to the Korean War,” it turns out “more than one Korean veteran went to see” it since they thought “it was about ‘his’ war because the title names a place of Korea War action,” in an example of Hollywood fostering conflated recollections of Korea.\(^{32}\)

In other ways the Korean War was not so much conflated as overshadowed by Vietnam on screen during the mid-1980s, given Oliver Stone’s 1986 film *Platoon* won Best Picture at the Academy Awards, a phenomena that continued into the next era of Korean War public memory as *Platoon* was followed the next year by *Full Metal Jacket* and *Good Morning, Vietnam* --and by dozens of additional films over the ensuing two decades-- while the Korean War entered a period when although it frequently functioned as an important element in understanding the backstory of a key character, it was rarely depicted on-screen. Stone briefly notes the Korean War at the outset of *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), in a scene of an abstracted 1950s Independence Day parade including disabled young veterans as well as a scene where a Marine Recruiter (played by Tom Berenger) makes mention of Chosin along the way to enlisting the young Ron Kovic (Tom

\(^{31}\) According to Daniel Gold, in his August 12, 2016 *New York Times* review of *Operation Chromite*, the 1981 film of the invasion “was the first to sweep the big four categories at the Razzie awards: worst picture, worst director, worst screenplay, and worse actor—Laurence Olivier in a latex-enhanced chin playing Gen, Douglas MacArthur.”

Cruise). While they help constitute a backstory key to the plotline, these scenes simply set up the film’s primary focus on the Vietnam War and its aftermath. Indeed, most American movies from the late-1980s to the early 2000s that mention the Korean War at all use the conflict primarily as a backstory rather than as a key focus of the plot.

*Chattahoochee* (1990), based on the real-life story of a Korean War veteran who was mistreated at a mental hospital in 1955, begins in 1952 although the conflict “is only momentarily glimpsed” in the opening scenes. *For The Boys* (1991), which follows the careers of USO singers through three wars, devotes much more run time to both WWII and Vietnam than to Korea, while in *Three Wishes* (1995), which follows the family of a Korean War POW in the years before he eventually returns home, the war itself is never actually shown.33 In *The Big Lebowski* (1998) the title character, not to be confused with The Dude, is wounded in the Korean War, while *Big Fish* (2003) is primarily about issues of memory --specifically the protagonist’s quest to reconstruct his dead father’s life story starting with his return from Korea-- yet the war itself is not shown.

Korea is also a key backstory in Oliver Stone’s 1995 film *Nixon*. *Nixon* premiered in late 1995 amidst a federal government shutdown that was prompted by sharp divisions between Democratic President Bill Clinton and new Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich, divisions that in part stemmed from the “culture wars” of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which revolved around issues ranging from abortion and gay rights to the mass media and public education.34 Moreover, as observers at the time noted, these cultural divisions were not new but stemmed from 1960s era divisions between supporters of the Young Americans for Freedom, who most likely voted for Richard Nixon, and followers of progressive groups such as the SDS and SNCC, many of whom grew more disillusioned with politics after the death of RFK. Oliver Stone places *Nixon*
directly within this partisan historical debate at the outset, by framing the film as “an attempt to understand the truth of Richard Nixon” which “is based on numerous public sources and on an incomplete historical record,” while also admitting “some scenes among protagonists have been conjectured,” as the audience is informed during an opening text crawl.

Anthony Hopkins, as Richard Nixon, is shown in a *March of History* Newsreel participating in the Chambers-Hiss case while a Congressman and engaging in Red Baiting attacks --in which he calls his opponent “Pink right down to her underwear”-- on the way to winning election to the Senate in 1950. In what is the only specific mention of the Korean War within the entire film, the journalistic voiceover next notes that Nixon “blamed the war in Korea on a weak foreign policy” and was “just as aggressive” as “his Republican ally, Joe McCarthy.” This statement is followed shortly by a silent array of images, including footage of both Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, whose arrest in July of 1950 and execution in June of 1953 roughly bookend the Korean War. Indeed, the focus is on domestic events at the time of the Korean War such as the 1950 campaign, the rise of Joseph McCarthy, and the lead up to the Rosenbergs’ trial.

An array of political, social, cultural, and international events from the mid-1980s to the early 2000s encouraged Americans to ignore the details of the Korean War, even as the war was abstractly recalled with the dedication of the DC memorial and the fiftieth anniversary cycle. The decline of the Cold War from the mid-1980s, thanks partly to the Soviet policies of glasnost and perestroika that helped ease tensions, and the rise of domestic political concerns about hard drugs and crime turned Americans inward. While the location of the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea would seemingly have provided a perfect opportunity to re-examine the Korean War, newscasters instead mostly focused on the emerging economic might of the so-called Asian Tigers and ignored the persistence of repressive politics in both parts of the peninsula. The end of the Cold War, starting with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, led to a search for new challenges both on the domestic front (with George H. W. Bush’s Thousand Points of Light) and globally,
especially after the 1991 Iraq War, with the Middle East replacing the Far East as a key interest. Even the war’s fiftieth anniversary cycle from 2000 to 2003 was obscured after the 9/11 attacks.

Gran Torino (2008) is similar to M*A*S*H, and Heartbreak Ridge, in that it potentially conflates Korea with Vietnam given the way that the Korean War veteran played by Clint Eastwood, who owns the title car, finds absolution by helping a teenager whose Hmong family had immigrated to the United States after aiding America in the Vietnam War. Olympus Has Fallen (2013) depicts a covert Korean attack on the White House which the villain claims is blowback for the long-term impact of American involvement in Korea. Cloud Atlas (2013) uses the Korean War only as backstory despite covering six distinct time periods. However, several mass media objects since 2007 do depict the Korean War, as I explore in later sections.

A close reading of several mass media objects portraying the Korean War that have appeared in the last decade (a narrative TV series, a documentary series, and two films) suggests traditional depictions of Korea may be shifting. For example, rather than conflate Korea with WWII or Vietnam, recent media objects depicting the Korean War make it clear the war was a distinct conflict with its own unique history and complex regional politics, even while these media objects still seem to share some qualities with early films about Korea. Perhaps this is because, as military journalist Thomas Ricks notes in the 2014 Foreign Policy article “Following the money through war movies tells us what the American audience wants,” ticket sales suggest “American audiences appear to still embrace the John Wayne tradition” of war film.

35 White House Down came out in the same year as Olympus Has Fallen and has almost-precisely the same plotline, save for the antagonist being a CIA agent instead of a North Korean. However, while White House Down grossed $73 million in box office receipts, despite costing over twice that amount to make, Olympus Has Fallen brought in nearly $99 million in box office receipts but cost only $70 million to produce.

36 This also ignores the reminders of the war in satires such as Team America World Police (2004) and The Interview (2014), which garnered much attention as a result of the “Sony Hack” that occurred in fall 2014.

37 Thomas Ricks, “Following the money through war movies tells us what the American audience wants,” Foreign Policy (3/24/2014). Ricks discusses WWII, Vietnam, and War on Terror films but no Korea films.
a full assessment of these several new mass media objects requires an evaluation of what the
audiences have had to say about them in their own words as well as how they have rated them,
broken down by gender and age group, in addition to exploring scholarly analyses, producers’
perspectives, and critical contexts. However, before exploring these contemporary Korean War
media objects, we must quickly look back at the most famous Korean War television series,
*M*A*S*H*, and at the decades-long history of Korea on the small screen.

*M*A*S*H* in American Public Memory: The Korean War on Television since the 1960s

The 1980s would see the first scholarly attempts to assess the television series *M*A*S*H*,
which soon became one of the most popular topics amongst those academics interested in Korean
War media. Scholarly critique of the show would begin even before it went off the air, with one
early example being a 1980 extended essay for the *Washington Post* by Joel Swerdlow, the author
of *Remote Control: Television and the Manipulation of American Life* (1978) who would later co-
author *To Heal A Nation: The Story of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial* (1984) with Jan Scruggs,
whose advocacy helped create that DC monument. Swerdlow’s article, titled simply “MASH,”
begins by highlighting the widespread cultural impact of the show, which he notes was by 1980
being broadcast in syndication to more than 140 cities nationwide and was then beating first-run
releases of several shows according to Neilson Ratings, while brand new episodes of *M*A*S*H*
were second only to *60 Minutes* in popularity. Swerdlow’s April 1980 article also notes that due
to the success of the show “all three networks now plan Vietnam-based series,” while asserting it
was not always a success but increased in popularity gradually over the course of the 1970s.
Swerdlow posits several explanations for the success of the show, which include the assertion
that despite changes to the writing staff and the acting ensemble, the overall quality has remained
high, as well the arguments that the show has stayed relevant to issues, “tapped in[to] [the] 1970s
turn to nostalgia,” and “contrary to its anti-war reputation” the series “has never been controversial” with groups like the VFW, since it is presented as a comedy.\(^{38}\)

The first book length treatment of the series also came out in 1980, mostly dealing with issues of production, although author David Reiss would re-release \(M*A*S*H: The Exclusive Inside Story of TV’s Most Popular Show\) in 1983 with an update covering the final three seasons, and last episode, of the show. \(The Last Days of MASH: Photographs and Notes\) by Alan Alda and his wife Arlene, also published in 1983, was only the first book written by a cast member, to be followed by \(The Secrets of the M*A*S*H Mess: The Lost Recipes of Private Igor\) (1997) by Jeff Maxwell and \(Gary Burghoff: To M*A*S*H and Back\) (2009), a memoir by the only cast member to star in both the film and the television versions of the story. Although \(The Complete Book of M*A*S*H\) (1988) by Suzy Kalter, the most exhaustive of these early remembrances of the series, tends to focus primarily on issue of production, while serving as an excellent reference because of its comprehensive treatment of every episode of the series, her book also includes some analysis and much insight on audience reception. Indeed, Kalter’s description of “MASH-BASHs,” during which “fans gathered in bars in their old Army fatigues” to watch the final episode, helps provide a sense, beyond numbers, of how impactful was this most highly rated broadcast in TV history.\(^{39}\)

Two scholars writing in the early 1990s about Korean War memory generally mention \(M*A*S*H\). Indeed, in 1992 in \(War and Television\), in addition to arguing that several 1950s films conflate Korea with the Pacific theatre of WWII, Bruce Cumings asserts \(M*A*S*H\) was really “a series about Vietnam, once removed to Korea” while also describing how the forgotten war trope made its way into the widely-watched 1983 “final episode of the television show,” during which the main character “Hawkeye opens a bottle of cognac and remarks, ‘We Drink to Forget.’” In his


1994 doctoral dissertation, titled “The Korean War and American Memory,” James Kerin, in contrast, argues that while he thinks the film is more of a document about the Vietnam War, “from its inception the series” M*A*S*H, which he calls “the most recognizable cinematic artifact of the Korean War” oeuvre, instead “was firmly grounded in the Korean experience.”

The first book-length academic study devoted to the M*A*S*H TV series, published in 1998, was Watching M.A.S.H., Watching America: A Social History of the 1972-1983 Television Series by James Wittebols. Asserting that “the legacy of the program illustrates the inherent conservatism of television” Wittebols concludes that, contrary to other assessments which stress the show’s “far fewer critical moments that turned a sharp eye on the militarism” of the United States, in his view “M*A*S*H serves as an excellent example of the limitations of social expression in network television.” In 1999, in War and American Popular Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia, historian D. Melissa Hilbish offered two useful pieces of information about the larger position of the TV series in American culture, noting that in July 1983 “shortly after the conclusion of the television show, an exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution” titled “M*A*S*H: Binding Up the Wounds” tried “to merge the Korean War with its popular culture,” and asserting that in 1997 when “the last mobile army surgical hospital permanently closed” that “it seemed only fitting that members of the television cast” were “a part of the official ceremonies.”

Since the late 2000s, three works have been published that offer considerable additional context for understanding M*A*S*H. In 2008 in M*A*S*H, part of the TV Milestones Series, David Scott Diffrient argues that not only did the show actually do “more to inscribe the idea of ‘Korea’ in America’s collective unconscious than any other cultural production” but that

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40 Cumings, War and Television, p. 148-149; Kerin, p. 369.

M*A*S*H “made a difference in how we see the world, how we deal with death, and how we cope with loss in our daily lives.” The next year in 2009 the encyclopedic, 800-page long TV’s M*A*S*H: The Ultimate Guide Book by Ed Solomon was published, including numerous new interviews with cast members, writers, and producers as well as information that is available in no other compendium about the show. Most recently, in 2016, in MASH FAQ: Everything Left to Know About the Best Care Anywhere, Dale Sherman asserts that “the image of what we’ve seen in MASH is what we know today as the Korean War” and it is thus “a fiction that helped shape our reality.”

There were a few television shows in the 1960s which depicted the Korean War, prior to even the 1968 novel MASH that was the inspiration for both the film and the television series. In Name, Rank, and Serial Number Charles Young notes that even a decade after the war “Chinese brainwashing was still topical enough to be taken up in 1963’s The Three Stooges Go Around the World in a Daze,” while “the theme of unfair treatment of POWs is explicit in a 1963 episode of the science fiction TV show The Outer Limits” titled “Nightmare,” and the TV movie The Case Against Paul Riker that originally aired on NBC on October 10 and 17 of 1963, reflects many of the same themes seen in early Korean War POW films. Moreover, while only a few Hollywood films in the 1970s depicted Korea, the war appeared more often on TV. On November 23, 1971, two days before Thanksgiving, ABC aired a made for TV movie called The Reluctant Heroes about the Korean War that opens with the tagline “six lives depend on an egghead.” In addition, several television series in the 1970s and 1980s featured characters with backstories including

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service in Korea such as The Jeffersons, the medical drama Quincy, and the comedy Diff’rent Strokes.43

Besides M*A*S*H, the show from this era that most often referenced Korea was The Rockford Files, starring James Garner as a veteran of “the 5th Regimental Combat Team 24th Division of the U.S. Army—the same unit to which James Garner was assigned during the Korean War.”44 Several episodes involve Rockford helping people he met in Korea, like “‘Howling Mad’ Smith, the military commander who once saved Rockford’s life during the Korean War,” or refer to Korea, such as him “stealing a major general’s staff car right in front of the Seoul Korean Hilton,” similar to “some of the exploits” that Garner “pulled off” while serving “during the Korean War.”45 Rather than just the site of happy memories, Korea is also the place where Rockford met future nemeses, such as his “former Army commander Al Brennan,” who tries to use “Rockford to lead him to a $3 million Chiang Yin vase,” in the episode “Return To The 38th Parallel,” and the place where Rockford’s friend “Angel was actually court-martialed for desertion under fire.”46

While the movie version of M*A*S*H may be an allegory for the Vietnam War, one prior scholar has suggested the television series included much more specific information about Korea. Indeed, while Korea Studies scholar Craig Coleman, in American Images of Korea, is skeptical of

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44 Ed Robertson, Thirty Years of THE ROCKFORD FILES: An Inside Look at America’s Greatest Detective Series (Lincoln, Nebraska: ASJA Press, 2005) p. 239. Viewers learns this in “The Battle of Canoga Park.”

45 Ibid, p. 360, 150. These episodes “The Hawaiian Headache” and “2 Into 5.56 Won’t Go,” note Rockford was injured in the war, though the latter gives more details such as the tale of him trading rations for a tank.

46 Ibid, p. 202, 147. Viewers learn about Angel’s service in Korea in “Chicken Little Is A Little Chicken.”
the show (rhetorically asking “how much damage can a single TV show do to a national image”
given that “there were strong paternalistic renderings of Korean characters” recalling to him “an
earlier era of Pearl Buck type views of Orientals circa 1930s”), he argues that as “America’s
participation in the Vietnam War faded the show’s writers attempted to portray Koreans more”
often, suggesting the need for a season-by-season analysis.47

Rather than engage in discussion of allusions and allegories, I decided to test the degree
to which the TV series M*A*S*H actually reminded viewers of the war by counting all references
to Korea and Korean(s) within the eleven seasons of scripts. I excluded episodes where Korean
was spoken without another reference, so as to not assume American audiences would be able to
tell the difference between foreign languages, nor did I count references to figures from the war,
such as MacArthur, despite the fact that many viewers might well have known he served in Korea
rather than in Vietnam, thus purposefully underestimating the show’s impact. The results of this
assessment show the series definitely worked to remind audiences of the Korean War.48

While in the first season of MASH only 15 of 24 episodes referenced either Korea or
Korean(s) at least once, the frequency of mentions increases in future seasons. In Season 2, 18 of
24 episodes fit the bill, while one episode (titled “The Chosen People” in a reference to the battle)
contains ten mentions. The frequency jumps even higher in Season 3 as 20 of 24 episodes include
the word Korea or Korean(s), and while it dips slightly in Season 4 to 18 of 24 shows, two of the
18 are titled “Welcome to Korea” and “Some 38th Parallels.” Season 5 includes the word Korea

47 Craig Coleman, American Images of Korea: Korea and Koreans as Portrayed in Books, Magazines,
Television, News Media, and Film (Elizabeth, New Jersey: Hollym International Corporation, 1997) p. 159-
160. Coleman includes results of survey data taken from 1988 to 1997, including a question about when
respondents thought the war took place, to which over half responded incorrectly and only one-fifth knew.

48 This study involved cross-referencing archives to tally references and determine viewership using
Nielson ratings data. Most scripts are available at:
http://www.springfieldspringfield.co.uk/episode_scripts.php?tv-show=mash/. The “M*A*S*H Ratings and
Rankings” come from a blog available at: http://www.mash4077tv.com/episodes/ratings/. I evaluated 250
of 261 episodes, counting the number of times in each script that the word Korea or Korean(s) was used.
or Korean(s) in 21 of 24 episodes including one titled “The Korean Surgeon’,” while Season 6 has 20 of 24 episodes conforming to the criteria, such as the one titled “The Merchant of Korea.” While the frequency drops in season 7 to 16 of 24 episodes, one of those is titled “They Call The Wind Korea,” and in Season 8 the frequency rebounds to 21 of 25 episodes that mention the word Korea or Korean(s) including one titled “The Yalu Brick Road.” 15 of 20 episodes in Season 9 fit the criteria as well as 16 of the 21 episodes from Season 10, including one titled “Give Em Hell Hawkeye” that has twelve distinct uses of Korea or Korean(s). While only 11 of 16 episodes during the brief last season of the show fit the bill, the finale not only includes a mention of Korea but references to both the city of Seoul and Syngman Rhee, South Korean President during the war and for years after. In total, out of the 250 episodes surveyed over 11 seasons, 191 (or 76.4%) mention Korea or Korean(s). 49

Following the last episode of M*A*S*H in 1983 only a few network TV shows focused on Korea, and those that did used the war only as backstory; one 1990 episode of the science-fiction/history drama Quantum Leap focused on a 1950s motorcycle gang and a Jack Kerouac novel is an example. In the episode titled “Rebel Without a Clue,” which according to Robert Hanke is one of several that “recite ‘classics’ of Hollywood film,” the leader of the gang claims his Korea service caused him to go wrong, while the gang terrorizes a diner owner by calling his POW son a “Commie” in a clear reference to Korean War POW films. 50

A common trope used in 1990s comedies such as Seinfeld, where in one episode Frank Costanza (Jerry Stiller) flashes back to the mass food poisoning he caused while a cook in Korea, as well as The Wonder Years and That 70s Show (where the dads --Jack Arnold and Red Forman

49 Memory of M*A*S*H as in CNN’s Seventies (2015) and Eighties (2016) also reminds viewers of Korea.

respectively--reference their service in Korea), consists of fathers of a certain age serving overseas in the early 1950s. As Hye Seung Chung details, television shows of the 1990s continued to feature Korean War veteran characters, such as Maurice J. Minnifield (Barry Corbin) in Northern Exposure (1990-1995), Martin Crane (John Mahoney) in Frasier (1993-2004), and Harold Weir (Joe Flaherty) in Freaks and Geeks (1999-2000).” The Korean War is referenced in Stephen King’s 1990 television miniseries It and in the 1999 West Wing episode “In Excelsis Deo,” moreover, in multiple dramas from the early 2000s that appeared during the war’s fiftieth anniversary cycle, including two episodes of JAG and an episode of Cold Case, Korean War era crimes are examined in flashbacks.

Robert Lentz discusses how, though there were no Hollywood films focused on Korea in the mid-1980s, some television movies, such as Child Bride of Short Creek (1985) which starred both “a young Helen Hunt” and “young Diane Lane” in a plotline about polygamy in Arizona, did “mention Korea to set up the story.” Lentz also notes that in the 1995 HBO film Truman, which improved the title President’s position in polls ranking past U.S. leaders,”the Korean War and the firing of General MacArthur take place during just ten minutes” in a film running more than two hours, “and those ten minutes also encompass the rise of Senator Joe McCarthy’s influence.”

In addition to providing even more opportunities for Korean War films to be replayed, especially late at night, the spread of cable television from the 1980s onward offered many new venues for the dissemination of documentary style information on the Korean War, for example,

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51 The examples of Jack Arnold and Red Forman are interesting since both shows have historical frames.


53 Lentz p. 444, 395.
in the form of historical context stories offered by CNN to help viewers understand contemporary Korean foreign policy questions or any of several History Channel films and PBS documentaries that have been produced in the last three decades. New documentaries started appearing in the late 1980s: a 1987 film narrated by Robert Stack was called *Korea: The Forgotten War*, a title used by at two other recent documentaries, and “a six hour telecast” in 1988 was titled “Korea: The Unknown War” and was produced by “Thames Television” for the BBC with the help of historian Bruce Cumings. While interest ebbed in the 1990s, the approach of the fiftieth anniversary cycle inspired a new set of documentaries such as *Korean War: Fire and Ice* produced by the History Channel in 1999 and *Korean War Stories*, narrated by Walter Cronkite, which aired on PBS in 2001.54

Many more Korean War documentaries have appeared over the last dozen years geared towards multiple audiences. While the History Channel aims for a broad viewership, PBS may instead represent a form of infotainment for especially well-educated and economically elite audiences, which suggests that public memory of the Korean War, or generally, might often be class based.55 In contrast, the internet now allows amateurs to make their own documentaries, often on specific aspects of the Korean War, which may provide alternative memories of the conflict. These include *They Chose China* (2006), about the twenty-one Americans who refused repatriation after the armistice was signed in 1953, and *Chosin: A Documentary Film* (2010)

54 Lentz, p. 452

55 Paul Grainge, “Nostalgia and Style in Retro America: Moods, Modes, and Media Recycling,” *Journal of Comparative and American Cultures*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Spring 2000). Grainge argues “nostalgia has become something of a genre in a media culture of ‘narrowcasting,’ a term denoting the pursuit of narrow body profitable segments of the viewing audience.” I think this idea applies to cable and subscription channels.
about the 1950 battle.\textsuperscript{56} Indeed, given the proliferation of new avenues to make and distribute stories about the Korean War it should be little surprise that more are starting to be created.

Oliver Stone’s Korean War: The Documentary Series \emph{Untold History of the United States}

Oliver Stone’s \emph{Untold History of the United States}, which premiered on Showtime in the fall of 2012, is unlike most other non-fiction films depicting the Korean War. While it does share similarities with the 1988 BBC documentary \emph{Korea: The Unknown War}, in that both are leftist works of collaboration of historians and filmmakers that included an associated book project, in other ways Stone’s series better fits the category of memorial journalism based on how it uses Korea. In 1999 Jill Edy argued memorial journalism tends to have three primary functions: it can serve as historical analogy, historical context, and commemoration. Eddy asserts “historical contexts do not have the failings of historical analogies” in that “they retrace the trail of how we got here, even when they miss important landmarks we pass along the way.”\textsuperscript{57} The series uses Korea as a historical analogy for Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and as historical context for the next half century of U.S. history. Other studies offer additional insights on \emph{Untold History}.

In 1992 in \emph{Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century}, one of the formative texts of American memory studies, John Bodnar argued that since at least the 1970s organizations have tried “to find the roots of ‘leftist ideology’ in American history” (a project Stone admits continuing in \emph{Untold History}), while a decade later Bodnar noted that “Stone appears to see himself and his films as part of a larger undertaking” designed “to sustain the critique of American power and authority that exploded so powerfully in


\textsuperscript{57} Jill Edy, “Journalistic Uses of Collective Memory,” \textit{Journal of Communication}, 49, No. 2 (Spring 1999) p. 82
the sixties” as well as “sustain the historic project of a liberal culture” in America. Similarly, in 1993, in Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture, another key American memory studies work, Michael Kammen observed (referring to Roots producer David Wolper’s liberality but using language that could describe Stone), “the ‘down’ side of history now receives more adequate attention than ever before in docudramas and documentaries.”

In a 1995 review of the current state of the memory studies field, Barbie Zelizer asserted “that the premium on revisionism in historiography creates an incentive to disestablish conventional renditions of the past,” that as a result “this dynamic has legitimated certain professional groups, such as journalists and professional historians,” that “such groups have ended up validating themselves as well as the memories they invoke,” and that therefore “memory work is at some level always political.” Similarly, in a 1996 essay exploring the relationships between “Public History and the Study of Memory,” David Glassberg argued that while “one strand of analysis has portrayed the politics of public historical representations as essentially consensual” many scholars see “representations of public history as instruments of the political struggle for hegemony among various social groups.”

Journalistic research adds further perspective here, as another key to understand Oliver Stone’s Untold History are recent revelations about government spying from sources such as WikiLeaks which several print and television journalists have since verified.

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Two essays by media studies scholars Yosefa Loshitsky and Vera Zolberg offer analyses that help further contextualize the politics of history underlying Oliver Stone’s *Untold History*. In 1995 Loshitsky discussed “the Histortherstrelt (Historians debate) that began in June 1986” and focused on whether “the Holocaust should be regarded as a unique event that made Germany’s history different from that of all other nations,” a discussion applying to *Untold History* in two ways: Stone’s focus on the idea of American exceptionalism as an explanatory factor for the rise of American militarism, and the quite heated public debate between Stone and Princeton historian Sean Wilentz in successive issues of the *New York Review of Books* during the spring of 2013. Additionally, in a 1998 reflection on the Enola Gay exhibit controversy, Zolberg argued one underappreciated factor was “the seeming decline in American economic dominance” since the 1970s combined with “the rise of Japanese fortunes,” an idea underlying Stone’s goal in *Untold History* to tell a tale highlighting non-Western states and economic motives for foreign policy.60

The first mentions of the Korean War come in Episode Three as part of Oliver Stone’s discussion of the Pacific theatre of WWII. The Koreans are initially portrayed as passive victims of Japanese aggression, as first comfort women and then as slave laborers who died during the bombing of Hiroshima. About three-quarters of the way through the episode there appears on screen a map of Korea and a mention of the joint occupation by American and Soviet troops following World War II. As Stone notes, “Korea would later become a major flashpoint in the Cold War that would engulf the world for another fifty years.” Several minutes later, following a discussion of the Soviet response to the atomic bombings, Stone discusses how Truman left office with a near record-low approval rating but has since risen in the esteem of historians, following

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the production of the HBO movie *Truman*, which Stone suggests through clips misrepresented the positions of Truman’s advisors and ignored the Soviets’ point of view. Stone calls Truman’s decision to drop the bomb “flawed and tragic” and even suggests that his actions may well have constituted a “war crime.” The episode concludes with a discussion of how VP Henry Wallace, the series’ inspiration, turned against the USSR as a result of the Korean War, and a rehashing of Stone’s central argument about contingency.

While WWII is the focus of the first three episodes of Stone’s series, in which he argues that the USSR did more to defeat the Nazis than did the United States, and the majority of both Episodes Six and Seven (on JFK, LBJ, and Nixon) focus on Vietnam, the Korean War is still key. In the WWII episodes of the series Stone plays with the concept of contingency, suggesting had Henry Wallace been re-nominated as FDR’s VP in 1944 then there likely would have been no atomic bombings of Japan nor a Cold War to follow, and later Stone asserts had JFK lived the Vietnam War could have been avoided. Yet it is the Korean War, touched on at the end of Episode Four about Harry Truman and discussed again at length at the outset of Episode Five on Dwight Eisenhower, that frames Stone’s key thesis of the series concerning the position of militarism within American life since the 1950s. Indeed, although the Korean War receives considerably less run time than either WWII or the Vietnam War, it is between those two segments on the conflict that Stone advances his main argument, suggesting that he views Korea as a major turning point.

Much of Episode Four, on the development of the Cold War from 1945 to 1950, argues that the U.S. was much more responsible for the onset of post-war divisions than the Russians. Yet it is the final third of this episode (which was the last one sent out to reviewers prior to the beginning of the series run in November of 2012) that first goes into some depth describing the

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61 Stone argues had Wallace been re-nominated for VP in 1944 post-war history would been much altered with the atom bombings, Cold War, and domestic strife things he thinks would have turned out differently.
early stages of the Korean conflict, which then serves as the backdrop to Stone’s articulation of his major thesis. Stone here suggests that the Truman Doctrine, created to combat Communism in Greece and Turkey, “could have been about Korea,” and uses clips from *The War of the Worlds* (1953) as a metaphor to discuss the rise of James Forrestall, the first Secretary of Defense, and his quite literal fall from a sixteenth story window. After a look at how the Soviets initially acquired an atomic bomb and the rise of Red China, the film turns to its first discussion of the Korean War, an event that Stone says “could have been foreseen by the laws of cause and effect.”

The war is demarcated by dramatic music and white letters on a map (which recur twice more in the series) highlighting a discussion of “The Korean War Story.” Stone argues that, with the invasion of South Korea by the North, “the Cold War turned hot for real,” closely mimicking their companion book which states that it was in Korea that “the Cold War suddenly turned red hot.”62 Stone notes that the Pentagon had previously suggested Korea was outside its defensive perimeter, but opted to make a stand there only after losing out in China and being threatened in Southeast Asia. According to Stone, the North Korean invasion may well have been justified by aggressive South Korean posturing while the response of Truman (which would involve the articulation of an early Domino Theory, the use of the term “Police Action” rather than a formal declaration of war, and the choice to opt for UN instead of Senate approval) would set the stage for future wars such as Vietnam and Iraq. Following a look at Doug Forrestall’s curious death (using more scenes from *War of the Worlds*) the episode concludes with an articulation of Stone’s major thesis about the rise of post-war American militarism and the responsibility of the U.S. for the Cold War.

During the last several minutes of the episode Stone argues that the U.S. “not the Soviet Union bears the lion’s share of the responsibility for starting the Cold War.” Stone rehashes a

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range of events discussed during this episode from Churchill’s Iron Curtain Speech and the Truman Doctrine to the Berlin Airlift and rise of Red China. Stone then argues that it is because of the idea of American exceptionalism, which he sees dating from the era of the Puritan “City Upon A Hill,” as well as fear of foreigners that the U.S. has felt the need to arm itself both on the domestic and international fronts “to liquidate that fear that never seems to erode” of the “other” (which he says harkens back at least as far as the time of Alexander the Great, chronologically the very earliest of Stone’s cinematic subjects). Stone as narrator concludes that, by 1953, America had established “a unique kind of empire” that would last for the next “sixty years of American history,” and would “follow a pattern” of global involvement first established after WWI.63

Episode Five, like most others, begins with voiceover commentary from period newsreels, before Stone as narrator chimes in to discuss the 1952 presidential victory of WWII hero Dwight D. Eisenhower, who Stone notes had called the Korean conflict “useless” while on the campaign trail. To Stone, Ike is a president who conceivably could have bridged the gap between the United States and the USSR because of his personal friendship with Soviet officials, but ultimately presided over the rise of the very “military industrial complex” that he would later warn against during his famous farewell address. Stone notes Winston Churchill again became Prime Minister in 1951, then discusses an Ike speech from April of 1953 that many Soviets saw as conciliatory. To Stone it is really CIA chief Allan Dulles, and his brother Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, who push hardest for a firm anti-Soviet policy. Stone then returns to the topic of Korea, indicating his shift in focus by using the same music and letters on a map as before.

Stone begins the longest discussion of the Korean War in the series by noting that by the time of Eisenhower’s 1953 inauguration the “Korean police action had become a two-and-a-half year nightmare.” Stone next tells the story of the war following the Chinese invasion in the late

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63 Stone makes this point in two bonus episodes on the era from the Spanish-American War to the 1930s.
fall of 1950, which “Time Magazine called… the worst defeat the U.S. had every suffered” and prompted Truman to write in his journal that World War III was at hand. Stone mentions “MacArthur repeatedly and Truman separately threatened to use the bomb” before the President finally fired the General for insubordination. Stone next discusses the air war between the United States and Soviet Union taking place over northern North Korea, then documents how most of North Korea’s cities were burned to the ground using napalm while noting that the bombing of dams on the Yalu River was technically a war crime. Stone then notes Ike’s threats to expand the war to China and use tactical nuclear weapons, a strategy that finally brought on the armistice (represented with scenes from Pork Chop Hill), and that Nixon used as a rationale for his own “madman thesis” according to Stone. Stone winds down his narration by noting “3-4 million Koreans” died during the war, China lost a million men but improved its global image, and the Soviet Union “looked weak.” Stone concludes the war guaranteed “under Eisenhower a permanent war economy was to be achieved.”

Stone next moves to a discussion of the domestic side of the Cold War in the early 1950s, using footage from The Manchurian Candidate (1962), as a means of mocking “the extremist tactics of” Joseph McCarthy, J. Edgar Hoover, and other proponents of “the Red Scare and the Lavender scare that targeted gays and lesbians.” While highlighting the Lavender Scare reflects scholarship such as The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth Century America by Margot Canaday, Stone chooses to reference McCarthy and Hoover while ignoring the role of others such as Nevada Senator Pat McCarran, as noted in Washington Gone Crazy: Senator Pat McCarran and the Great American Communist Hunt by Micahel Ybarra. This section also visually depicts the executions of the Rosenbergs but makes no verbal mention of them, instead.

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64 This part of Oliver Stone’s Untold History draws extensively from the 1959 film Pork Chop Hill, and Stone-as-narrator here directly compares Korea to Indochina (much in the way Jill Edy describes historical analogy journalism), when he argues it was over “useless hillsides as elusive as the jungles of Vietnam.”
using three images to tell their story (the first two showing the names, occupations, and execution year of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg while the third is a newspaper headline noting that it was “Death for A-Spies, Rosenbergs get top penalty in Atom trial”). Episode Five contains a few brief additional mentions Korea, specifically in regard to American actions in Iran and as a part of a broader, Asian Cold War front.

The Korean War looms large but is mentioned very little over the final several episodes of *Untold History*. The white letters on the map of Korea again flash on the screen as part of the opening montage for Episode Six, this time very briefly and without the ominous music. These visual and occasionally verbal cues (such as in the case of Joe McCarthy) provide a review of the previous episode and create continuity over the course of the series. Moreover, the use of such reviews demarcates the show as a kind of thesis-driven history lecture course meant to tell one version of the past, which should come as little surprise considering the project began in part due to Peter Kuznick teaching a college class on “Oliver Stone’s America” and in part as a response to overtly heroic narratives found in Stone’s daughter’s high school history textbook.65 Finally, the war returns again in Episode Nine, when Korea and Vietnam are compared to Kuwait in 1990. Indeed, one could argue that the Korean War functions in *Untold History* as historical context for everything which comes after as well as an historical analogy for several key events.

Determining audience engagement with a film, whether a documentary or a narrative fiction film, is always challenging, since it requires assessing the perspective of cinema consumers both quantitatively and qualitatively. Moreover, neither box office receipts nor Neilson Ratings offer the same combination of hard data and audience quotes as the Internet Movie Database, which has user reviews for subscription service television documentaries such as *Untold History*, as well as for television series and fiction films, which is why I used IMDB.

Untold History has an average score of 8.8 overall from 4,000 reviews, though more than 90% of reviewers are male, while just over half of all reviewers are between the ages of 30 and 44, with slightly more of the remaining reviewers in the youngest bracket (18-29) rather than the oldest bracket (45 +). Many of the reviewers themselves focus on the question of whether Stone’s conclusions are reliable, with Desertman84 from the United States arguing that, while the show “was definitely well made,” the reviewer “was uncomfortable” because “the documentary has strong feelings about the country policing the world,” as well as “trying to prevent the spread of communism especially during the Cold War and during the country’s participation in the Korean War.” Reviewer earthinspace-1 from the United States also asserts that overall “these episodes are a good addition to the mental library of a serious history buff,” because of the inclusion of details such as the fact that “45,000 Korean slaves died in Hiroshima,” despite the fact the reviewer thinks “this series does make quite a few boo-boos at the big-picture level.” Untold History has also garnered several international ratings, with a reviewer from Brazil called Vander Colombo noting it seemed “interesting how most of the negative reviews come from America or from countries that do not suffer this ‘intervention,’” while “here in Latin America” there is “no need to tell us” since “we saw it.”

The Korean War also plays a key role, and is even depicted on-screen, in one of the most highly rated and decorated cable television series of the last decade, which premiered before Oliver Stone’s Untold History but only ended in 2015.

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66 “User Ratings for The Untold History of the United States,” IMDB.com, Accessed 8/25/2017. Available at: [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1494191/ratings?ref_=tt_ov_rt](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1494191/ratings?ref_=tt_ov_rt); Total male reviewers was 3708 to 356 total female reviewers. Total reviewers by age group was 964 ages 18-29, 2195 ages 20-44, and 832 ages 45 +. Using IMDB does not permit a full determination of the number of viewers who saw a film, but breaking down user ratings, by gender and age group as here, at least gives some basis for a comparative analysis.

Don Draper’s Korean War: The American Movie Classics Television Series Mad Men

The most extensive portrayal of the Korean War over the last dozen years appeared not on the big screen but on small screens across America tuned to a particularly popular cable television series. Mad Men, which ended its run on AMC in 2015 and was the winner of several Emmy Awards, although set in the 1960s is quite interested in forgetting Korea despite depicting it for several scenes in Season One and referencing the war frequently. Indeed, series protagonist Donald Draper was really born Dick Whitman and stole his identify in the Korean War following the death of his superior. Because of this backstory attached to “Don” Draper (portrayed by Jon Hamm), the Korean War actually plays a prominent role in multiple episodes of Mad Men, which chronicles the lives of advertising agency employees from 1960 through 1971. Although the war itself is only portrayed through flashbacks in a single episode, the series is rife with references to Korea and Don Draper’s military service starting from the premiere, which is set in March 1960 and which first aired on July 19, 2007. Moreover, as the series’ creator Matt Weiner has admitted, this Korean War element of the plotline predates the production of the series by several years.

