



## The 9/11 Legacy: “History is Not Was, History *Is*”

*National September 11 Memorial & Museum, June 15-16, 2017*



*Source: NS11MM Collective Access*

This past September, thousands of family members gathered at the 9/11 Memorial to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 2001. At this site, the effects of that day are still obvious: memorial fountains where the Twin Towers once stood, the steady drone of construction on surrounding projects still underway, rebuilding the devastation left behind, and two large steel tridents that once formed part of the external façade of the North Tower visible through the windows of the 9/11 Memorial Museum’s entry pavilion. Here, the effects of terror are evident. Here, to quote Pope Francis on his own visit to the site in 2015, “grief is palpable.”

This conference, to be held at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum on the former World Trade Center site in lower Manhattan, will explore the broader legacy of 9/11. This was the most globally witnessed event in history and one that led to the longest war in the history of the United States. What, then, are the legacies that ripple out from the memorial fountains across the city, the

country, and the globe? As William Faulkner observed, “History is not was, history *is*.” How has the event of 9/11 reverberated in our understanding of the past and in more contemporary social, political, and cultural life; in the economy, in war and peace, surveillance and security, the geopolitics of the Middle East, the refugee crisis and in the debates over identity, memory and sacred space? What historical processes might we trace – either backwards or forwards – from September 11, 2001? What news headlines can we connect to 9/11 in meaningful and instructive ways: Paris, Orlando, Istanbul, the Arab Spring, Aleppo, the death of Syrian refugee child Alan Kurdi, Edward Snowden, Russia, the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the list goes on...

We invite proposals for interdisciplinary papers and panels that consider the ways in which, to quote Mark Redfield in *The Rhetoric of Terror*, a “new history begins here at this calendrical ground zero.” We seek contributions, both empirical and conceptual, that consider the myriad ways that the events of September 11, 2001, continue to inform the past, the present and the future – both in the United States and around the globe.

Topics might include (but are not limited to):

- 9/11 and historiography
- 9/11 and periodization
- Memory and memorialization
- Sacred and contested spaces
- “America in the world”
- The conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia
- Acts of terror around the globe since 9/11
- The changing face of terrorism
- The changing face of warfare and nation-building
- Intelligence, surveillance and counter-terrorism
- Para-legality, states of exception and rendition
- Nationalism, identity, “self” and “other”
- Human rights, civil liberties and conceptions of “freedom”
- Shifts in cultural production and representation since 9/11
- The media, social media and the “image” of terror
- The academy, museums and cultural institutions
- The return of religion
- The refugee crisis
- Discussions of time and space; home and homeland

We especially seek papers that draw on the intersections between these topics and themes in order to explore the ways in which they might (or might not be) traced back to, or through, 9/11. Do they have a narrative coherence shaped by the forces created that day in September? Or do they operate outside the event, as part of some other inevitable geopolitical shift that we now know only by that name-date even if that shift might have happened anyway?

We invite paper and panel proposals from scholars who can speak to the conference theme. We also seek contributions from practitioners, museum professionals and graduate students. Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words and CV to the conference organizers (Dr. Andrew Hammond and Dr. Lindsay Balfour) at [2017conference@911memorial.org](mailto:2017conference@911memorial.org) by **April 1, 2017**. Panel proposals should include

an additional abstract for the theme of the panel. Some financial assistance will be available to help offset the cost of attendance. Selected papers may be included in a follow-up edited volume/special edition.