In “Much of the backstory for ‘Mad Men’ came from a movie script the creator never finished,” Ian Phillips notes that “Matthew Weiner began work on” the idea “as a failed screenplay called ‘The Horseshoe.’”69 The occasion for the public learning about the origins of Mad Men’s key Korea backstory was a March 2015 exhibition at the Museum of the Moving Image in New York, which Meredith Blake details in a Los Angeles Times review titled “‘Mad Men’ exhibit sheds light on Draper’s origins -- and future?.” Blake notes several “screenplay pages on display” describe one of the “scenes that ‘Mad Men’ fans will instantly recognize from the episode ‘Nixon Vs. Kennedy’: During the Korean War, two soldiers are caught in an accidental explosion; one of them dies, the other survives with injuries” then steals “the dead

man’s dog tags and assume[s] his identity.” Other journalists in also analyzed this single scene from the penultimate episode of the first season as a way to understand the series as a whole.

In “The Weird Agelessness of Don Draper,” Neima Jahromi argues that when he is “alone with his dead comrade,” and “Whitman take’s Draper’s dog tag and becomes him,” what is really happening is that “Whitman ‘swallows’ Draper,” which is evidence that “these civilized people will eat each other” if that is what it takes to survive. The most extensive discussion of this scene, and the role played by the Korean War in the series, comes from a curator’s note in a digital project put together by Allison Perlman called “G.I. Dick: Don Draper as Korean War Veteran.” Perlman notes that “the first thing we learn about Don Draper’s past is that he is a veteran” and “references to Don’s status as a Korean War veteran recur throughout the first season,” before arguing “the penultimate episode reveals the importance of Don’s war service through two flashbacks to Korea,” where “we meet the ‘real’ Don Draper.” Perlman goes on to assert that “these scenes seem to present Korea through the lens of Vietnam” and “Korea, often referred to as the ‘forgotten war,’” has “long has been overshadowed in public memory and popular media by Vietnam.”

In the premiere episode Draper drops his Purple Heart on the floor and is later referred to as a war hero by his boss, Roger Sterling (portrayed by John Slattery). In the second episode

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70 Meredith Blake,”’Mad Men’ exhibit sheds light on Draper’s origins -- and future?”Los Angeles Times (3/11/2015). This display opened two months prior to the finale, while the show’s resolution was unclear.

71 Neima Jahromi, “The Weird Agelessness of Don Draper,” The New Yorker (5/16/2015); Allison Perlman, “G.I. Dick: Don Draper as Korean War Veteran” In Media Res: A Media Commons Project (4/23/2009). Available at: http://mediacommons.futureofthebook.org/imr/2009/04/22/gi-dick-don-draper-korean-war-veteran.; Perlman’s analysis is limited by the fact that her project came out only two seasons into the series’ seven-year run, leading her to compare Mad Men to MASH, which she interprets as a stand in for Vietnam despite its many references to Korea. Future seasons of Mad Men offer chances for Draper to differentiate between the two wars, while comparing them as well. While what the Internet Movie Database calls a “Goof,” the portrayal of Whitman in an undershirt digging a trench despite it being freezing at the Yalu River in 1950, could contribute to the conflation of Vietnam with Korea, were it not for a mention of a “Chinese” enemy.
Sterling, a WWII vet, refers to Draper as Lieutenant as the two discuss Army psychiatrists. Over the next few episodes there is no direct discussion of Korea, but it soon becomes clear that Draper is trying hard to hide his true identity. Episode Seven features a discussion of the “Three on a Match” rule and war in general, one of many times throughout the series when Korean War experiences are compared to those of veterans from Vietnam or the World Wars. The penultimate episode of the first season, which is framed by election night 1960, sees several flashbacks to the Korean War and the fullest explanation to date of why Draper must hide his past.

This episode, titled “Nixon Vs. Kennedy,” starts with a black and white television shot of voters at the polls. About halfway through the episode, after Draper is encountered by a co-worker who claims to know he has been hiding his identity and states “it’s not like you’re a deserter or anything,” Draper opens a box that holds Dick Whitman’s dog-tags and flashes back to his time in Korea. Draper, as the young Dick Whitman, gets off a troop transport and reports to the real Don Draper, who is building a field hospital. “Whitman,” who says he volunteered for the service, looks very much like a figure from the National Korean War Memorial in Washington -- thanks to the huge poncho and steel helmet he wears while being debriefed in a tent upon arrival-- as he is warned by the real Draper not to “mistake me for Chinese” and questioned as to if “a movie” had inspired him to sign up. In a second flashback towards the end of the episode viewers learn that “Dick Whitman died in Korea ten years ago,” just as Draper’s boss hears this from the embittered colleague, though his boss tactically replies “there is more profit in forgetting this.”

The second flashback begins with Dick Whitman, in an undershirt and helmet, digging a trench. After several seconds of lonely silence, mortar shells start to fall just as the real Don

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72 The publicity *Mad Men* garnered in its first season, and the fact that according to the Internet Movie Database “Nixon Vs. Kennedy” is “Ranked #8 in TV Guide’s 100 Greatest Episodes of All-Time list (2009 update),” means this portrayal of Korea was likely the most-watched depiction of the war since the *MASH* finale twenty-four years prior. Moreover, the line uttered by Draper’s boss on the profitability of forgetting aspects of the war, can be seen as a reason why Korea is forgotten or as an allusion to the memorial trope.
Draper dives into the foxhole next to “Whitman.” As bullets begin whizzing by Whitman asks Draper what to do and is told “don’t shoot at anything unless it shoots at you first,” and “shut up and stay down” as the assault goes on. Whitman naively asks “don’t they know this is a hospital” and “is it over,” after the attack seems to end. The real Don Draper begins chuckling in relief after the danger passes and both men light cigarettes, only for Whitman to drop his General Issue lighter onto a puddle of gasoline, causing an explosion to occur. The episode then flashes forward slightly to a scene of Whitman recovering in a hospital bed, but being called Draper by the staff. Only at this point, interspersed with scenes in the hospital, does the audience learn not only that the real Donald Draper died, but Dick Whitman switched dog-tags with him as an analog method of identity theft. Whitman as Draper finds out that he has been tasked with returning the real Don Draper’s body to Dick Whitman’s family. The episode ends with a scene of Draper in uniform after he has returned from Korea, in which he chooses to maintain the illusion that he is not Dick Whitman, despite his brother seeing him on the train, when he decides he cannot risk exiting the car when returning the dead body.73

Season two contains considerable discussion of Draper’s post-war past, as he assumes his dead comrade’s identity, and includes a scene of a 1962 Memorial Day celebration that contains Korean War veterans but little overall focus on the Korean War, in contrast to season three in which war in general is discussed, as well as is Korea specifically. In episode four, Draper’s father-in-law looks over his WWI medal from the French campaign, as well as several other pieces of military memorability, while they discuss war in general, then the song “Over There” plays during the credits. Draper’s true identity is also exposed during season three, first to his bosses who are unbothered by the revelation but are also willing to use it for leverage in contract negotiations, then to his wife Betty (portrayed by January Jones). Indeed, after Betty discovers a

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73 The depiction of this firefight and ironic death of the real Don Draper are two elements of this portrayal of Korea that would seem to mark *Mad Men* as more of a realistic or melodramatic than propaganda series.
desk drawer containing info on his true identity, Draper defends himself by stating “all I had to do was pretend to be him and I got to leave Korea,” in the most extensive reference to the conflict since the first season and yet another of many which hint at the harshness of the Korean War.

Season four sees even more direct discussion of Korea, increasingly in comparison to Vietnam as the show’s timeline progresses to the LBJ years, beginning with the opening scene of episode one. The scene begins as a one-on-one interview between Draper and a reporter for an advertising magazine who is trying to write a feature on him, but continues to receive purposefully elusive answers in response to the question “Who is Don Draper?.” Sterling and another colleague arrive as the interview ends, causing the reporter to rise abruptly and reveal his wooden leg, which he then says he received in “Korea.” Draper’s colleague quickly thanks the reporter for his “sacrifice,” while Draper himself says nothing although his facial expression suggests he is fully aware of his own relative good fortune in surviving the Korean War. Moreover, the incident seems to set the stage for a season-long focus on the war’s impact on Draper as he begins to discuss it more openly, since his job is secure and his marriage to Betty has by then ended. It is also not the only time another minor character makes reference to the war, as Draper’s female colleague is told by her doctor at the outset of episode three that he “only went to Korea because they made” him.

Three later episodes during season four of this ensemble drama directly discuss the Korean War. Halfway through episode seven Draper talks about his airplane ride to Korea while at a birthday dinner with a protégé. Draper says that he recalls “on the way to Korea they told us how many thousand feet in the air we were” and a few minutes later his colleague remarks she “didn’t know that you were in Korea,” to which he replies “very briefly” and that though he did not kill anyone he “saw some people get killed.” In episode eight a voiceover of Draper speaks as he writes about the Korean War, while footage of the Vietnam War plays on the television set in the background. Inspired by a mention of the Korean War on the Vietnam news segment,
Draper’s voiceover declares “more and more everyday about Vietnam, I hope it’s not another Korea.” Draper must finally deal with the repercussions of his stolen identity over the course of episode ten, after a background check form is submitted on his behalf by his secretary to the Department of Defense that includes lies on “three out of eight questions.” He is most concerned because the real Draper was a trained engineer and his lies could be quickly exposed by such a line of questioning. Eventually, Draper breaks down and admits to the psychiatrist he is then dating that “in Korea” he “was wounded, but this other man was killed,” giving him a chance to go home but only with a stolen identity.

After season four over a full season passes before Korea is mentioned again. Moreover, whereas in earlier seasons the Korean War was more frequently discussed in comparison to WWI or WWII, from season five onward the conflict is almost exclusively discussed in the context of the Vietnam War as the series’ chronology turns to 1967. Indeed, the next mention of the Korean War comes in episode eleven of season five during a meeting between Draper, some of his colleagues, and several high-level executives from Dow Chemical, who are there to discuss their Firestone Tire brand but end up talking about napalm and the negative press they have been receiving as a result of recent protests against its use in Vietnam. In response Draper notes that Vietnam was not the first war during which the U.S. military has used napalm, recounting its origins during WWII and then adding that he knows “it was all over Korea” since he “was there.” This exchange uses the Korean War as both historical analogy and historical context for Vietnam.

The Korean War also functions as both an historical analogy and historical context for Vietnam in season six of Mad Men. During the season premiere, Draper and his new wife are on vacation in Hawaii when, in a bar, he meets a soldier named Dinkins who is on leave from Vietnam. They compare the brass G.I. lighters with their names engraved, especially ironic since Draper accidentally caused the fire that killed the real Don Draper by dropping his own General
Issue lighter, and discuss ways in which military life during the two wars is comparable. Draper agrees to serve as the best man at Dinkins’ wedding the next morning, and only after he arrives home does Draper discover they had accidentally swapped lighters. Later in the season (after another mention of Korea, relating to the 1968 Pueblo Crisis which is referenced in episode three), Dinkins once again appears to Draper, only this time in a hashish induced hallucination in which he learns that the soldier has died in Vietnam. Season six’s narrative arc involves another young man and the Vietnam War but in this case Korea is a context informing older men’s ideas.

Throughout season six Draper has been engaged in an illicit affair with the wife of a doctor who lives in his new building, and with whom Draper has struck up a friendship. When, in episode ten, the doctor’s son burns his draft card and as a result is reclassified as 1-A, both the doctor and his wife come to Draper in search of help. This crisis provides the platform for several conversations about the nature and morality of modern warfare, including one between Draper and the doctor in which they discuss how the Korean War has informed their view on wars in general. When comparing the Vietnam War to his experience in Korea, Draper says “it was very different, I wanted to go and then when I got there” that changed. Draper is ultimately able to appeal to the pacifist sentiments and political connections of a colleague in order to help the young man secure a spot in the Air National Guard that will prevent his being sent to Vietnam.

Vietnam again returns to the forefront of the series during season seven, its last run of episodes.

While some young men went to great lengths to avoid being sent to Vietnam other young men volunteered to go, as represented by the choice of a longtime friend of Draper’s daughter who enlists in episode ten. Later in the same episode Sterling, a WWII vet, interjects some humor during a meeting when he describes Draper (who has left on a cross-country road trip without telling anyone), as having gone AWOL. Finally, the effects of war, both mental and physical, as

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74 This episode, “The Doorway,” was the series’ second most watched with 3.37 million viewers according to Neilson Ratings. The highest rated episode was the Season 5 premiere, “A Little Kiss,” at 3.54 million.
well as the complex relationships between veterans from different eras are portrayed in episode thirteen, the penultimate hour of the show. In this episode Draper, whose cross-country road trip in 1970 led some to speculate that the series would conclude with him being revealed as the “real” D.B. Cooper, goes to a fundraiser at the VFW but is later beaten by a multi-generational group of veterans who believe he has stolen the money raised by the event.

The Korean War first comes up about halfway through this second-to-last episode of the series, when Draper admits to another veteran that he served in the Seventh Infantry in Korea, although he seems reluctant to acknowledge he was a Lieutenant. Just a few minutes later, while drinking with veterans from several generations of conflicts, one new acquaintance corrects another by noting that, rather than serving in Europe, “Don was in Korea.” They then call over a man named Jerry Fanning who was also in Korea, and who gets Draper to describe that he served “near the Yalu River” in the period “before they called it a war,” before Fanning offers his own perspective on Korea, which is that “they can keep it.” Finally, near the end of the episode, after another veteran says everyone just did what they “had to do to come home,” Draper admits that he “killed my CO,” before explaining how they “were under fire, fuel was everywhere, and I dropped my lighter, and I blew him apart, and I got to go home.” This extended description of the specifics of Draper’s time in Korea is easily the most detailed discussion of the war since the first season, and was likely the most watched on-screen rehashing of grim Korean War details since the finale of M*A*S*H.75

Mad Men has been rated by the most users of those mass media objects discussed in this section, over 125,000 total, more than a quarter of them female, and it has the highest rating at 8.6 out of 10. The users rating this series have also tended to skew younger; over a third of the users who rated it were ages 18 to 29 while just under half were ages 30 to 44, meaning that just over a

75 This episode, “The Milk and Honey Route,” had $1.87 million viewers, according to Neilson Ratings.
tenth were in the 44 + group. Though several reviewers specifically mentioned the Korean War, some seemed confused by the complex narrative and the show’s timeline, with blanche-2 from the United States wondering how if “Don Draper (Jon Hamm) in 1962 is 36 years old” why is it that “he was in Korea not WWII,” and SAWTIMBER INC from the United States inquiring “how did Draper get a Zippo from a guy half his age, lost in Korea and found in Nam.” In contrast, to reviewer Dr Jacques COULARDEAU from Olliergues, France the show is “nostalgic but in another style and direction with the Korean War” functioning “in a dramatic way” as a logical historical backdrop for “a lieutenant being killed and his identity assumed by the only witness.”

Although it had been decades since Korea was depicted on screen prior to Mad Men, following the end of the series’ run in 2015, the war would return to the big screen in 2016 in two drastically different films.

Marcus Messner’s Korean War: The 2016 Films Indignation and Operation Chromite

Of the two 2016 films portraying Korea, the first is a combination of realistic and melodramatic military movies. Indignation, which premiered at the Sundance film festival in January and was released in late July to a wider audience, had grossed over $3 million in box office receipts by October according to the Internet Movie Database. As many critics at the time noted, this adaptation of a Philip Roth novel which is set in 1951 was one of the first depictions of the Korean War on screen since the early 1980s. Akiva Gottlied argues in the Los Angeles Times that the “2008 novel is especially well-suited to adaption” for several reasons, while in his Rolling

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76 “User Ratings for Mad Men,” IMDB.com, Accessed 8/26/2017. Available at: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0804503/ratings?ref_=tt_ov_rt; Total male reviewers was 93571 to 35646 total female reviewers. Total reviewers by age was 49263 ages 18-29, 58709 ages 20-44, and 15724 ages 45 +.

Stone review Peter Travers notes that the film includes specific elements from Roth’s “own life in 1951 as a New Jersey student who left the Newark campus of Rutgers University for Bucknell College in Pennsylvania, mostly to avoid being drafted to fight in Korea.”

In her review for the Washington Post, Ann Hornaday notes that the film centers around Marcus Messner “who, in 1951, escapes the Korean War” by going “to attend Winesburg College in Ohio,” while in his New York Times review Stephen Holden asserts that while the film “is book-ended by brief scenes of the Korean War that lend it structure and a tragic dimension” in his view “they feel too mechanical and tacked on.” Glenn Kenny, in his online review of the film, notes “the movie actually opens with a scene of a single-soldier battle overseas, with framings that recall the work of Samuel Fuller” and that the narrative actually begins with the Messner “attending the funeral of one of his high school buddies, who’s been killed in the early years of the Korean War.” In his New Yorker review, Richard Brody notes --though the audience learns this later-- “near the start of the movie” Messner “in uniform, dies fighting in the Korean War, and says as much in a voice over,” while the story “is a flashback from this moment, as if told by the dead character --whose voice-over is nonetheless almost absent from the rest of the film.”

While the film actually opens with a contemporary 2016 frame, immediately after the title appears the storyline shifts back to a scene of a Chinese soldier walking through a Korean forest as a voiceover of the protagonist --Marcus Messner-- discusses death. The voice states “it is important to understand about dying, that even though in general you do not have a personal

78 Akiva Gottlied, “Adapting Philip Roth novels for film has been hot or miss,” Los Angeles Times (7/31/2016); Peter Travers,”’Indignation’ Review: Finally, a Great Philip Roth Movie,” Rolling Stone (7/28/2016)

choice in the matter” in reality “there are reasons you die, there are causes, a chain of events linked by causality” adding that “those events include decisions that you have personally made, how did you end up here on this exact day at this exact time, with this specific event happening to you.” The audience then sees a brief firefight which ends with an American being bayonetted to death by a Chinese soldier, although the American’s identity is not clear.

One of the reasons why it is not clear who specifically suffered such a death by bayonet is that the film immediately flashes to a scene of a young man’s funeral in a synagogue in Newark, where the Rabbi notes that they are there today to “mourn the loss of young Jonah Greenberg, fallen in Korea fighting for his country at nineteen years of age,” before asking the dead youth’s father to recite the Kaddish. At this childhood friend’s wake, Messner talks to the dead friend’s mother, who tells him “don’t go into this war for your parents sake,” then adds “don’t go into this draft” which prompts Messner’s father to chime in that he is going to college and “they keep the ones in college from the draft.” Messner then discusses the death of Greenberg with two other friends, one of whom says that there is “only one thing worse than dying by getting stabbed with a bayonet and that’s dying by getting stabbed with a bayonet while you’re still a virgin” before the audience learns that this friend is himself “getting shipped out” in “two weeks.” This connection between sex and death due to war becomes a theme of the film in Messner’s time at college.

The Korean War goes on in the background during Messner’s time at Winesburg Collge in Ohio, occasionally being mentioned obliquely, such as when his date, Olivia Hutton, notes that one of the only things her companion has mentioned is that he believes “General MacArthur is insubordinate.” Later, she jokes with him that he might be able to get “a waiver for Conscientious

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80 So far as I can tell this is easily the most extensive on-screen discussion of ways to avoid being drafted to be sent to Korea of any film, and suggests various forms of passive resistance to the war might have been much more widespread than has been previously noted, especially amongst insular immigrant communities.
Objection’ to get out of Chapel, a term that college students at the time might well use in such a situation even though their own exemption from wartime service was based on their educational attainment rather than their personal religious views. As an atheist, however, Messner at the time would not have had the right to claim Conscientious Objector status if he were drafted, since in the 1950s agnosticism was widely associated with Communism, a key tension that comes to the fore during a confrontation with the Dean that ends with a broken-down Messner in the hospital.

Following more confrontations with the Dean, Messner is expelled for being caught not going to Chapel, and then drafted into the army to be sent to Korea. The penultimate scene of the film, prior to the brief return of the 2016 frame narrative from the beginning, shows Messner’s death in Korea while a voiceover describes his dying thoughts. Messner’s voiceover wonders “if everyone, after they die, remembers all the details and decisions they made” that led them to that point, saying “I remember and replay those things even if I can’t remember how long I’ve been remembering,” in what seems a clear argument against the idea of Korea as a forgotten war. The voice-over ends temporarily as the audience sees Messner sitting with a dead comrade, only to be startled by the sound of approaching Chinese troops, before the audience learns that the fatality depicted at the very beginning of the movie was Messner’s rather than Greenberg’s. This final revelation changes the tone of many of the film’s earlier pronouncements about death, and adds an ironic twist as Messner died in the same way as his friend had earlier joked after the funeral.

*Indignation* has been rated by more than 6,500 users, over a quarter of whom are female, with a total rating of 6.8, although women rated it lower than did men at 6.6 to 6.9. The age breakdown adds much to this analysis, since for those in the age 18 to 29 bracket, which saw the largest number of reviewers, the film seems to have been more a date movie (nearly a third of the reviewers in this age group are women), while women in the age 44 + bracket rate the film more
highly than women in the younger age groups.\textsuperscript{81} While many reviewers noted the Korean War backdrop to the film, some disagreed over the degree of anti-war sentiment suggested by the protagonist’s decision to attend college: Paul Allaer from Cincinnati asserts that the film “brings to life what things were like in the US while the Korean War was raging” but argues Messner, the protagonist,”didn’t choose to go to college so as to avoid the draft, but because he just loves learning,” while jadepietro from the United States, who describes the movie as “an underrated film that deserves to be seen,” in contrast states in no uncertain terms that the “young Jewish man goes to college to avoid the Korean War.” Some users even asserted that despite the relatively short screen time devoted to the Korean War, that the film as a whole was very much about the conflict, with one reviewer from the United States called vincentlynch-moonoi asserting that “though there are only minutes of film about the Korean War,” it,”in a very unique way, shows the personal tragedy of war” and added that “in terms of storytelling, it’s a realistic ending” although it is “not what we want for our main character.”\textsuperscript{83}

A propagandistic portrayal of the war that played on American screens in summer 2016 was the South Korean produced \textit{Operation Chromite}, which tells the story of the Inchon landing and stars Liam Neeson as Douglas MacArthur.\textsuperscript{84} Prior to the film arriving in American movie houses in 2016, Neeson gave several press interviews in which he discussed both Korea and

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\item \textsuperscript{81} ‘User Ratings for \textit{Indignation},’ IMDB.com, Accessed 8/25/2017, Available at: \url{http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4193394/ratings?ref_=ttexrv_sa_4}; Total male reviewers was 4903 to 1720 total female reviewers. Total reviewers by age was 2812 ages 18-29, 2302 ages 20-44, and 1246 ages 45 +.
\item \textsuperscript{84} According to Lee Hyo-won’s \textit{Hollywood Reporter} article from August 8, 2016 titled “‘Operation Chromite’: Five Things To Know About Liam Neeson’s South Korean Hit,” the movie was made on a budget of about $12 million, some of which was crowd-funded, and had already garnered over $37 million in “50 territories around the world.”
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MacArthur, telling *Variety* in 2015 that he “always had an interest in the Korean War” even prior to his acting career “mainly because it is a forgotten war in America,” and describing the general to *CNN* in 2016 as “a formidable soldier, incredibly brave and yet huge ego.” The movie opens with a shot of Neeson as MacArthur, smoking his trademark corn-cob pipe, emerging from his cabin to look over the American Inchon invasion fleet that is moored in Tokyo Bay.\(^8^5\) MacArthur and his subordinates discuss a forecasted typhoon, then quickly move on to the “diversion operation” that is “planning to launch” and which serves as the central narrative of the film. One subordinate hesitantly offers his observation that “this operation” would “entail many casualties” and asks MacArthur whether they ought to precede, to which he says nothing but nods. This opening scene, which as all other scenes involving MacArthur is shot in English while the rest of the film is in Korean, sets up an issue debated throughout, MacArthur’s real motive for Inchon.

Before moving forward with the narrative, the filmmakers opted to include a brief lesson on the background to the Inchon invasion, similar to the way the Oscar winning film *Argo* (2012) offered a brief history of American-Iranian relations leading up to the hostage crisis. The background begins with a grey scale illustration of two groups of troops, one under the North Korean star the other beneath the Hammer and Sickle of the USSR, as the text indicates that “with the Soviet Union’s support, North Korea invades the South.” The screen shot then quickly slides forward to the date “June 27, 1950” and the text message that “USA President Truman deploys the U.S. Army” in front of an image of Truman signing something, before the right side of the screen fills in with a sketch of MacArthur, and the text turns to the second half of the line: “and assigns General Douglas MacArthur as the Commander-in-chief of the UN Command.”

\(^8^5\) Sonial Kil, “Liam Neeson Joins Korea’s ‘Operation Chromite’ As General MacArthur,” *Variety* (8/12/2015); Paula Hancocks, “Liam Neeson on Korea War film: ‘We are all very concerned by Pyongyang,” */CNN.com* (7/26/2016); In his August 11, 2016 *Washington Post* review, Mark Jenkins is critical of Neeson, arguing he “bombs in the role of MacArthur,” but is less so of the film overall, which Jenkins says “often plays as if it had been made in the year it is set” except for the “graphic depiction of violence” that he calls “a specialty of recent Korean cinema.”
The text crawl adds “however, the rest of South Korea north of the Nakdong River, falls in a month” as an on-screen map of South Korea turns red except for the southeast corner that was the Pusan perimeter. The text concludes “in order to turn the tide of war, General MacArthur orders a covert operation involving eight men” in front of their image, and then the screen fills with the words “OPERATION CHROMITE.”

After the title, the audience is treated to a view of occupied Inchon, complete with dead political prisoners hung up with propaganda for passersby to learn from lest they suffer the same fate, immediately after a violent action scene in which the eight agents kill and replace North Korean troops. While most of the movie’s central narrative focuses on these eight spies and their secret mission, the issue of if Inchon will ultimately be picked as the location of the invasion comes up repeatedly, both in scenes that involve MacArthur and in scenes describing interactions between the spies and the North Korean officer charged with fortifying Inchon. Indeed, both American and North Korean characters suggest that the real reason MacArthur would choose Inchon, despite the five-thousand-to-one odds against success that are noted by both sides, is that he imagines such an improbable victory would set up a run for the Presidency in 1952. Moreover, the quality of MacArthur’s character is the main secondary plot of the film, an underlying story that is interspersed and interconnected with the primary plot, and is the focus of several scenes.

Immediately after the audience is shown occupied Inchon, the location toggles to MacArthur’s command post in Tokyo, where he enters a room to a stunned salute from the officers who he quickly tells to “get back to work” before barking out orders that he expects his subordinates to bend the will of other nations on his behalf. MacArthur says “if they refuse” he “will call” the French President himself, and he “won’t accept anything but yes” as an answer to if “the Australians are sending their aircraft carriers,” in the clearest reference throughout the entire film as to the importance of UN allies to the war effort. Once he is in his private office, his subordinates report the identity of the North Korean in charge of fortifying Inchon, Lim Gye-Jin,
who the audience immediately meets in the next scene which shifts back to Korea. Lim has the steely-eyed appearance of a true-believer, and immediately questions whether he can trust the leader of the group of eight troops fresh from central command, Park Nam-Cheol, who actually is a spy. Besides gleaning information about troops placements and underwater mines, Park also tries to dissuade Lim that MacArthur will really choose to attack Inchon, rather than another location, which gives Lim an opportunity to argue that MacArthur will opt for the most-difficult landing spot to enhance his own ego.

Whereas Park suggests the landing location could be Wonsan, Lim says he is “certain it will be Inchon” but that he has “to convince the idiots in Pyeongyang but the proof isn’t there.” Lim asserts the real reason MacArthur will come to Inchon despite the “five thousand to one” odds is that he wants “to be remembered as a hero” and “that old decrepit wants Inchon to be his Normandy.” Indeed, while the film suggests that MacArthur’s larger than life ego is often a useful trait for the military commander, since his subordinates are seemingly able to use his reputation as both the motive and the means to get things done, the director and screenwriter are careful to also present this ego as the General’s potential Achilles Heel. For example, at one point upon learning that the spies needed additional time to gather intel on the mines, MacArthur tells his subordinate to “get God on the phone, tell him it’s me, tell him we need more time,” suggesting he is at least willing to entertain the notion that his mission is divinely inspired and therefore cannot fail. The most dramatic debate on MacArthur’s motivations comes in two interspersed scenes: of MacArthur meeting with three other Generals sent by the Pentagon and of Kim Il-Sung’s council convening.

At the council Lim asks “why is no one talking about Inchon,” then the scene immediately flashes to Tokyo where MacArthur’s colleague notes that “the Inchon tides are the worst in the world” as “they rise and fall at an average rate of twenty-nine feet each day and sometimes as high as thirty-six” which, he argues, means American “ships will be stranded within
ten minutes of entry” and that “the harbor is too narrow to turn around.” MacArthur’s colleagues, especially Air Force chief Arthur Vandenberg, continue to be skeptical of his plan when they learn of the key role that “ladders and a lighthouse” will play in its execution, sarcastically asking if MacArthur truly wants “to win this war” and forcing him to defend his battle plan.\textsuperscript{86} The scene flashes to Pyeongyang, where Lim asks “is MacArthur stupid” as a way to argue that he will attack Inchon rather than the fortified Pusan Perimeter, forcing Kim Il-Sung to note that “even the Secretary of Defense has given the odds as five thousand to one against success,” then toggles back to Tokyo, where Vandenberg is using that same argument as to why what MacArthur is proposing is “the riskiest military operation” in history. In Korea, Lim quotes Sun Tsu’s \textit{Art of War}, adding he is sure of the site since he knows how his enemy thinks and “what MacArthur wants,” then the scene toggles to Tokyo where MacArthur asserts “I fight wars to win them” and “Operation Chromite is the only way to victory.”

The resolution of these two heated scenes sets the tenor for the rest of the film, as Vandenburg asks “why the fixation on Inchon” only for the scene to flash again to Korea and for Lim to argue “what MacArthur wants is to be President” and “that’s why he needs a miracle of five thousand to one” which “is exactly why he’ll invade Inchon,” not in spite of but \textbf{BECAUSE OF} the long odds against his success. The scene then flashes back to Tokyo where Vandenberg again asks “what do you want out of this” as the music reaches a tense crescendo before going silent and allowing MacArthur to offer his own response in the form of a grey scale flash back to “two days after the war broke out in Korea” when he “made a secret trip there from Tokyo to assess the damage” and he “came across a young Korean boy alone in a trench, no older than sixteen” who “had no gun and no shirt” but had refused to flee battle because “no one [had] ordered” him to do so. MacArthur says that he was so “moved by the boy’s courage” that he

\textsuperscript{86} The suggestion MacArthur had some sort of a God-complex comes through in this scene as well, when he informs his colleagues that he plans to seize the lighthouse near Inchon “and then there will be light.”
“knew then” that he “had to save this boy’s country,” suggesting a God-complex but not a huge desire to be President.

MacArthur plays a smaller role on screen during the latter half of the film, as the eight spies start to run into problems while trying to uncover the locations of the underwater mines, resulting in the deaths of a few in bullet ridden firefights that pit Park against Lim and which hint at the extreme violence amongst partisans in territories such as the Inchon-Seoul corridor that changed hands multiple times in the course of the war. The film does set up the infamous conflict between MacArthur and Truman which leads to the General’s firing in a scene where Vandenberg passes along the message that Truman “wants to make one thing perfectly clear,” because he does not “want the Chinese to join the fight,” that “once we reach this line” (indicating the thirty-eighth parallel on a map) “the war has to end,” to which MacArthur responds that “this war will not end by a politician simply drawing some line on a map” because he “won’t agree to that,” in response to which Vandenberg retorts that “it’s a direct order from your Commander-in-Chief.” Vandenberg asks why MacArthur is being stubborn, to which he inquires “why is Truman being so ignorant” as to desire “a limited war” which MacArthur thinks “doesn’t do any good” since “Communism cannot be contained with a limited war” and “these politicians, they don’t know what war really is.” MacArthur then concludes that “it’s immoral to send our soldiers to war unless total victory is sought,” which once again leads Vandenberg to ask what his real goal is and if he wants “Inchon to be your Normandy, some grand theatrics before your second run at the Presidency,” leading MacArthur to retort that though Vandenberg may believe that MacArthur wants “to go to Inchon to become President” MacArthur has “dedicated fifty years of [his] life to the battlefield” and “win[s] wars” so that “no one can analyze [him] or question [his] motives,” which seems a carefully-worded political statement which does not deny presidential ambitions.

The film’s final sequence involves the invasion of Inchon itself, which begins with an attack on the lighthouse by the spies and the “Korean Liberation Organization” operatives they
have joined up with, then proceeds to a focus on the self-sacrificing destruction of a dynamite booby-trapped field by the spies. All the while, MacArthur awaits the lighting of the tower and a signal from his operative (whom he chose for this mission as the audience learns in an earlier flashback), so he can start landing U.S. Marines. Once MacArthur sees the flair he ceases his naval barrage of the shoreline, sends forth waves of Allied air bombardments, starts landing troops on the beach (in a scene reminiscent of Saving Private Ryan [1998]), and uses ladders to climb cliffs. The penultimate shot of the narrative shows MacArthur himself looking over Park’s dead body lying next to Lim’s after each has killed the other one, then saluting his dead comrade, before the last shot shows Inchon’s liberation by South Korean troops as the locals wave flags.

After this final narrative section, the film flashes back briefly to an interview process in which each of the South Korean spies explains their reasoning for wanting to volunteer for the mission, and then a group photo of the film cast that blends into a real historical image (utilizing a technique used by Oliver Stone in Nixon) noting the fifteen men “who sacrificed their lives for Korea’s freedom and peace,” which is why the film is dedicated to them “and their families.” The film closes with text describing how within two weeks of the Inchon landing that took place “on September 15, 1950, the UN Allied forces reclaimed Seoul” then “went on to take Pyeongyang but the Chinese army drove them back” and lastly that “on July 27, 1953 an armistice was reached, drawing the war to an end after three years with over three million causalities.” The avoidance of detailed descriptions of the bulk of the Korean War following the entry of China, as well as key issues such as Truman’s firing MacArthur, in this final text crawl suggests a desire to still lionize MacArthur in South Korea even as in the U. S. Truman’s profile has recently risen.

Fewer users have rated Operation Chromite, with just under 1,850 total, more than 1,700 of them male, with the movie garnering an overall rating of 6.2 out of 10. Nearly half of those users who rated the film were between the ages of 30 and 44, with the remaining number split
roughly equally between those ages 18-29 and those ages 45 +.\textsuperscript{87} Several reviews were critical of the film, comparing it both stylistically and substantively to “old American productions of the same genre” from “the 50s and 60s, when World War II was too fresh a memory and war stories were rhetorical and unrealistic” according to niutta-en rico from Italy, or mocked Neeson’s performance as the General, like that of alexdeleonfilm from the United States who stated that “Neeson's portrayal of MacArthur is such a caricature it's almost a joke,” especially when compared to the Korean actors who the reviewer states “are quite convincing and keep the suspense at a peak throughout.” In contrast other reviewers were more positive, especially highlighting combat scenes, such as marshall_plan02 from the United States who called it “one of the best military movies that I have recently seen portraying historical battles” and “one of the best Korean War movies out there.”\textsuperscript{88}

Conclusion: Korea in Cold War Film and Four Phases of Korean War Public Memory

What all four of these mass media representations of the Korean War that first appeared from 2007 to 2016 have in common is that they all portray battle scenes from a conflict widely remembered as forgotten. Indeed, the recent relative proliferation of these Korean War mass media objects suggest Korea is less forgotten by Hollywood now than in years. Moreover, in comparison to the conclusions of scholars who have previously assessed early Korea cinema and prior documentaries, as well as the TV series M*A*S*H, these more recent representations of the Korean War begin to move beyond earlier portrayals, especially in documenting different forms

\textsuperscript{87} User Ratings for Battle for Incheon: Operation Chromite, IMDB.com, Accessed 8/25/2017, Available at: \url{http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4939066/ratings?ref_=tt_ov_rt}; Total male reviewers was 1735 to 111 total female reviewers. Total reviewers by age group was 472 ages 18-29, 859 ages 20-44, and 416 ages 45 +.

of dissent. Indeed, while *Untold History* focuses much of its discussion of Korea on famous critics of the war at the time and *Operation Chromite* details those subordinates who tried to dissuade MacArthur from his actions in Inchon, setting up some of the reasons for his later firing, *Indignation* hints at multiple forms of passive draft resistance that were used during the Korean War and *Mad Men* repeatedly narrates the desperate steps one soldier in Korea took to go home.

While the Korean War was widely present on screens in the three decades after it began, from the finale of the *M*A*S*H* TV series, in February 1983, until the premiere of *Mad Men*, in July 2007, Korea was rarely depicted in movies or television series save for several documentary films, though it frequently functioned as the narrative backstory for key characters in both movies and TV shows produced from the 1970s through the present. However, in the decade-plus since the premiere of *Mad Men*, Korea has again returned to screens, while the explosion of digital media and new technologies over the last twenty years now also allows for easier access not only to these contemporary mass media representations of the war but to many of those manifestations of public memory from the 1950s which had been lost for decades.

The fact that some of the lost films from this initial wave of Korean War cinema, prior to the first Vietnam movies in the mid-1960s, have now been found and are more widely available than ever before offers an opportunity not just for a re-appraisal of how the Korean War was portrayed on screen by those who were most familiar with it --since they lived through it themselves-- but also a chance to rethink how twentieth century American film audiences understood on-screen conflict in general from the 1950s to the 1980s. If many Korean War films broke the World War II movie-mold, in highlighting the gritty realities of war as well as the harsh psychological impacts of military service, they also helped set up the mode by which most future Vietnam War films would remember the later conflict in far from positive and patriotic terms. Although many Korean War films from the long-1950s reflect the jingoism of WWII movies of the era, several others look forward to the pointlessness portrayed in many Vietnam films, in
which the war is simply seen as tragic and the reasons for the conflict go unexplained. Comparing it to Vietnam, in “Korea: The Post-war War,” Marilyn Young argues that the Korean War “was equally brutal, its casualties proportionally higher, the experience of guerrilla warfare in its first half as harrowing for the troops and its war aims as shifting and obscure.” Therefore, it should be no surprise Korea created the paradigm for Cold War cinematic memory.

My research into mass media objects also suggests that the larger history of Korean War public memory can be broken down into four phases, starting with the fifteen years from 1951 to roughly 1967, during which several sub-genres of Korean War films played on the big screen and Korea also appeared on television. During this initial wave of public memory, the Korean War was recalled frequently, sometimes conflated with the Pacific theatre of World War II but very often remembered distinctly. Over the next twenty years, during the second wave, in which the Vietnam War overshadowed and was conflated with Korea on the silver screen, the major representation of Korea was the series M*A*S*H, while in this era, the relative number of references to the Korean War also dropped. In the third wave, from the late-1980s to the early 2000s, Korea (though rarely depicted) began to reappear in films and TV series as an important backstory to a key character, while many new documentaries about the conflict appeared during this period covering the lead-up to the dedication of the National Korean War Memorial in Washington in 1995 and the fiftieth anniversary cycle of the war from June 2000 to July 2003. The most recent wave, which for the purposes of this study stretches to 2016, seems to be seeing a return to in-depth on-screen portrayals of the Korean War in documentaries, television series, and films. This sketch of four phases of Korean War public memory also suggests a framework to assess the history of Korea monument-making, and to compare on-screen memorialization of the war to in-stone memorialization through local and state monuments, the focus of the next chapter.

89 Marilyn Young, “Korea: The Post-War War”, History Workshop Journal, Issue 51 (2001) p. 113
CHAPTER 6 - NEVER FORGOTTEN: LOCAL KOREA MONUMENTS, 1950-2017

In this chapter I explore how Korean War monuments have changed over time from the 1950s to the 2010s. I show how local Korean War monuments at first tended to be simple honor rolls and hero tributes to those who gave their lives in war, while later memorials returned to a tradition of grand design and started to honor both the living and the dead. In this chapter I also look at the people and processes that produced several representative Korea monuments: the Mays Landing World Wars and Korean Conflict Memorial dedicated in 1955, the Hammonton Korea and Vietnam Veterans Memorial dedicated in 1987, the official state of New Jersey Korean War Memorial in Atlantic City dedicated in 2000, and the Wildwood Korean War Memorial dedicated in 2011. Understanding how monuments get made, as well as who both pushes for and pays for them, is just as important as the message which ends up on the finished monument, since finding funding is often a key factor in the stories of these monuments, as is the interplay of local politics and veterans groups with community leadership and civic engagement. Finally, in conclusion I begin to categorize local and state Korean War monuments based upon their symbolism, narrative, and sense of place.

What we learn from such an examination is that state and local Korea monuments seem to follow the same pattern from the previous chapter. Indeed, the history of Korea memorials, like that of films and TV shows depicting the war, can be broken into four phases. During phase one, from before the armistice until Vietnam grabbed public attention in the late 1960s, Korea was

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1 While the history behind each monument matters a lot, dates also matter for analyzing changing patterns of Korea commemoration, therefore in most cases in this chapter I only examine memorials that can be dated at least to year. Moreover, in most cases, this chapter only covers sites that I visited, so I could observe the broader commemorating landscape in which a memorial sits and its proximity to nearby heritage tourism options. As a result of my adopting this approach, as well as due to the volume of Korea monuments I was not able to visit, and the many that I did visit but could not accurately date or otherwise fit into the review that follows, this chapter necessarily underestimates the number of Korean War memorials nationwide. In a sense, the Korean War is even less forgotten than I can document here.
most often memorialized with one or both World Wars and recalled in monuments honoring individual soldiers who died in the war. Moreover, Korea was most often labeled as a “Conflict” on memorials built during this first phase of public memory, even though Congress did not formally re-christen Korea an official “War” until the 1990s. During phase two, from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, Korea was most often recalled in dual monuments alongside Vietnam, many of which equated the two. In contrast, phase three, from the late 1980s through the early 2000s, constitutes a veritable “Forgotten War Memory Boom,” during which many local and state Korean War monuments were dedicated nationwide, especially for the fortieth and fiftieth anniversary cycles from 1990 to 1993 and 2000 to 2003. Phase four, since 2003, has seen a relative drop in the incidence of Korea monument-building, although state memorials and local markers, often paid for by community chapters of the Korean War Veterans Association, have continued to be dedicated, while others remain in the works.

Phase One: Honor Rolls and Hero Tributes, 1950-67

In the Forrest Park section of St. Louis, site of the 1904 World’s Fair, sits a marker declaring the spot was home to the “Site Of The First Korean War Memorial In The United States” that was “Dedicated By Mayor Joseph M. Darst” on July 2, 1951. The living monument which was created in St. Louis in July of 1951 consisted of a memorial clock using flowers to spell out “Hours And Flowers Soon Fade Away,” but when the memorial began to fade after decades the city dedicated a permanent sundial. Moreover, since the use of sundials and other

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3 “Site 5 on the St. Louis Sundial Trail: Forest Park,” Website of Donald L. Snyder, Accessed 1/3/2017, Available at: http://dls-website.com/hobbies/Sundials/StLouisSundialTrail_Site5.htm, Korea is recalled at another “World’s Fair” site, the East Tennessee Veterans Memorial in Knoxville, which was built in 2008.
forms of unique statuary generally mark more recent Korean War memorials, the St. Louis site can be considered ahead of its time in terms of highlighting the timelessness of the war.

The large memorial sundial that replaced the floral arrangement also shares design elements with many other Korean War monuments from later decades in being angular and having a gap in the middle. Designed by Marianist Monk Mel Meyer, the memorial was funded by the Anheuser Busch Company and was dedicated on July 23, 1989 (during the third phase), while a nearby memorial to the Chosin Few was dedicated in July 2003, offering a prime example of a monument added to over time. The current St. Louis memorial is engraved with the Latin words *Diem Adimere Aegritudinem Hominibus*, translating as “time heals all wounds,” while a plaque, titled “It’s About Time,” asserts that “unique as an upright sundial is, it symbolizes the community's response to the need to remember forever our veterans of the Korean War.”

In contrast to the complicated memorials in St. Louis, most Korean War monuments constructed during the first phase of commemoration, which ended in 1967, are simple honor rolls listing the names of locals who died in Korea or memorials to individual soldiers who achieved unique distinction. Many of the markers also list locals who died in WWII including some memorials that were clearly planned before 1950 and only added Korea as an afterthought, and many markers refer to Korea as a conflict. Though the framing of the fight in Korea as a conflict (with the graves of servicemen in national cemeteries labeled only “Korea” rather than “Korean War”), may seem to downgrade their service, being listed on the same marker as WWII vets moderates this effect by equating the sacrifice of those who died in the 1950s with those who died in the 1940s. Moreover, some Korea monuments were dedicated even before the armistice.


5 O’Connell, p. 152.
The city of Colchester, Connecticut dedicated one such marker in 1952, honoring local WWII and Korean War vets, noting that “they fought against aggression, Communism, and the enslavement of people,” the first marker to assert such an anti-communist message, suggesting that by the early 1950s the WWII alliance between the U.S.S.R and the U.S. had been forgotten. Although undated, the Davidson County WWII and Korean War memorial in Lexington, North Carolina, must have been unveiled during the war; since it is dedicated to citizens who died in “the early days of the Korean Conflict,” and later added a second plaque for other locals killed in Korea. Moreover, it is likely many undated memorials listing locals who died in WWII and Korea may have been dedicated in the early 1950s, such as the Honor Roll in Hyde Park, New York that labels it as the “Korean Conflict,” which is the only Korea monument with FDR’s name on it.6

Several more monuments mentioning both WWII and Korea were dedicated in the year and a half after the armistice. The Veterans Memorial Monument in Concord, New Hampshire which sits in front of the statehouse but honors residents of the city, was dedicated on Veterans Day of 1953 to locals who died in WWII and Korea, and was recently cleaned and expanded as part of an Eagle Scout project in 2013. A Memorial Flag Pole, which includes WWII names and notes the Korean Conflict started in 1950 but gives no end date, was dedicated July 4, 1954 in the town of Milford, Connecticut, where on Veterans Day in 1986 another plaque was dedicated to local veterans of who fought in Korea and Vietnam. On November 17, 1954 the city of Bristol, Connecticut dedicated a monument to its citizens who fought in WWII and in the Korean War, which includes mention of Korea on plaques and the main masthead but not in between the two plaques, only a few yards from a second Korean War memorial, dedicated decades later in 1995.

It was also in 1954, in Columbiana, Alabama, that the American Legion erected a monument mentioning Korea and both World Wars, in “memory of the brave men from Shelby County who gave their lives that freedom and justice should not perish from the earth,” in an early articulation of Cold War era ideology.⁷

Case Study: The Hamilton Township World Wars and Korean Conflict Memorial

On Memorial Day, May 30, of 1955, in Underhill Park next to the Atlantic County Courthouse in Mays Landing, New Jersey, a monument consisting of a grey granite obelisk inscribed with the names of those locals whose lives were lost in WWI, WWII, and the “Korean Conflict” was first “Dedicated As A Lasting Tribute To The Men and Woman of HAMILTON TOWNSHIP Who Served Their Country,” and it offers a useful case study in the people and processes behind early Korean War monuments. The park itself is dedicated “in Memory of John W. Underhill, Negro Citizen and Public Benefactor,” who owned a candy store and donated the land for the plaza on his death in 1925, a fact immortalized by the memorial fountain that was “erected in 1932 by the township committee of Hamilton.”⁸ The only listed local to die during the

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“Korean Conflict,” as it is labeled on the memorial, was Harry Hartmann, Jr. In addition, three other men are listed as sitting on the Hamilton Township Committee behind the building of the memorial: Joseph Venuti (named as Chairman), William Davies (namesake of a local school), and Herman G. Liepe.

So who were these men? Herman G. Liepe, Jr., born in 1925, was the grandson of an immigrant farmer called the “Sweet Potato King” and worked in the family business, serving as the Atlantic County Market Growers manager who oversaw a sweet potato crop valued at $5 million dollars in 1962. William Davies, born in Elwood, Indiana in 1908, moved to the area on “completing his schooling at Baltimore City College” and began teaching after “a special course of study at the Ocean City Summer School,” starting his career “in a one-room rural school in Eatonville in” 1926 before taking a job teaching English in Mays Landing two years later, then eventually becoming “principal of the Hamilton Township Public Schools” in 1960. Joseph Venuti, born in 1905, graduated from Atlantic City high school in 1924 then “became a teacher,” starting out “at a one-room schoolhouse in Weymouth” before moving on to “Mays Landing,” where he taught until becoming “clerk of the Atlantic County board of elections” in 1945.9

Venuti could only have garnered this patronage job after years of service to the powerful Atlantic County Republican Party. Indeed, all these men were politically powerful. Venuti began his political career in 1940 when “elected to the township committee,” then served multiple terms as mayor, including in 1950 when he was quoted in a West Virginia newspaper discussing the impact of a factory closing, and in 1955 when he judged a facial hair competition called the

“Brothers of the Brush.” William Davies sat on Township Committee from 1944 through 1972, and also served “several terms as Mayor of Hamilton Township,” including in 1960, when he successfully lobbied the State Senate to declare a “Celebration Year” in commemoration of the two-hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the community. Liepe, Jr. also served for years on the Committee, as well as one term as mayor in 1959, when an encephalitis epidemic left nineteen dead and was reported on as far away as Tucson, Arizona. In declaring a state of emergency, Mayor Liepe “called for an all-out war on mosquitos,” which meant “the aid of Civil Defense officials… and marine reservists armed with a flamethrower…used to burn out ditches.”

All three of these men were also socially well-connected. Liepe played baseball in local leagues as late as 1953, led a drive to create the Cologne Volunteer Fire Company in a section of Hamilton Township in 1960, and was a member of both the Grangers and Masons as well as the Egg Harbor City Moravian Church, which preaches pacifism and perhaps explains why Liepe served in neither WWII nor in Korea. Davies, “a member of the First Presbyterian Church and its board of trustees,” in 1945 became a charter member of a new local Rotary Club serving as its President in 1948-1949, and was a Mason who in “1959 was elected to hold the highest office in Masonry in the State… that of Grand Master.” Venuti, a member of St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church, was also a founder of the new Rotary Club, for which he initially served as one of four Directors then as the President in 1960-61, and was “active in athletics,” and also helped found “the Atlantic County Baseball League.” Moreover, Venuti was proclaimed “Citizen of the

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Year” in 1963 and Davies was picked in 1964, when both were in their mid-fifties, suggesting Liepe may also have been chosen for the award had he not died “suddenly” in 1969 at age 44.11

In contrast, while the Hartmann family would acquire many local connections in the years after their son’s death, when Harry Hartmann, Jr. was killed in Korea they were still relative newcomers to the community, with two other sons, who would likely have faced challenges in trying to lobby for a monument themselves. Private Harry Hartman, Jr., the “only Township resident who gave up his life during the Korean War,” according to a poster that was a part of the “50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemorative Community Program,” was just 19 when he died in 1951. In fact, Harry Hartman, Sr. had moved his family to Mays Landing only five years earlier, in 1946, after retiring from his job as a “New York City policeman” to work at “the Wheaton Plasticote Co.,” which he did until “two years” before his death in 1973 at age 67, and his obituary notes “he was a member of the St. George Association of the New York City Police Department.” Emma Hartmann, a widow until her death in 2000 at age 94,” was a member of St. Vincent DePaul as well as of “the V.F.W. Post 22 Ladies Auxiliary, and a past president of the American Legion Post 254 Ladies Auxiliary,” as noted in her obituary, which mentions she “was also a member of the Hamilton Township Senior Travel Club, and was a Gold Star Mother.”12


Why add Hartman’s name at all? Liepe, Davies, and Venuti all either had named a son for them, or were named for their fathers. In addition, Joseph Venuti, Jr., born in 1926, was then a New Jersey State Trooper, while Venuti’s other son became a Marine but died in 1965 at age 18. Moreover, the fact that all three served as mayor in the five years after the memorial was unveiled suggests they built it at the height of their influence and implies key connections between local political power and social-civic networks, as these men could call on their contacts among baseball players, firefighters, teachers, Grangers, Rotarians, Republicans, Masons, Moravians, Presbyterians, Catholics, and many more to ask for aid in their effort.13

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That same Memorial Day of 1955, Kenosha, Wisconsin dedicated a monument to locals who died in the World Wars and Korea, decades before dedicating another memorial in 1994 specifically to Korea vets which calls it “The Forgotten War” while telling those who served “You Are Not Forgotten.” Also in 1955, in Salisbury, Maryland, a memorial was dedicated consisting of a thirty-two foot obelisk containing a parchment with names of all Wicomico County soldiers who died in the World Wars and Korea, which is set to undergo a renovation once fundraising efforts begun in 2015 are completed. In 1955, Deerfield, Ohio built a memorial specifically in honor of “Lt. James S. Walker and Corp. Paul R. Kirkbride,” locals “Who Gave Their Lives In The Service Of Their Country During The Korean Conflict,” as they term it.14

_Township Historical Society; Harry Hartman obituary, Atlantic County Record (July 5, 1973), Hartmann Family file, Hamilton Township Historical Society; Emma Hartman obituary, The Press of Atlantic City (September 9, 2000), Hartmann Family file, Hamilton Township Historical Society


Most of the local Korean War monuments produced in the latter half of the 1950s also mention WWII. On June 24, 1956 the town of Lansing, Ohio dedicated a memorial by a local “Sportsmen’s Club” to those “Who Gave Their Lives That We Can Continue To Live In Freedom” that mentions both WWII and Korea. On March 30, 1957 in Monmouth County, New Jersey a Roll of Honor was “Erected by the citizens of the borough of Keyport” in front of the library “to commemorate the patriotic men and women who served in the Armed Forces” and “honor those listed below who made the supreme sacrifice” in the World Wars and “Korean Campaign.” Memorial Day of 1958 was a popular date for finishing memorials in Indiana as it saw the dedication of the Marshall County Honor Roll in Plymouth, which also names the locals who died in both of the World Wars, and the Randolph County World War II and Korean Conflict Memorial in Winchester, consisting of a plaque affixed to a tank sitting in front of the county courthouse. It was also in 1958 that Waterbury, Connecticut dedicated an All-Wars Memorial that is unique in noting the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War as well as the Korean War but neither of the World Wars, decades before the town dedicated another memorial to honor George Libby, the first enlisted man to win the Medal of Honor in Korea, on September 15, 2011.\\footnote{15}\\

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Many Korea monuments dedicated during the 1960s continued to include mention of additional conflicts, often both World Wars. On May 30, 1960 Nekoosa, Wisconsin dedicated a plaque to local dead from the World Wars and Korea. Also in 1960 Wethersfield, Connecticut dedicated a plaque to those who died in WWI, WWII, and the Korean War years before building a monument that added Vietnam, while in Maryland the Bethesda-Chevy Chase War Memorial, dedicated in 1960 to WWI, WWII, and Korea dead, later also added Vietnam. The first dated monument in Tennessee to mention Korea is the Martin War Memorial, dedicated in 1960 to locals who died in the World Wars and Korea, while the “Viet Nam Conflict” was added later. The memorial includes a Rudyard Kipling quote ending “Lest we forget - Lest we forget.”

The Howard County War Memorial was dedicated to those who fought in the World Wars and the Korean War in 1961 in Ellicott City, Maryland, while also in 1961 Old Saybrook, Connecticut dedicated a memorial to locals who died in the same wars. In 1964 the “grateful citizens of Sussex County,” Virginia dedicated a memorial honoring “Sussex County citizens who gave their lives in service to their country, 1917-1958” which includes one name who died in Korea and another who died working for the Strategic Air Command. The Clyde Town-Ship Armed Forces Memorial in Haywood County, North Carolina was dedicated to locals who fought in both World Wars and the “Korean Conflict” on May 15, 1965 by using a wooden plaque because the bronze version had yet to arrive. The Blount County War Dead Memorial Plaza in

Maryville, Tennessee included wars from the Revolution to Korea when dedicated in 1965. The memorial was a metal statue on a stone base ringed by bronze plaques, until recently renovated.\textsuperscript{17} Korea was also recalled at official state war memorials in the 1950s and 1960s. The Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, dedicated on Leap Day 1956, was designed to honor those who died in the World Wars when first authorized in 1950. The memorial wall of names is divided by county, and sits next to a twenty-two foot sculpture labeled “Memory” at whose base burns an eternal flame. Delaware’s Veterans Memorial Park in New Castle, is now home to memorials honoring vets of Desert Storm and submarines, and also dates to 1956, when a wall was put up with the names of Delaware and New Jersey residents who died in WWII and Korea. Another Korean War monument, a Pagoda shaped marker, was added to the site on May 30, 2003. The Alabama War Veterans Monument, dedicated in 1966 at the American Legion state headquarters in Montgomery, mentions eight wars such as the “War Between the States,” each on its own dedicated pillar (now topped by flower pots but formerly by statues) that also include poems, like the line “SOLDIER REST, -THY WARFARE O’ER” engraved on the Korea pillar.\textsuperscript{18}


Memorial Day 1954 kicked off an eighteen-month period of Korea monument-building, the earliest an Honor Roll in Lincoln Park, Michigan unveiled May 23, 1954. On June 27 a memorial in Montgomery, Alabama that includes a Latin Cross and a Star of David was dedicated by the “Woodmen of the World,” a fraternal order, “in grateful memory of the men and women of” the “County who fought for God and country on the field of honor in the Korean War” noting “we will remember them.” The first New Jersey memorial to exclusively honor Korea dead was “Dedicated To The Memory Of The Korean War Dead Of West Orange” in November 1955 by the local VFW branch and consists of a bronze plaque of an eagle, which includes three names. Fewer monuments exclusively focused on the Korean War would be built from the late 1950s to the mid-1960s. One of these few, a Korea Memorial in Hampton, New Hampshire consisting of a “ROLL OF HONOR In Remembrance Of Those Who Served In The Korean War,” was dedicated in May 1959, while the Korean War Honor Roll in Swampscott, Massachusetts, was dedicated in 1965.19

The first monument for an individual soldier killed in Korea was dedicated in 1951 to honor local Lieutenant George Sulliman “and other Belvidere youths” such as Private-First-Class Leland Kahrmann in New Britain, Connecticut, where another monument was dedicated on October 10, 1954 in honor of Sherrod Skinner “killed in action three days before his 23rd birthday in the Korean Conflict” after “he heroically threw himself on a live hand grenade.” The Junior Edwards statue in the Oddfellows Cemetery south of Indianola, Iowa is more overtly symbolic,

and notes he died January 2, 1951, but must have been dedicated after the war as it calls him “the only Iowan in the Korean Conflict to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.” As the only sculpture in the field, a Christ-like figure that is visible from the road and hard to miss walking through the cemetery, it is an outlier as a stylized early Korean War monument.  

Another early Korea monument that includes a statue is the Greenwich Veterans Monument in Fairfield County, Connecticut dedicated May 20, 1958 to locals “Who Made the Supreme Sacrifice” in WWII and Korea, while later adding the names of locals who died in Vietnam. This process of adding to existing memorials is not merely a local phenomenon. On August 3, 1956 President Eisenhower signed a bill authorizing WWII and Korea additions to the Tomb of The Unknown Soldier, although it was only in 1958 that they lie in state at the Capitol before being buried with honors at Arlington on Memorial Day.

The Honolulu Memorial at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific on Oahu in Hawaii was dually dedicated to those who went Missing-In-Action in Asia during WWII as well as in Korea, then added an area devoted to MIA in Vietnam in 1980. The Punchbowl is named for its location in an extinct volcano that houses the remains of thousands of Korean War veterans including “unidentified remains of 800 U.S. servicemen who died fighting in Korea.” A hundred acres of graves marked with flat granite stones, many of them decorated with freshly cut flowers when I visited, dot the landscape as far as the eye can see. Yet what dominates the scenery is a

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thirty-foot statue of Lady Liberty atop a grand staircase flanked by ten courts commemorating those who went MIA in Asia during World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.23

The monument itself focuses on abstractions about sacrifice and soldiers whose physical remains are not actually present, in a way encouraging the confusion of details about the wars in the 1940s, 1950s, and long 1960s. Indeed, the idea of the universality of war is solidified in the space beneath the statue which bears the inscription “THE SOLEMN PRIDE THAT MUST BE YOURS TO HAVE LAID SO COSTLY A SACRIFICE UPON THE ALTER OF FREEDOM,” lines lifted from Abraham Lincoln’s letter to Mrs. Bixby upon the death of her five sons in the Civil War. Behind the statue lies a chapel containing “a lighted Latin cross” and a “gold leafed Star of David” as well as “a Buddhist Wheel of Righteousness.”24

On either side of the chapel are map galleries containing educational annotations meant to teach tourists about the geography and history of WWII and Korea, yet it is easy to lose the latter war. At the lone memorial maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission which even represents Korea, compared to the dozen additional sites from WWII the ABMC governs, the Korean War gets only one map. In contrast, thirteen individual battles of WWII, are each depicted and have their own interpretive captions. The Korean War described at this gallery is divided into two narratives: the “OPERATIONS AGAINST THE NORTH KOREANS” from “25 JUNE-23 NOVEMBER 1950,” and the “OPERATIONS AGAINST THE CHINESE INVADERS” occurring between “24 NOVEMBER 1950-27 JULY 1953.”25


24 Cemetery Booklet, p. 5-6, 10. This letter is referenced in a scene near the start of Saving Private Ryan.

25 Cemetery Booklet, p. 22-23
The section on North Korea is full of action verbs and adjectives portraying a dramatic back and forth that began with the South Koreans “heavily outnumbered and outgunned” and soon “compressed into a small beachhead,” prior to the arrival of the Americans “at Inchon in a daring flanking operation,” after which “the enemy line was broken and resistance collapsed” leading to “the liberation of Seoul.” In contrast, the section on war with China describes how early successes of the U.S. military were “thrown back by a massive attack by Chinese Communist forces” who “had secretly crossed the Yalu River,” and led to new “front lines” which “remained substantially unchanged” until “an armistice agreement was finally signed.”

While the rhetoric of American military superiority in the first section may be a way of attempting to lionize Korea vets, the image of duplicitous Communists promoting a protracted stalemate in the second section suggests Cold War ideology played a role in the Punchbowl memorial’s messaging.

The American Battle Monuments Commission, formed in 1923 to commemorate battle sites from WWI just a few years after American troops aided the anti-Soviet side of the Russian Civil War, began to build the Punchbowl monument in 1964 and finished it in 1966, amidst increasing American involvement in Vietnam. Indeed, as Kurt Piehler argues, the messaging of the Punchbowl is explained by its history, since “during the 1950s and 1960s there were several efforts to build what might be termed national Cold War memorials,” all of which failed, as did the ABMC’s attempt to create a separate memorial in Korea.

The expansion of the Vietnam War meant 1967 would be the last year that Korea was most often recalled with one or both World Wars but apart from Vietnam. In 1967 Quakertown, Pennsylvania added a stone donated by “Joe Tarantino and the family cemetery memorial

26 Ibid.

business” honoring those who died in WWII as well as Korea “In the Cause of Freedom” to an existing monument, later adding the names of locals who died in Vietnam, in the Persian Gulf, and in Iraq. Astronaut Virgil “Gus” Grissom’s grave at Arlington, which both notes his World War II career and is labeled simply with the word “Korea” for his service as a jet pilot there, was unveiled on January 31, 1967, marking one of the last times Korea was to be recalled with World War II but apart from Vietnam, as well as the end of this first phase of commemoration.28 During the next phase of commemoration, stretching from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, Korea was much more likely to be recalled on monuments that also mentioned Vietnam, or multiple-wars.

Phase Two: Korea in the Vietnam Era, 1967-87

The earliest Vietnam monument known to exist was dedicated in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania on Veterans Day 1966 “according to Duery Felton, curator of the…Vietnam Veterans Memorial Collection,” though it was then forgotten before being rediscovered in 2012. The next earliest is a plaque in Calumet City, Illinois “Dedicated to the Veterans of Korea and Vietnam” on May 30, 1967, the first of many dual memorials created over the next two decades.29 Indeed, from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s, Korea was rarely recalled without Vietnam, leading to an equating of them but also making it easier to conflate them.

Most early Korea-Vietnam monuments were simple lists of local names. The Blackford County Korea and Vietnam Memorial in Harford City, Indiana was dedicated in 1973, while the Korea-Vietnam memorial in Omaha, Nebraska was dedicated on May 25, 1976. Constructed in 1948 to honor locals who died in the World Wars, the Murfreesboro “These Our War Dead”


Memorial in Tennessee, which includes a quote from Douglas MacArthur, added Korea and Vietnam names on May 3, 1977, while Franklyn, Connecticut dedicated a monument on a church lawn to vets of Korea and Vietnam in May of 1978.30

On May 30, 1982, Bethlehem, Connecticut dedicated separate plaques to Korea and Vietnam vets, exactly a year before a memorial co-dedicated to Korea and Vietnam vets was unveiled in Sullivan, Indiana. In 1983 that “The People Of Goshen,” Connecticut dedicated a memorial to those who served “During The Korean War And The Vietnam Era.” In Wisconsin on April 29, 1984 the Osh Kosh Korean War Memorial was dedicated in the corduroy capitol, alongside a twinned Vietnam marker, listing locals who died in each. In May of 1984 Plainville, Connecticut dedicated a monument to community members “who served their country in Korea and Vietnam.” Finally, the Monroe County Korean and Vietnam War Memorial in Madisonville, Tennessee was dedicated in May 1985, the same year plaques for both Korea and Vietnam were added to the monument in front of the Harlan County courthouse in Alma, Nebraska.31


In addition to dual Korea-Vietnam memorials, many monuments from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s mention Korea alongside Vietnam and at least one World War. The Thomson War Memorial in Connecticut, dedicated in 1968, mentions Vietnam as well as WWII and Korea. A monument near the state capitol grounds in Atlanta also naming both World Wars and Vietnam, dedicated August 25, 1969 for “the 50th anniversary convention of the American Legion,” includes an eternal “Flame of Freedom,” while months later on Veterans Day 1969, way across the state in a small park in the town of Waycross, another “Flame of Freedom” was dedicated by several branches of the American Legion as well as the “GA Natural Gas Company,” among others.\(^{32}\) These are only two of dozens of local “Flames of Freedom” dedicated in 1969 and 1970 across the country in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the American Legion. In the wake of the 1968 *USS Pueblo* attack and rise in tensions between the U.S. and North Korea in the late 1960s these eternal flames mentioning Korea also reminded Americans that despite Vietnam occupying national attention, it was not the first nor the only ongoing Asian conflict.

Simple memorials proliferated through the 1970s such as in Hodgensville, Kentucky where an All-Wars Memorial denoting Korea was dedicated on May 30, 1970, a year before a memorial in nearby Maysville was dedicated by General George Patton to local dead from WWI to Vietnam. In 1974 a memorial was dedicated in Dustin Park in Pittsfield, New Hampshire that notes the World Wars and Vietnam along with Korea. Some multi-war monuments dedicated in the early 1980s began to move past honor rolls and toward complicated designs, just at the time Erika Doss identifies “the recent mushrooming of the public art industry” which she thinks is a

key factor underlying “much of today’s memorial mania.” One complicated multi-war memorial from in the early 1980s that notes Korea is the Lamar County War Memorial located in front of the courthouse in Purvis, Mississippi, which is a six-sided pillar topped by a bronze eagle, built in 1983, and mentions Korea alongside both World Wars and Vietnam. Another is the Cherryville Veterans Memorial in Gaston County North Carolina, dedicated May 26, 1986, a nine-foot tall granite pillar paid for by the American Legion noting the World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam.33

Some dual memorials unveiled in the early to mid-1980s use complex designs to equate the wars, such as the Onondaga County Korea and Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which consists of twin triangular pillars, dedicated on Veterans Day of 1984 next to a historic church in downtown Syracuse, New York. Similarly, the Vermillion County Korean and Vietnam War Memorial in Danville, Illinois, dedicated in 1984, includes twin stones describing the particulars of the different wars. The dual Korean-Vietnam Veterans memorial in Essex, Maryland, which was dedicated in 1985 and paid for by “The Joint Veterans Association of Essex,” equates the wars by inscribing a giant “K” within a “V” using the same size font.34

Though never as common as monuments mentioning Korea alongside Vietnam, some memorials dedicated from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s were meant to exclusively honor


Korea vets. For example, the Lawrence County Korean War Honor Roll in Bedford, Indiana that was dedicated in 1974 to locals that served in “the Korea Conflict and died so that you and I might live in Peace” and earned the title “Defenders of Freedom for God and Country,” and has one of the many overtly religious messages inscribed on monuments. In July 1976 the citizens of Covington County, Mississippi dedicated a monument next to the courthouse in Collins to Medal of Honor recipient Mack Jordan, who died in Korea in 1951 displaying “conspicuous gallantry and indomitable courage.” The unique Korean War Memorial in North Attleboro, Massachusetts started out as a plaque affixed to a boulder made of local “Red Rock” that was dedicated June 30, 1978 by the North Attleboro Veterans Council to those who served in “the war known as ‘The Korean Conflict,’” then added a “granite arch designed to represent the gateway of a Korean city,” dedicated June 15, 1996.35

The number of monuments specifically dedicated to Korean War veterans grew through the early 1980s. The move of vets to Florida helped inspire the dedication, on Memorial Day of 1981, of a monument in Palatka honoring those “who gave their lives in the Korean Conflict,” the same year the “Tampa Historical Society” unveiled a marker dedicated to Medal of Honor winner Baldomero Lopez, who had died at Inchon. The Virgil “Gus” Grissom Rocket Monument in Mitchell, Indiana was also finished in 1981, after years of efforts, and notes he was denied a request to fly extra jet missions in Korea after surviving his assigned quota.36


The thirtieth anniversary of the armistice in 1983 saw the dedication of the Dallas County Korean War Memorial in Selma, Alabama, which asserts we “withstood the North Korean enemy and drove them back to the 38th Parallel,” and was sponsored by local branches of the VFW and American Legion as well as the Daughters of American Veterans. This is one of many Korean War monuments highlighting the theme of sacrifice for ideology and local community. Some Korean War monuments from the 1980s would go even further to explicitly assert the idea that Korea was fought to defend against Communism. For example, in Glasgow, Kentucky the Barren County Korean Conflict Memorial, dedicated Veterans Day of 1983, asserts locals must “never forget how” soldiers “stood between us and the threat of Communist aggression.”

Some Korea memorials dedicated in the mid-1980s include statements on why the sacrifices of the conflict were required. On June 23, 1984 Richmond, Indiana dedicated a marker on U.S. Route 40 to honor “those who fought to keep South Korea free and to those who maintain the vigilance,” alluding to the continued presence of U.S. troops along the DMZ. Garden City, Michigan dedicated a monument to local Korean War veterans on May 30, 1985 which asserts that “Liberty Is Not Inexpensive” and promises “Their Sacrifices Will Not Be Forgotten.” On Veterans Day 1985 Monroe, Connecticut dedicated a monument exclusively to Korean War veterans, though the town had unveiled a WWII plaque in 1953 and a Vietnam plaque in 1984.

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1986 was a year of dual monuments honoring those who died in Korea and Vietnam, starting with one dedicated in Elizabeth City, North Carolina on Memorial Day, May 30. On that same day Rutherford, New Jersey dedicated a monument to locals who died in Korea and Vietnam, while across the state the city of Spotswood unveiled dual Korea and Vietnam markers, decades before the community added two monuments mentioning Korea, sponsored by the local high school history club, in 2000, including a time capsule that was buried next to the original 1986 monument set to be unearthed in 2050. Though the Korean War Memorial on the county courthouse lawn in Newberry, South Carolina does not have a date, a twinned Vietnam memorial just a few feet away suggests both were dedicated on Veterans Day 1986. It was also in 1986 that two more dual monuments would be dedicated, the Anderson County Korean War and “Viet Nam Veterans” Memorial built by the South Carolina branch of the “American Legion Auxiliary,” two counties away, and the Miami County Korean-Viet Nam War Memorial, found in Peru, Indiana.39

A dual Korea-Vietnam monument built the next year helps reveal the memorial-making process.

**Case Study: The Hammonton Korea-Vietnam Memorial**

On May 25, 1987 the town of Hammonton, New Jersey dedicated a dual monument to locals who fought in Korea and Vietnam. Though one of the last monuments dedicated during the second phase of Korean War commemoration, it offers a good illustration of the motivations that lie behind the creation of many Korea-Vietnam monuments in the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover,

the origin story of the Hammonton Korea-Vietnam Memorial suggests some of the ways that such monuments intersected with other forms of public patriotism during the final years of the Cold War, since it goes back to the fall of 1984, when Ronald Reagan spoke at a site downtown, during his re-election campaign. Reagan’s speech highlighted some of the ways Hammonton represented the nation, even using the town tagline of “Blueberry Capital of the world,” and noted that it was home to “many proud Italians and hard-working farmers” in order to rouse the crowd.40

While the speech itself is best known now for Reagan including a reference to Bruce Springsteen, and “the message of hope in [his] songs,” that led to the singer forcing the President to cease using “Born in the U.S.A.” as a campaign ballad, and eventually led Springsteen to get involved in progressive politics, Reagan also mentioned several other New Jerseyans by name in his speech. Moreover, those names which Ronald Reagan dropped that day included both those of politicians and of “the faces of Hammonton,” such as “two people who recently you honored on their 50th wedding anniversary, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mazza.” Their son, Frank Mazza, Jr., whose name is on the Hammonton monument, “served in the U.S. Navy” during the Korean War, then “owned and operated Frank Mazza & Son Furniture Store since 1958” and “was an active member in his Community serving in many organizations including Rotary,” the American Legion 186, the Chamber of Commerce, the Knights of Columbus, and local VFW Post 1026.41

The lead-up to Reagan’s arrival also offered the opportunity for the “Women’s Civic Club” to kick off “a four-year beautification program” of the “Veterans Memorial Park,” where

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the Korea-Vietnam memorial sits, which was finished the very same Memorial Day 1987 that the memorial was dedicated. Indeed, “before the unveiling of the Korean-Vietnam War Memorial Monument” VFW Commander John Vaughn “conducted the rededication of the park,” which he noted was used as the site of a “monument following World War I,” while opining he hoped the site would house no future monuments. Vaughn, “a member of the Peace Presbyterian Church” and a Mason, had seen his share of war, serving “in the U.S. Navy during WWII, Korea and the Vietnam War,” then “after his military career [he] taught elementary school in Hammonton” from 1968 to 1984 and “served on the Hammonton Town Council.” VFW Commander Tom Rizzotte, who “served in the U.S. Army during WWII” then “worked for Highway Transportation as a truck driver for over 35 years” before becoming “a certified Black Seal Boiler” who worked “for over 10 years for the Hammonton Board of Education,” next separately “dedicated Hammonton’s memorial to the men who died in Korea and Vietnam.” These men, with a star next to their names on the monument, include only one soldier that died in Korea, John F. Bruno, who was killed June 14, 1953, less than two months before the armistice, and received posthumous medals including a Purple Heart. Rizzotte also noted that “the town donated the $7,500 for the monument,” which was created by Peterson Monuments of nearby Egg Harbor City.42

According to Denise Saia, Secretary of the Historical Society of Hammonton, in 1987 “a town ordinance appropriating $7,500 for the construction of the monument,” was approved by the mayor and town council. Among the mayor and council who approved the proposal were several veterans, such as Rodney G. Cramer, whose name appears on the memorial as a Korean War vet.

Charles “Bud” Gazzara, who “served in U.S. Air Force” before becoming “branch manager for Metropolitan Insurance Co.” and “a bus driver for the Atlantic County Vocational School and Hammonton Public Schools,” was well-connected in the community (being “a member of the Knights of Columbus,” Volunteer Rescue Squad, Fire Company, VFW, and American Legion), and in 1982 “he was named N.J Volunteer of the Year and was recognized” by President Reagan. Andrew Berenato was “a member of the Army National Guard” before he became “president of M.L Ruberton Construction,” a volunteer firefighter, “Hammonton Rescue Squad” member, and a Kiwanis Club member, but he did not fight in Korea, although his cousin (fellow firefighter and local postman), Peter Berenato, did. With a majority of veterans on the town council, it posed no problem to gain support from Ralph Morano, who worked for his family company James Morano & Sons,”one of South Jersey's largest paper and cleaning supply wholesale companies,” and from Russell Clark,”who took over and expanded to 175 acres” his family’s farm while shifting it from “peaches and apples” to blueberries.43

Mayor George Mortellite, whose father “Carmelo, first planted blueberry bushes in the 1950's,” founded Buffalo Farms with his brother in 1963, which his sons now “operate with the same commitment to excellence and hard work they learned from their father, George Sr..” Mortellite, “a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corp” and “active in many local organizations,” was in office from 1984, when “President Ronald Reagan made a visit to Hammonton,” to 1987, and pushed for many patriotic displays to take place. Just months after the monument was dedicated, on Memorial Day of 1987, “Hammonton’s first Red, White, and Blueberry Festival” took place, an event where young Kellyanne Fitzpatrick (later Conway) was crowned as “blueberry packing

champion” of Hammonton for having “packed 39 crates and nine pints” in just over a half-hour of work. This nexus of rural patriotism and Republican politics that brought Ronald Reagan to town, and led to a “Red, White, and Blueberry Festival” that celebrated its thirty-first year in 2017, was what prompted the mayor and town council to spend Hammonton’s money on a monument.44

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Even before the Hammonton memorial was dedicated in 1987, big changes were afoot that would impact public memory of the Korean War going forward. The Korean War Veterans Association was first formed in 1985 and, as Kristin Ann Hass notes, that fall Congress initially authorized $1 million to build “a Korean War memorial.”45 These efforts to remember Korea more publicly meant 1987 was the last year it was more often recalled with Vietnam than alone, as the years leading to the unveiling of the DC Memorial in 1995, and to the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice in 2003, would see more memorials focused only on Korea.

Still, several additional dual Korea-Vietnam memorials would be built in the late 1980s. The Bloomington-Normal Korea-Vietnam Memorial in Indiana was dedicated May 1988, while in Kansas City, Kansas a monument to Korea and Vietnam vets, dedicated Veterans Day 1988, claims to be the nation’s first such monument, according to the “Narrated Audio Tour” that is available through the local “Convention & Visitors Bureau” by calling into a pre-recorded line.46


Consisting of bronze statues and honor rolls, the Wyandotte County monument is really one of the most recent, rather than first, Korea-Vietnam memorials, despite this claim.

More common from the late 1980s on are monuments dedicated exclusively to those who fought and died in Korea. An early example is the Jacksonville Korean War Memorial in Illinois, dedicated May 30, 1987. Completed two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Jacksonville monument honors the “Memory of Those Who Gave Their Lives Serving Their Country and Fighting Communism.”47 Many of these phase three monuments would also consciously play on the idea that Korea is the forgotten war.


From the late 1980s on, more and more Korean War monuments began to use the term “Forgotten,” suggesting that this period might be thought of as a Forgotten War Memory Boom, in line with what Jay Winter identifies as a scholarly era. Woodside Cemetery in Middletown, Ohio dedicated a marker on May 25, 1987 that concludes “may they never be forgotten.” Similarly, the Chicago Korean War Memorial in Kennedy Park, dedicated on September 15, 1988, includes a sculpture of one quarter of a globe showing a map of Korea and states “those who sacrificed so much in the cause of freedom will never be forgotten.” In 1990 a marker noting “132,000 Wisconsinites were involved in this ‘Forgotten War,’” was installed near Westfield on Highway 51, which decades later became the state Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway. The Laurens County Korea Memorial in South Carolina, unveiled on Veterans Day of 1991, says locals “Shall Never Forget Their Own” on one side while on the other is a map and labeling as “The Forgotten War.”48


48 “Middletown Korean Conflict Memorial,” Historical Marker Project, Accessed 10/9/2016, Available at: www.historicalmarkerproject.com/markers/HMK0K_middletown-korean-conflict-memory_Middletown-
Though not all used the term forgotten, many cities across the nation dedicated Korean War memorials in the late 1980s, from Nashua, New Hampshire to West Milton, Ohio and from Philippi, West Virginia to Quincy, Illinois. Moreover, for localities seeking to commemorate the war but not feeling the need to create a unique community monument to do so, there were options available. The monument in Monroe, Michigan was dedicated July 27, 1988, thirty-five years after the armistice, and includes a bronze plaque full of images from Korea and text mentioning battles such as Heartbreak Ridge and noting troops “froze in the winter and baked in the summer sun.”

The same plaque appears in Korean War monuments in Azusa, California and Dyersburg, Tennessee and All-Wars Memorials from Branchburg, New Jersey to Scotia, California, and in 2017 it was still advertised for sale by United States Bronze of Hyde Park, New York. So just as earlier generations had used Pioneer statues, some communities chose generic Korea monuments.


The first official state Korean War Memorials were also dedicated in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. In contrast to local memorials, state monuments are more likely to include an extensive narrative describing the war and emphasizing the contributions of that state, such as it is in Iowa. Following five years of efforts the Iowa Korean War Memorial was dedicated in Des Moines on May 28, 1989 amidst a crowded memorial landscape on the lawn of the Capitol. The front of the memorial pillar describes the invasion of South Korea “with 22 Russian built tanks” starting “what has been referred to as ‘Korea—The Forgotten War.’” The other faces of the pillar assert “The Valor Of The Ground Forces,” “Mighty Navy Command Of The Sea,” and “Superior Was Our Air Power.” The narrative on the surrounding stones focuses on the opening months of the war; of the eight stones, six deal with the invasion and Inchon while a seventh discusses the actions of the “X-Corps” and entry of “China into the War.” Only the last stone notes events from 1951 to 1953, such as the two years of “Truce Talks,” and the creation of a “Demilitarized Zone.”

The official Maryland Korean War Memorial in Baltimore also gives short shrift to the armistice in its lengthy narrative. Dedicated on May 27, 1990 in Canton Waterfront Park, on a tiny street named Korean War Veterans Memorial Boulevard, the memorial is a void sunken into the ground with circular walls. In addition, running through the middle of the memorial is a line that on closer inspection actually bisects a map of Korea where the thirty-eighth parallel divided North from South. Besides this main map, the most prominent of the site’s design elements is the wall of stones with different pieces of a cohesive narrative on the Korean War, with but a brief background and only a single sentence describing the armistice. As interesting as the design of

Plaques,” U.S. Bronze Company website; Accessed 12/23/2017, Available at: https://usbronze.com/memorials/war-memorials/

51 “Korean War Memorial,” Iowa State Legislature website, Accessed 6/15/2015, Available at: https://www.legis.iowa.gov/resources/tourCapitol/pictorial/capitolGroundsOld/koreanWarMemorial; For example, historian Roger Thompson, in Lessons Not Learned: The U.S. Navy’s Status Quo Culture, argues that though the U.S would gain air superiority by the end of the Korean War, at the start this was not true.
the memorial is its position on the water near Fort McHenry and historic Inner Harbor, both shown on a bay map, reinforcing the value of Baltimore’s nautical heritage tourism trade.\textsuperscript{52}

Multiple official state Korean War memorials are tied into heritage tourism by their location near memorials and museums as well as due to “the advent of Percent for Art ordinances in multiple American cities and states” since the 1980s that, in the words of Erica Doss, “have funded thousands of public art projects across the country.” Moreover, as Mike Wallace notes, the creation of monuments in the early 1990s took place against the backdrop of cuts in federal funding for historic preservation, and was only possible due to a belief in the “economic benefits of heritage tourism.” The New York state Korean War Memorial in Albany, dedicated on June 25, 1990, includes a fountain ringed by the flags of nations that fought for the UN side. Located in the Empire State Plaza next to the state Women Vets Memorial and nearby the State Museum, the memorial also has plaques offering a narrative of the war and noting residents who served.\textsuperscript{53}

Several local multi-war memorials which were created in the early 1990s use the term “forgotten war.” For example, the Korean War Monument in Dearborn, Michigan, dedicated in 1991 as part of a set also honoring WWI, WWII, and Vietnam dead, calls Korea a “Forgotten War.” On July 4, 1993, the City Council of North Augusta, South Carolina along with the American Legion and the Sons’ of Confederate Veterans dedicated the Wade Hampton Veterans Park, with memorials from the Revolution to the Persian Gulf War. The Korean War marker is

\textsuperscript{52} “Korean War Memorials: State of Maryland,” The Korean War Veterans Association website, Accessed 4/21/2013, Available at: \url{http://www.kwva.org/memorials/maryland/p_mem_maryland.htm}

“dedicated to the men and woman who bravely fought in ‘The Forgotten War,’” which it asserts as “the first war to end the spread of communist tyranny throughout the world.”

1993 was a key year in the history of commemorative anti-communism in America, the year “a bipartisan bill” to “educate the American public about the crimes of communism,” and honor “victims of communism around the world,” was “unanimously passed by Congress and signed into law by President Bill Clinton.” Kirk Savage notes that “Lev Dobriansky, organizer of the Shevchenko Memorial” that was built for a Ukrainian poet “in 1964 at the height of the Cold War” and “intended as a weapon” against “the Soviet Union,” was also the “prime mover behind” the Victims of Communism Memorial, dedicated in 2007, which he says “illustrates the larger cultural drift” from hero monuments to victim memorials. Yet, Jon Wiener notes, the original plan was for a “$100 million building” with a Victims of Communism Museum including “a recreation of the Gulag” and “200-foot high statue of the Goddess of Democracy,” arguing that this change is a part of a “larger phenomenon of forgetting the Cold War.” Still, the Korean War memorial in Danbury, Connecticut, dedicated on July 25, 1993, includes discussion of ideologies underlying the conflict, concluding “it was the first time a United Nations coalition turned the tide against communist aggression.” Similarly, the Korean War monument in Chicopee, Massachusetts, dedicated the same day, asserts that U.S. “Army forces participated in the Forgotten War as part of the U.N forces to expel the enemy.”


Some memorials use statues to represent the fact that the Korean War is still unfinished decades later, such as the empty silhouette of a soldier that comprises the centerpiece of New York City’s Korean War Memorial, located in Battery Park. Dedicated June 25, 1991, the fifteen-foot memorial is surrounded by flags of twenty nations that sent troops or hospital ships. Castle Clinton National Monument is the fort cannonade that gives the park its name, while nearby memorials honor Merchant Mariners, WWII Sailors lost at sea, 9/11 victims, and immigrants. The memorial’s location close to many other monuments makes it more likely visitors who have no interest in the memorial might be exposed to some information about the war, and in this way the memorial helps foster heritage tourism which in turn helps fosters knowledge of the Korean War. In design terms, depending on the angle of view, one can see skyscrapers through the hole in the middle of the memorial or look out over the harbor onto Ellis Island and Lady Liberty, and it was also created as a sundial but “over time the growing tree canopy has obscured this effect.”

Many Korea memorials include soldier statues. In June 1992, Hauppauge, New York dedicated a memorial to the Korean War that includes two statues, one of a soldier and one of a map of Korea, at an Armed Forces Plaza off of a Veterans Memorial Highway, that like many Korea memorials is especially moving when viewed at night. The official Tennessee Korean War Memorial, dedicated July 3, 1992 at the War Memorial Plaza in Nashville, includes a granite sculpture of two soldiers flanking a map as well as a list of all those statewide who volunteered, or were drafted to fight, and died in Korea. The Evansville, Indiana Korean War Memorial, dedicated August 29, 1992, consists of two life-size bronze figures aiding a third soldier. Like

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57 “Korean War Memorial,” Waymarking.com, Accessed 11/17/2015, Available at: http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMB79M_Korean_War_Memorial; During the day there would be many cars in the parking lot awaiting traffic court, according to signs, but at 8 PM I saw only deer and an owl who hooted for my entire stay. I also saw the Nashville monument at night, although it was raining.
many Korea memorials, the monument is on the water, next to “The Pagoda” (a 1912 building home to the “Evansville Visitor Center”), and near a “Museum of Arts, History, and Science.”

The Massachusetts Korean War Veterans Memorial, including a sculpture by Robert Shure, was dedicated on July 28, 1993 near the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston. This roofless gazebo upon a hill has a choice of audio accompaniment that can be activated by pressing labeled buttons on two silver colored pillars. The monument has empty walls on five sides, which along with the open air roof makes it one of the many with an unfinished quality. Moreover, this monument integrates motion activated audio as well; as visitors enter, they are surrounded by the sound of a soldier’s voice telling them they have entered solemn ground and detailing the meaning of various parts of the memorial. Shure would later design other Korea memorials.

The Korean War Memorial at McNeely Lake Park in Louisville, which was dedicated November 7, 1993, blends the global with the local. The memorial “features granite steps, a granite map outline of North and South Korea and a bronze plaque of flags representing the participating U. N. countries,” but also notes names of all local Jefferson County men who died in Korea. Built at a cost of $100,000, the Louisville monument equates South Korea with all other Allies, and contains a unique engraved timeline that shows the rise and fall of Allied fortunes with peaks and valleys in the wall, while linking specific dates to brief, corresponding narrative descriptions on the ground such as “Inchon landing” or “Chinese entry into the war.”


59 “Korean War Memorials: State of Massachusetts,” The Korean War Veterans Association website, Accessed 4/21/2013, http://www.kwva.org/memorials/massachusetts/p_mem_massachusetts.htm; For example, Shure did the Cape and Islands Korean War Memorial in Hyannis, dedicated June 25, 2000, costing $10,000 that was raised by a local branch of the KWVA, as well as a third memorial there and one in Rhode Island. See: Mark Merchant, “Korean War Memorial gets a home,” Cape Cod Times (5/9/2000)

60 “Korean War Memorial,” City of Louisville website, Accessed 8/27/2016, Available at: https://louisvilleky.gov/government/parks/korean-war-memorial
Some communities offer visitors information which can be accessed via telephone while standing live in front of local monuments, offering tourists a kind of immediacy that could encourage more to learn about their site, such as the Kansas City, Kansas Korea-Vietnam Memorial. The Berrien County Korean War Memorial in St. Joseph, Michigan is interesting since the message visitors hear also explains why the memorial moved. A plaque that sits in front of the monument notes that it is a part of the “Touch Tone Culture” collection of public monuments administered by the nearby Krasl Art Center, and by calling the number listed visitors can learn -- from the town’s mayor no less-- that when the monument was dedicated in 1994 it was located in a different place, but later all the war memorials in town were removed to Bluff Park.61

Dedicated in 1994, the Wisconsin Korean War Veterans Memorial in Plover sits on an artificial island in Lake Pacawa with picnic tables and commemorative bricks, still advertised for sale as at many monuments. Built for $600, 000 by the state KWVA, the memorial has been run by the city since a 2010 Change of Command ceremony. Prominent among design elements are five statues from each branch of the military led by a nurse, that are also notable for their attempt at racial inclusion as one figure seems to have pronounced features. The monument is also visible from the road, which I realized as I left is the state Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.62

Several official state Korea memorials are located in cemeteries. The official Maine Korean War Memorial was dedicated July 29, 1995 at Mount Hope Cemetery in Bangor “two


days after the national memorial.” The monument, shaped like a Pagoda, has a list of all those state residents who perished in the conflict, flags from the allied nations that fought alongside the U.S., a map of the peninsula, and a walkway of stones honoring specific veterans. The official Illinois Korean War Memorial, dedicated June 16, 1996 in Springfield at the Oak Ridge Cemetery not far from other war monuments and near Abraham Lincoln’s grave, includes the names of all Illinois residents killed in Korea. The monument consists of a twelve-foot bronze bell, which plays war songs every hour on the hour and is surrounded by four larger than life figures to create an immersive experience like at the official Massachusetts Memorial in Boston.

In July 1998 near the city of Exeter an official Korean War Veterans Memorial was dedicated at the two-hundred-sixty-five acre Rhode Island Veterans Memorial Cemetery, home to over thirty distinct memorials. One of many local monuments built in the late 1990s and early 2000s to proclaim the message that “Freedom Is Not Free,” the inside rim of the masthead asserts that the monument honors those “Who Served And Returned No Less Than Those Who Served And Paid The Ultimate Sacrifice.” The fact that this part of the memorial is not visible from the road, along with the language emphasizing the equality of those who lived with those who died,

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64 One of the Maine vets honored by a walkway stone, Medal of Honor winner Corporal Claire Goodblood, would be recognized again in 1998, when a local monument and memorial highway were dedicated to him.


66 The other official state of Rhode Island Korean War Memorial was dedicated on October 8, 1998 in downtown Providence not far from the campus of Brown University and also includes a sculpture by Robert Shure. See: Robert Shure: Sculptor website, Accessed: 11/3/2015, Available at: http://robertshuresculptor.com/veterans-memorials/
suggests it may be a hidden tribute directed at living veterans. Moreover, the California Korean War Memorial that was dedicated August 1, 1998 is in San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery.67

Several more state Korean War memorials would be created in the mid-to-late 1990s, including some using innovative architectural designs such as the Ohio Korean War Memorial at Riverside Park in Dayton, dedicated September 9, 1995 at a cost of $1,000,000. The only Korean War memorial other than The Punchbowl to list the names of all American MIA in Korea, the Ohio monument uses a windy walkway to recognize a range of Buckeyes from various twentieth century wars as well as people from other states who served in Korea, has huge sculpted-shrub lettering naming it, and includes a thirteen-foot tall granite bas-relief of a soldier. Designed by the Dayton firm of Architectural Associates Inc., the memorial was a passion project of AAI founder Bryan Choi. According to the design firm’s website, “having lived through the Korean War as a child, Mr. Choi wanted to contribute his services for this special monument.”68

The official state of Minnesota Korean War Memorial uses hollowness as a way of “representing the missing-in-action,” whose war still remains unfinished, and those Minnesotans who did not survive. The monument, dedicated September 13, 1998 (with a crowd of several thousand in attendance according to one attendee), is larger than life with an eight-foot bronze soldier and an eighteen-foot high hollowed out column.69 Moreover, the grounds of the State


Capitol Mall in St. Paul are a complex commemorative landscape, with a memorial court dedicated to the longtime NAACP leader Roy Wilkins and a statue of a soldier returning from Vietnam that seems to be asking “Why?” In contrast, the Korean War Memorial includes an orientation plaque at the entryway explaining how it is to be understood, noting a single “soldier, in winter clothing, is looking for his lost comrades” and “the silhouette image created by the monolith represents Minnesotans who did not return.” The monument also includes a list of names of all Minnesotans killed in the war and engravings along the stones on the right side of the walkway, which intersperses a timeline of major events with names of the UN member countries, including those that only sent hospital ships.70

Perhaps the most powerful visual representation of Korean War loss is found at Florida’s official Korean War Memorial, which uses both dividing lines and abstract sculptures to represent the specifics of Korea as few state monuments do. On December 2, 1998 construction started at Cascade Park in Tallahassee, and the memorial was unveiled by then-governor Jeb Bush on December 11, 1999. The centerpiece of the memorial is a broken circle with the words “Duty,” “Honor,” and “Country” while the segment on the ground has the word “Life” as well as listing the names of state residents who died in the conflict. The memorial also includes a map of the Korean peninsula, which is divided at the thirty-eighth parallel by the horseshoe-shaped broken circle, and a “Battlefield Cross” made of a helmet and rifle on a pair of boots.71

70 “Minnesota Korean War Memorial by Art Norby,” Start Seeing Art: Your Guide To Public Art In The Twin Cities, Accessed 2/26/2017, Available at: www.startseeingart.com/sculpture/minnesota-korean-war-memorial-by-art-norby/. Many of the engravings are covered by creeping underbrush and visible only by standing over them, making visitors feel they are in a Da Vinci Code or National Treasure franchise film.

Korea memorials also continued to be built by localities in the late 1990s. Staten Island dedicated a memorial on May 18, 1996, with Mayor Rudy Giuliani signing a bill in 1997 to expand the monument, which includes a plaque on a boulder with the words “Freedom Is Not Free,” into a memorial park. The Pittsburgh Korean War Memorial, dedicated on July 27, 1999, uses a sundial as part of its design.\(^\text{72}\) This well-trafficked site, on the North Shore of the Ohio River near two stadiums, has bronze plaques which denote it was dedicated by the Matthew B. Ridgeway chapter of the KWVA. One Temple University undergraduate suggested “the best time to visit is when the sun is out to get the full experience,” but noted “there’s so much more to the memorial” than the sundial, like “a long wall…filled with the names of local veterans.”\(^\text{73}\)

Many local monuments were created in the year 2000 which recall Korea, such as the “C Battery” Plaque at Union Station in Meridian, Mississippi (in full view of anyone boarding or leaving a train) and the Lycoming County Korean War Memorial in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, which seems oddly shaped until one realizes it is designed to mimic the outline of the county itself. The Bucks County Korean War Memorial in Doylestown, Pennsylvania is one of many that includes a Pagoda as part of its design and the phrase “Freedom Is Not Free.” The memorial at Somerville High School in Massachusetts, uses several detailed sculptures of objects such as a shovel, a canteen, and ration cans stamped CRACKERS and JAM, PINEAPPLE as well as text and maps to argue for the idea of Korea as “The Forgotten Victory.” The Lebanon County Korean War Memorial in Pennsylvania, located in Fisher Veterans Park which is also home to a

\(^{72}\) “Korean War Veterans Park,” New York City Department of Parks & Recreations website, Accessed 11/17/2015. Available at: https://www.nycgovparks.org/about/history/historical-signs/listings?id=12190; In June of 2015 my first attempt to visit the site was deterred by Duck Boat, a situation made more frustrating after several of my Temple students wrote memorial blogs on this monument I had missed. I saw it in 2016.

tank as well as memorials to several additional conflicts, has the same plaque as in Monroe, Michigan but uses a different caption. Beneath the bronze plaque in Lebanon the text asserts “They And The War They Fought Were Soon Forgotten” but their “Sacrifice Will Always Be Remembered And ‘Not Forgotten.’” Moreover, etched into granite under the bronze plaque are the two phrases which are most often found on local Korean War monuments: “The Forgotten War” and “Freedom Is Not Free,” which is engraved into the national memorial in Washington.

Korean War national memorial sculptor Frank Gaylord also designed a state monument. South Carolina’s official state Korean War Veterans Memorial, at Veterans Memorial Park in Columbia, was unveiled on June 25, 2000, the fiftieth anniversary of the start of active hostilities in Korea. The monument includes a plaque noting “82,000 Palmetto state residents served in what has been called the forgotten war.” This plaque includes a map with arrows showing the direction of the “Inchon Landing” and “Hungnam Evacuation.” The circular monument, located in one of the nation’s largest Veterans’ Parks, has markers for the separate service branches but is centered around the Gaylord sculpture, which mimics the figures he forged for the national Korean War Memorial. Gaylord’s sculptures, whether in Columbia or the District of Columbia, are likely now the most iconic images of U.S. soldiers serving in Korea in the minds of many Americans.


Case Study: The New Jersey Korean War Veterans Memorial in Atlantic City

Another state Korea memorial which was dedicated in 2000 shows how these monuments get made. Driving down the Atlantic City Expressway, a brown sign reminds tourists to visit the official New Jersey Korean War Veterans Memorial at Boardwalk and Park Place in Atlantic City. This most valuable piece of property on the monopoly board, once home to historic hotels such as the Traymore and next to Bally’s Wild Wild West Casino, was rechristened November 13, 2000 as a memorial. The monument has “a 12-foot high statue of ‘The Mourning Soldier’ clutching dog tags” while “the back wall of the Memorial, beneath an eternal flame” includes the “names of the 800 New Jerseyans who were killed in action or are still missing in action.” The design also has statues of a nurse and of a soldier aiding an injured comrade, as well as a large bas-relief sculpture of the state’s Congressional Medal of Honor winners, disparate elements that coalesce to create an atmosphere of commemoration without analysis, although it means a lot to many veterans. Indeed, one Stockton University undergrad noted the “memorial holds a special place in [her] family’s life, as it helped [her] Great-grandfather who served in the Korean war” and had PTSD, but “seeing the outcome of his service and the men who died in battle next to him being honored and recognized for their service,” it “gave him a better outlook on his life and eased the pain that he felt for those who didn’t make it.”

The process of creating this monument, which took several years and millions of dollars, illustrates how many state Korea memorials were created, and why many in phase three focus on living veterans instead of on the dead.

“An Act establishing the Korean War Veterans’ Memorial Committee” and “creating the Korean War Veterans’ Memorial Fund” with an appropriation of $25,000 was introduced by State Senators Bob Singer and Louis Kosco at the start of the 1996 legislative term, after its committee

made one amendment to “give preference to Korean War veterans” instead of “members of Korean War veterans organizations” in being assigned to the memorial committee. Singer and Kosco shepherded the bill through the Senate, gaining passage February 5, before Assembly allies pushed passage in that house June 17, which allowed then-Governor Christine Todd Whitman to sign it into law on July 22, noting the “Committee will ensure that veterans will always be recognized and remembered for their dedication and commitment.” Who were these sponsors? Bob Singer was born in 1947 and served in the Coast Guard reserves from 1966 to 1972, first started his political career as Mayor of Lakewood in 1983, and was elected to the State Senate in 1993. Louis Kosco, who would also serve on the Memorial Committee, was born in 1932 and “served as an infantry sergeant” in Korea from 1952 to 1954, before attending “the New York Institute of Auto Mechanics,” opening a Paramus Harley-Davidson dealership, and being elected as State Senator for the first time in 1992.  

Which other elected officials served on the committee? Legislated to be bipartisan, the group had Republican Senator Kosco, as well as Republican Assemblyman and Majority Whip Kenneth LeFevre, Democratic Senator Garry Furnari, and Democratic Assemblywoman Nilsa Cruz-Perez. LeFevre, who was born in 1945 and “holds a degree in management from Rutgers,” was elected as an Assemblyman in 1996 after several terms on the Atlantic County Board of Chosen Freeholders, while also serving “on the boards of the Ports of Philadelphia and Camden and the Shoprite LPGA Classic,” and “is the recipient of many awards from business and civic organizations.” Furnari, who was born in 1954 and graduated from Rutgers in 1976 before

obtaining his JD from Pace University in 1980, was at first an “attorney in private practice” before gaining election to the New Jersey State Senate in 1998, but then he served just six years before being appointed for life as a State Superior Court Judge in 2004. Cruz-Perez, who was born in 1961 in Bayamon and holds a Political Science degree from the University of Puerto Rico, first moved to Camden after six-years as a Sergeant in the U.S. Army then became the prima Latina Legislator in New Jersey history when selected to fill an unexpired Assembly seat in 1995, serving there until 2010 and then since 2014 in the Senate. In addition to these state leaders, the committee doubtless benefitted from including Richard E. Squires, born in 1932 in Atlantic City and a sailor on the USS Wisconsin in the Korean War, who was a local tax assessor before winning election as Atlantic County Executive from 1979 to 1999, then serving in appointed posts after retiring, most recently chairing a Veterans Museum Committee.78

Who else served on this memorial committee? Lawrence St. Laurent, Committee Chair, born in Southbridge, Massachusetts in 1931, received a Purple Heart for his service at the Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, worked for years as the Ocean County Director of Veterans Affairs, and served as a District Commander for the VFW, as well as founded local branches of the KWVA and Chosin Few, and asserted in a 2008 interview his hope for more “people to know about the Korean War,” living just long enough to see a road renamed SFC E. Larry St. Laurent Place in 2016. Cris Boutillete, born in 1931, served as the State Commander of the Disabled American Veterans in 1994-1995 before joining the committee, while Frank Holman, born in 1930, had served in the Air Force in Korea, retiring as a Brigadier General in the Air Force Reserve, before

entering politics--eventually rising to become the chair of the state Republican party from 1982 to 1988--then starting his own “political consulting firm.” Robert Yancey, Sr., born in Philadelphia in 1925, served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam before retiring from the Army in 1971, completing degrees in Psychology and History, and becoming a Social Studies teacher at Trenton State Prison for two decades, while J. Robert Tracey, who was born in 1926 and served in World War II and Korea, was Morristown Postmaster for three-decades before retiring to focus on his passion for history, raising “$100,000 to repair and clean up veterans memorials” and offering up “his carpentry skills for the restoration of the Community Theatre,” living to see “the renaming of Morristown’s Veterans Memorial Park for him” on July 4, 2012. Edmund Calanzi, born in 1932 in Pennsylvania, moved to Atlantic City at age two, then served in the Air Force in Korea before attending “Glassboro State college to pursue a teaching ” career, but instead started at “Atlantic City’s tax office in 1961” and later served on “a score of Committees, Boards and Organizations, including Governor’s Appointments,” while Patrick McGahn, Jr., born in 1928 in Atlantic City and a “Marine second lieutenant” in Korea “awarded a Navy Cross,” was a “Democratic Party leader who helped bring gambling” as part of a “Committee to Rebuild Atlantic City,” according to his August 2000 obituary, since McGahn died just prior to the dedication of the monument.79

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So how did the official state of New Jersey Korean War Memorial end up down in Atlantic City? While the presence of four Committee members (McGahn, Colanzi, Squires, and LeFevre) from Atlantic County doubtless played a role in Atlantic City being selected as the site, there were other factors that led to the Boardwalk location beating out all other contenders. According to Joseph Cassella, a past President of the KWVA of Hudson County, the committee “didn't want to build” in Jersey City “at Washington and Dudley because it was dead-end,” and despite his arguing “that we had the PATH and the light rail, but they chose Atlantic City anyway.” Another issue was the relationship between the potential locations and available financing, since the original authorizing legislation charged the committee not only with picking “a suitable location for the construction of a Korean Veterans' Memorial” but establishing an “appropriate method of financing the construction and maintenance of the memorial” (and also with the staging of “a competition for the design of the memorial” that was won by Thomas Jay Warren, “born in the Mississippi Delta in 1958,” who eventually “created the sculpture for all three of New Jersey's major veterans' memorials: Vietnam, Korea and WWII”). Indeed, the deciding factor was very likely the Committee getting a donation of “$1 Million from the CRDA” (the development authority charged with re-investing funds from casinos into Atlantic City), in December 1999, which paid for the plurality “of the $2.5 million needed to build the memorial,” with the state, veterans’ groups, and companies such as Lockheed Martin funding the rest.80

Several local Korean War monuments were dedicated in towns, and on college campuses, across the nation in the year 2001, including the New Bedford Korean War Veterans Monument in Massachusetts that Erika Doss notes in *Memorial Mania* uses the phrase “Freedom Is Not Free,” which she asserts “has been widely adopted in contemporary American war memorials,” and not just those recalling Korea. Also dedicated in 2001 was a two-part Korean War Memorial in Terra Haute, Indiana that includes the names of those from Vigo County killed and a statue honoring Medal of Honor winner Corporal Charles Abrell. On October 10, 2001 the Eastern Mississippi Community College Korean War Memorial in Scooba was dedicated in honor of local students who died in the war, while on November 4, 2001 in East Meadow on Long Island the Nassau County Korean War Memorial statue was built, although it would be another two years until a set of markers listing locals killed was dedicated. In Akron, Ohio a “white dome rises out of the ground, representing the Earth as it extends up from the 38th Parallel North” while a metal rectangle above is engraved with the words “the Forgotten War.” Located next to Bierce Library, the University of Akron monument was dedicated Veterans Day 2001, and cost $160,000 raised by local veteran Tom Blair.”

The Perry County Korea Monument, dedicated May 24, 2002 following a design contest amongst students won by Sarah Wheatley (whose sketch was “cast as a bronze bas-relief plaque by Laran Foundry in Chester, Pennsylvania”), sits in front of the West Perry High School in Elliottsburg, Pennsylvania and includes the message that the war is “Forgotten No Longer.” The project, brainchild of history teacher Jeff Popchock (who won a “statewide award in 2002 from

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the Pennsylvania Council of Social Studies” and a “state VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award” in 2007), was “student designed and funded,” as was a subsequent Vietnam Monument dedicated in 2003. The unveiling of the memorial was a monumental community event, including a luncheon “for 300 veterans, guests, and dignitaries,” while both the entire “student body and about 500 community members attended the dedication ceremony” itself.\footnote{82 “War Monuments,” West Perry High School website, Accessed 12/24/2017, Available at: http://www.westperry.org/community/war_monuments; Richard Steffy, “West Perry history teacher surprised by VFW award,” Pennlive.com (March 8, 2007)}

On November 23, 2002, following years of fundraising efforts, the Hudson County Korean War Memorial was dedicated in the Paulus Hook part of Jersey City with Ellis Island in the background, at a location which had once been a finalist for the official state of New Jersey Korea memorial. The monument is one of the few sites I have visited with assigned parking spaces meant for visitors to the memorial, which came about as a legislated compromise.\footnote{83 Joseph Cassella,”Hudson residents invited to Korean War Monument dedication,” Accessed 3/2/3017, Available at: http://www.hudsonreporter.com/view/full_story/2385362/article-Hudson-residents-invited-to-Korean-War-Monument-dedication?instance=more_page; Ken Thorbourne, “Korean Vets salute deal to access memorial,” The Jersey Journal (October 19, 2006). These spots seem particularly important given a lack of other available places to park nearby and the variable uses of this waterfront location; when I arrived a Farmers’ Market was just concluding.} There is also ample free parking near Philadelphia’s Korean War Memorial, which is especially ironic given it is the only Korea monument that I ever received a parking ticket while visiting.

Philadelphia’s Korean War Memorial at Penn’s Landing, dedicated June 22, 2002, has four pillars that contain the names of the war dead from the five counties surrounding the city broken up by year, and this list of the dead is quite moving according to one Temple University undergrad, who noted “looking at all of the names was really overwhelming emotionally.” The narrative of the conflict divides it into four phases (Invasion, UN Advance, Chinese Intervention, and Stalemate) and refers to “Chinese Communist Forces” not China, alluding to the ambiguous international legal position of those who crossed the Yalu River. The panels on the other side
present a history that starts with Japanese colonialism and includes an analysis of the early Cold War, next to a 2001 speech by George W. Bush commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the war. The panels disagree on the number of war dead, with the official history listing 33,742 casualties and the President’s address counting 33,665. Such disagreements over details may be one reason why Korea continues to be labeled as the forgotten war despite the myriad of monuments recalling those who died in the war. Moreover, one reason the memorial is so complex may be the number of stakeholders, not only locally but on the federal level, since in 2003 Congress appropriated $1,000,000 to pay off the monument, though this was a modest allocation in a bill directing the Defense Department to spend $8,500,000 for “the Fort Benning Infantry Museum” and give $2,100,000 to “the Intrepid Sea, Air, Space Foundation.”

Many official state Korean War monuments are located along bays, rivers, and other bodies of water such as the one in Mobile Bay. Following a three-year effort, on June 25, 2002 an official Alabama Korea Memorial was dedicated at the U.S.S. Alabama Battleship Park, near other monuments, at a cost of $300,000. The Pagoda-shaped sign for the monument includes the Korean translations of each word, and sits next to a walkway called Vickery’s Bridge that recalls the actions of Lt. Grady Vickery at Namji-Ri Bridge in Korea. The monument consists of granite blocks with the flags of each Allied nation alongside narratives describing their actions in Korea, five pillars for the U.S. military, and one with a map. It also includes a pillar with protruding forms of an infantryman, sailor, marine, and pilot, and a M48A1 Tank.

84 “War Memorial,” Sydney Spott Course Blog, Accessed 3/2/2016, Available at: https://sydneyspott.wordpress.com/2016/03/09/war-memorial/; Congressional Record, V. 149, PT. 17 (September 24 to October 3, 2003), p. 22834

Alabama’s other official Korean War Memorial, which divides the dead by county, was dedicated in 2003 at the entire other end of the state, within the first rest stop on Interstate 65 South as one enters from Tennessee. More monuments recalling the Korean War would be dedicated before the end of 2003, such as the Northeast Kansas Korean War Memorial in Topeka, Kansas which was dedicated on July 27, the date of the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice, and includes three stones, the largest of which uses the phrase “Freedom Is Not Free,” a phrase that could be the motto of the Forgotten War Memory Boom.86

Phase Four: Korea in the Twenty-First Century, 2003-17

Many more states and localities have dedicated Korean War memorials since 2003, with examples of all prior types from dual war monuments to kudos for dead heroes, especially those previously unrecognized. For example, in 2003 Pratt, Kansas dedicated a plaque to Pastor and POW Emil Kapaun who died in 1951 “in Pyoktong, Korea” after “giving of his own food and clothing” to his flock. Kapaun was “born at Pilsen, KA,” where his home Church had dedicated a memorial in 2001 which notes he was “captured by Chinese communists.” A decade later Kapaun was given a posthumous Medal of Honor by President Obama, who spoke about the Chaplain’s sacrifices at the ceremony, only a year before another White House event at which twenty-four veterans, previously passed over for racial reasons, were recognized with Medals of Honor for their service in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. Those Korea vets recognized by President Obama at the 2014 ceremony included Leonard Kravitz, the uncle and namesake of the rock musician

Lenny Kravitz who was born after his death, following a decades long campaign by a childhood friend from Brooklyn.87

Local Korean War monuments would continue to be dedicated at a rapid pace in the years after the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice. In the city of Reading north of Cincinnati, Ohio, the local KWVA dedicated a monument on October 17, 2004 which asserts that “Lest We Forget, Freedom Is Not Free.” The Korean War Memorial on Broad Street in Augusta, Georgia, dedicated in December 2004, also uses the phrase “Freedom Is Not Free” on one side as well as promises to “Always Remember” on the opposite face. On June 25, 2005, fifty-five years since the war started, the city of Hampton unveiled “Virginia’s first memorial specifically dedicated to” the veterans of Korea, shaped like a map of the Korean peninsula “with the 38th parallel clearly marked.” The York Korean War Memorial in Pennsylvania, also dedicated in 2005, consists of a bronze statue on a black marble pedestal inscribed with the words “Lest We Forget, Freedom Is Not Free,” a combination of those phrases most often found on Korea memorials, while asserting that we fought “To Defend The Freedom Of South Korea From The Threat Of Communism.”88

On April 16, 2005 a sculpture was dedicated on the University of Kansas campus in Lawrence “honoring 44 members of the university community who died in the conflict,” at an event that included “veterans groups from across Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska” as well as


several “dignitaries from three continents.” The monument in Lawrence, consists of a set of plaques and a seven-foot copper sculpture of two entwined cranes titled “Korean Cranes Rising,” which designed by Professor Jon Havener. The monument is interesting as a piece of public art which suggests the long, intermingled history of the two Koreas and the unfinished legacy of the war, while it also stands out for being a non-human, yet non-abstract design.89

Two weeks later, at another campus halfway across the country, the Korea / Vietnam Memorial was dedicated April 30, 2005 at Armed Forces Plaza of Lehigh Carbon Community College in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania. The monument consists of a grey metal sculpture of a U.S. soldier holding two children up by their hands, atop a stone platform in the shape of a five-pointed star. The pentagonal sides declare that “This Monument Is Dedicated – To The Children Of the World – Who Enjoy The Freedoms – Secured By The Sacrifices Of – The American Armed Forces,” reinforcing the message of American soldiers as global protectors.90

Other innovative designs used in Korean War memorials in the mid-2000s include the Sussex County Korean War Memorial that was dedicated on Memorial Day 2006 in the city of Georgetown in Delaware’s smallest county. A small granite sculpture that looks like the state of Delaware, the Georgetown monument sits next to a bench which is engraved with the words “The Forgotten Victory” and it also inspired the similarly shaped Kent County Korean Memorial at the Veterans Memorial park in the capitol city of Dover, dedicated on July 27, 2014. On June 25, 2006 Toledo, Ohio dedicated a three ton, nine-foot memorial that includes an inscribed “hollow


black granite cube” on top of which is a nickel-plated Battlefield Cross made of “soldier’s boots, an inverted rifle stuck in between them, and on top of the rifle butt, a helmet.”91

Another of the several state Korea memorials that includes a fountain in its design was dedicated in Overland Park, Kansas on September 30, 2006, thanks to a grant of $370,000 from the federal government which allowed the plan to proceed ahead of schedule. Situated along a busy highway in suburban Kansas City, the memorial contains thirty-eight pillars, an eight-foot tall curved wall with the names of locals who died in Korea, a soldier statue, several flags, and a courtyard of memorial bricks as well as fliers to buy one, in addition to the fountain. While the monument is one of the few to receive a federal grant, it is not the only Kansas state Korean War monument but instead shares that distinction with a memorial in Wichita, which was dedicated in May of 2001 after winning the support of state legislators and includes a Pagoda in its design.92

One memorial using both dividing lines and a “Forgotten War” motif sits in a park near the Gulf of Mexico in Pensacola, Florida not far from National Naval Aviation Museum. The Pensacola Memorial, designed by a retired U.S. Navy Captain, was dedicated on Memorial Day 2007. One of the monument’s bronze plaques asserts Korea is “‘No Longer The Forgotten War,’” while another honors women who served in Korea as “‘Silent Heroines.’” The memorial consists of sets of statues divided by a stone labeled “38th Parallel.” One sculpture shows a soldier


carrying a wounded child, while another is of a soldier on a radio protected by a comrade with rifle extended, and both are ringed by markers honoring the branches of the U.S. military.93

The first part of the Central Massachusetts Korea Memorial in Worchester debuted in November 2003, with the names of all those locals who died in Korea. Yet after the project hit a snag, the Memorial Committee brought in Robert Shure to complete the final phase of the project, his fourth Korea memorial in New England, which was finished in 2007 and which Shure says he created as a way to show “the humanitarian contribution of the U.S. military during the conflict.” Memphis, Tennessee also dedicated a memorial in 2007, in Overton Park, a full fifth of which was funded with a $20,000 grant from the South Korean government. Moreover, on September 30, 2007 Queens became the last of the five New York City boroughs to dedicate its own Korea monument, a twelve-foot bronze sculpture titled “The Anguish of Experience,” which is located in Kissena Park in Flushing, a district “home to the city’s largest Korean population.”94

The Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial in Kansas City, which cost $350,000 to construct, uses dividing lines and empty spaces to symbolize the war’s lack of a conclusion. The monument consists of a tunnel full of holes that visitors can walk through, bisected by a dividing line of memorial bricks that recalls the continued division of Korea. The memorial has engraved images on either side (of a G.I. and an elderly Korean), carved so that they disappear unless viewed from the right angle, as well as the names of residents killed in Korea, and a narrative asserting the U.S. “answered the call to go to the aid of South Korea when it was attacked by


Communist North Korea,” and that while “called a ‘police action’ the war would eventually see over 1,500,000 Americans serve,” reminding visitors how impactful the war was at the time.\textsuperscript{95}

The geography of the Kansas City monument is also noteworthy. Located in Washington Square Park across from historic Union Station and cattycorner to Kansas City’s National WWI Museum and Memorial, the Korea monument was dedicated in a ceremony on September 28, 2008 that according to one attendee is a day still celebrated in Korea for the liberation of Seoul.\textsuperscript{96}

Not only is the local geography focused on war memory but KC’s metro area is also home to many Korea memorials and archives stretching from eastern Kansas to Independence including memorials in Lawrence, Topeka, Kansas City, Kansas, and Overland Park, as well as the Truman Library and Center for the Study of the Korean War, both in Independence.

Dedicated on August 18, 2009 by the “Ocean State Chapter #1” of the KWVA, the Korean War memorial in Pawtucket, Rhode Island includes a circular map framed by the words “America’s Forgotten War.” This map is ringed by crests of five service branches (including the Coast Guard) while on the top are listed the names of locals killed in Korea. On Veterans Day 2009 Bridgeport, Connecticut dedicated a Korea Memorial by its old City Hall that includes a map and a Harry Truman quote. Korea also continued to be recalled with other wars, as at Ohio’s Zanesville WWII and Korea Memorial, a unique monument consisting of piles of helmets inscribed with names, designed by a local sculptor and dedicated in 2010.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{95} “The Memorial,” Missouri Korean War Veterans Memorial website, Accessed 6/5/2015, Available at: \url{http://mokoreanwarmemorial.org/the_memorial}.


Case Study: The Wildwood Korean War Memorial

Much like the DC Korea Memorial owes its existence to the Vietnam Wall, the Korea Memorial in Wildwood, New Jersey might not exist had the city not previously constructed its own half-size replica of the Wall. Wildwood, which has marketed itself since the 1990s as the place for Doo-Wop Architecture from the 1950s and 1960s, dedicated its own Memorial Wall in 2010 across the street from the convention center, located on the Boardwalk, following a 2008 visit to the island by a traveling Vietnam memorial called The Wall That Heals. Vince DePrinzio, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Marines from 1964 to 1967” and was “treasurer of the Wildwood-based Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 955” when both memorials were being built, told The Press of Atlantic City that the drive to create a Korea memorial grew out of comments made by Mayor Ernie Troiano, Jr. at the dedication of the Vietnam Wall, about “the need to remember Korean War veterans.” Speaking at the unveiling of the Korea monument on August 27, 2011, DePrinzio mentioned the memorial “was dedicated in memory of Jimmer Muldoon,” a “Korean War combat veteran” who “worked to bring the memorial to life” but had then just recently died at age 81, and noted that “Mike Gallo of MG Signs made” the seven foot wide, four foot tall memorial that “depicts a soldier in his rain gear with the words the forgotten war underneath” and which cost $7,200, raised by donations.98

So who were these men? DePrinzio, born in 1946 in Philadelphia and “raised Roman Catholic,” comes from “a veterans advocate family” with his grandfather, uncles, cousins, and

brother also serving, and so he joined the Marines after high school, heading to Vietnam in 1965 with a mission of “fighting communism” (in his words), and mentioning the battle of “Frozen Chosen,” alongside Vietnam, as part of the Cold War. Born in 1950, Troiano has served multiple terms as mayor, is also a battalion chief in the Wildwood Fire department,” and through his family construction company, E. Troiani & Sons, helped to literally lay the “concrete base for the installation of the black granite panels bearing the names” of those who died in Vietnam during a gap in his mayoral service due to questions over nepotism in his son’s fire department promotion. According to his July 2010 obituary, Jimmer Muldoon was born in 1930 in Philadelphia, but after serving in Korea he spent sixty-years as a “member of the American Legion Post #184” in Wildwood, and worked to create the Wall before turning his focus to a Korea memorial. Mike Gallo notes his “father was a WW2 vet” and he has “done projects in the surrounding township high schools, grade schools, elks lodge, American legion and many local businesses” through his company MG Signs “over the past 30 years,” including “in all 4 cities of Wildwood” and working “with Mayor Troiano on the Joe Stamile Amphitheatre that is adjacent to the war memorial.”

Via an email, Gallo outlined the creative process. According to Gallo, he “was first approached by Vinny Diprenzio” who he knew previously since he had “done some work with him for the VFW and American Legion over the years,” and he was glad to get involved in the project since his own “father in-law served in Korea so it felt good to do something not only to commemorate the Korean War but to acknowledge all who serve.” Gallo credits another man,
Robert D’Alessandro, who passed away on October 15, 2011 (just weeks after the dedication of the monument), with the design of the memorial itself. According to his Press of Atlantic City obituary, D’Alessandro, born in 1940 and a longtime resident of Sewell, had “retired down the shore he loved in 2000,” enjoyed “riding his Harley Davidson” as “a member of the Legion Riders, belonged to American Legion Post 184, and designed the Korean War memorial at Fox Park in Wildwood.” Gallo says, DiPrenzio introduced him to D’Alessandro and the two “worked together” through “some sketches trying to come up with a concept that wold (sic) work in the available space,” after D’Alessandro came up with “the idea to use an image of a lone soldier similar to the Washington DC memorial.” Gallo also says D’Alessandro “was instrumental in getting the memorial project started,” and is reflective about his own involvement, noting that “sometimes in [his] line of work” he can “do special things that are more than just advertising,” and “this was one of those times.”

Mayor Troiano was also reflective about the monument, and its place within the larger memorial landscape of the Wildwood community, via a Facebook message which began with him explaining that the Korean War “memorial is part of a number of memorials that we have at fox park” and two more sites in town that “honor the different wars,” noting plans to consolidate memorials (much as cities such as St. Joseph, Michigan have done), by “redoing memory lane and adding our WWI dough boy statue.” Troiano added Wildwood is “very supportive of all our veterans and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice” and of “our POW/MIA,” whom he asserted “are the true American hero’s (sic) that we respect and honor” with memorials. Indeed, to both Gallo and Troiano, creating a Korea monument seemed the least they could do for local veterans.

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100 Personal Communication from Michael Gallo; “Robert D’Alessandro,” Press of Atlantic City (October 16, 2011)

101 Personal Communication from Ernie Troiano, Jr. (November 17, 2017)
The lead up to the sixtieth anniversary of the armistice would see many more Korea monuments be dedicated. Outside Caroline County High School in Milford, Virginia sits the “38th parallel garden,” a memorial “dedicated by the Caroline Middle School 2012-2013 History Club” with a sign reading “You Are Now Crossing the 38th Parallel.” On June 1, 2013 the “Foothills Chapter” of the KWVA dedicated a Korean War Veterans Memorial at Conestee Park in Greenville, South Carolina noting that “Freedom Is Not Free” and the war is “No Longer Forgotten.” The Washington County Korea Memorial in Hagerstown, Maryland, dedicated in June of 2013 by the “Antietam Chapter” of the KWVA, notes that the soldiers who fought in Korea “Aided in Stemming the Tide of Communist Aggression Throughout the World,” in sign that anti-communist rhetoric in Korean War monuments has far outlasted the Cold War itself.

On July 27, 2013 the Cincinnati-area city of Covington, Kentucky dedicated a statue in Linden Grove Cemetery honoring those who died in Korea, the centerpiece of which is a sculpture modeled after local Clofus O. Farris and donated by his siblings. The same day a statue of Sergeant Reckless, the horse, was dedicated on Semper Fidelis Memorial Trail at the Marines Museum in Triangle, Virginia in an event shown on C-Span. Near the north end of Route 7-A (designated the state Korean War Memorial Highway in 2003), in Manchester, Vermont sits a monument, dated July 27, 2013, that tells veterans “You Are Not Forgotten” and reminds visitors “Freedom Is Never Free.” However, a video of the dedication event shows the monument being unveiled a week after the date carved in stone, calling into question dates on all memorials.


103 “Korean War Memorial to Be Unveiled in Linden Grove this Weekend,” River City News (7/22/2013); “Sergeant Reckless Monument Dedication,” C-Span, org, Accessed 4/11/2016, Available at:
The most recent state monument to be completed was the North Carolina Korean War Veterans Memorial located in Mint Hill outside Charlotte, which cost $900,000 to build and asserts “They Shall Never Be Forgotten.” This monument, dedicated in a well-attended public ceremony on November 9, 2013 after years of efforts, dates the war in an unique but more accurate way as stretching “June 25, 1950 – July 27, 1953 AND BEYOND,” and has a multi-colored fountain in a blue and red, Yin/Yang design.104

Dedicated in May 2015, the Lackawanna County Korean War Memorial in Dunmore was perhaps intended partly in order to help make up for the relative lack Korean War monuments in the northeastern part of Pennsylvania. On Memorial Day of 2016 the city of Grand Ledge, Michigan dedicated a Korean War monument which calls the conflict “The Forgotten War,” while also asserting that the war is now “No Longer Forgotten.” On August 1, 2016 at the Presidio in San Francisco, a Korean War memorial was dedicated in a ceremony attended by the Mayor of Seoul, South Korea after efforts going back to 2009.105

The seven years that it took fund and finish the Presidio project seems par for the course for local Korean War memorials. Fairmont, West Virginia has been trying to build a lighted Korean War memorial with a thirty-eight-meter tall flagpole since 2007. Located just outside East Marion Park, which is home to one of the largest local Vietnam memorials that I have come across in my travels, I did not know about the Korean War monument until I ran into veterans at


the Vietnam Memorial on Memorial Day of 2016, who directed me to the construction site overlooking the highway. The project first experienced financial issues in November of 2014 and despite a donation the next Flag Day of an even bigger banner that is visible for miles up and down Interstate 79, the Fairmont monument still remained largely unfinished as of fall 2017, with one veteran noting that the project had been begun in 2004 and that it “would take at least $100,000 to complete,” in part due to a need to account for future operating costs such as replacement flags.106

Conclusion: Symbolism, Narrative, and Place in Korea Monuments, 1950-2017

Three elements of the composition of state and local Korean War Monuments display important patterns: symbolism, narrative, and place. While symbolism often relates to sculpted or statuary aspects of any monument, it can also figure into other uses of any other signs such as flags or insignia on that memorial as well as design elements such as the monument functioning as a sundial. Narrative refers to text or audio aspects of any monument, especially information about the history of the war itself or arguments about the meaning of the Korean War, which are most often found carved into a monument but sometimes also found in pamphlets or on signage adjacent to monuments. A sense of place, which is especially important when considering official state monuments that are often found in cities besides the state capitol, includes the location of any monument both in absolute and relative terms, the commemorative landscape in which that monument is located, and specific geographic elements such as a monument’s proximity to water.

At least two monuments that might be thought of as official state Korean War memorials, in part because unlike most other states neither Virginia nor Georgia ever designated an official state monument, include eternal flames as elements of their design, though both the monuments in Richmond and Atlanta also mention other wars. Moreover, the eternal flames found in Raleigh, North Carolina and Atlantic City are both made of bronze, although the symbolism remains the same. Several state monuments make use of fountains as design elements, including the official monuments in North Carolina, New York, and Kansas, while multiple monuments function as sundials such as those in Pittsburgh, St. Louis, and New York City. The Battery Park monument in Manhattan also includes a hollowed-out figure very similar to the official Minnesota state memorial in St. Paul, referencing the unfinished-ness of the war, while others adopt a roofless design to show the unfinished elements of the war, such as official state monuments in Atlantic City and Boston. Finally, several monuments show the specifics of the Korean War by making use of dividing lines to highlight the continued separation of the Korean peninsula including in memorials in Pensacola, Kansas City, and Baltimore, while others include a Pagoda as part of their design in order to differentiate the Korean War from other conflicts such as the monuments in New Castle, Delaware and Bangor, Maine.

The overarching narrative feature in many monuments, regardless of during what decade they were dedicated, seems to be stark anti-communism. From 1950s in Connecticut to the 1980s in Kentucky and beyond, many Korea monuments specifically mention the fight against abstract Communist ideology, rather than versus specific actors such as the North Koreans or the Chinese. The story told about the Korean War at these memorials is one that focuses on the heroic sacrifice of local soldiers for the defense of friends and family as well as undefined terms such as “Justice” and “Freedom.” Moreover, the fact that so many monuments from the 1980s onward assert in some way or another that “Freedom Is Not Free” reinforces this notion of sacrifice and serves as a justification for militarism, as well as a comfort to the families of soldiers killed in Korea. Other
common phrases, such as “All Gave Some, Some Gave All” highlight the dual function of these monuments for both the living veterans who returned from war and the grief-stricken families of those who did not return. Finally, the phrase “Forgotten War,” which appears the most often of any motto on state and local Korean War memorials across the country, asserts that those who fought in Korea have long suffered from a lack of public memory, despite the fact that any given monument is meant as an act of remembering. Some monuments even include multiple variations on the phrase, suggesting the war is “No Longer Forgotten” or is a “Forgotten Victory” rather than a stalemate, in a clear attempt to rewrite our understanding of the Korean War and its position within the arc of modern American military memory.

The placement of Korean War monuments, especially official state memorials, is also important in understanding their function. While many local memorials are located at the heart of their respective communities such as courthouses, town greens, or public parks (in most cases in line with the regional character of each place) some local monuments are specifically located in key maritime heritage tourism spots such as the New York City monument in Battery Park, which is next to several other memorials, or the Philadelphia monument near Penn’s Landing, similarly set up to be part of a memorial row. Placement near water is also a characteristic of many state monuments, from Mobile Bay in Alabama to Charlestown Harbor in Boston. Moreover, the state memorial in Baltimore is along the water, while the one in Atlantic City is on the Boardwalk. Even inland monuments are often along rivers, such as the Pittsburgh memorial or monuments in Riverside Park in Dayton and at the artificial island in Plover, Wisconsin. If we understand places adjacent to water as being liminal zones of transition, especially for those who died far from their home, then placement of these monuments directly adjacent to water is another indication of the unfinished-ness of the war, since these memorials functions as places to commune with the dead.

Through the annual ceremonies that take place at these sites, they become “living memorials” for those veterans who survived and those families whose loved ones did not return.
Every year on July 27, New Jersey Korean War Armistice Day, a ceremony takes place at the state monument on the Boardwalk in Atlantic City. Speakers from the military and the local government note the specifics of the war, while nearby Korean churches sometimes send singers to represent their communities and state officials have used the occasion to unveil policy changes, such as updates to veterans’ Drivers Licenses. Veterans from across the state, though fewer in number every year, then process from Brighton Park to the adjacent monument for picture taking and solemn music, as curious passersby often stop to check out the ceremony going on only a few feet from the bustle of the Boardwalk. Representatives from the state and local branches of the KWVA, some of whom only served in Korea in the decades after the 1950s, commiserate with their colleagues, all dressed in their finest parade uniforms, and display their distinctive Korean War hats. It is one day of the year that the Korean War, never actually forgotten, is very publicly recalled at the many monuments across the nation that have been created in the last six decades.

Another form of “living memorial” has long been a component of Korean War commemoration, alongside the creation of local and state monuments to honor the dead and to celebrate surviving veterans. Indeed, as I demonstrate in the next chapter, memorial infrastructure projects are another way in which communities across the country have chosen to remember the Korean War, with a pattern of production that mostly follows the four phases which have also governed the creation of films and monuments. Moreover, while most memorial infrastructure projects from the 1950s to the 2010s have focused on dedicating bridges, highways, buildings, and trees in honor of Korean War veterans and those who gave their lives in the conflict, the definition of memorial infrastructure is broad enough that it can encompass a wide range of useful community projects, from digital infrastructure such as memorial websites to the floral clock created in St. Louis in 1951, which the city claims is the nation’s first Korea memorial.
Beyond traditional monuments, another way American communities have honored Korea veterans, and those locals who went off to war but did not return home, is by crafting memorial infrastructure. These often take the form of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees named in memory of those who fought in Korea, but can also include parks, plazas, and digital memory projects. Randall Mason, in “Historic Preservation, Public Memory, and the Making of Modern New York City,” defines “spatializing memory” as “expressing historical memory in material form,” and though he introduces the idea to discuss “early preservationists,” the manner in which he describes it operating makes it a useful way to ponder how memorial infrastructure works. Mason notes that “the spatialization of historical memory was (and is) an intensely political process,” that many engaged in this work became aware (by the 1910s) of the fact “that the need for public memory and memory sites was driven by social forces,” and that therefore they tried to foster a “celebratory civic memory in the form of stone, bronze, authentic buildings, and historical park landscapes.” Indeed, as the ensuing review of Korean War memorial infrastructure makes clear, the expression of historical memory through the crafting of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees is both political and meant to shape public feeling.

This review also indicates that, in many ways, the history of Korean War memorial infrastructure follows the same patterns and four phases as media and monuments, starting with commemoration of the actions of Korea veterans alongside those who fought in the World Wars from the 1950s to the late 1960s. However, unlike media and monuments, almost no examples exist of phase two Korean War memorial infrastructure projects dually dedicated to Vietnam vets, although from the late 1980s to the early 2000s there was an “Infrastructure Boom” as with

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monuments. Moreover, since 2003 there have been drives to dedicate traditional infrastructure, such as highways, and to create new forms, especially digital memory. My purpose in this chapter is therefore to trace the history of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees as well as other forms of Korean War memorial infrastructure, alongside the history of Korea veterans groups in the United States, which helps to explain why the war has been commemorated in the ways that it has been.

The Great Age of Living Memorials: Bridges, Highways, and More, 1950-68

Relatively few scholars have delved deeply into the practice of creating memorial infrastructure, or “Living Memorials” as some have termed it, though a few academics interested in war memory have discussed the dedication of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees as a way of trying to link the sacrifices of soldiers with public benefits. Michael Kammen details “The Changing Imperatives of Myth, Memory, and Americanism” after the 1920s, discussing how memorial infrastructure became an element of U.S. public memory. Kammen notes “starting in 1930, ‘public sculpture’ in the broadest conceivable sense became less allegorical and more functional” and “the building of new bridges and highways, often with memorial and historical markers, became a kind of surrogate for” more “conventional forms of public sculpture” with the dual goals of aiding in “the process of remembrance while directly facilitating people’s needs.”2

John Bodnar’s discussion of “Memory in the Midwest After WWII” mentions that memorial infrastructure was a major means of expressing official public memory in the Korean War years. Bodnar notes, in preparing for the 1953 sesquicentennial of Ohio statehood, a state-produced booklet argued for “permanent construction projects such as parks, museums, and the restoration of local historic sites,” and the same year “Eisenhower made a well-publicized trip to Defiance College to lay the cornerstone” for a new library. Moreover, as G. Kurt Piehler details

in “The “Good War” and Modern Memory,” the push to build memorial infrastructure as a way to honor local citizens was widespread after WWII. Piehler notes that from 1944 on “advocates of ‘living memorials’” lobbied “for the construction of playgrounds, parks, highways, bridges, and other useful structures,” and instead of sculptures “many large and small communities opted to build stadiums, parks, recreation centers, libraries, and other” types of memorial infrastructure.³

More recently, some scholars have highlighted the importance of “living memorials” in how Americans have remembered wars from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries. In Kirk Savage’s discussion of “Trees,” he notes “long before the twentieth-century movement to erect ‘living memorials,’ it was already customary to designate old trees as memorials” and “to plant new trees for commemorative purposes,” asserting “the tradition of ‘memorial trees’ stretched back to the Revolutionary period,” and were often labeled as “‘living monuments.’” Erica Doss, in her lengthy discussion of “Living Memorials,” focuses on the fact that most early WWII monuments were memorial infrastructure as a way to explain the desire for a more visible national memorial in the 1990s. Doss notes, contrary to the view that the nation had never honored the “Greatest Generation” which fought WWII, “World War II was commemorated—immediately and profusely, locally and nationally” and “above all” else “with ‘living memorials’” such as “memorial bridges, fountains, and flagpoles.”⁴ Other scholars, studying the national Korean War Memorial, have linked the drive for “living memorials” in the wake of WWII with the fact that the Korean War was similarly commemorated with memorial infrastructure.


In discussing “The Korean War Veterans Memorial and Problems of Representation,” Patrick Hagopian argues that, “in the post-World War II period, those who commissioned local memorials often preferred utilitarian memorials such as libraries, parks, and other civic improvements” citing Piehler’s book, which seems to have become the accepted scholarly paradigm, as his primary source. In discussing the “Origins” of the National Korean War Memorial in DC, Kristin Ann Hass, asserts “in 1955, memorials were not of much interest to most people in the United States” as “World War II was remembered mostly by living, local memorials, and renewed interest in memorialization was still” a quarter century in the future.5

Hass, in her chapter titled “Discovering the Memory of Bodies: A History of American War Memorials” in Carried To The Wall, had previously documented that “in most cities and small towns, the names of the World War II dead were added to the WWI memorials” and “new memorials were practical, functional pieces of the American infrastructure” such as “bridges, highways, and auditoriums.”6 My own research confirms that, much like WWII, the Korean War was frequently remembered during the 1950s and 1960s with memorial infrastructure, or “living memorials,” especially bridges, highways, buildings, and trees, while also suggesting that such memorials have again become popular since the late 1980s, but for seemingly different reasons.

The very earliest monuments to local soldiers killed in Korea are examples of memorial infrastructure. As far as I can tell, the first memorial of any kind to a soldier who died in Korea is a bridge in Rockville, Maryland dedicated to a single soldier who died a mere month into the war. According to the marker that now sits on a gas station corner and is easy to miss (especially at night when I visited), the John C. Brown Memorial Bridge was “dedicated August 26, 1950, to


the memory of the first Maryland soldier killed in action in Korea.” Moreover, the floral clock created in 1951 in Forrest Park in St. Louis, though neither bridge, highway, building, nor tree could be thought of as an example of memorial infrastructure. This clock was maintained by public workers for years, until “city budgets grew increasingly tight” and in the “1970s, the number of plantings fell sharply,” despite the fact by “the mid-1970s an average of almost 1,000 people a day visited the” area around the memorial, “slightly more than half the annual attendance reported in 1951-1952.” In addition, a War Memorial gym in Danbury, Connecticut, built in 1951 with the motto “To Honor The Dead, To Serve The Living,” while not specifically a Korean War memorial, includes a monument honoring local Lee Hartell, killed in 1951, that was moved from another location.7

Multiple colleges that had already planned buildings to honor alumni veterans expanded their scope to include students then serving in Korea. Washburn University’s Memorial Student Union in Topeka, Kansas, which opened in the fall of 1951 and now includes a plaque with the names of those 21 alumni killed in Korea alongside those names of their classmates who died in the World Wars, was in the works in 1948, when the “Independent Women’s Alumni group sold metal emblems of” the school’s mascot “that could be attached to a bicycle or car” for $1.10 as a fundraising venture. Although I did not get the see the plaque, since I twice made it to Topeka in the evening and it is viewable only during business hours, I learned the Union had to be rebuilt fifteen years later, because one of these visits was the week leading up to the fiftieth anniversary of a 1966 tornado that “destroyed or heavily damaged” every single “building on the Washburn University campus.” In April of 1953, the University of New Hampshire’s Memorial Union Building was designated by the then-Governor Hugh Gregg as the state’s official war memorial

four years before the structure itself was finished. Their Memorial Union, which was paid for by a combination of “alumni, the state, businesses and civic groups,” has “a Memorial Room [which] reflects that distinction and honors all New Hampshire residents who perished while in military action from World War I through present day.”

Two New York City boroughs created different types of memorial infrastructure to honor locals who died in Korea. In 1952 Charlton Park in the Bronx was named after local Medal of Honor recipient Cornelius H. Charlton, who “assumed command of the platoon, rallied the men, and re-launched the attack” after his “platoon commander was seriously wounded during an assault on Hill 543 in Korea,” according to signage now found in the park. Yet, while Charlton’s contribution are today widely recalled at his park, this space was largely forgotten for decades until a 2005 Memorial Day ceremony, according to a press release of the local Congressman, Jose Serrano. This release notes “the Garden had been named after Sergeant Charlton in the immediate aftermath of the war, but had long-since fallen into disrepair” before “a group of dedicated local veterans” learned “Sergeant Cornelius H. Charlton and Pfc. William Thompson,” who were “the only African-Americans awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor during the Korean War,” had both been “living in the South Bronx when they volunteered for service in Korea,” and so “formed The Friends of Charlton Garden, committed to celebrating the soldiers’ legacy and to building a memorial at Charlton Garden” to highlight the “forgotten stories of two Bronxites who died in the service of their country.” In addition, on October 25, 1953, only three months after the armistice, the group calling itself “The Daughters of the Defenders of the Republic,” which was

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led by “Founder, President General” Amanda Shaw Hirsh, dedicated four memorial trees to “those who made the supreme sacrifice in the Korean War, in the defense of freedom,” in Riverside Park in Manhattan, on a grassy knoll south of Grant’s Tomb.\(^9\)

In 1957 Wisconsin dedicated two different forms of memorial infrastructure to residents who perished in Korea. Red Cloud Park in La Crosse, built on a Winnebago village site “started as a picnic area in 1953” with “a water fountain and playground” initially “installed in 1954,” while “on May 10\(^{th}\)” of 1956 “the name of the park was changed” to “honor of CPL Mitchell Red Cloud, Jr., who had died in Korea, winning the Congressional Medal of Honor” and was “a heroic descendent of these people.” The park was formally dedicated in May 1957, while in 1958 “a shelter house was built at a cost of $2,278 in materials” while “the labor on this memorial building,” according to a fireplace plaque, “was donated by La Cross Building and Construction Trades Members 1957-1958.” Also in 1957, the legislature named an Air Force reserve training site at Camp Douglass as Volk Field as a way to honor Purple Heart recipient Jerome Volk, who “was killed in action over Korea in an F-80 ‘Shooting Star’ Jet Fighter, November 7, 1951.”\(^10\)

Some Korean War memorial infrastructure that are impossible to date precisely might still be surmised to have been built in the 1950s, such as a bridge in Maine and a highway in Georgia. The first memorial of any kind in Maine to honor those who fought in Korea was the “Veterans Memorial Bridge” that was “built and dedicated shortly after the end of the Korean

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War in Portland, the largest city in the state, and which was at the time “the longest and most expensive span in Maine,” at a total cost of seven million dollars, but “lasted less than 60 years” because the crossing is “one of the busiest in the state.” More than 740 Georgians perished in the Korean War, including Medal of Honor winner Luther H. Story, who was only 19 when he died on September 1, 1950. Story would soon have a bridge named in his honor on the Flint River that divides Dooly and Sumter Counties, as well as after other local men who died in WWII and in Korea, whose names are printed on two undated metal markers that were most likely put up in the 1950s based on the segregation of the black soldiers’ names, which was still quite striking when I visited in January 2016. Perhaps partly to help remedy such overt racism, as well as to “honor the outstanding heroism and bravery of PFC Luther H. Story,” in 2011 the State Legislature passed a bill naming another “bridge on SR 26, over the Kinchafoonee Creek in Marion County, as the Luther Story Bridge,” which I encountered accidentally while on my way to the POW Museum.11

The story of the second span of the Delaware Memorial Bridge, begun in 1964 but not completed until 1968, demonstrates how the Korean War could often be conflated with both WWII and Vietnam in memorial infrastructure, just as it frequently was in media and monuments, while also suggesting some of the ways contemporary politics can impact commemorative practices. The building of the first span began in April 1945, even prior to the end of WWII, and when the bridge was dedicated in early 1951, amidst the Korean War, it was christened in memory of those who had died fighting Germany and Japan in the 1940s. When construction began on the second span, the plan was to dedicate it exclusively to the Korean War dead from both New Jersey and Delaware, and a memorial wall was carved prior to construction that reflects

this priority by only including the names of those KIA from WWII and Korea. However, by September 1968, when the second span was dedicated, it was clear Vietnam could not be ignored as it was ongoing in the same way Korea had been, especially following the Tet Offensive and LBJ’s decision not to run for re-election against Richard Nixon in November. With Democratic Presidential candidate, Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, set to officially dedicate the bridge, the decision was made, seemingly for immediate political purposes as much as anything, to honor both the dead of Korea and of Vietnam together with the second span. At the unveiling ceremony Humphrey stated they were assembled there, then to “dedicate this second span of the Delaware Memorial Bridge to the memory of those Americans from Delaware and New Jersey who gave their lives for us,” using the opportunity to argue the nation “must build new bridges -- not just bridges of concrete and steel, but of tolerance, understanding and cooperation” and being sure to add that “the issue has indeed been raised in this presidential campaign” versus Richard Nixon.12

Where-as this initial period of Korean War memorial infrastructure-making corresponds closely with the first phase of commemoration through media and monuments, as denoted in prior chapters, it would be nearly two decades before more major Korean War memorial infrastructure projects were to be undertaken, and those that would be built starting in the late 1980s would have a different inspiration and be constructed in a different commemorative environment, one which also included sculpted monuments. Because many Korean War commemorative projects in the two decades following the start of the conflict were infrastructure monuments which linked

the sacrifices of those locals who fought and died in Korea with area citizens who had defended democracy in World War II, instead of stand-alone statues denoting individual battles and suggesting heroic sacrifices, Americans in the 1950s and 1960s were effectively encouraged to imagine the Korean War in the abstract rather than remembering the specifics of the war.

The fact that, besides the Delaware bridge, no major Korean War memorial infrastructure projects were created from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s, the period corresponding with the second phase of commemoration, is worthy of further study, since in theory there should be a number of dual Korea and Vietnam War bridges, highways, buildings, and trees dedicated in this period, but I have not found them. Moreover, whereas many memorial infrastructure dedicated to Korean War soldiers that were built in the 1950s and 1960s were meant as “living memorials” to honor individual dead heroes, most infrastructure built from the late 1980s to the 2010s were instead meant to honor living veterans who fought in the Korean War and survived to make their own contributions to the public good, as well as groups of veterans from communities across the country, most of whom only began organizing thirty-years after their military careers had ended.


Just as Korea began to be recalled more often with its own monuments, and though not shown on screen started playing a role as backstory in TV shows and films, from the late 1980s onward the war would become more frequently recalled by bridges, highways, buildings, trees, and other types of memorial infrastructure across the country. For example, on July 27, 1987, the thirty-fourth anniversary of the armistice, a Korean War contemplative bench was dedicated in Arlington next to a Korean White Pine tree donated in 1965. The bench (where I sat to rest a spell on the hot afternoon I visited the site in summer of 2015), which sports a pro-peace quote, was
dedicated by the national KWVA and the group “No Greater Love,” which sponsored at least eleven memorials in Arlington from the late 1970s to the mid-1990s.\(^1\)

On September 22, 1987, the village of Rouses Point, New York named the bridge across Lake Champlain to Alburgh, Vermont as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge, in a ceremony where a town supervisor spoke about his experience as “a former prisoner of war” in Korea, and asserted that “all Korean War veterans can view” the naming of the new bridge “as recognition of those sacrifices and feel the sacrifices have not gone for naught.” This new U.S. Route 2 bridge is an ultra-modern suspension span, which replaced a much older model that had swung open to allow boats to pass, and over the course of three decades has likely reminded millions of Americans (and numerous Canadians given its location near the border) about the Korean War, since it has signs visible from both sides. This seems to be the first bridge dedicated to Korean War veterans since the Delaware Memorial Bridge was completed two decades earlier.

Similarly, in November of 1987 the Wisconsin State Legislature became the first in the nation to name a road in honor of Korean War veterans when it dedicated all of U.S. Highway 51 within Wisconsin as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, declaring that the road is “a living memorial to and in honor of all Wisconsin veterans, living and dead, of the Korean war,” with highly visible signage but only from one direction, which forced me to have to drive an extra several miles and make a few awkward turns in order to see it when I visited in June of 2015.\(^2\)


Korean War memorial infrastructure would proliferate in the late 1980s and early 1990s. On May 31, 1988 Massachusetts passed “An Act Designating A Portion Of Interstate Highway Route 495 As The Korean War Veterans Highway” to honor those who served “in the Armed Forces of the United States of America during the Korean War.” On May 30, 1989 the Robert Wurtsbaugh Memorial Bridge, which is both a foot bridge in a park honoring the first area citizen to be killed in Korea (for whom the influential local branch of the KWVA is named) and is a highway bridge on U.S. 150 over the Vermillion River, was dedicated in Danville, Illinois.15

In Cherry Hill, New Jersey a “Korean War Memorial Tree,” with a sizeable sign, was dedicated on October 25, 1991 in front of the First Korean United Methodist Church just off State Route 70, a road that often experiences rush hour traffic standstills, making it likely one of the most frequently viewed Korean War memorials anywhere, and a reminder of the impact that Korean-American communities have played in promoting public memory. In 1993 a bridge across the Ohio River, at New Martinsville, was named by the West Virginia Legislature to honor “Korean War Veterans,” in a bill noting that “there is no memorial to veterans of the Korean War in Wetzel County” but “the people of Wetzel County would like to have a memorial to remember and honor those veterans who took part” in it, “and such a visible memorial would not only pay homage to Korean War veterans in Wetzel County and West Virginia but to Korean War veterans throughout the country,” especially with signs visible on both the Ohio and West Virginia sides.16

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California has named several pieces of memorial infrastructure for Korean War veterans. In 1994, the State Legislature named a fifty-four mile stretch of State Highway 126 between the coast and I-5 as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway and in 1998 it designated a bridge in Mendocino County on Highway 101 over Squaw Rock Viaduct as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge. Then in 2001 the State Legislature passed a bill designating a southern stretch of Highway 1 as the Orange County Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway and another act naming a Kern County Korean War Memorial Highway.\textsuperscript{17}

From 1995 to 2003 at least fifteen states dedicated highways in honor of Korean War Veterans, starting with New Jersey, West Virginia, and Louisiana in 1995. The New Jersey story is particularly revealing. On April 11, 1995 the State Legislature passed an initial bill naming the entirety of Interstate 287 within the state after those New Jerseyans who died in Korea and designating specific stretches of the road running through five counties in honor of individual soldiers who had fought in Korea, with three chosen then and two added in a bill introduced the next year with specific conditions, such as a requirement all branches be represented and a preference for living vets. According to \textit{The Daily Record}, “Morris Township resident Warren Wilhide, Sr., was instrumental in getting the New Jersey Legislature to designate Route 287 as The Korean War Memorial Highway,” and helped “maintain signs and flags along the Interstate” for two decades, after “driving a mail truck” in Korea then attending Johns “Hopkins on the G.I.

Bill“ to become an engineer. However, the legislative history of the subsequent bill suggests there is much more to the story, and highlights the roles of local political networks (and lobbying) in getting government entities to formally designate Korean War memorial infrastructure. Indeed, the choice of which additional individual names to add to the highway labeling seems to have led to the promise of a compromise that was never fulfilled.

At first the legislation had selected the “Ex POW and Army Staff Sergeant Walter Bray” for Bergen County, the “former U.S. Air Force gunner Clarence ‘Red’ Mosley’ for Passaic County, and the “former Marine Hector Cafferata, Jr.” for Morris County. Who were these originally selected soldiers? Walter Bray, born in 1930, was “captured during the Korean War on” November 4, 1950 and "held until his release” in August 1953, and told the New York Times in 1982 that he “vividly remembers the freezing temperatures” as well as “wounded American prisoners dying beside him in a filthy hut,” and added in 1988 (on receiving a Prisoner of War Medal authorized by Congress for the first time in 1986), whenever any “prisoner in his tent died, he removed the man's dog tags, stuffed them in an old sock, and buried it in a corner,” and that his receiving an “award also means remembering friends who died.” Clarence “Red” Mosley, born in 1930 and “raised in Patterson, NJ in a poor family” according to a 2011 obituary, was a successful amateur boxer who turned pro in 1949 then joined the Air Force in 1951, but was soon “shot down by enemy ground fire while on his 25th combat mission” and “came back as the only quadruple amputee in the Air Force from the Korean War,” then sold cars while being an active member of the community who was “a Past-Commander of the Wayne Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1931,” part of American Legion Post #174, an Elk, and a past “President of the NJ Diamond

Glovers from 1985-87,” according to his entry in the New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame. Hector Cafferata, Jr., born in New York City in 1929 but “raised in New Jersey” according to a 2016 obituary, joined the Marines at 19 and fought at the Battle of the Chosen Reservoir, winning the congressional Medal of Honor, then returned to New Jersey where he “owned a bar” and worked for the Division of Fish and Game before retiring to Florida, where a school is named for him.19

The real story starts in January of 1996, when bills were introduced in both the State Assembly and Senate suggesting candidates for the remaining two designations, which would ultimately lead to a failed attempt at compromise and a political solution to the problem. The first, Assembly Joint Resolution 32 introduced on January 11, would have named I-287 “as the Korean War Memorial Highway/LTC Richard F. Lauer, Infantry, U.S. Army, where Route 287 passes through Morris County,” but was withdrawn eight months later because it had mistakenly named Morris instead of Middlesex County and due to Richard Lauer being added to a later, larger bill. According to AJR 32, Lauer “for his extraordinary heroism in military operations against armed enemies, was recommended for the Congressional Medal of Honor,” and Purple Heart, while after Korea he remained in the Army and worked as a recruiter in California during Vietnam, using innovative ways to encourage enlistments as indicated by newspaper and court records.20

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Senate Joint Resolution 12, introduced on January 29, the second bill suggesting a candidate for one of the remaining individual Korean War highway designations, would have designed the stretch of I-287 running through Middlesex County “as the Korean War Memorial Highway/Joseph C. Sabella, Army.” The bill was passed unanimously by the Senate on February 26, but lingered for eight months in the Assembly after its introduction on March 18, then was withdrawn December 5 after passage of the later, larger bill. According to the bill, Sabella, “born and raised in North Brunswick” and “first soldier from Middlesex County to be killed in action in Korea;” initially “served in the New Jersey National Guard for four years before enlisting in the United States Army,” and received a “Purple Heart posthumously.” That same language was used to describe Sabella in the later, larger bill introduced in the Assembly July 18, which would have formally designated “State Highway Route 9 in Middlesex County as Korean War Memorial Highway/Joseph C. Sabella, Army,” after legislators picked Lauer over Sabella for the Middlesex County designation due to the original legislation implying the names of living vets were meant to be selected and noting just one non-POW member of the Army was to be chosen. This bill, Assembly Joint Resolution 47, passed by a vote of 75 to 0 on November 14, but was never voted on in the Senate, which had already opted to ignore the identical Senate Joint Resolution 31, thus keeping Sabella from getting his highway.

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The bill that would gain passage, after a long period and in a new legislative session, was Senate Joint Resolution 17, introduced on February 22, 1996 but not passed by the Senate until March 22, 1997 by a vote of 38 to 0. An additional ten more months passed before it passed the Assembly on January 8, 1998 by a vote of 76 to 0 with one abstention, of Assemblyman Joseph Azzolina. Why did Azzolina abstain? It was not for lack of interest in honoring local veterans or commemorating military history. Joseph Azzolina, born in Newark in 1926, served in the Navy in Korea as part of a four-decade career as a Naval Reservist according to a 2010 obituary, managed “his family's Foodtown Supermarkets” and in 1996 was “founding president of the Battleship New Jersey Foundation…responsible for bringing the USS New Jersey to her namesake state in 1999,” after being “assistant to the captain of the USS New Jersey Battleship during the Beirut crisis in Lebanon” in 1983. On the contrary, Azzolina abstained because his was the Navy name selected as the final veteran to have the section of I-287 through Somerset County bear his name, and which with Richard Lauer’s name (picked over Joseph Sabella’s for Middlesex County) was mentioned in the bill.

Senate Joint Resolution 17, which made “additional designations to the Korean War Memorial Highway,” does not mention Assemblyman Azzolina's accomplishments, calling him “Captain Joseph Azzolina, U.S. Navy (Ret.)” who “served in Korea in 1951, as a Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Intelligence Officer aboard the destroyer USS Toledo” during “the Wonsong Harbor battle and later at the Inchon invasion.” SJR 17, unlike the other bills nominating candidates for the honor, also spells out the logic the led to Azzolina’s selection over Sabella and the process by which vets groups have lobbied successfully to gain power in picking who garners


public recognition, noting that when the first bill was passed “it was intended that two additional Korean War veterans” were to “be named at a later date by the Korean War Veterans of New Jersey, Inc.” and that “Azzolina and Colonel Lauer have been proposed for consideration by the Korean War Veterans of New Jersey, Inc.,” adding that it was “the intention that each of the five final additional designations would” honor “a living Korean War veteran from each of the four services of the U.S. Armed Forces” alongside “a living Korean War veteran who is a former prisoner of war.” Whether this is an authentic narrative, or an invented rationale for bumping Sabella from I-287 enabling Lauer to be shifted to Middlesex all so Azzolina could be honored, the legislature focused on the fact that “all five of these veterans would be a testament to all of those Korean War veterans being memorialized, both living and deceased, under this type of memorial dedication,” and that it was “the first type of memorial dedication of its kind.”

Just weeks after New Jersey’s initial dedication, on April 30, 1995, the West Virginia legislature named “That Portion Of WV Interstate 77 Extending South From The Ohio River To Charleston… As A Memorial To The West Virginia Veterans Who Served During The Korean War,” followed by a formal dedication on June 25, according to the plaque located at a rest stop just off the interstate in Williamstown which was itself dedicated on August 12 of 2004, and provides an example that one never knows where they might find a reminder of Korea, as I imagine many a bored tourist waiting for a travel partner to have read that plaque since it was placed. Also in 1995, the state Legislature passed a bill naming “that portion of Interstate 49 which is located inside the city limits of the city of Shreveport” as a Louisiana Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, though other highways in the state later got a similar designation.

25 “Senate Joint Resolution 16, State of New Jersey”

26 “Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7: Requesting the West Virginia Division of Highways to name a section of Interstate 77 in honor of the veterans of the Korean War,” West Virginia Legislature website, Accessed 9/17/17, Available at: http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=SCR7%20INTR.htm&yr=1998&sesstype=
In September 1997 the Indiana Korean Veterans Memorial Highway was dedicated, with two ceremonies in Indianapolis and Fort Wayne highlighting the designation of I-69 from the capitol to the Michigan line. It was also 1997 when the Richmond Parkway in Staten Island was renamed the Korean War Veterans Parkway, which given the traffic backups around New York likely makes it one of the more frequently viewed reminders of the Korean War. In addition, following lobbying efforts by Jim Duncan of the “Texas Lone Star Chapter” of the KWVA, then-Governor George W. Bush signed a bill in 1997 to name State Highway 6, “from the Red River” to “the Gulf of Mexico,” as the Texas Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.27

In 1998 the State Legislature renamed “the entire length of Interstate 295 in Rhode Island” as “The Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.” However, as seems to be the case with memorial highways in several other states as well, the Rhode Island legislature allocated funding to pay for only two roadside signs, one of which “was damaged by a plow in 2003 and has not been replace by the R.I. Department of Transportation.” It was also in 1998 that the state of Oklahoma designed all of I-40 “from I-35 west to the State Line” as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, part of an effort to name four highways. On November 23, 1998 State Route 1 was designated the Illinois Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway in a Danville ceremony, with “commemorative signs” to “mark the route in four locations,” including “at its beginning on

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the South Side of Chicago,” two in Danville, and “in the southeastern tip of the state,” which is the one that I accidentally encountered it while driving from Paris to Danville in May of 2015.28

Several states have multiple Korean War memorial highways, but none more than Missouri.29 On Veterans Day 1999, in Washington State Park near De Soto, a marker was erected noting the naming of Missouri State Highway 21 as a Korean War Memorial Highway, two years before a Blue Star Highway Marker was dedicated at the same site to honor members of “the Armed Forces that fought at the 38th Parallel in Korea” on Veterans Day of 2001. In 2003 the former James River Freeway located just south of Springfield was renamed the Korean War Veterans Memorial Freeway, thanks to an act of the state legislature, then two years later, another act of the Missouri State Legislature re-designated a section of U.S. Highway 63 in Phelps County as the Korean War Veterans Association Memorial Highway.30

In February 2000 in Massachusetts, the Cape and Islands Chapter # 1 of the KWVA, which also dedicated a monument in Hyannis on June 25 of that year, successfully lobbied the legislature to rename the portion Route 6, the Mid-Cape Highway, passing through “the town of


29 Louisiana, New York, Ohio, and Virginia are among states with two highways named for Korea vets.

Barnstable as the Korean War Memorial Highway,” and later added a monument on that road which is visible at a rest area in Yarmouth. That same month the Virginia Senate and the House of Burgesses passed a bill renaming “the entire length of I-295” as “the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway” effective July 1, 2000. In 2001 the Maryland State Legislature authorized the renaming of a stretch of I-70 in Frederick County, as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, though it took several years before highway signs were added and a formal dedication occurred in May 2004. In June 2001, the State Legislature voted to designate historic Route 7-A, as the Vermont Korean Veterans Memorial Highway. Tracing the original path of U.S. Route 7, the road links the Hudson River Valley to ski resorts such as Killington, seeing tens of thousands of tourists annually.  

In October 2001 the Ohio House voted to name a section of Interstate 75 through Lucas County as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, “adding it to a similarly named stretch of U.S. Route 36 across most of central Ohio,” although the Senate opted to give several other roads the distinction instead, including parts of I-280, of I-680, and of State Route 8. In 2002 the Michigan Legislature passed a bill naming part of State Highway 82 as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, but only after studying the costs of the act and deciding that it “would have

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no fiscal impact on State or local government.” In 2002 the Connecticut State Legislature voted to name part of Route 12, near a Route 12 bridge over the Shetucket River named “The Korean Conflict Veterans Bridge,” as the “United States Submarine Veterans Memorial Highway,” while in 2003 they voted to name part of Route 5 in New Haven as “The Korean War Veterans Chapter 204 Memorial Highway.” It was also in 2003, the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice, that the Delaware State Legislature named State Route 1 as the Delaware Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, and that the Colorado Senate voted to add more mileage to their Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.32

Though they were the most prominent, state highways were not the only memorial infrastructure recalling Korea that were widely constructed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as bridges and trees were also popular. A plaque detailing the life of African-American Tuskegee aviator George “Spanky” Roberts, which also notes his involvement in the Korean War, sits next to the “Spanky” Roberts Memorial Bridge, dedicated in Fairmount, West Virginia in 1999. Nearby Spencer, West Virginia is the site of the Colonel Ruby Bradley Bridge, so designated by the State Legislature in April of 2001 to honor the most decorated female veteran in American

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history, who had previously been recognized with a local marker dedicated in 1999, though the bridge itself is scheduled to be replaced. In 2002, the Illinois General Assembly passed a bill to name a bridge in Decatur as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge, while Fifield, Wisconsin dedicated a “Korean War Memorial Freedom’s Bridge” at a wayside on State Route 13 in 2003.33

On June 28, 2000 a memorial tree was dedicated in honor of Task Force Smith, “The First United States Army Contingent To Engage” at Arlington near undated trees to “the memory of members of 23rd regimental combat team missing or killed in action during the Korean War,” “in memory of those who died in Prison Camps or are unaccounted for,” “to all African American Veterans of the Korean War,” and “to the men of the 65th infantry regiment” from Puerto Rico known as “The Borinqueneers” (next to the graves of Earl Warren and John Foster Dulles). On May 27, 2002 at the Danville Area Community College in, Illinois, a Memorial Tree was first dedicated with a plaque, dating from a re-dedication on July 27, 2012, which calls it a memorial “In Honor Of All Danville Junior College And Danville Area Community College Alumni Who Served Their Country In The Korean War.” Arkansas City, Kansas then dedicated a Korean War Liberty Tree Memorial on Veterans Day 2003, the first of many more such “living memorials.”35

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Korean War Infrastructure Now: Bridges, Highways, and More, 2003-17

Several more Korean War Memorial Liberty Trees were designated in 2004. Indeed, as explained in a June 19, 2004 Toledo Blade article by Kim Bates “a national effort is under way to dedicate existing trees as new Liberty Trees” which was then “being spearheaded by Veterans of Foreign Wars’ posts across the nation in honor of Korean War veterans.” As Bates explains it “the original Liberty Tree was an elm tree at Washington and Essex streets in Boston and was a rallying point for the Sons of Liberty,” however, as Karal Ann Marling notes, there had also existed a long tradition of commemorative trees stretching back to the “‘Constitution trees’” at the 1939 Worlds’ Fair. On May 1, 2004 the “old cork oak tree at the Coachella Valley Museum and Cultural Center” near Indio, California “was dedicated as ‘The USS Liberty Tree’ in honor of Navy Capt. William L. McGonagle” and “all Korean War veterans.” On July 3, 2004 in Addison, Texas, a Liberty Tree “was ‘dedicated to the honor of Korean War Veterans,’” while similar trees were dedicated in Liberty Hill, Texas by “VFW Post 8200” and in Winters, Texas “In Honor Of Korean War Veterans.” Moreover, although Lake Butler, Florida’s Liberty Tree has no date, based on its design it was likely dedicated at this time too.36


The mid-2000s also saw ongoing dedications of Korean War Memorial Highways, especially as part of a coast-to-coast “memorial highway project” begun “in 2004” by Korean War veteran William Clark of Pearl, Mississippi which quickly saw several southern states rename sections of U.S. Highway 80. In February of 2005, Governor Haley Barbour signed a law naming the section of U.S. Highway 80 that runs through Mississippi as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, becoming the first state to do so. Louisiana quickly followed suit, thanks to the efforts of Lou Dechert, who became an advocate for the project when he won election as the National President of the KWVA in 2006, the year that William Clark passed away.37

On June 24, 2005 (sixty-five years after the war started) then-Governor Bob Riley of Alabama dedicated the stretch of U.S. Highway 80 running through the state as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, however, this is not the only road in the state of Alabama with such a designation, as a section of Interstate 59 running from Birmingham to the Georgia line has also been called the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway since at least 2002. Though one article, about the dedication of the part of U.S. Highway 80 that runs through Georgia, from Tybee Island to Columbus, asserts that by the time it was officially named the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, at an Macon event in March 2008, five other states including “Nevada, and Arizona had already dedicated the portions of US 80 within their borders in honor of the veterans of the

Korean War,” I can find no confirmation of Arizona’s having done so, other states that have comprehensive guides to memorial infrastructure including Texas, New Mexico, and California appear NOT to have done so, and the road does not run through Nevada at all. Upon dedication of the Georgia highway, where the South Korean ambassador spoke, three large signs paid for by the Republic of South Korea were placed at strategic spots, such as Columbus at the Alabama border, where I saw it in January of 2016.38

Besides those states that named sections of U.S. Highway 80 for Korean War Veterans, several other states named roads in the years after 2003 for those who served in the Korean War. In 2007 the state of Washington designated a road between Highway 101 and “the Makah Indian Reservation at Neah Bay” as the “Korean War Veterans Blue Star Memorial Highway.” In 2008 the Kansas State Legislature named “part of K-4 as the Korean War veterans memorial highway,” authorizing the Secretary of Transportation to arrange for signage but noting “such signs shall not be placed until the secretary has received sufficient moneys from gifts and donations to reimburse the secretary for the cost of placing such signs” as well as allocating “an additional 50% of the initial cost to defray future maintenance or replacement costs of such signs,” setting a new standard for memorial infrastructure bills which henceforth tended to include similar language

about signage costs. Moreover, a September 2009 Aberdeen News article about “Roadways that currently have official historic designations” lists Route 4, “from Rapid City to U.S.385,” as the South Dakota Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.\footnote{“Veterans Memorial Highway,” Strait of Juan de Fuca Scenic Byway website, Accessed 9/18/17, Available at: \url{http://www.highway112.org/vmh.asp}; “Article 10 – Naming and Marking of Highways and Bridges’, Kansas Legislature website, Accessed 9/18/17, Available at: \url{http://kslegislature.org/li_2014/b2013_14/statute/068_000_0000_chapter/068_010_0000_article/068_010_0077_section/068_010_0077_k/}; “Roadways that currently have historic designations,” Aberdeen News (September 25, 2009)} More Korean War highways would be so named during the 2010 to 2013 sixtieth anniversary cycle.

In 2010 the New York State Senate voted to rename part of a highway through Rockland County as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, while in 2012 they designated part of the Taconic State Parkway as the Westchester County Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway. Given the degree of daily commuter traffic on these roads, it seems likely they serve to remind New Yorkers of Korea more often than many of the monuments created throughout the state over the last six and a half decades. Similarly, in 2011 when the Maine Legislature voted for bill, introduced by Representative Kimberly Rosen, “To Name Route 1-A between Brewer and Ellsworth the Korean War Veterans Highway,” it might have done more building another Maine memorial to remind both residents and visitors about the Korean War, since this route is the main thoroughfare between Bangor and Bar Harbor, the home of Acadia National Park.\footnote{“2010 New York Code, HAY - Highway Article 12- (340-A - 345-A) STATE ROUTES: 343-C - Portion of state highway system in the county of Rockland to be designated as ‘The Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway,’” Justia.com website, Accessed 9/19/17, Available at: \url{http://law.justia.com/codes/new-york/2010/hay/article-12/343-c}; “Senate Bill S7704, 2011-2012 Legislative Session: Designates a portion of the Taconic State Parkway as the ‘Westchester County Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway,’” New York State Senate website, Accessed 9/19/17, Available at: \url{https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2011/s7704}; “Subjects for LD 1593,” Maine Legislature website, Accessed 9/19/17, Available at: \url{http://legislature.maine.gov/LawMakerWeb/subjects.asp?ID=280043263}}

Commemoration of Korea through the dedication of memorial highways has continued right up to the present, with at least three such roads designated between 2014 and 2016. The
Veterans Corridor Of Honor stretching down a part of Interstate-385 in South Carolina began as an attempt to name a highway after Korea vets, but, the project was transformed in the legislature on June 19, 2014 into a bill providing the authority to create a series of highway signs naming several wars, at a cost $500 each, to be raised by the local KWVA. The process illustrates, in the words of South Carolina Department of Transportation’s Pete Poore, how “naming a section of road isn’t as easy as putting up signs.” In 2015 the State Legislature declared “the portion of Interstate 5, crossing the State of Oregon, beginning at the California state line and ending at the Washington state line, shall also be known as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway,” while the local KWVA “chapter raised over $5,000 to pay for about half of the 11 signs designated for I-5.” Most recently, on September 21, 2016, the Commonwealth Transportation Board of Virginia voted to “name US Route 50, Northwestern Pike, from State Route 37 to the West Virginia State line, Frederick County” as the “Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway,” as requested by the county.41

The push to name bridges for Korea veterans has also continued over the last decade. Nashville, Tennessee is home to a two-hundred foot tall, one-hundred foot wide Korean War Veterans Bridge across the Cumberland River that won architectural awards (such as “top honor in the ‘Major Span’ category in the National Steel Bridge Alliance” contest), even before being dedicated in 2006 and includes significant signage that is highly visible at night, when the bridge

is brightly lit, as it was on my January 2016 visit. In Maryville, in eastern Tennessee, another causeway was christened as a Korean War Memorial Bridge in September 2008 following an effort led by local vet Leroy Roberts, which I found accidentally when driving from one site to another the next day, the last day of my January 2016 tour of the South. In 2012 the Iowa State Legislature designated a bridge on I-380 over the Iowa River in Johnson County as the Harold DeGear Memorial Bridge to honor a WWII and Korea vet who died while on duty as a Highway Patrolman in 1954, which I definitely drove over when living in Iowa City from 2004 to 2006.\(^{42}\)

Two memorial bridges in Kentucky honoring Korea vets have been recently dedicated, although I was unable to visit either due to the difficulty of traveling into eastern Kentucky; on April 22, 2014 the Leo Roberts Korean War Veteran Memorial Bridge on Route 680 in Floyd County and on December 18, 2014 the Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge just off of U.S. Highway 460 in Pike County, the first part of a new project meant to improve regional access. Also in 2014 the Manhan River Bridge in Easthampton, Massachusetts was named to honor Korean War veterans, with signage on both sides of the road, which is significant given how many more people likely drive across the bridge than stop at the Easthampton Korean War Memorial stone, close by the library. Indeed, since memorial infrastructure are more often “used” than monuments, it seems likely even the marker for the small “Korean War Veterans Memorial Plaza” in nearby Holyoke, an enclosed court full of public art between the historic 1871 city hall and a 1913 annex, let alone a larger marker for the Korean Veterans Memorial Plaza in a park just blocks away, may be amongst the most effective everyday reminders of the Korean War

\(^{42}\) “Gateway Boulevard Bridge: Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge,” City of Nashville website, Accessed 9/19/17, Available at: http://www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Capital-Projects/Gateway-Bridge.aspx; Robert Wilson, “Maryville bridge renamed to honor Korean Vets,” Knoxville News Sentinel (September 20, 2008); “Historic Auto Trails: Special Route and Bridge Designations, Special Designation Bridges,” Iowa Department of Transportation website, Accessed 9/19/17, Available at: https://iowadot.gov/autotrails/special-designations
anywhere in Massachusetts. Moreover, these sites of Korean War public memory serve as good reminders that not all memorial infrastructure consist of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees.

**Digital Public Memory: The Korean War on the Web since the 1990s**

Since the mid-1990s, and increasingly since 2004, a new form of memorial infrastructure has emerged as a key avenue of Korean War public memory. Digital memorials, in the form of websites that seek to honor veterans and educate the public about Korea have grown considerably over the last two decades. The earliest of these efforts is the Korean War Project, based in Dallas and especially active on Facebook, which “began in 1979 as part of a family history” and has “been online since 1995 providing a service to veterans, families, researchers, and students of military history” according to their website, which lists Hal Barker (“photojournalist, writer, designer/inventor/carpenter” and “the son of a Korean War veteran”) as founder of the group. The Korean War Educator website, which was founded by Lynnette Brown, “former Director of the Douglas County Museum” in Tuscola, Illinois, after she created “the museum's 1996 exhibit, ‘The Korean War: Cold, Bloody and Forgotten’” and has been online since June of 2001, takes an

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44 “About the Korean War Project,” Korean War Project, Accessed 12/11/2016; Available at: [http://www.koreanwar.org/html/about_the_project.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/about_the_project.html). The site lists Hal’s father Ted as part of the staff.
overt political position stating that the website only “includes information about the Korean War from the perspective of U.S. veterans” and that “for the communist viewpoint of the war, our viewers will have to look elsewhere.” Two related University of Syracuse web projects are the Korean War Veterans Digital Memorial that debuted in 2011 and the Korean War Digital History Project, which describes itself on a slickly designed website as “a collection of educators seeking to bring veterans and their stories into the classroom” that has “created an academic study of prominent textbooks and their representation of the Korean War” as well as “crafted lessons that utilize the artifacts found at www.kwvdm.org.”

Many of the new forms of digital memory that have proliferated recently offer much info but little analysis. These include 50th and 60th anniversary websites, newspaper retrospectives, and a range of other pages often run by branches of the American government or divisions of the armed forces. While scholars, students, and members of the general public who want to learn more about the war now have access to a wealth of information, the web offers fewer narrative guidelines than do museum exhibits, books, movies, or even monuments. It is often impossible for visitors to Korea memorial websites to gauge the level of accuracy of the info presented to them, while the many websites that provide a history of the war offer just a glimpse into events, ignoring elements such as PTSD and massacres that might work counter to their commemorative projects. Moreover, by providing so much shear data about the war, it becomes easy for visitors to these websites to assume they have received a comprehensive view of the war even though in some cases, such as that of the Korean War Educator, the info available is presented partly for

propaganda purposes. In these ways, some digital memorial websites about Korea can actually obscure the history of the war through a deluge of detailed information, though the sheer weight of digital infrastructure devoted to Korean War memory further problematizes the use idea of the forgotten war as a descriptor rather than a memorial trope with political consequences.

My own digital memory work has added to the presence of the Korean War on the web. My PhD research blog, the Korean War Memory Tour (KoreanWarMemoryTour.wordpress.com) has functioned as a way for me to share my initial impressions of local monuments, museum exhibitions, and other forms of public memory as well as to organize my research trips by location. Moreover, along with the accompanying Facebook group page (as well as a related “Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for the Humanities” blog post, a failed Kickstarter campaign, and an online video of my plenary address on the topic at a 2015 digital humanities conference at Bucknell University), the blog has allowed me an avenue to both get the word out about my own research and to foster public memory of the Korean War itself, thus helping make it less forgotten.46 Indeed, as of December 2016, if you Googled “Korean War Memory” my blog was the first result that popped up and remained a Page One result as of December 2017, offering me a long-term, web-based opportunity to help shape public understanding of the history of the Korean War in the future and further cementing the importance of digital infrastructure in promoting Korean War public memory.

Korean War Veterans’ Groups and The Turn Towards Local Memory

When assessing the history of Korean War memorial infrastructure across more than six decades, several patterns start to emerge. For example, early Korean War memorial infrastructure

usually consisted of buildings and trees as well as bridges and other forms such as parks, with highways becoming popular from the late 1980s onward, just as the war was more frequently becoming the backstory of Hollywood films and TV shows as well as the subject of local and state monuments across the nation, though both bridges and trees remained popular too. There also seem several lessons inherent in this history that would be of interest to anyone, such as myself, attempting to name a bridge for Korean War veterans. For example, on Veterans Day of 2011, the Pennsylvania Legislature voted 198 to 0 in the House and 49 to 0 in the Senate to designate Route 462 running through York County as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, demonstrating how easy it is to get such legislation passed once it reaches a statehouse floor. However, the case of Clinton, Iowa on the Mississippi River, which in 2004 failed to approve a highway named for Korean War veterans, shows that the hardest part can sometimes be getting local city council support.47

What also becomes clear is that, since the late 1980s, local posts of both longstanding veterans’ groups, such as the VFW and the American Legion, and especially community-based branches of the nascent Korean War Veterans Association have played an outsized role in successfully lobbying for the creation of bridges, highways, buildings, and trees that encouraged public memory of a conflict that was much less frequently labeled as the forgotten war on memorial infrastructure than on the myriad of monuments being built by many of the very same local communities across the country during the same time period. Therefore, to fully understand the history of Korean War memorial infrastructure (and monuments), it is necessary to briefly review the history of Korea vets and their involvement in veterans’ organizations since the 1950s.

The experience of Korean War vets, and the bodies of those who died in the war, differed significantly from those who had fought in the World Wars, starting with their journey home from the front. In contrast to the World Wars, “in March 1951 the Defense Department decided that the bodies of all American” war dead “would be returned to the United States for burial,” as G. Kurt Piehler points out. Moreover, as Aaron O’Connell indicates “most Korean War vets” who did return to their homes “did not come home in large groups” making “it difficult for hometowns to acknowledge their service.” As Colonel Harry Summers, Jr. relates it, “in May 1951,” after finishing “almost four years of experience in the Far East Command” he “was one of the first allowed to leave the front line,” and “after two weeks aboard a troop ship” easing him “out of the war” he “was back home,” where “it was not long before the Korean War became the forgotten war for” him “like the rest of America,” while also noting that for the Korean writer Ahn Junghyo (who has an essay that appears in the same collection as Summers’), “the Korean War can never be the forgotten war.”

Charles Young notes that prisoners of war faced the most challenging journey home in several ways, spending “two weeks on a military transport ship” rather than flying back “so they could be observed” for any signs that they “were tainted by Communism,” a concern which did not dissipate once these POWs had arrived on American shores. Young tells the tale of one POW who, during a ceremony in his honor where he was to get “a $50 savings bond from the American Legion and a nomination from the Veterans of Foreign Wars to become a Kentucky Colonel,” saw “the savings bond rescinded” and his “membership in the VFW put on hold” as a result of “a rumor” that “rippled through the crowd” about the soldier being “a collaborator.” Melinda Pash, notes that “not all veterans’ groups welcomed Korean War Veterans” after the armistice since

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“Congress did not designate Korea as a war until the late 1950s,” which gave these “veterans’ organizations ample excuse to turn men who served in Korea,” as “both the American Legion and the VFW” did, though some Korean War vets later joined these groups and similarly shunned Vietnam veterans. Moreover, Paul Edwards notes that “the smear campaign directed against the military” and related accusations POWs were Communist collaborators “was supported by no less an organization than the American Legion,” which was “full of World War II veterans” that “felt that the pride of its members had been challenged” by the hazy outcome of the war in Korea.49

Official histories of the VFW and the American Legion tell a very different story of these groups’ involvement with Korean War veterans during and after the war. According to The VFW: An Illustrated History of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (1991), the group was “looking out for the rights of the servicemen fighting in Korea” by lobbying against changes to the Veterans Administration and “large cuts in the VA budget in the area of veterans’ medical care;” although Korea vets often faced challenges accessing care even after joining the VFW. Until the 1951 case of an Arizona Marine veteran who was denied care at a VA medical center became a cause championed by President Truman and Congress, Korea veterans could be turned away from VA hospitals, while according to Maurice Plant, as late as 1994 Korean War vets were “denied service-connected benefits because the money was going to World War II Veterans” instead. According to The American Legion: An Official History, 1919-1989 (1990), the group “had worked admirably and would succeed in the pursuit of a Korean War G.I. Bill of Rights,” but such “impressive advocacy on their behalf alone would not cause them to become active Legionnaires,” and since “their life-styles often did not mesh well with the older members of the Legion,” few Korea vets joined up then. Moreover, as Richard Kolb notes this “Korean War GI

Bill was less generous than its WWII counterpart” in that “Korea vets had to pay their tuition out of a monthly stipend rather than having it paid separately,” and “as a result, only half as many of them, on a per capita basis, were able to attend private colleges.”

Kolb argues, “if Korea vets kept a low profile and accepted their fate in a matter-of-fact fashion, there were reasons for it” such as them being “products of an impersonalized pipeline system known as rotation” so that “there was little basis for unit pride” as there had been after previous wars, and that “Korea vets were unconsciously inaudible because of the stigma attached to a war gone awry.” Edwards asserts it was a “very small percentage of the Korean War veterans who took advantage of the benefits offered,” as “the veterans were themselves not inclined to be affirming of the Korean War or their part in it,” and says that this “Korea veterans’ unfocused discounting of their parts in the war and its place history is a disturbing contrast to the assertive individualism of the veterans of World War II.” Kristin Ann Hass, in discussing the origins of the National Korean War Memorial in Washington, suggests “before 1982, getting a war memorial built required making special, disruptive demands that the proud (and maybe more compliant?) Korean War veterans were unwilling to make,” despite noting one effort “pushing for a memorial in the late 1970s.” Yet, because most Korean War veterans were in their late 40s and early 50s by the time they organized to pursue a national monument, at a time when most men reach their peak earning potential, the veterans’ groups that they formed in the 1980s have held significant lobbying power over the many memorials dedicated since then.

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51 Richard Kolb; Edwards, To Acknowledge A War, p. 32; Hass, Sacrificing Soldiers on the National Mall, p. 31-32; Kathleen Elkens, “Here’s the age at which you’ll earn the most in your career,” CNBC.com (August 18, 2017)
Hass notes that Korea vets started lobbying for their preferred memorial style in the early 1980s, even before groups such as the Korean War Veterans Association were created, with the National Committee for the Korean War Memorial, formed by a naturalized Korean-American in 1981, managing to distribute questionnaires at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in November 1982 that were designed to promote a veterans’ influence on a future national Korea monument, although just “two years later, the committee dissolved in the face of serious financial improprieties.” Barry Schwartz and Todd Bayma assert that “the 1981 formation of the National Committee” was motivated “by resentment over the Vietnam War being commemorated before” Korea had been, “even though it was fought later and less effectively” than the Korean War. Moreover, according Patrick Hagopian, the cards posed choices that “reflected the design debates about the Vietnam Veterans Memorial” and suggests that when “the right-wingers who controlled the memorial committee reported that the respondents overwhelmingly” picked “a ‘traditional monument, above ground, and based on what veterans want’” it helped to make these Korean War veterans activists for specific sorts of memorials.52

Shortly after Korea vets began to lobby for a heroic commemoration of their war, the first groups were formed exclusively for those who fought in Korea. As Edwards notes, the “Chosin Few,” founded in 1983, began a wave of groups to debut in the mid-1980s. In 2016 “the Chosin Few held their bi-annual reunion at the Marriot Mission Valley in sunny San Diego,” with “over 150 veterans” alongside “their family and friends” as well as reporters “present to document and photograph the veterans’ experiences” that included tours, a banquet with “Korean dancers,” and a speech by the “CEO of Tootsie Roll Industries,” which “has been a strong supporter of the ‘Frozen Chosin’ veterans ever since countless tootsie rolls were mistakenly airdropped to them”

that “saved lives during that sub-zero temperature battle, as they could suck on them for energy.” One president of the group notes, they “started out with 3,500 survivors,” but that number had shrunk “down to about 1,500 paying members” by 2017, with branches spread across the nation, such as “the Valley Forge chapter” that “consists of veterans of the Chosin campaign living in eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey” and was founded by Frank Gross at a bar “called the Silver Saddle, close to his home in Philadelphia,” where he sang about the war. The group successfully lobbied the New Jersey State Legislature in 2011 to name a road the “Chosin Few Memorial Highway,” in an effort led by “Wall resident Michael Shaheen,” although it took years to get signs noting it is “Dedicated to Our Fallen Brothers, Battle of the Chosin Reservoir, Korean War,” which were finally erected only “after the passing of Mr. Shaheen.”

In founder Bill Norris’ description of “The Forming of the Korean War Veterans Association,” he notes that after he “attended a reunion in July 1984 the seed was planted” for a nationwide organization with state chapters, the first two being Norris’ home state of New York and his colleague’s home state of Massachusetts, as “they both started to plan the first gathering of ‘Korean War Veterans,’” which was “to be held at Arlington, Virginia on 25, 26 and 27 July 1985” and was designed “to pay honor to those who stayed behind (MIAs) and the ones who gave their lives during the Korean War.” As Norris notes, this reunion led directly to the creation of the KWVA, when “on the afternoon of 26 July 1985 those attending this first reunion of Korean War Veterans held a meeting,” which led to them deciding “they wanted to become a ‘NATIONAL

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ASSOCIATION of Korean War Veterans.” Norris concludes his history by admitting that, at first, he “was reluctant to become aggressive due to the lack of enthusiasm by other Korean War Veterans attitudes,” but that he felt obliged as a combat survivor “to never let the world forget.”

Bill Norris first began putting out a group newsletter in January of 1986. In the first issue of *The Graybeards*, so named because over thirty years had passed between the end of the war and the formation of the group, Norris readily notes some of the difficulties of attempting to organize veterans nationwide in the mid-1980s. Indeed, Norris admits to the “537 members who joined the Association in the first six months” who wished to contact their friends from the war that “we do not have a computer yet,” though he assured readers “at the time that the Association can get a computer all the necessary information will be on hand to put into it.” The KWVA website has long had digitized documents dating back to 1986, but until a 2017 modernization, which shows the group’s commitment to creating a digital memory infrastructure capable of moving forward into the future, the layout looked like an older message board with links useful for veterans seeking information, and helpful background for researchers such as myself.

The national still KWVA acts as an umbrella and lobbying organization, but each local chapter has significant autonomy in terms of planning and fundraising for public history projects, an arrangement in place since a financial scandal in 1997 rocked the national KWVW leadership, which I first discovered quite accidentally while skimming through a folder at the Center for the Study of the Korean War in Independence, Missouri. In a letter dated August 28, 1997, written by the then-President of the group Nick Pappas, he refuses to step down despite a request for his

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56 The prior website [www.kwva.org](http://www.kwva.org) now redirects to the new site with dropdown menus at [www.kwva.us](http://www.kwva.us).
resignation, and does so in a tone that reads as equal parts bureaucratic and sarcastic. Pappas wrote (with emphasis in the original), “unless you have proof to provide the authorities that I have committed an unlawful act, I suggest you rethink the ‘legal’ aspects of your public quote” and “in summary, I do not intend to resign by 13 September 1997 as demanded by We, ‘whomever We are,’” adding he wants “a list of the WE who are seeking legal recourse to remove me from office and associated charges therewith, for publication in the next Graybeards.” The underlying reason for this conflict between Pappas and the members of the KWVA stems from 1996, when “the good name of Korean War Veterans Association” was “tarnished by an internal incident of theft of funds” by “John Maison, formerly of Fairview Heights, Illinois” who “was the Treasurer of the KWVA when he came under investigation by local authorities and the FBI” after the “KWVA accountant Stan Myrda discovered the discrepancies.” While Pappas would later step down (on July 26, 1998, the day before the fifty-fifth anniversary of the armistice), the incident remains a revealing anecdote which suggests that after the dedication of the National Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington in 1995, which the group spent much of its first decade lobbying and fundraising for, the national KWVA lost its focus, which would offer an opportunity for state and local chapters to take the lead in future memorial construction.

While the national KWVA has persevered as an organizer of national reunions and a lobbyist for some commemorative projects, it is the local and state branches of the KWVA (and other veterans groups as well) that have been much more active in pushing for the construction of monuments and memorial infrastructure. As the page on the Korean War Educator website which describes the so-called “Maison Incident” asserts, “even today its current national leadership continues to be blighted for the incident, even though many of the directors serving in 2003 were

not serving the KWVA in a national capacity at the time the incident took place,” and years later “there is still a certain amount of mistrust and suspicion when it comes to the handling of money matters at the national level.” Moreover, as Suhi Choi notes, “local commemorations of the fiftieth anniversary of the Korean War” were “encouraged by the U.S. Department of Defense during the years from 2000 to 2003,” and she says provided “Korea War veterans with a rare opportunity to attempt to make their memories comprehensible to the public,” although she warns that they are “vulnerable to the process of depoliticizing memories.”58 Given this history, the turn to local memory by state and community chapters of the Korean War Veterans Association of America and other veterans groups since the late 1990s makes sense, as does the encouragement of abstract appreciation and the continued remembering of Korea as a forgotten war.

58 “Maison Incident”; Choi, p. 73.
CHAPTER 8 - NOT FORGOTTEN GLOBALLY: KOREA RECALLED BY BOTH SIDES

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950 when North Korea invaded South Korea across the 38th parallel, but quickly grew to include more than a dozen United Nations Allies in support of South Korea, as well as both the Soviet Union and China acting in support of North Korea. Moreover, for many of the nations that fought on both sides of the Korean War, active involvement in the region did not cease with the signing of the armistice on July 27, 1953 but continued for years afterward, some even to the present. In order to contextualize the ways that the Korean War has been remembered in the United States, it is necessary to briefly review how it has been remembered amongst the various other nations which were part of the conflict.

In prior chapters I have looked at exhibitions, scholarly studies, mass media, monuments, and memorial infrastructure, and I have shown that American public memory of the Korean War is characterized by specific tropes, such as the forgotten war mythos, overtly anti-communist ideology, and messages focusing on sacrifice including “Freedom Is Not Free” as well as “All Gave Some, Some Gave All.” But how has the Korean War been remembered, or not, in the other nations that participated in the conflict during the early 1950s? This chapter begins to answer that question by offering a brief historiography of existing scholarship on global monuments, museum exhibitions, and mass media objects portraying the Korean War which have been created in the Koreas and those countries which fought on either side in the war, by creating a typology of key themes in global Korean War public memory and exploring how these vary by nation, and by comparing global monuments, museum exhibitions, and mass media to American public memory.

The following brief comparison of American public memory of the Korean War to the various tangible ways in which the war has been recalled by our wartime UN Allies, in South Korea, and amongst those countries that fought on the opposite side of the war clearly shows that the forgotten war trope is culturally contingent and is not found everywhere, although themes of
remembrance are commonplace, while ideological anti-communism (or anti-imperialism on the other side) also seems to be an often used theme. Moreover, the persistence of Korean War public memory in Australia, Canada, Ethiopia, China, and many other nations suggests there is a broad global interest in recalling the war, while also revealing additional key themes of nationalism, connection (rarely found in the U.S.), and appreciation (rather than of “Sacrifice” as in the U.S.).

Reviewing Global Korean War Public Memory Scholarship and Cultural Criticism

The turn toward international history since the 1990s has inspired several contemporary historians writing about the Korean War to highlight the shared ideologies and networks of those nations involved. For example, in *The US, the UN, and the Korean War* (2014) Robert Barnes not only notes that “the ‘Old’ Commonwealth countries – Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa- were an integral part of the Western bloc” that fought on the side of South Korea in the early 1950s, but also argues that North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung was forced to ask “Stalin to authorize and provide support for a military invasion of South Korea,” which was readily offered since “Stalin was eager to trigger a conflict in Korea that might embroil China in a drawn out conflict.” Similarly, in *Warming Up to the Cold War: Canada and the United States’ Coalition of the Willing, from Hiroshima to Korea* (2009), Robert Teigrob shows that “Canada’s involvement in the Korean affair began in 1947” when that country initially “accepted a U.S. invitation to join the United Nation’s Temporary Commission on Korea,” and once war broke out, in the words of one “Canadian official” the nation promised to “become ‘a 49th state as far as war production is concerned.” Some earlier scholars had previously highlighted the importance of international connections for the war effort, such as Lawrence Kaplan, who notes in “The Korean War and U.S. Foreign Relations: The Case of NATO” (1977) that some allies “such as Greece and Turkey” were then seeking to join the newly formed North Atlantic Treaty Organization, while others including France and the Benelux nations were already part of NATO. In addition,
the United Nations Allied command also included the countries of Ethiopia, Thailand, Colombia, and the Philippines, each contributing more than a thousand troops to the South Korean cause.¹

More recent scholarship has also noted the persistence of transnational ties even after the war. As Paul Edwards describes the situation, in To Acknowledge a War (2000), “Ethiopian troops remained in Korea until 1967,” while “rather than departing immediately” after the conflict ended Australians also remained in Korea for four years as military observers, as is noted in a digital exhibition about “Australia’s involvement in the Korean War.” Moreover, the continued involvement of wartime allies after the end of the Korean War also occurred on the other side. Indeed, in Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea (2013), Sheila Miyoshi Jager describes how “the Chinese people emerged from the ashes of the Korean War supremely confident” and “recognizing China’s new status,” Premier Khrushchev provided “Beijing with the necessary economic and military assistance to help China get back on its feet” after the war and to continue its support for North Korea, which Jager notes China still does into the twenty-first century, long after the fall of the U.S.S.R., with “Chinese investment in North Korea in 2006” surpassing $135 million dollars in value.² Several scholars have also written English language books and articles which discuss Korean War public memory in the various nations that fought with, or against, the United States on the Korean peninsula in the early 1950s.


In “Remembering the Unfinished Conflict: Museums and the Contested Memory of the Korean War” (2013), Tessa Morris-Suzuki describes several museum exhibitions in Pacific Rim nations which recall the Korean War. Morris-Suzuki notes that “the Australian War Memorial’s Korean War section” was “remodeled in 2008,” with aid from South Korea, and now the site uses “everyday objects” such as “packets of cigarettes” in an attempt “to evoke the life of soldiers at the front,” and asserts “the unprovoked nature of the North Korean attack is strongly emphasized” in the exhibit, though it does not try “to proclaim the Korean War as a ‘victory.’” Morris-Suzuki also describes how in 1993 Dandong, China’s “Museum To Commemorate the War To Resist American Aggression and Aid Korea,” which had been but a “modest adjunct to the Dandong historical museum” that had previously simply told the story of the war, “was reopened in an impressive granite and marble hall on a hilltop” that “develops its account of the conflict through a series of large exhibition halls” and “one great cyclorama.” She notes the site uses “uniforms, knapsacks, and other items of everyday war life,” as a way “to dramatize the hardships faced by the Chinese” troops, and shows “the faces of the heroic Chinese volunteers” who died, including “a simple white bust commemorating the most famous of them,” Mao’s eldest son. Moreover, as Morris Suzuki notes, “the memorial’s history goes back to 1958, the year when the last” Chinese “forces withdrew from North Korea,” while she argues that “the symbolism of the memorial” presents North Korea “as a small and vulnerable buffer between China and US military might in Asia” which must “be protected; but also as a country whose problems have real and menacing implications for China.” Morris-Suzuki also visited the major memorial museums in both North and South Korea which are devoted to remembering the Korean War.

Morris-Suzuki notes, about the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum in Pyongyang, North Korea, that the sprawling facility “originally opened in 1953” but “it was only when a new and grandeur museum was unveiled in 1974 that the word ‘Victorious’ was added to its title” (following “the capture of the US intelligence-gathering vessel Pueblo in 1968,” which is now the centerpiece of the display at the site), and states that she “cannot help being reminded of the yet-to-be completed” (at the time she wrote but defunct as of 2017) “Korean War National Museum in Springfield,” with its “V-sign logo celebrating ‘the forgotten victory.’” Morris-Suzuki also mentions she has “been to the museum twice” but that “all visits are guided tours given by a uniformed member of the armed forces” so that “the itinerary chosen affects the story told to the visitor” and suggests that different rooms than the ones she was shown likely “feature centrally in the tours given to Russian and Chinese visitors,” while concluding that “like other North Korean historical exhibitions” the site “presents its story in a format that relies heavily on the marshaling of archival evidence,” such as images, in order “to support particular truth claims” about the war.4

About the Museum at the War Memorial of Korea in Seoul, South Korea, Morris-Suzuki notes that “the ambiguous motto engraved in stone outside the Memorial Hall: ‘Freedom is not Free’” (much more frequently used in American memorials), “in Korean translates into” a “much more cumbersome epigram,” and observes that while the site “vividly describes the sufferings of Korean civilians during the war” and “the heroism of South Korean soldiers,” she also asserts, in conclusion, that “the story ends on a note neither of triumph nor reconciliation, but rather of a kind of uneasy sadness.” Yet Morris-Suzuki, who “visited on a rainy day in May 2009” just after “a short stay in North Korea,” (and perhaps because of this) also notes that she has an “impression of the War Memorial” which is “slightly different from the perceptions of Sheila Miyoshi Jager and

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4 Ibid, p. 139
Jiyul Kim,” in part because their scholarly project was done “at a time when the Sunshine Policy of engagement between North and South was at its height.”

Of the several museum exhibitions Morris-Suzuki discusses, the Museum at the War Memorial of Korea in Seoul has most frequently been written about in English by other scholars, both prior to and after her article. The first academics to critically examine the museum, which first “opened its doors in 1994 and has since become a popular destination for school field trips,” were Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Jiyul Kim, who noted in “The Korean War after the Cold War: Commemorating the Armistice Agreement in South Korea” (2007) that the site includes an “Outdoor Exhibition Area” which “displays large-scale armaments used during the Korean War,” while arguing that it seeks “to fashion a narrative of triumph that” allows for the “possibility of peninsular reconciliation.” Most recently Daniel Kim wrote an essay noting “the very fine work of Sheila Miyoshi Jager and Tessa Morris-Suzuki proved to be quite useful” since “their differing interpretations suggest that there is” an “instability in the meanings embedded in the memorial,” but since he “visited the memorial” museum “in June and October of 2013” after “the rooms devoted to the Korean War had been wholly renovated,” he has his own views. Kim also details “the immense Statue of Brothers” and “the Korean War Monument” that “was unveiled in 2003,” while arguing “the overall aesthetic of the new incarnation of the Korean War rooms at the War Memorial of Korea” is “designed to better target a younger audience” than the prior exhibits.

Multiple popular cultural reviews of the site also offer insight into its commemorative meanings, with a LonelyPlanet.com review noting the site is home to “stirring war memorials”

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5 Ibid., p. 131, 133-136
7 Daniel Kim, p. 107-108, 111.
outside adjacent to “tanks, helicopters, missiles and planes” as well as a “huge museum” inside
that “takes at least three hours to browse,” because of the numerous exhibits on the Korean War
as well as other topics such as “Admiral Sun-sin’s famous iron-clad turtle warships,” which were
“used to defeat the Japanese navy in the 1590s,” and “Korea’s involvement in the Vietnam War.”
Moreover, as noted in a CNN article, the museum includes “a Memorial Hall, which pays tribute
to all those who have fought in Korean Wars,” and a “War Room, featuring Korean weapons
from as early as the Paleolithic age,” as well as “the ROK Armed Forces room, which shows the
history and changes of South Korea's army” and an “eerily lifelike Combat Experience Room, a
re-creation of a Korean night battle full of special effects, video, sound, canon smoke and the
smell of gunpowder” that “induces a sense of horror,” much like the immersive exhibit at the
Soldiers’ Experience Gallery in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.8

Other scholars and cultural critics have also written about the Korean War museum
exhibitions which Morris-Suzuki visited in China and North Korea. According to Ethan Epstein
writing for Slate.com in 2010, “the Museum To Commemorate the War To Resist American
Aggression and Aid Korea,” (an “official English name” that he states “does not quite roll off the
tongue” but “certainly speaks volumes”), includes both “the museum and memorial, set on a hill
overlooking Dandong,” which he argues portrays China and North Korea as “revolutionary
brothers-in-arms, united in fighting Western imperialism.” In a piece titled “China’s Memory and
Commemoration of the Korean War in the Memorial Hall of the ‘War to Resist U.S. Aggression
and Aid Korea’” (2015), Keun-Sik Jung describes how “the memorialization project spatializing”
Korean War public memory in China first “began as a form of local history between 1958 and
1966, shut down during the Cultural Revolution, and” only “expanded into a national memorial

8 “War Memorial of Korea,” Lonely Planet website, Accessed 10/10/17, Available at:
https://www.lonelyplanet.com/south-korea/seoul/attractions/war-memorial-of-korea/a/poi-
sig/391947/357441; Tey-Marie Astudillo, “Seoul’s best museums: 6 you’ll want to see,” CNN.com/travel
(July 12, 2017)
with the decision to renovate in 1984,” while arguing that the site “is interesting in that it shows us not only China’s perspective on the Korean War but also its views on modern Chinese history,” since “according to the exhibition, it was the Korean War Armistice Agreement” which “put an end to China’s history of unequal treaties.” Jung goes on to note that “the exhibition starts with an explanation of China’s decision to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea“ and that “the Sino-Korean Friendship Gallery displays not only friendship between Chinese and North Korean soldiers, but” also “Chinese soldiers and North Korean residents,” which is ”expressed through souvenir pendants, photos, and paintings,” before concluding by discussing “Dandong’s attempt to boost border tourism and battlefield tourism” especially since 2006.9

Writing about the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum, Suzy Kim argues at the outset of her site assessment, titled “Specters of War in Pyongyang” (2015), that the capital city as a whole “may be regarded as one giant memorial, commemorating the foundation of the republic;,” and notes that “the reconstruction of Pyongyang in the 1960s into one of the most modern cities in Asia at the time was made possible by” wartime American bombing campaigns. She then details how, on a “visit to North Korea in 2011,” she first noticed a dominant “historical narrative,” about the Americans as the Korean War’s villains, which was “reproduced throughout countless memorials and museums.” Kim also notes that “the museum was reborn in the early 1970s, just as the Vietnam War was drawing to a close in precisely the fashion that North Korea had envisioned for the Korean War,” (with the unification of one nation under a Communist rule), as well as that “North Korea commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the armistice in 1993 under very different circumstances”( due to “the collapse of the Socialist bloc”), but it “once

again insisted that the war had been a categorical victory” and therefore it created “another major construction project by installing the Victory monument near the museum,” concluding that “the latest reconstruction of the museum in 2013” was significantly impacted by “North Korea’s deep insecurities about its past, present, and future.”

Moreover, Suzy Kim also writes about the history of Chinese public memory of the Korean War in the Introduction to the 2015 Special Issue of Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review titled “(De)Memorializing the Korean War: A Critical Intervention,” which she guest-edited and in which her article appears. Kim here argues that “despite normalization of relations between China and South Korea in 1992,” following the fall of the U.S.S.R., “Chinese memorialization of the Korean War expanded in the post-Cold War era,” and she asserts that “the once-peripheral memorialization project entered the capital” when “the Military Museum of the Chinese People’s Revolution in Beijing opened a new exhibit devoted to the Korean War in 2000.” Kim’s scholarship reflects a keen understanding that war memory always evolves, which was also identified by Pingchao Zhu, in “The Korean War at the Dinner Table” (1998), in which he shows how “ongoing political conflict at home” has continuously impacted “how the Korean War was remembered” in China, especially the key idea “that the Korean War was China’s first international victory over an imperialist power” in centuries, which is juxtaposed to the fact that “the war was deliberately forgotten because of the power struggles” and “ideological splits within the CCP during the late 1950s” that “resulted in the ousting of Marshal Peng.” Yet such highly ideological exhibitions are not only the province of communist commemorators.


According to scholar Louis Allday, in “The Imperial War Museum in London: A Lesson in State Propaganda” (2016), The Imperial War Museum in London, which as a direct result of the “Korean War further developed” its mission “to include all conflict involving British & Commonwealth forces,” has since a 2014 renovation included a section on the Korean War which asserts that “the US had ‘introduced democracy’ in the South of Korea after the Second World War” (a far from factual statement), and “the subsequent Korean War was a political war: ‘communism’ v. ‘democracy,’” (which is problematic both because it compares an economic system to a political system and because South Korea from the 1950s through the 1970s can hardly be considered a functioning democracy). Other exhibitions about the Korean War are less overtly ideological and focus instead on the connections between past and present. In “War Trauma, Memories, and Truths” (2012) Jeon Seung-Hee describes the “Still Present Pasts” display as “a multimedia exhibit touring the United States and Korea” from 2005 to 2011, which stopped at two sites in Seoul, and which he says “uses survivor testimonies and historical records incorporated in art to make the point that war is a continuing presence in peoples’ lives” which stretches forward “across generations.”

These themes of anti-communism versus anti-imperialism and connections between time periods, people, and places are also present in extent scholarship and cultural criticism on global Korean War film. While relatively few English language films on the Korean War have been produced outside Hollywood, both Robert Lentz, in Korean War Filmography: 91 English Language Features through 2000 (2003), and Paul Edwards, in A Guide to Films on the Korean War (1997), have discussed those few that do exist. According to Lentz, the 1956 movie A Hill in

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Korea is “the only British-produced film that deals with England’s direct participation in the war” as “one of twenty-three countries which contributed” in some way “to the Korean War effort,” while Edwards notes “the film is Michael Caine’s first role,” which Edwards suggests Caine most likely received because “he served with British forces in Korea.” Lentz also notes that in 1970 a Japanese company produced a film called The Walking Major documenting efforts by American veterans to aid war orphans after the conflict, which should be no surprise given that, according to Tessa Morris-Suzuki and “despite Japan’s official ‘non-combatant’ status,” thousands of “Japanese sailors, dockworkers, and others were sent to the Korean Peninsula.” In 1986 a Dutch company produced Field of Honor, “which takes great pains to avoid sentimentalizing the war” and “dramatizes the war in all of its ugliness,” according to Lentz, while Edwards notes it is “one of the few foreign films on the Korean War available in English” to problematize the war at all.13

Several other scholars and cultural critics have also discussed films and documentaries produced by United Nations Allies about their involvement in the Korean War. In May of 1955 the French film Heartbreak Ridge opened in Paris “as a sort of post-mortem on the Korean affair,” in the words of New York Times reviewer Bosley Crowther, who goes on to note that “the drama itself is conventional and follows a formula” starting with the protagonist being “sent to the Korean battalion,” while “the French dialogue is a reminder that there were French soldiers” in the war as well as English-speaking allies and Koreans. The BBC documentary series Korea: The Unknown War produced by Bruce Cumings and Jon Halliday “aired in the summer of 1988, running six successive weeks on Channel 4,” which had just been “brought onstream in England in 1980 as an outlet for alternative programming” and which angered many “Thatcherites,”

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13 Lentz, p. 106, 146, 407; Edwards, A Guide to Films on the Korean War, p. 66, 71; Morris-Suzuki, p. 146. This probably says more about the dominance of Hollywood globally, in terms of English language films, than it says about comparative public memory of the Korean War in the U.S. versus in other allied nations.
according to Cumings in *War and Television* (1992). In 2003 a Canadian company produced a documentary television series called *Korea: The Unfinished War*, to which Michael Fein of Central Virginia Community College gave “a not recommended rating,” despite the fact that “technical aspects are done well and make this an overall sharp production,” because in his view the narration “makes one wonder if perhaps the producer wants his audience to demand ‘War crimes’ tribunals for every American who fought in Korea.” Turkey, which in 1954 had produced a full-length film about the war titled *The North Star (Simal Yildizi)*, in August 2017 picked as its “official candidate for the best foreign-language film Oscar” a movie titled *Ayla* that is “based on the true story of a Turkish veteran of the Korean War,” and which “follows its characters against the background of the war in 1950” according to *Variety*.

The Korean War has of course also played a prominent role in South Korean film, though through the mid-1980s strict government censorship required strongly anti-communist plots, according to Lentz, who describes *Piagol* (1955) as “an anti-communist film which portrays the barbarity of leftist guerillas” that support North Korea. In addition, in the words of Korean Studies scholar Leonid Petrov, “until the early ’90s, the Korean film industry was suppressed” and able to make just “about a dozen films a year” which “were underfunded.” According to Suh Ji-Moon, in “The Korean War in Korean Films” (2000), several Korean films of the 1990s depicting the war in less ideological terms, such as *To the Starry Island* (1993), *The Taebaek Mountains* (1994), and *Spring in My Hometown* (1998),”were successful movies, which indicates that Korean moviegoers” might be “ready to see such serious issues as the national tragedy” of

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the war portrayed on screen.\textsuperscript{16} This trend in Korean language cinema has continued in recent decades, according to Stephen Holden of the \textit{New York Times}, who notes that \textit{Tae Guk Gi: The Brotherhood of War} (2004) became the fifth-highest grossing film in Korean cinema history and \textit{The Front Line} (2012) was selected as “South Korea’s submission for the Academy Award for best foreign language film,” despite both depicting the Korean War as a conflict between close cousins rather than ideological foes.\textsuperscript{17}

China also has a long history of Korean War mass media that dates back to the mid-1950s and has been discussed by multiple scholars. For example, in “Revisiting Cold War Propaganda: Close Readings of Chinese and American Film Representations of the Korean War” (2010), Paul Pickowicz discusses “the Chinese film \textit{Shangganling}” that was released in 1956 as “a work of propaganda” which should not be expected “to conform to a complicated web of ‘facts,’” since the goal of “the elite propagandists who produced” it “was to get other people to believe it,” noting “there are several brief scenes in which the Korean masses are seen helping and feeding their Chinese allies” and the film “sends the message that individual desires, hopes, and dreams must be subordinated to the collective.” Moreover, in \textit{Arc of Empire: America’s Wars in Asia from the Philippines to Vietnam} (2012), Michael H. Hunt and Steven Levine note that “\textit{Shangganling} took its name from a bitterly contested position” widely known as “Heartbreak Ridge to Americans,” and assert “another popular film about the Korean War” that was called \textit{“Heroic Sons and Daughters} (\textit{Yingxiong ernu}) from 1964” used “the familiar wartime theme of family sacrifice in patriotic service,” a similarly in how China and America remember the war.\textsuperscript{18}


Multiple writers have also discussed North Korean films about the Korean War. For example, according to cinema studies scholar Simon Fowler, who maintains a website about North Korean films, “in 1978 work began on” the “20-part epic called Unsung Heroes, a sprawling series of films” that has “a heavily North Korean view of the Korean War,” in which “each of the four deserters” from America who then lived in North Korea “was required to act” multiple times by “portraying evil Western characters.” Moreover, as Helier Chung notes, in “Ten things: North Korea’s film industry,” the North Korean army runs a production centre specifically for making war films” and forces “young solders” to act “as extras,” while asserting that despite “tensions with Seoul, fellow Koreans are normally spared the villain-treatment.”

Much less has been written in English about global Korean War monuments, though the scholars that have tackled the subject have noted the ways in which such memorials tend to support nationalist ideas. For example, according to Paul Edwards, in United Nations Participants in the Korean War (2013), “a memorial in honor of Netherlands troops who fought in the Korean War was built in 1975 at Ucheon-ri” that says they were “valiant fighters who acted in the spirit of the Prince of Orange.” LonelyPlanet.com notes that the “Monument to the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War” in Pyongyang, was “unveiled in 1993 to mark the 40th anniversary of the war’s end” and includes a series of “sculptures reflect[ing] the different battles of the war” with “the Victory Sculpture” as “the centerpiece.” In Embattled Memories: Contested Meanings in Korean War Memorials (2014), Suhi Choi discusses “multiple narratives of the Korean War in an international context” that support nascent nationalism, such as the “heroic

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song that proudly remembers the bravery of Chinese soldiers” or the “nostalgic feelings about the good old days of Ethiopia when that country could afford to send troops” to the aid of another nation. Choi also notes the shifting meaning of Korean War monument in South Korea when she argues that the statue of Douglass MacArthur “in Jayu (Freedom) Park in Incheon City,” which was first dedicated by the South Korean government in 1957, was for several decades “revered in postwar South Korean society.” That all changed in 2005 when it became “targeted frequently by iconoclastic actions,” such as a demand that the statue “had to be either demolished or moved to a less prominent location,” which led to violent strife but resulted in no changes.21

While this analysis of existing scholarship on global Korean War public memory moves us closer “towards a comparative cultural approach” to the conflict, in the way that Jay Winter did for World War I in Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning (1995) a fuller assessment requires looking first hand at additional museum exhibitions, mass media objects, and memorials from around the world.22 Such an examination reveals that while public memory of the Korean War seems to vary by nation, the presence of key themes of connection, appreciation, remembrance, ideology, and nationalism can be found in multiple countries.

Locating Global Korean War Public Memory: Museums, Memorials, and Media

Several of these key themes are found in Korean War public memory in Commonwealth nations, such as Australia, which has been home to multiple museum exhibitions. That current

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21 Choi, p. 96-97

digital exhibition on Australia’s role in Korea which notes the presence of troops through the mid-1950s is the descendent of a traveling museum display originally staged at the Australian War Memorial for the war’s fiftieth anniversary. The exhibit, designed by Rosalind Heeder and titled “Out in the Cold,” first debuted in Canberra in April 2000, then traveled to such sites as the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in Townsville, Queensland in 2001, before ending its tour schedule in February 2002 at the Gosford City Art Gallery in New South Wales. The Australian War Memorial also includes a museum, the one discussed by Theresa Morris-Suzuki in her review of four sites, with one gallery devoted to post-WWII conflicts, which contains a “Korean War diorama” alongside a display of “a Korean trench and a Meteor jet.”

Similar to the United States, Australia is also home to numerous local memorials commemorating the Korean War, as well as a national monument located along ANZAC Parade in Canberra, not far from the Australian War Memorial museum exhibit. The Australian National Korean War Memorial, dedicated on April 18, 2000, “commemorates the 17000 Australians who served under United Nations command in the Korean War” through “the use of white and grey tones in the memorial,” inclusion of “a boulder from a Korean battlefield,” and utilization of “granite and gravel,” which were all designed in order to “recall the harsh climate and terrain in Korea,” in one example of connection. The New South Wales Korean War Memorial in Sydney, which was dedicated on July 26, 2009 by both Australian and South Korean government officials alongside “veterans groups and the Korean community of Sydney,” contains three main design themes: “Commemoration”(which “is symbolised by a ‘taegeuk’ shaped path winding through the circular memorial”),”Regeneration” (which “is symbolised by a field of forged steel ‘Roses of Charon’…the national flower of Korea”), and “Remembrance” (which is embodied by a

“memorial centerpiece” consisting of “a Korean stone alter”). Sydney is home to at least two other Korean War memorials, a marker honoring “the 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment who embarked for Korea in 1952” that sits in front of the Sydney Opera House, and a Korean Missing in Action Plaque that is “dedicated to the 43 Korean War veterans who remain on the battlefields of North Korea,” and which is one of at least fourteen similar monuments in towns across Australia, seemingly all donated by a local funeral home in each community.24

The Korean War Memorial that sits next to an “Avenue of Honor” in Rippleside was dedicated on the same day as that memorial roadway in 1996, while on June 25 of 2000, the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the war, the city of Alexandra Headland together with the “Korean Defence Attache” dedicated “a monument for all Australian and United Nations personal involved in the Korean War,” which is dated 1950 to 1957 in honor of those Australian peacekeepers who remained on the Korean peninsula for several more years, and includes the words “Lest We Forget,” displaying elements of both connection and remembrance. The phrase “Lest We Forget,” which assumes the Korean War is not forgotten, was used on monuments dedicated in 2003 in Hobart on the island of Tasmania (also the home of a Korean War Memorial Grove of trees) and in Grafton, consisting of a stone amidst a brick pillar Pagoda that represents “the type of terrain our infantry had to conquer before coming to grips with their opponents.”

phrase “Lest We Forget” is also found at the black marble monument in ANZAC Park in Glen Innes that was dedicated in 2008 “in memory of those who served and those who gave their lives in the Korean War,” although the Queensland Korean War Memorial in Broadbeach, (which was dedicated in 2011 as “a gift to the State of Queensland from the Republic of Korea and the Korean communities now resident in Australia” and includes a soldier figure as well as a memorial temple with a pagoda-shaped shrine), offers a different take and instead uses the phrase “Korea Remembered” and a “Wall of Remembrance” for the 339 Australians killed. There is also an effort begun in 2016 that argues “we need an official Korean War Memorial in Melbourne” as “globally there are 292 Korean War Memorials in 20 countries that participated in the war.”25

There have been relatively fewer films made about the Korean War in Australia in recent years. Australia Screen: Australia’s Audiovisual Heritage Online, a government run website, lists just two such films: Convictions, a 1994 documentary that “honors those Australians who fought in the Korean War,” and Birthday Boy, an “Oscar-nominated short, set during the Korean War,” that “is about a boy who receives an unexpected birthday present with tragic consequences,” which premiered in 2004.26 In 2011 the film Kapyong (offering one perspective on connection to


that particular location, which is recalled in many monuments) debuted, which Internet Movie Database reviewer davidfurlotte from Canada argues, although “done in a documentary style,” includes “very moving scenes that bring the viewer right into the action,” and also asserts “if the battle of Kapyong had involved two U.S. brigades instead of a Canadian and Australian one, there would be at least 10 movies produced extolling the magnificent victory.”

Canadian sites similarly display themes of connection, remembrance, and appreciation by Korean-Canadians and South Koreans. Though the Canadian War Museum (Musee Canadien De La Guerre) exhibit “Korea 60,” which “presents a selection of photographs that depict Canada’s participation in the Korean War” as well as “the uneasy ceasefire that followed the 1953 armistice and the war’s enduring legacy,” was only a temporary display put on from June 2013 to May 2014, it “complement[ed] upgrades made to the” site’s “permanent gallery displays about the Korean War” in Ottawa at the same time. The statue at the Military Museums of Calgary was dedicated on April 25, 2003 (“the anniversary of the Battle of Kapyong”) as a way to honor all “Canada’s veterans of the Korean War” with funds from project protagonist Duncan McNeill. Then on July 14, 2007 a statue titled the “Ambassador of Peace” was dedicated in Burnaby, near Vancouver, by “Korean immigrants, now Canadian citizens,” who “raised almost one million dollars” to honor “the 36 servicemen from British Columbia who made the supreme sacrifice.”

There is a Korean War Cairn in Winnipeg, in Brookside Cemetery (“the largest military cemetery in Canada”), dedicated on September 19, 1998 as a result of efforts by the Manitoba branch of the Korean Veterans Association of Canada, and a Memorial Cairn on the Legislative Building Grounds in Edmonton dedicated “in memory of the Albertans killed in action” in Korea.

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27 davidfurlotte, “We are far too modest for our own good,” Accessed 10/4/17, Available at: http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1865421/reviews. Evidence seems to contradict this claim about U.S. films.

There are at least two Korean War memorials in the Toronto metro area: the Wall of Remembrance with the names of all the Canadians killed in Korea that is located in Meadowvale Cemetery in Brampton and was dedicated on July 27, 1997 by the KVA of Canada following over $300,000 in funding “raised by the committee from the private sector” and without any “government participation,” and “a monument which recognizes the sacrifice of Canadian sailors during the Korean War,” located in the city of Burlington and unveiled on July 28, 2014, which is “believed to be the first of its kind in Canada.” The contributions of French Canadians who died in Korea are recalled at the Cenotaphe Place du Canada in Montreal and at the Croix du Sacrifice in Quebec City, both of which were created to honor WWI heroes but later added dates for both WWII and Korea. Ottawa is home to the National War Memorial Cenotaph first unveiled in 1939 but “re-dedicated to include the dates of the Second World War 1939-1945 and the Korean War 1950-1953” on May 29, 1982, as well as a statue that “was designed by a Canadian veteran of the Korean war, Vincent R. Courtenay” and “created by Korean artist Yoo, Young Mun,” which was dedicated in 2002. This statue unveiled in 2002 is connected to an identical sculpture in Korea.

The identical sculpture is part of a Monument to Canadian Fallen at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Pusan, which was actually unveiled back in 2001 and consists of a statue of “an unarmed Canadian soldier holding a young Korean girl and guiding a Korean boy” that is meant to “represent the generations of Koreans who live in freedom thanks to those who served.” Several Commonwealth countries have monuments at the United Nations cemetery. The British Common Wealth Monument includes “the names of men from Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa who died in the Korean War and have no known grave,” while there is also a separate Australian Memorial. South Africans received their own monument in October 2001 as part of the installation of a Sculpture Park that included a statue called “Reconciliation” designed by Strijdom van der Merwe, which “used natural rock from Korea” and “cut 50 lines (year rings) around the rock” so the war’s anniversary can be counted like “the age of a tree,” while in 2010 the British dedicated a monument “to pay tribute to the fallen” which is shaped like a lion and engraved with the words “We Will Remember Them.” Moreover, the contributions of Kiwis who fought in the Korean War are recalled by the New Zealand Memorial, “located in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery” in Pusan, “where most of the New Zealanders who died in that conflict are buried,” dedicated by “Prime Minister Helen Clark,” in November 2005, “during her visit to Korea for the APEC meeting” to promote regional economic cooperation.30

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The South Korean government has also created monuments in Korea to the non-English speaking Allies who fought on their side against North Korea, China, and the Soviet Union during the early 1950s. Most of these monuments are located at the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Pusan, which is home to two Turkish monuments erected in 1960 and 1962, a Greek memorial dedicated in 1961, and a French monument unveiled in 2007. While the United Nations cemetery is also home to a Dutch memorial “to those who fell” and a Thai memorial dedicated in November 2008, both nations have other monuments elsewhere in South Korea. In 1974 the South Korean government “built a monument and a Thai pavilion in Pocheon City,” while in 1976, a “Thai-Korean Friendship Bridge at the UNMCK was” created “by the Royal Thai Government.” Though located in Seoul rather than at the United Nations Cemetery, there is also a memorial in Korea dedicated in April 2013 to “the 159 Irish people who died in the Korean War,” and “not just soldiers” but also “seven members of the Columban order and [an] Anglican nun.”

Many non-English speaking American allies in Korea maintain monuments recalling the conflict, often with aid from the South Korean government. Government partnerships constructed the Korean War memorial in Brussels, Belgium in 1966 and “The Garden of Korea” monument in Ankara, Turkey in 1973, in honor of those Turkish soldiers who were quickly buried in Korea in accordance with Islamic tradition. There is a Korean War memorial, shaped like the peninsula, located in Paris, France and a Pagoda-shaped Korean War monument in Bogota, Columbia as

well as a Korean War monument at a Thai military base and a memorial in Athens, Greece dedicated in 2005 and paid for with $130,000 in South Korean government funds.\textsuperscript{32}

The “PEFTOK Korean War Memorial Hall and its Museum” (which has English language text) is located in Manila, Philippines and “stands as a magnificent monument to the Philippines’ unselfish defense of the Republic of Korea,” since its dedication “by President Benigno Simeon Aquino on March 29, 2012.” The Korean War Memorial in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia which includes engravings in Amharic, English, and Korean was dedicated on February 26, 2006 by the South Korean “Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs” while the city of Chuncheon, South Korea since 1968 has maintained a “Memorial Hall for Ethiopian Veterans in the Korean War” that includes a museum and has an Ethiopian coffee shop next door, in another example of the potential economic benefits of promoting Korean War related heritage tourism. The South Korean government has also paid tribute to Ethiopian war veterans by offering their grandchildren scholarships to study in Seoul, South Korea as well as creating a medical clinic and community center in Addis Ababa, “the third of its kind for Korean War veterans abroad” since 2013 following similar sites in Colombia and Thailand.\textsuperscript{33}


The non-English speaking allies who fought on the side of the United States during the Korean War have also created a number of films to commemorate their roles. Indeed, films depicting the roles of allies in the Korean War effort first appeared in the 1950s and have continued to be produced up to 2017. For example, in April 2009 “The Forgotten War,” the most recent of several Filipino films that have been produced on the Korean War, meant to honor the over one-hundred Filipinos who perished, “premiered in Seoul” following “a special advance screening for the Filipino Community” of South Korea staged at a theatre “where a Tagalog mass is held every Sunday.” Moreover, though it has not yet been made into a movie, there are several online videos of recent theatrical presentations of the 1966 Colombian play “El Monte Calvo,” which “revolves around two bums, who are veterans of the Korean War,” and since 2013 has been staged in Lima, Peru, in Madrid, Spain, and in New Haven, Connecticut.\textsuperscript{34} Great Britain has also created films, museum exhibits, and monuments in order to recall its participation in Korea.

The 2014 British film \textit{Queen and Country}, a sequel to the 1987 movie \textit{Hope and Glory}, is framed by Her Majesty’s army being “involved in the Korean War (which still limps on to this day – peace never having been formally agreed),” but the war is not shown, as noted by IMDB reviewer Tom Dooley of London. Meanwhile, since 2016 “Floating Dreams,” a “three-story-high, geometric lantern” made up of “500 separate, miniature drawings, transferred onto pieces of traditional Korean rice paper” that was “designed by one of South Korea’s most renowned multimedia artists” to float on the Thames River “outside London’s Tate Modern Museum,” has also

served as a “memorial to the communities that suffered” due to the war. Great Britain is also home to memorials, albeit few compared to Australia, Canada, and other Commonwealth nations.

In November of 2013 work began in London on “a memorial on Victoria Embankment Gardens” that was “being paid for by the South Korean government,” following the unveiling by Prince William of “a scale model of the monument” that now consists of a “five metre-tall bronze statue of a British soldier” which was meant to ameliorate the fact that Britain had been “the only country that served in the Korean War that doesn’t have an accessible memorial in their capital city,” as noted at the time by a member of the British Korean Veterans Association. When it was finished, the monument, unveiled in December of 2014, included a smaller statue in front of “an obelisk that stands 5.8 meters” high, which sits on a foundation that “used stones from Pocheon in Gyeonggi-do Province where fierce battles occurred during the war,” helping correct the fact that “the U.K. was the only nation among the 16 other countries involved with the Korean War that did not have a public memorial” already, despite the fact that Great Britain “dispatched a force of around 80,000” during the Korean War, “the second largest number” after the United States.

Yet there had previously been several Korean War monuments constructed throughout the British Isles, such as the plaque in St. Peters Square in Manchester that has been there since at least 2011, which asserts “not one of them is forgotten before God.”

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37 “Korean War Memorial , St. Peter’s Square - Manchester, UK,” Waymarking.com, Accessed 10/6/17, Available at:
“Birmingham’s first ever fixed memorial to those who fought in the forgotten war” opened in Cannon Park, consisting of “an engraved hardwood bench,” which was added “to the 33 saplings of Korean origin planted there last November” 2012, while a marker in St. John Gardens in Liverpool dedicated “to those who served and did not return,” although it is undated, may also be older. There are also United Kingdom Korean War monuments outside England, such as the North West Wales Branch Korean War Memorial, located in Llandudno since at least 2010. The Scottish Korean War Memorial “in the hills overlooking the Firth of Forth,” which was donated by the West Lothian Council” on June 20, 2000 to mark “the 50th anniversary of the war’s commencement,” consists of “a historic Korean style wood and slate crafted Pagoda amidst two grass mounds” which are “arranged like the Ying and Yang,” as well as “an arboretum of 1,114 native Scottish trees, one for every man who died” in Korea. In 2010 a monument honoring “the 157 men of the Royal Ulster Rifles (RUR) who died in the 1951 Battle of Happy Valley and elsewhere during a campaign against communist China” was relocated to Belfast City Hall in Northern Ireland from nearby “St. Patrick’s Barracks in Ballymena” after “that base closed.”

In South Africa, public memory of the Korean War tends to focus on pilots who became POWs. A display at the South African Air Force Museum, dedicated in 2010 by South Korea’s ambassador (in one of many instances where South Korean dignitaries played a role), includes

http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMB3J9_Korean_War_Memorial_St_Peters_Square_Manchester_UK. The Waymark was posted in 2011, although the wear on the marker makes it look to be much older.

Sabre jets in an exhibition about the role of SAAF pilots, especially the thirty-four who “lost their lives and eight taken prisoner of war.” Those South Africans who fought on the side of South Korea are also remembered in Cape Town, at the Cenotaph War Memorial, which was first dedicated to those who fought in the Great War but later also added the names of “the soldiers who died in the Second World War, as well as the Korean War… to the remembrance list,” and in Pretoria at the Air Force Memorial at Bays Hill, which has “a Korean War Plaque,” as well as at “the South African Air Force Memorial in Pyongtaek,” South Korea which “was erected by the Koreans” themselves and which now “officially belongs to the Korean Government.”

Both because of the extent of prior scholarship on the many South Korean memorials, museum exhibitions, and mass media objects made about the Korean War, and due to linguistic limitations, all that I can do is briefly begin to explore South Korean public memory of the war, which alongside public memory of Korean immigrant communities in the United States is a topic I hope future studies will further examine. However, in addition to the many memorials created by South Koreans in honor of those who fought on their side during the war, it is worth briefly mentioning a museum exhibition that discusses mass media. In June 2014 the National Museum of Korean Contemporary History staged “a special exhibition titled ‘Flowers Blooming in the War’” that was designed with three purposes: first “to honor the countries that participated in the war in support of Seoul,” second to show “remains of the war dead” such as “helmets and M1 rifles,” and last to document “the traces of war and daily routine as reflected in the public media.”

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including “movie posters from the time, like that for ‘Piagol,’ directed by Lee Kang-cheon in 1955.” In addition, there are other memorials to allied nations located in or connected to Korea.

There actually exists a second monument honoring the contributions of Canadians to the South Korean cause that is located in South Korea, the Canadian Korean War Memorial Garden in Naechon near Kapyong, which includes a memorial dedicated in 1985 “by the people of Korea to the memory of the approximately 26,000 Canadian who served in Korea,” especially the more than five-hundred killed during the Korean War. A New Zealand memorial shows yet another form of connection to Kapyong, and of appreciation. On July 27, 1992 a memorial was dedicated in Parnell, New Zealand as “a gift from the people of South Korea to New Zealand,” which “was funded by businesses in Pusan,” and includes a “granite stone that forms the centerpiece of the memorial” which “came from Kapyong” as well as an Honor Roll naming “the 43 New Zealand servicemen who died during the war.” New Zealand is also home to at least one museum with info on Korea, the Auckland War Memorial Museum (Tamaki Paenga Hira) exhibit “Scars on the Heart” that covers the impact of “the Asian conflicts” in “Korea, Malaya, Borneo, and Vietnam” among other wars. According to a 2010 review put out by the South Korean Ministry of Patriots & Veterans Affairs called Korean War Memorials in Pictures, there is even a museum exhibition and a monument to the war in Luxembourg, as well as memorials that honor those who worked in field hospitals in Italy and Sweden, and to the Danish medical ship Jutlandia in Copenhagen that includes “a dedication statement expressing thanks and gratitude for participation.”

41 “Special exhibit held on Korean War,” Korea.net: Gateway to Korea website (6/26/2014), Accessed 10/10/17, Available at: http://www.korea.net/NewsFocus/Culture/view?articleId=120234

North Korea and China, the two primary foes of the United Nations forces, have both focused extensive resources on remembering the Korean War, which for these two communist countries has not only resulted in public memory tied up in anti-imperialist ideology but also in connections between the two nations, and deeply rooted nationalism. There have been a number of ideological films about the Korean War produced in North Korea in the decades following the conflict, although these movies still remain less accessible to American audiences than perhaps any other country’s cinematic representations of the Korean War. An early example is Kim Song Gyo’s *On the Railway* from 1960, which is “set during the autumn of 1950, when a locomotive engineer is attempting to evacuate precious machinery and equipment during the North Korean retreat,” and which was most recently shown at a 2010 film festival in Sydney, Australia. North Korea is also home to multiple monuments and museums that focus on the Korean War, such as “the North Korea Peace Museum,” located “in the building constructed to house the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement,” that sits within “the former village of Panmunjeom.”

Moreover, similar to how South Korea has attempted to foster ongoing relations with those countries that fought on its side in the 1950s by funding the construction of memorials and museums in foreign lands, “the October 1973 War Museum in Cairo,” Egypt, (which has “a 360-degree panorama paying tribute to the two-week war Egypt lead against Israel” also called the Yom Kippur War), “was partially funded and built by the North Korean government” in 1989 to celebrate the “close relations” between the nations. Chinese sites of memory function similarly.

The earliest Chinese Korean War memorial seems to be a “Korean War Memorial at Wangfujing” (which is now one of the busiest shopping districts in Beijing), that “was established

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In late 1951,” while the most recent seems to be the “Korean War museum and memorial hall in the Pudong New Area” in Shanghai, which opened on August 25, 2013 after a five-year effort that was led by “self-made real estate developer” Lu Huangao. Moreover, after initially becoming popular during the 1950s, Korean War films became unpopular during and after the period of the Cultural Revolution from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s, however, the genre has recently experienced an ongoing revival. Recent examples include Assembly, from 2008, which begins with WWII proceeds through the era of the Chinese Civil War then outlines the protagonist’s “time serving with the North Korean army in 1952,” and My War from 2016, which “ended up becoming the center of controversy after a promotional clip was released” in which “elderly Chinese tourists, played by veteran Chinese actors and actresses,” are shown visiting Korea “while proudly talking about how they triumphantly entered Seoul during the Korean War.”

In 2016 “China’s first Korean War TV series hit small screens throughout the nation” focusing on “a subject that had been forbidden for years,” according to a Global Times review by Zhang Yuchen of The 38th Parallel, in which he also notes that “no TV series on the Korean War has been allowed to air since 2000,” despite the fact that “China Central Television” had “filmed a 30-episode series” on the war in 2000 that “was supposed to air the following year, but never saw the light of day” after 9/11. Indeed, it seems China may be currently experiencing a kind of “Forbidden War Memory Boom” that highlights fighting between American and Chinese troops in the 1950s, as potential economic and geo-political conflict between the nations looms large.

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45 Zhang Yuchen, “New Chinese TV series breaks nation’s silence on the Korean War,” Global Times (June 5, 2016)
Conclusion: Comparing Global to U.S. Korean War Public Memory

This review makes possible several preliminary assessments and comparisons to American public memory of the Korean War. First, Chinese Korean War public memory seems to most closely mimic the phases found in the United States, with an initial period of intense interest lasting until the late-1960s that was followed by an era in which the war was forgotten (or in the case of China one might say forbidden), that in turn led to a “Forbidden War Memory Boom” in China lasting from the mid-1990s to the present, despite a brief blip of obscurity in the wake of 9/11. Second, just as out-reach Korean War museum exhibitions in the United States are used partly for public relations purposes, it seems South Korea (and to a lesser extent China and North Korea) practices a form of commemorative diplomacy that leverages a shared military history to, for example, push trade and continued protection from NATO nations while providing economic opportunities and vets services for those of its allies that South Korea has surpassed in GDP since the 1950s such as Columbia, Ethiopia, and Thailand. Indeed, the funding provided by the South Korean government to build memorials overseas doubtless not only represents genuine gratitude for wartime aid but also a desire to foster future economic relations with those nations. Third, the creation of Cenotaphs and Cairns seems to be distinctly Imperial British, while the integration of Korean rocks and other design elements that are meant to evoke the landscape represents a kind of connection to place and physicality not often found in American memorials. Fourth, the role of Korean immigrant communities in Australia and Canada helps to explain why national memorials were created there before Great Britain, while the websites run by arms of the Australian and Canadian governments, designed to promote cultural knowledge and heritage tourism, are indicative of investments in history not found in the United States. Fifth, the forgotten war mythos in the U.S. seems to have blinded American policy-makers to the significant role that the Korean War continues to play in fostering nascent nationalist ideas not just in both Koreas, but in many of the other nations that fought with South Korea and (perhaps most significantly) in China.
Finally, this assessment suggests that, while the Korean War is surely not forgotten in nations that fought with the United States nor in China and North Korea, the war does in fact seem to be fairly forgotten in the former Soviet Union. The Soviets seem to have collaborated with North Korea on several films and have built a sizable number of monuments to the MiG aircraft that initially “dominated the skies when” it “made its debut in the Korean war,” ranging from Russia and Ukraine to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, that mimic the Sabre jets found in the United States, but without the signs that mark such American planes as Korean War memorials. Indeed, rather than highlight the role of Soviet pilots as South Africa has done for those who flew in the skies above Korea, perhaps the closest comparison given neither nation sent ground troops, “the Russian role in the Korean War was publicly denied by both Washington and Moscow” at the time, leading to an act of mnemonic erasure by which Soviet actions during the Korean War are still forgotten today. Moreover, this legacy is a reminder of how Korean War public memory is still politically important now.

In sharp contrast to the former Soviet Union, South Korea commemorates the war effort of many nations. Several South Korean monuments honor those Americans who made up the majority of the allied forces, such as the Task Force Smith Memorial in Osan and the U.S. Korean War Memorial located at the United Nations cemetery in Pusan which consists of “a polished slab of dark gray Vermont granite” that “serves as a ‘witness stone’” and became “the first non-World War I or World War II memorial constructed by the” American Battle Monuments Commission “outside the United States” upon its July 28, 2013 dedication. Moreover, Inchon, once the site of MacArthur’s famous amphibious assault, is now also the location of a combination Memorial and Museum complex, an approach to Korea commemoration adopted by many nations. The Inchon Operations Memorial Hall, dedicated September 15, 1984 to commemorate those who took part

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in the 1950 landing and “the 100 year anniversary of the opening of Incheon port to foreigners in 1883,” has an attached “museum [that] also shows videos about the Battle of Incheon” and displays on “weapons, uniforms, equipment and the lifestyle of both the North and South Korean army” in the war.\footnote{\textit{“Korean War Memorials: Republic of Korea,”} Korean War Veterans Association website, Accessed 10/8/17, Available at: \url{http://www.kwva.org/memorials/korea/p_mem_korea.htm}; \textit{“Dedication of U.S. Korean War Memorial in Busan, South Korea on July 28,”} American Battle Monuments Commission website, Accessed 10/8/17, Available at: \url{https://www.abmc.gov/news-events/news/dedication-us-korean-war-memorial-busan-south-korea-july-28#.WdydeVtSzIU}; \textit{“Incheon Landing Operation Memorial Hall,”} Exploring Korea website, Accessed 10/10/17, Available at: \url{http://www.exploringkorea.com/incheon-landing-operation-memorial-hall/} }

The exhibit about the Korean War at the Memorial Museum in Seoul, according to the memorial museum’s website, includes extensive displays on the “Surprise Invasion,” the “Counter-Offensive,” the “Intervention of Chinese Forces,” the “Participation of United Nations Forces,” and “Wartime Life.”\footnote{\textit{“The Korean War Room,”} The War Memorial of Korea website, Accessed 4/21/13, Available at: \url{https://www.warmemo.or.kr/eng/sub03/sub03_02_03_01.jsp}} Literally millions of American servicemen stationed near the DMZ since the 1950s have had the chance to see firsthand the time and money spent in South Korea on remembering the war. Indeed, in contrast to the Korean War National Museum in Springfield, Illinois, which closed forever in the summer of 2017, the museum at the War Memorial of Korea in Seoul is in no danger of having to shutter because of a lack of local interest. Yet the extent of Korean War commemoration in South Korea could actually reinforce the notion that the conflict is forgotten within the United States, whereas, as I have shown in this chapter, the theme of remembrance (or “not forgetting”) is one that is found in many nations that fought in the Korean War.

The theme of anti-communist ideology is also found frequently both in the United States and in the other nations that fought with South Korea during the war, though perhaps not as often as the parallel anti-imperialist ideology is found in North Korea and China. However, American
public memory of the Korean War less frequently makes use of those other key global themes of connection, nationalism, and appreciation. In contrast, an alternative to the appreciation by South Koreans and Korean immigrants for the contributions of the countries that fought with them in the war, as shown through the tangible benefits to both veterans and their descendants offered by the Korean government, in the U.S. another key theme of sacrifice is especially popular, as shown by phrases such as “Freedom Is Not Free” and “All Gave Some, Some Gave All.” These phrases each have their own histories, which are important to understand, as I discuss in the conclusion.
CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION: TOWARD A PUBLIC HISTORY OF THE KOREAN WAR

Over the course of the last seven chapters, I have demonstrated that the Korean War, rather than being forgotten, is omnipresent throughout the landscape of the contemporary United States. I have also shown how the Korean War has come to be remembered as forgotten, and suggested some of the results of such a consequential historical erasure, by looking closely at several phrases that have been used to recall the Korean War without really remembering it, at the four phases of Korean War public memory that seem to govern patterns of production of media objects, monuments, and memorial infrastructure, and at the five types Korean War historical exhibition, as well as what gets left out of public memory.

The four phases of Korean War public memory, which begin even before the armistice in 1953, are patterns of production that seem to govern the ways mass media objects, local and state monuments, and memorial infrastructure have been created in the United States over roughly the last sixty-five years. Phase one began in 1950 and stretched until about 1967. During this period the Korean War was all over the big screen, with the majority of movies about the war being made in the 1950s and 1960s, including several different varieties of Korean War film produced in the 1950s and 1960s, from realist films and propaganda pictures to melodramas merely using Korea as a backdrop and movies about POWs. During the 1950s and the early 1960s the Korean War was also sometimes conflated with the Pacific Theatre of World War II by Hollywood, which often did not do very much to differentiate between the two conflicts. Korea was also often conflated with World War II on local Korean War monuments produced from the early 1950s through the mid-1960s, which often took the form of honor rolls to county citizens who died in one or both World Wars as well as in Korea. Also popular in phase one were monuments to individual soldiers who had died, especially those awarded distinctions such as the Medal of Honor or Purple Heart, while such awarded individual soldiers also garnered memorial
infrastructure to honor them, which in this period often included plazas and parks as well as bridges, highways, buildings, and trees. There were also some memorial infrastructure produced in these early years that were meant to honor all Korean War veterans.

Phase two began about 1967 and stretched for two decades to roughly 1987. During this period the Korean War largely disappeared from the big screen, with relatively few Hollywood films about the war made during the 1970s and 1980s, although Korea did become a much more frequent backdrop in television shows of the period, most notably (but not only) *M*A*S*H*, which still retains the distinction of having the most watched series finale ever, thirty-five years after the show ended its run. Moreover, the Korean War also served as the backstory for numerous television characters during this period, such as Korean War veteran James Garner’s private investigator Jim Rockford. However, many cinematic and television representations of the Korean War from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s conflate Korea with Vietnam, especially *M*A*S*H* which some scholars suggest was more about Vietnam than Korea despite evidence to the contrary, leading to potential confusion on the part of viewers. The Korean War was also conflated with the Vietnam War on many of the local monuments that were made in this period, which only very rarely noted the sacrifice of those who fought and died in Korea without also making mention of Vietnam, although such dual monuments were fairly common from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s. While one might logically expect to similarly find much memorial infrastructure dually dedicated to veterans of Korea and Vietnam built during this period, with the exception of the Delaware Memorial Bridge, which only added Vietnam vets to its designation immediately prior to being formally christened in October 1968, I can find none.

Phase three began about 1987 and stretched until the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice in 2003, thus being one of the few start or end dates to these phases that can be pointed to somewhat definitively. During this period the Korean War remained largely absent from the big screen, with no major films that actually depicted the war made from the late 1980s to 2003,
although some Hollywood movies of this era did use service in Korea as a backstory for characters, while such an approach was even more common on television, with characters in several comedies and a few dramas making reference to the Korean War. Moreover, the spread of cable television from the late 1980s to the early 2000s helped to provide new avenues for both documentary programs and narrative films, such as HBO’s *Truman*, to be disseminated. In contrast, for monuments the period from the late 1980s to 2003 can be thought of as a “Forgotten War Memory Boom” thanks to the sheer quantity of local and state monuments dedicated exclusively to those who fought in Korea which use some variant of that phrase as a component of their design. Moreover, many of these monuments move beyond bronze markers listing the names of the dead or simple granite stones to include complex statuary that contains both direct references to Korea and abstract elements that recall the ongoing division of the peninsula and the fact that the war still remains technically unfinished. Similarly, the significant number of state highways as well as both local and interstate bridges that were created during this era also marks it as a “Korean War Memorial Infrastructure Boom” coming after the earlier bust of the 1970s.

Phase four began in 2003 and stretches to the present. During this period the Korean War finally returned to the big screen in 2016 with the release of *Operation Chromite* and *Indignation*, two films that both depict combat scenes in Korea, while the war has also continued to be a backstory in several movies. Moreover, the Korean War also played a key role in both the AMC narrative television series *Mad Men* and the Showtime documentary series *Oliver Stone’s Untold History of the United States*. Monuments, many recalling Korea as “The Forgotten War,” have continued to be created by states and communities, with a turn towards local memory evident in the role that is played by individual branches of the Korean War Veterans Association and other organizations in seeking to honor living veterans before they pass away. Moreover, the role of the KWVA in the state-by-state effort to dedicate a national highway for Korea vets demonstrates that the activism of these veterans themselves is the single greatest factor that explains why the
Korean War has become so widely remembered as the forgotten war over the last three decades, as they have devoted themselves to dedicating memorial infrastructure, and monuments, to their comrades. In addition, the development of the KWVA website is perhaps the best example of ways that the spread of digital memory, as a new type of Korean War memorial infrastructure, has made it even less forgotten.

The spread of Korean War historical exhibition, of which I have identified five primary types modeled after Tammy Gordon’s museum display taxonomy, has also contributed to the development of increased knowledge about the Korean War. Academic exhibition, which includes displays at multiple distinct branches of the Smithsonian, historical sites run by the national park service, and Presidential Libraries governed by the National Archives and Records Administration, is primarily focused on educating the public and on balancing the concerns of historians with those of veterans and other stakeholders, while also often trying to encourage heritage tourism visitation. Community exhibition, which includes local military museums and community history centers as well as the now-defunct Korean War National Museum in Springfield, Illinois that closed in 2017, tend to use more artifacts, images, and text but fewer screens and experiential elements than academic exhibition or what I term out-reach exhibition, but similar to how what I term in-reach exhibition operates. Such in-reach exhibition, which includes museums on military bases that are hard to access and other sites that are more focused on passing down institutional knowledge to future practitioners than on changing public perceptions of their institutions, is primarily focused on the preservation of specific techniques and niche narratives that inform a field such as Special-Operations or cryptography, though some facilities that formerly were designed as in-reach have been repurposed recently with the goal of promoting regional heritage tourism and have moved toward an out-reach exhibition model. Such out-reach exhibitions, which includes museums devoted to the history of different branches of the U.S. military such as the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio or the Marine Corps Museum in
Triangle, Virginia that are run by foundations with the primary goal of promoting that service branch to the broader public, is mainly focused on bringing both students and the general public through their doors while remaining aware of the concerns of veterans and political entities that often provide start-up funds for such facilities. Finally, vernacular exhibition, which includes informational outdoor public displays such as Sabre jets as well as indoor exhibits in museums or other spaces where one would not expect to learn about Korea, are unique since the public is more likely to “encounter” the past there than at other types of exhibition.

What almost all of these manifestations of public memory fail to do, however, is to document the existence of the widespread Korean anti-war movement that grew up during the course of the early 1950s. Because this movement has been largely written out of the public memory record, as well as the historical record since most scholarly works suggest there was little dissent against the war while it was ongoing, I also felt it was essential to include a chapter that uses traditional archival primary sources to demonstrate the existence of such a movement, and to situate the “forgetting” of that movement within the broader arc of Korean War scholarship, in order to show the importance of counter-memories of Korea in shaping public understanding of the war moving forward. Indeed, I argue it is only by wrestling with the hard-historical truths about the Korean War rather than remembering it in rhetorical and politicized tropes, that we can hope to prevent another outbreak of a conflict, which (lest we forget) has never actually ended.

So, why then is the amnesia myth so persistent? Part of the answer concerns how we use language in public contexts to describe war. I began this dissertation by unpacking the history and the meaning of that key phrase “The Forgotten War.” Touring Korean War memorials, however, shows us that it is not the only phrase that structures public memory. Visitors to DC are reminded at the National Korean War Memorial that “Freedom is Not Free,” and invited to a Smithsonian exhibit on military history called “The Price of Freedom,” yet neither site discusses what freedom guarantees to citizens. The concept of freedom is frequently referenced in American culture, but it
is often unclear what the term is supposed to mean. Moreover, the meaning of American freedom has changed greatly over the last three centuries, with multiple definitions often competing with one another. For example, in Freedom Is Not Enough (2006), Nancy Maclean notes the limits of political freedom without economic freedom, beginning with a discussion of the 1967 murder of Wharlest Jackson, “a veteran of the Korean War” and “treasurer of the Natchez, Mississippi branch of the” NAACP, who “lost his life for being promoted to a ‘whites only’ job” at a company where he had worked for years.¹ Yet the idea of freedom has long remained powerful.

The histories of the phrases “The Price of Freedom” and “Freedom Is Not Free” show how the meanings of American freedom have evolved. Long attributed to Thomas Jefferson, there is no evidence he ever used the phrase “eternal vigilance is the price of liberty,” the idea implied in the title of the Smithsonian exhibit. The phrase “Freedom Is Not Free” is often credited to Colonel Walter Hitchcock of the New Mexico Military Institute, who recalls while “serving on the Secretary of the Air Force’s Staff Group in 1988” that he “was tasked to write his graduation address for that May” and “the phrase came out of” that part of the Secretary’s speech Hitchcock wrote.² However, it seems that, in actuality, Hitchcock was far from the first person to use this phrase, or a very close variant. Former Texas Congressman Ralph Hall asserts the phrase “was coined by John Ben [Shepherd] in the late 1940s and used in hundreds of public appearances during his civic and political career,” as well as notes “in 1953 he published an excerpt of his speeches and entitled the booklet ‘Freedom Is Not Free.’” Richard Cummings, writing on Radio Free Europe’s “Crusade for Freedom,” says “the Advertising Council choose the theme ‘Freedom is not free’ for the 1958 Crusade campaign.” In 1965 Paul Colwell, of the “Up With People”


movement, penned the pop song “Freedom Isn’t Free,” which asserts as Americans “you gotta pay a price, you gotta sacrifice, for your liberty.” Lastly, on May 30, 1985, a Korea monument in Garden City, Michigan was dedicated that uses the inelegant line “Liberty Is Not Inexpensive.”

The phrase “Freedom Is Not Free” is found on local Korean War monuments across the country, most but not all dating from after the 1995 dedication of the memorial in Washington, DC. The monument in Springfield that was constructed by the Korean War Veterans of Western Massachusetts Chapter in 2000 includes the standard KWVA map and the phrase, while the Lebanon County Korean War Memorial in Pennsylvania, dedicated on June 18, 2000, includes both the phrases “The Forgotten War” and “Freedom Is Not Free” etched under a brass plaque, next to a flag flying state colors. The Korean War Memorial marker in Stony Point, New York has “Freedom Is Not Free” and “Forgotten War,” as well as “All Gave Some, Some Gave All.”

Another phrase, “All Gave Some, Some Gave All,” appears on many monuments across the nation, and is the third most often engraved expression on local Korean War memorials. The phrase does appear by itself, such as on the Wallingford, Connecticut memorial, but it is more frequently used in conjunction with either or both “Freedom Is Not Free” and “Forgotten War.”

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The idea of “All Gave Some, Some Gave All” emphasizes the sacrifices not only of those who died in Korea but those who returned to their home communities with physical and psychological wounds. Aaron O’Connell notes that many Marines had a hard time readjusting to civilian life, took to heavy drinking as a coping mechanism, or suffered through many a sleepless night on returning from Korea. However, only over the last few decades have many Korea veterans begun to talk about their wartime experiences in terms of “Post-Traumatic Stress,” a concept still called “Shell Shock” in the 1950s but which was little-understood and oft-ignored until Vietnam.

Veteran Howard Osterkamp is widely cited as the source of the quote, but when using the phrase in a 2004 interview he actually said that his branch of the KWVA has “a motto that sums it all up—‘All Gave Some, Some Gave All.’” In 1992, in the wake of the first Gulf War, Billy Ray Cyrus released the album Some Gave All that includes the phrase “All gave some and some gave all” in the title song, which made it up to number 52 on the charts (but was overshadowed by the artist’s breakout hit “Achy Break-y Heart”), suggesting this phrase was already in common usage by then. Indeed, forty years earlier in June of 1952, Wichita Falls, Texas built a memorial “dedicated to those who rendered service to our country” that states “All Gave Some and Some Gave All.”6 The histories of these phrases, “All Gave Some, Some Gave All” and “Freedom Is Not Free,” also show that public memory is found both in popular culture and in local landscapes.

These three key phrases show us how the Korean War which “ended” in 1953 has been publicly remembered in the United States over the sixty-five years since. “All Gave Some, Some Gave All” and “Freedom Is Not Free” both suggest an abstracted sacrifice on the part of those who fought in Korea, whether it is their physical and mental health or their life, while the latter

phrase adds an essential element of exchange, by which lives (and health) are given up for freedom. From an anthropological perspective, this idea of sacrifice and exchange is a key element of the belief systems of many cultures around the world from the Aztecs (who felt compelled to feed the hearts of the enemy soldiers they captured in war to their Sun god) to the Catholics (who feel compelled to ritually “consume” the body of their savior every Sunday, or at least on Easter), as well as the basis of much great literature. From a historical perspective, this idea of sacrificing for freedom is problematic, since one could argue that in the case of Korea (as in the later case of Vietnam) many of those for whom the United States was ostensibly fighting for did not want the kind of freedom that America was offering, while throughout the Cold War the United States was often willing to support un-free regimes which were also anti-communist.

The phrase “The Forgotten War” on the one hand also suggests the sacrifice of those who fought, adding the element of it being unappreciated while removing even the abstracted reason for its necessity. On the other hand, “The Forgotten War” is dismissive of the genuine suffering of both American soldiers and the Korean people, in that the phrase seems to excuse ignorance of what went on in Korea (and in the United States) in the early 1950s, as if there was simply no information available to remedy this situation, when in fact there are reams of books and articles, dozens of media objects and museum exhibitions, and quite literally hundreds of Korean War monuments and memorial infrastructure throughout the country. Indeed, as I have argued throughout, instead of being a descriptor that is suggestive of the true position of the Korean War within American public memory, the forgotten war label is nothing more than a trope, and one which has only become widespread over the last three decades, as my research also demonstrates. Moreover, in light of the events of 2017 and 2018, it seems more important now than ever before to move beyond the forgotten war label in order to try to bring the decades long conflict between North and South Korea, as well as that between the United States and North Korea, to a close.
Afterword: A Not Forgotten War, A Never Ending Conflict

In January 2017 Donald Trump was inaugurated as the forty-fifth President of the United States. Trump, who praised Douglas MacArthur during the campaign, has ramped up the rhetoric against North Korea’s leader Kim Jong Un since assuming office, even referring to Kim as “Rocket Man” on Twitter. While historical amnesia about any military conflict is an affront to those who died fighting for freedom, forgetting the realities of the Korean War, even as we recall it in general, is a potentially deadly error.

Most Korean War museum exhibitions, whether outdoor displays of Sabre Jets such as the one at the airport in Danville, Illinois or expensive exhibits focused on U.S. soldiers’ stories such as at the Army Heritage Center, highlight the heroism of individual infantryman. At several sites with major Korean War displays, such as the National Museum of the Marine Corps, school groups make up a large percentage of site visits in the spring and fall, so the educating of the next generation about the realities of the Korean War is a paramount function, yet some sites blur the specifics of Korea by blending it into exhibits with Vietnam, such as the Udvar-Hazy branch of the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. Few sites denote the actions of protesters opposed to the war, with one exception the medal sent to Truman from the father of a soldier who died in Korea that is displayed at the Truman Library, next to the letter asserting it was a shame that women could not be drafted, so Margaret Truman would not also have the chance to be killed in Korea.

Though it was labeled at the time as a United Nations Police Action, a designation lasting until 2004 when the Pentagon declared that all references to the war as a “Conflict” cease, more Americans died in Korea per year than perished annually in Vietnam. This toll led to an anti-war movement starting in 1950, amidst the McCarthy era, which included famous figures such as

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7 Paul Szoldra, “Trump keeps praising a controversial American general whose actions nearly prompted World War III,” Business Insider (September 27, 2016); Saba Hamedy, “All the times President Trump has insulted North Korea,” CNN.com (September 22, 2017)
W.E.B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, and David Dellinger as well as forgotten protesters such as Vito Marcantonio and Dr. Clementina Paolone. By 1952 anti-war sentiment had reached a fever pitch, with grass-roots groups such as “The Wisconsin Council for Peace” and “Mothers Against War” planning protests and putting out publications, while established pacifist organizations lobbied Congress on behalf of COs and advised draftees of their rights. The Korean War might be less forgotten today had it lasted longer, but Dwight Eisenhower campaigned on a promise to go to Korea, which he did after winning but before being sworn in, and secured the armistice in 1953.

While dozens of films about Korea were produced during the 1950s and 1960s, some scholars have asserted that M*A*S*H (1970), arguably the most famous of all Korean War films, is really a narrative about Vietnam. Yet the television series includes numerous specific mentions of Korea, which make it clear the war being depicted takes place in the 1950s in northeast Asia rather than the 1970s in Vietnam. While the Korean War largely disappeared from movie screens in the 1980s and 1990s, service in Korea was often a key element of the backstories of fathers of a certain age on TV comedies of the late twentieth century, such as The Wonder Years, Seinfeld, Frasier, and That 70s Show. The Korean War also plays a key role in the plots of TV series such as Mad Men and Oliver Stone’s Untold History of the United States, and has recently returned to the big screen in Operation Chromite, a Korean film shot half in English with Liam Neeson as Douglas MacArthur, and in Indignation, based on the Philip Roth book, both appearing in 2016.

Korea was labeled as a “Forgotten War” even while it was still actively being waged, but it has been widely recalled through public monuments since the 1950s. Many local monuments dedicated from the early 1950s to the mid-1960s which mention Korea also honor veterans of WWII, while most of those city and county monuments dedicated from the late 1960s through the mid-1980s that mention Korea also honor vets of Vietnam. However, since the late 1980s many more monuments have been built exclusively honoring the service of those who fought in Korea. Ironically, many of these monuments dedicated since the late 1980s call Korea “The Forgotten
War,” even while actively recalling it, reinforcing this false label. The war is called forgotten in the Massachusetts state Korean War Memorial in Boston and in the Iowa state Korea monument in Des Moines, as well as at sites from Dearborn, Michigan to Laurens County, South Carolina.

The prevalence of Korean War memorial infrastructure, especially bridges, highways, buildings, and trees dedicated in honor of Korea vets, also begs the question of what kinds of memorials work best. The earliest Korean War memorial was a bridge in Rockville, Maryland that was dedicated in 1950, while many Korean War monuments in the 1950 and 1960s were “Living Memorials” designed to be useful to society. Since the late 1980s many new memorial infrastructure have been built honoring Korean War veterans, including interstate bridges like the one between Vermont and New York as well as that between West Virginia and Ohio, and state highways across northeastern states such as New Jersey, midwestern states such as Wisconsin, and several southeastern states such as Georgia and Mississippi. Moreover, if more people see signs on roads or bridges reminding them of the Korean War, but such signage lacks explanatory info available at monuments or museum exhibits, does that make infrastructure better memorials?

Maybe most problematic are those monuments in Georgetown, Delaware near the Sussex County Courthouse and outside of the Somerville High School in Massachusetts, which seek to revise history to call the bloody stalemate in Korea a “Forgotten Victory,” as did the Korean War National Museum in Springfield, Illinois before it closed abruptly in 2017. Such disregard for the realities of a war that included attacks on civilians and bombings now considered war crimes is most pervasive in terms of forgetting it was fought mostly against Chinese troops, rather than North Koreans, and that MacArthur was fired specifically due to his desire to expand the war to mainland China and to use nuclear weapons. Such ignorance could also lead to sabre (jet) rattling by a President who reveres MacArthur, and nuclear weapons, but does not seem to know history, a dangerous proposition not only for the United States but for the world, and one that stems at least in part from a legacy of recalling Korea as “The Forgotten War,” despite more than sixty
years of opportunities to remember the details of what happened, even as the rest of the globe debates the meaning of its memory. This was put on exhibit for the globe to see in February 2018.

On February 9, 2018 the Olympic Winter Games in South Korea began, after weeks of political negotiations which led to a special North Korean delegation and the flying of the North Korean flag over the Olympic village. While “Ping-Pong Diplomacy” in the early 1970s brought an end to the two decades of conflict between the United States and China which had begun during the Korean War, and a form of “Basketball Diplomacy” made Dennis Rodman and the Harlem Globetrotters the first Americans to meet Kim Jong Un, it remains to be seen whether “Hockey Diplomacy,” which saw female skaters from North Korea and South Korea competing together, can bridge the gap between the Koreas (and between the United States and North Korea) which has lasted for more than sixty-years. If the opening ceremony, at which Vice-President Mike Pence refused to rise when the blended Korean delegation of athletes was introduced, is any indication, the United States may have a less-diplomatic plan in place. However, the prospect of a meeting between Trump and Kim Jong Un, like the trip Richard Nixon took to China, seems like it could hold the potential to reduce tensions on the peninsula and bring us closer to an end for the Korean War.
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APPENDIX – SITES VISITED: EXHIBITS, MONUMENTS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE


**Alabama** - Army Aviation Museum (Fort Rucker), Korean War Veterans Highway, Geneva, Mobile, Selma, Prattville, Wetumpka, Montgomery, Columbiana, Southern Museum of Flight (Birmingham), Talladega, Anniston, Gadsden, Huntsville, Alabama Korean War Memorial (near Athens)

**Connecticut** - Danbury, Bridgeport, West Haven, KWVA Chapter 204 Memorial Highway, Bristol, Norwich, East Lyme

**Delaware** - Wilmington, Delaware Memorial Bridge, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Dover, Air Mobility Command Museum (Dover Air Force Base), Georgetown

**Florida** - Tallahassee, Crestview, Air Force Armament Museum (Elgin Air Force Base), National Naval Aviation Museum (Pensacola Naval Air Station), Pensacola

**Georgia** - Augusta, Atlanta, Museum of Aviation (Robbins Air Force Base), Luther Story Bridge(s), National POW Museum (Andersonville National Historic Site), National Infantry Museum (Fort Benning), Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Donalsonville, Bainbridge,

**Hawaii** - Punchbowl, Honolulu

**Illinois** - Paris, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Danville, Vermillion County Museum, Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge, Tuscola, Korean War National Museum (Springfield), Springfield, Jacksonville, Quincy, Chicago, Marion, Carbondale, Chester, Swansea, Litchfield
Indiana- Richmond, Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Corydon, Sellersburg, Salem, Virgil “Gus” Grissom Museum (Spring Mill State Park), Mitchell, Bedford, Jasper, Princeton, Evansville, Crawfordsville, Greenfield

Iowa- Iowa City, Sidney, Indianola, Des Moines

Kansas- Eisenhower Presidential Library (Abilene), Lawrence, Overland Park, Topeka, Kansas City

Kentucky- Morehead, Mount Sterling, Georgetown, Frankfort, Louisville, Hogdenville, Brandenburg, Henderson, Covington

Maine- Bowdoin College War Memorial, Bangor, Korean War Veterans Highway, York

Maryland- Baltimore, United States Naval Academy Museum (Annapolis), National Cryptologic Museum (Fort Meade), National Archives and Records Administration Annex (College Park), Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Salisbury, Snow Hill, Rising Sun, Havre de Grace, Essex, Frederick, Sharpsburg, Hagerstown, Frostburg, Ellicott City, Bethesda, John C. Brown Memorial Bridge (Rockville)

Massachusetts- Korean War Plaza (Holyoke), Chicopee, Springfield, Korean War Memorial Bridge (Easthampton), Somerville, Boston, South Boston (Castle Island), North Attleboro

Michigan- St. Joseph, Garden City, Dearborn, Lincoln Park, Monroe

Minnesota- Mankato, St. Paul, Rochester

Mississippi- Purvis, Collins, Meridian, Scooba, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway
Missouri - Truman Presidential Library (Independence), Truman National Historic Site (Independence), Center for the Study of the Korean War (Independence), National Churchill Museum (Fulton), Jefferson City, Washington, St. Louis, Korean War Veterans Association Memorial Highway, Kansas City, Warrensburg, Boonville, Columbia

Nebraska - Falls City, Beatrice, Lincoln, Nebraska City

New Hampshire - Hancock, Concord, Manchester, Hampton

New Jersey - Atlantic City, Mays Landing, Hammonton, Wildwood, Naval Air Station Wildwood Aviation Museum, Forgotten Warriors Museum (Cape May), Ocean City, Somers Point, Morristown, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, West Orange, Jersey City, Bayonne, Spotswood, Keypor, Belmar, Militia Museum of New Jersey (Sea Girt National Guard Training Center), Point Pleasant Beach, Korean War Memorial Tree (Cherry Hill), Egg Harbor City, Audubon, Berlin, Lindenwold

New York - Manhattan (Battery Park), Staten Island, East Meadow, Hauppauge, Huntington, Korean War Veterans Memorial Parkway (Staten Island), Elmira, Ithaca, Auburn, Syracuse, Lenox, Utica, Albany, Troy, Hudson, Hyde Park, United States Military Academy Museum (West Point), Highlands, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway (Nyack)

North Carolina - Raleigh, Airborne and Special Operations Museum (Fayetteville), JFK Special Warfare Museum (Fort Bragg), Raeford, Laurinburg, Rockingham, Mint Hill

Ohio - Coshocton, Dayton, Air Force Museum (Wright-Patterson Air Force Base), Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Akron, West Milton, Middletown, Reading, Addyston, Chillicothe, Lansing
Pennsylvania- Philadelphia, Lebanon, Elliottsburg, Army Heritage and Education Center (Carlisle), Lawncrest, Wings of Freedom Aviation Museum (Horsham), Doylestown, Quakertown, Schnecksville, Williamsport, Canton, Uniontown, Pittsburgh, Canonsburg, Waynesburg, McConnellsburg, Chambersburg, Eisenhower National Historic Site (Gettysburg), Hershey

Rhode Island- Pawtucket, Providence, Exeter, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway

South Carolina- Upcountry History Museum (Furman University), Greenville, Laurens, Newberry, Columbia, North Augusta

Tennessee- Nashville, Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge, Murfreesboro, Sparta, Lenoir City, Marysville, Korean War Memorial Bridge, Knoxville

Vermont- Brattleboro, Newfane, Chester

Virginia- Smithsonian Air and Space Udvar-Hazy Center (Chantilly), Arlington, National Museum of the Marine Corps (Triangle), Fredericksburg, Richmond, Orange, Locust Grove, Accomack, Northampton, Hampton, MacArthur Museum (Norfolk), Hampton Roads Naval Museum (Norfolk), United States Army Transportation Museum (Fort Eustis), Virginia War Museum (Newport News), Smithfield, Emporia

West Virginia- Morgantown, Fairmont, Philippi, Buckhannon, Mountaineer Military Museum (Weston), Spencer, Charlestown, South Charlestown, Williamstown, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway, Korean War Veterans Memorial Bridge (New Martinsville), Wheeling

Wisconsin- Red Cloud Park (La Crosse), Nekoosa, Plover, Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway