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Strategically Using the National Mall: Communication Cycles in the Formation of Political
Narratives

by

Morgan Noel Smith

Under the Direction of Amy Steigerwalt, PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

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ABSTRACT

The National Mall is an iconic space visited by thousands of individuals every year. The space is devoted to monuments and memorials reflecting important events, individuals, and pieces of time that have structured, supported, and created path dependencies for the narrative of the United States told today. One specific function of the National Mall is to memorialize soldiers and wars, while another is to memorialize and celebrate the individuals who have politically shaped the United States. This project focuses on the individual figure memorials placed on the National Mall, centering around the question of who gets to be placed on the National Mall, and who gets to make those decisions, and what narrative is created because of this. While the uses and relevance of the National Mall has been looked at by scholars, a number of unanswered questions remain about the ways in which the space is utilized by political figures, how the American public view these usages, and the effects of these usages on broader political narrative and memory. I argue that when looked at individually, the structures on the National Mall reveal a cycle of communication between political elite and the American public that create a narrative of American Democracy. There are two distinct stages where definition is made: the creation stage, and the post-dedication stage. Within both, there is a consistent back and forth between political elite and American citizens that reveal a clear narrative strategically used to foster nationalism, unity, and support for the spread of American Democracy.

INDEX WORDS: National mall, Political memory, Political communication, Narrative formation, Political memorials, Political monuments

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Jenny Clementine Young and John Tsukayama. There are not adequate words for the way your love, support, light, and constant inspiration guides and shapes my life.

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1 A THEORY OF NARRATIVE FORMATION ON THE NATIONAL MALL

In 2019, I visited the National Mall to collect a name rubbing from the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial, as well as to get a photo with my travel companion with the 'Hawai'i' pillar at the World War II Memorial. However, visiting these two memorial spaces resulted in vastly different personal experiences. At the World War II Memorial, people take photographs with the state slabs, just like I did. However, I also saw adults and children alike climbing all over the structures that make up the memorial, playing in the fountain in the middle of the memorial, and having races on the steps that lead down into the arena that the fountain sits in. Children were permitted to run around and scream as their parents watched them while sitting on the steps of the stairs. The environment was one of playing and excitement like visiting a playground, and I felt that you were supposed to be happy in this space.

Just steps away sits the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where a very different scene occurs. While at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, I saw adults holding the hands of their children and ensuring that they are walking beside them quietly. There was almost no one running around. It was an environment that did not welcome or tolerate play and excitement. Rather, the environment is tense and sad. People leave flowers, small stuffed animals, notes, and various military memorabilia at the foot of the wall. In short, the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial and the World War II Memorial offer very different experiences and provide very different environments for those visiting the National Mall.

Experiencing these two vastly different environments at memorials on the same national space led me to question how two memorials that commemorate the lives lost in war could result in such vastly different environments. Is there more behind the memorials than just the physical stone structures standing in a federal space?

These queries underlie the central questions driving this project: what do each of the memorials and monuments on the National Mall mean? And, perhaps more importantly, who gets to define the meaning and overall narrative of these memorials and monuments? Is the definition and narrative defined and set by the artists who design the structure? Is it the political elite who go through the process of placing the memorials and monuments on the National Mall? Is it the political elite who utilize these structures as backgrounds to public speeches? Or, is it the public who visits and interacts with these monuments and memorials on a daily basis?

1.1 The National Mall

The National Mall is an iconic space visited by thousands of guests every year. From the White House to the Capitol Building, the National Mall fills the space of power between two of the most powerful buildings in the United States. In almost the center of the two buildings stands the Washington Monument (Savage 1987). The space is devoted to monuments and memorials reflecting important moments, events, individuals, and pieces of time that have structured, supported, and created path dependencies that craft a narrative of the American Democracy that functions today.

There is a general consensus among scholars that the National Mall is not simply a place, park, or area of land that has trivial meaning and minimal impact (see for example: Benton-Short 2016; Smith and Low 2013; Benton-Short 2006; Mitchell 1995). Advertised as 'America's Front Yard,' the National Mall stands as a central reflection of the American unity and identity. Turner (2009) goes so far as classifying the National Mall as a pilgrimage site for American citizens (also see Benton-Short et al. 2018). A kind of symbolic permanence (Doss 2011) surrounds the National Mall, making it an attractive setting for usage by elected officials and the public alike to strategically garner support, legitimacy, and power.

Because the National Mall has such a prominent place in American politics, it is a natural stage where political elite can act strategically and shape political memory and narrative. I argue that this is especially true for the president who hold the ability to influence and sway public opinion (Shapiro 2011; Canes-Wrone 2010; Baum and Potter 2008; Cohen 1995). With the space of the National Mall acting as a place of representation for American democracy and the things and people who have shaped it - thus standing as a place that also represents a version of American history - there is a narrative crafted and shaped off of the National Mall. I argue that the narrative crafted off of the National Mall is one that is strategically shaped by political elite, but also a narrative that is shaped by the public.

The public is a particularly important part of this narrative formation and outcome in two ways. Firstly, democracies require the public voice in political narrative creation, policy outcome, and governance (Tomz, Weeks, and Yarhi-Milo 2020; Tomz and Weeks 2013; Baum and Potter 2008). Second, and perhaps more important to note, is that there is always going to be a sub-sect of the public who does not go to the National Mall, who holds no interest in the National Mall, and who does not promote or place importance on the National Mall. When thinking about narrative creation off of the National Mall then, who makes up the required element of 'the voice of the public?' Is it just the public visitors to the National Mall? Or is there public voice involved off of the National Mall that shapes the narrative and political memory crafted off of it? I argue that it is both the public on and off of the National Mall that shapes and affects the narrative pushed off of it. While the narrative and importance of the National Mall might be cohesive, indicating a narrative across the mall, there are individual narratives assigned to each individual memorial that make up the overall narrative of the mall.

The National Mall itself is comprised of three primary structure types. Firstly, the Smithsonian and other educational museums surround the center grassy area that helps define the National Mall. There are 14 museums that sit on the National Mall, including the six Smithsonian museum Cultural, Museumian Institution, Museum of Natural History, Museum of American History, Air and Space Museum, Museum of African Art, and the Arts and Industries Building), five national galleries and museums (Museum of African American History and Culture, Museum of Asian Art, Museum of the American Indian, Gallery of Art - East Building, and Gallery of Art - West Building), plus three additional museums linked to the Smithsonian (S. Dillon Ripley Center, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and Hirshhorn Museum).

The second set of structures are the war memorials. These memorials are dedicated to those who died in specific wars that America fought in. Two of the three war memorials have the very intentional titles of 'Vietnam Veterans Memorial,' and the 'Korean War Veterans Memorial.' The final memorial is the World War II Memorial. Also among the war memorials are the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the D.C. War Memorial, and the Three Servicemen Statue.

Lastly, there are the figure memorials. These are the memorials that depict the likeness of one person. Rather than symbolically memorializing a multitude of people, the figure memorials intentionally memorialize one single individual. The figure memorials on the mall include Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, and Ulysses Grant, as well as Martin Luther King, Jr. The Washington Monument is a monument to a single person, but it is not included in the list of the figure memorials because it is not reflective of Washington's likeness. The three structure types of the National Mall work together to create the whole, overarching narrative of the mall.

The National Mall plays an important role in the creation of the American political narrative because the memorials and monuments on it reflect important moments, people, and events in American history (Benton-Short et al. 2016; Savage 2009). Memorials are relics that commemorate and impose a set definition and representation in order to categorically assign order to time and life experience (Mayo 1988; Tuan 1980). The United States uses memorials on the National Mall to acknowledge events or people that have had an impact on the country's political history (Mayo 1988; Niven 2007). These memorials cultivate a certain type of remembrance, helping to create a narrative lens through which to view shared events and individuals. The memorials and monuments on the National Mall are, in the words of Levinson, "an effort, in their own way, to stop time" (2018, 7).

Throughout this project, I focus my analysis on three specific figure memorials: the Lincoln Memorial, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial. These three memorials were chosen for three main reasons: first, they reflect the overarching timeline of the placement of figure memorials on the National Mall. The Lincoln Memorial was the first figure memorial placed on the mall, dedicated in 1922. The King Memorial is one of the most recent memorials added to the National Mall, dedicated in 2011. And the Roosevelt Memorial falls in the middle of this timeline with its original dedication year of 1997. Second, these three memorials are geographically contiguous on the National Mall. And, finally, the King Memorial reflects the first and only non-president memorialized on the mall. Including the King Memorial allows me to better understand whether the cycle of communication works differently depending on the type of individual being recognized and honored.

One of the war memorials was not selected as a case study in order to fill the role of representation of the public on the National Mall. Simply put, the war memorials are not figure memorials. The war memorials that are distinct statues of people (for example the Korean War Veteran Memorial, the Vietnam Women's Memorial, and the Three Servicemen Statue) are representations of nameless individuals whose overall message is the military power, dedication, and life sacrifice needed to uphold the shadow of American Democracy that is cast from Lincoln's Temple of Democracy. As for the names etched into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it could be argued that the naming of all American Soldiers¹ who died in the Vietnam War is one form of intentionally placing American Citizens on the National Mall, and therefore, in the overall narrative of the American Story. While there are the war memorials that are, in theory, dedicated to the American citizen's role in the American Story, the overall impact and contribution to the American Story is much different when all citizens are grouped together under the name of a war, rather than given an individual name, face, and space on the National Mall. The war memorials do not give space to actually visually memorialize a singular soldier or individual who died or fought in that war (Ochsner 1997) in order to uphold American Democracy without a visitor already having a personal knowledge and picture of a person who fought in those wars.

However, it does not serve the same form and purpose as the placement of a figure memorial, solely dedicated to one citizen, in dedication to them and their contribution to the

¹ It should be noted that not all American Citizens who died in the Vietnam War are named on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Nurses, aids, and other female dominated positions who were placed physically in Vietnam to care for the needs of those fighting also died in the name of the Vietnam War, and are not honored - as the title of the memorial would suggest - as Vietnam Veterans, or as those who gave their lives fighting for the ideals and protection of democracy that the United States Government claimed in defense of the Vietnam War. While there was a memorial dedicated to the women who died in Vietnam on the National Mall (The Vietnam Women's Memorial), it is not physically located by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, nor is it in the same space as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial as is the Three Servicemen Statue, which sits directly across from the wall.

American narrative. The figure memorials highlight an overall, individual contribution and impact, while the war memorials highlight an end-of-life sacrifice and impact, explicitly in the name and contribution of an event that would have taken place regardless of their individual involvement in that event. Thus, prior to the placement of Martin Luther King, Jr. on the National Mall, there was a clear and present lack of citizen representation and contribution to the American Narrative. Yet another way to think about this is that the placement of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is the first civilian contribution to the American Narrative that is not focused on war, absence of life (Ochsner 1997), and violence in the name of American democracy and preservation.

While the uses and relevance of the National Mall has been previously examined (for example: Zychlinska 2022; Prash 2021; Pippert 2021; Benton-Short 2016; Hilderbrand 2014; Evans and York 2013; Savage 2011; Glaazer and Field 2008; Benton-Short 2007; and Benton-Short 2006), many important questions remain about the role of elites and the public in establishing the political narrative crafted by the National Mall and the monuments that reside there. What is the narrative of American Democracy that is espoused from the National Mall, and is the narrative formed by the political elite or citizens? I argue that political narratives reflect an ongoing cycle of communication between political elites and the public. The structures on the National Mall are strategically used by differing political actors to shape and frame history and political memory in deliberate ways. However, the messages espoused by the political elite regarding the meanings and symbols of the memorials on the National Mall have to be accepted and reiterated by the public. If citizens and other visitors disagree with the crafted narrative, they make their rejections known, and political elite must adjust the narrative as it fits their ultimate political goals. This process reflects a broader cycle of communication between

political elites and the American public that creates the country's overall political narrative both on and off the National Mall.

I explicate my theory of narrative development and the cycle of communication below.

1.2 A Theory of Strategic Narrative Development Between Political Elite and Citizens

The political memory of a nation is an important element of any country's sustainability and progress (Hunter, Loughran, and Fine 2018). Understanding the events, histories, people, and symbols of a country is part of that political memory. An important component of the creation of political memory is the way prominent historical and political figures are remembered and celebrated. Hunter, Loughran, and Fine (2018) argue that in the center of the debate and construction of a shared political memory is a broad group of participants, institutions, and shared spaces. The National Mall acts as a shared space where political figures and American citizens fight to create a prevailing narrative of the American story.

A vital component of a state's historical narrative are the monuments and memorials used to represent the government and country as a whole. The National Mall is a space used to form political memory out of narratives of nationalism (Stevens and Franck 2015; Burling 2005; Glassberg 2001; Mayo 1988). The process of placing any memorial on the National Mall is intricate and lengthy. It also tends to be a process drowned in controversy both at the political level, and in the public space.

At the political level, the creation phase heavily relies on the political elite that sit in the House of Representatives and the Senate as they are in charge of changes made to the National Mall. The executive branch also has a heavy hand in the creation process. Both the President, as well as the bureaucratic entities, are intimately involved in the procedural process that creates and shapes the National Mall. From solving controversies, to implementing design competitions,

to securing funds for the actual construction and continual upkeep of the spaces on the National Mall, the executive branch is just as much part of the creation process as Congress. Where the public responds to Congressional decisions, they also respond to the decisions of the executive branch. Political actors act strategically in the creation, spacing, and framing of memorials and monuments to have control over the formed narrative (Burling 2005; Hass 2013).

An extensive memorial and monument scholarship focuses on the responsibility of historians and city planners to erect monuments and memorials that frame history accurately and realistically (Barber 2002; Longstreth 2002; Burling 2005). Yet, this is not always what we see (Sedgwick 1902). Rather, political elite attempt to establish the narrative and political memory they want embodied by the monument or memorial. The political actors responsible for the design and creation of the monument and memorial form and structure the monument and memorial to reflect the definitions and narratives they want to pull focus to (Mayo 1988; Burling 2005; Hass 2013). As memorials and monuments are spaces of engagement, ripe with important information environments (Stevens and Franck 2015), monuments and memorials are utilized as political tools of the state (Sedgwick 1902; Mayo 1988; Cooley 2010) to cultivate intentional political narratives.

I build on these works to argue that the space of the National Mall is strategically utilized by both political elite and the public to create a narrative of American democracy. This narrative is both explicitly created by the placement of memorials and monuments on the National Mall, but is also implicitly crafted when political elites use the Mall as a background for events and speeches.

Yet, the political elite are not the only ones who use the spaces of the National Mall. The public also plays a role in voicing its opinions about what should be placed on the Mall and what

these structures should look like. They also contribute to the definitions and meanings of a memorial. Once dedicated, citizens hold public events on the National Mall at the various memorial and monument spaces. In their utilization of this public space, the public also plays an important role in narrative formation.

I argue that this political narrative reflects an ongoing cycle of communication between political elites in Congress, the executive branch, and the public, one that is ongoing, and plays out over time during the two main stages of memorial defining: the design and creation stage, and the dedication and post-dedication stage.

1.2.1 Stage One: Design and Construction

Stage one of this cycle of communication is the design, creation, and construction phase of the memorials and monuments. Here the communication is between the political elite of Congress, the bureaucratic makeup of the executive branch, and the public. Not only does this stage come logically first in the process, but it also must be examined first because of the way it contextualizes the eventual memorial that is created.

Transforming the political landscape of the National Mall is no small task. It requires bipartisan work from both the legislative and executive branches of government. From adding a memorial or monument, to planting new flowers in the constitution garden, everything that occurs on the National Mall has roots in policy passed at the highest levels of federal government. This tight control over the National Mall suggests the ability of the legislative and executive political elite to seemingly control the ever-changing narrative of the National Mall as they please. However, even during this seemingly elite-driven process, the public plays an important role as well.

Examining the timelines of the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials shows that the beginning of this cycle of communication starts with Congress and the Executive Branch, and then eventually brings in the U.S. public. The timeline for each memorial begins when a bill was initially introduced in Congress authorizing a commission or committee to investigate the creation of the memorial in question. The commission also oversees the actual building and dedication processes of the memorial, and any potential changes and important upkeep that occur post-dedication.

1.2.1.1 Timeline of the Lincoln Memorial

While the first structure placed on the National Mall was the Washington Monument, the first memorial was that of Lincoln. The memorial that is known today was originally discussed and designed in the late 1800s, but it was not the "first" memorial to Lincoln. The original statute honoring Lincoln was put in place in 1868 following the assassination of the President. However, much of the American public, and well as many political elite in Congress expressed a desire for a more 'fitting' depiction of Lincoln and his role in shaping American Democracy (National Parks Service, "Lincoln Memorial).

In December of 1910, Senator Shelby Cullom introduced a bill that would provide two million U.S. dollars for the building of a memorial to President Lincoln. This was the sixth bill introduced for this purpose, and it was subsequently enacted. In February of 1911, President Taft was chosen to head the Lincoln Memorial Commission.

The selected memorial proposal was designed by American architect Henry Bacon. Bacon's goal was to emphasize Lincoln as the "Great Unifier" rather than the "Great Emancipator" (Evans and York 2013; Savage 2009). To achieve this goal, Bacon designed the memorial to include the name of each state carved on the outside of the Greek temple structure (Savage

2009), as well as explicitly titling Lincoln as "For Whom He Saved the Union" above the sitting Lincoln sculpture (Evans and York 2013). Further Bacon's inclusion of the Gettysburg Address rather than the Emancipation Proclamation on the left wall of the memorial is an explicit choice which points towards Lincoln as the President who brought together the North and the South to "form a more perfect Union" rather than the freeing of the slaves.

The construction of the Lincoln Memorial took eight years. Not only is the memorial one of structure, inscription, and sculpture, it also holds two decorative murals painted on canvas.² The murals were painted by artist Jules Guerin, and symbolically depict the emancipation and the unification. Both murals depict a male figure at the center, with a background of angel wings, depicting the "Angel of Truth." Interestingly, however, these paintings are not marked, labeled, or described, and the depiction of the angles can be mistaken for painted depictions of Lincoln himself in 'angel' form. This works with the religious iconography Bacon used to place Lincoln as the Christ like, savior figure of American Democracy, which I argue predominately is due to his role as the great unifier (Thompson 2023; Mokrynski and Schwartz 2022; Morel 2020; Martinelli 2018).

On May 30, 1922, the completed memorial was dedicated by President Harding. While Harding reiterated the messaging of Lincoln as the Great Unifier, he also heavily emphasized Lincoln's work as the great emancipator. Harding's emphasis on Lincoln as the great emancipator was potentially stronger than Bacon intended his design to symbolize. Overall, the creation and design of the Lincoln Memorial was a relatively straightforward process, in contrast to the two other memorials discussed below.

² Rather than being painted directly on the stone that makes up the entire Lincoln Memorial, the murals are painted on canvas. Each canvas measures at 12 feet in height, 60 feet in length, and weighs 600 lbs (Nelson 2010).

1.2.1.2 Timeline of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

From introduction of the bill in Congress that would allow the addition of a new memorial, to the original memorial dedication in 1997, the process of placing the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial on the National Mall took 51 years. Like Lincoln, there was a previous memorial that resided in Washington, D.C. Roosevelt asked for a simple slab with his name on it in front of the National Archives Building (Shipman 1945).

However, there was both a political and public call for a more appropriate memorial to the life of the longest serving President of the United States. The original resolution was introduced in 1946. This resolution proposed the establishment of a commission to oversee the design, creation, and implementation of a new and more appropriate memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR Memorial Legacy Committee). Almost ten years later, on August 11, 1955, Congress passed Public Law 372, approving the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission and devoting a space on the National Mall to Roosevelt. The general physical location of the Memorial was chosen on September 1, 1959. The exact location would not be determined, however, until January of 1969.

The design of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was a similarly drawn-out endeavor. A national design competition was held. Out of the 564 designs submitted, the FDR Memorial Commission selected the design of Pederson and Tilney in January of 1962 with only one voice of opposition. The Pederson and Tilney design was rejected, however, by the Federal Commission of Fine Arts on February 1, 1962 (Senate Report 1982). Eight months later, a joint resolution was passed by Congress directing the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission to select a new design (Pub.L. 87-842). In response, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Memorial Commission had Pederson and Tilney submit a redesign of their original design, and on June 1, 1964, the Federal Commission of Fine Arts approved it.

The redesign was not received well by the public, however. The Roosevelt family largely advocated against the Pederson and Tilney design, stating that they did not believe that Roosevelt himself would have supported it (Parsons 2012). Public outcry against the design eventually led to Pederson and Tilney resigning, as well as the chairman of the memorial commission.

Congressman Eugene Keogh then took over as the chair of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission, and in January of 1966, selected Marcel Breuer to create a new design concept. That December, the commission approved his submitted design. However, on January 26, 1967, the Federal Commission of Fine Arts rejected Breuer's design outright (Hyman 1995).

Twenty-three years into the process of creating a memorial to Roosevelt on the National Mall resulted in only a committee formation, and two failed design attempts. In January of 1969, President Johnson signed an executive order designating twenty-seven acres of National Mall land to be the eventual site of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. This was done in an effort to salvage the dwindling hope and efforts towards constructing this memorial (Parsons 2012).

In 1971, the legislation establishing the memorials commission was amended to include the National Parks Service in the design and creation procedure (Parsons 2012). There was also an appropriation of \$174,000 included in the amendment. In 1972, Congress passed a public law authorizing the Secretary of State to take an active role in the design, development, and construction of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial (Pub.L. 92-332).

In March of 1972, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission selected seven artists and architects who expressed interest in submitting design concepts. This invitation came with specific criteria designed to mitigate the complications and controversies that had arisen with the past two designs:

[First,] that the landscape solution harmonize with the beauty of the park setting;

[Second,] that water is a significant element of the memorial environment;

[Third,] that no major structure dominate the site;

[Fourth,] that an image or images of Roosevelt were appropriate; and

[Fifth,] that the existing recreational areas be retained (Parsons 2012).

Lawrence Halprin was selected as the new memorial designer, and his designs received all of the necessary approvals by February 1977. Landing in the developmental stage was a turning point for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. In September of 1977, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission approved Halprin's specific sculptures. A sculpture design workshop was held in October of 1977 with all of the individual sculptors who would be contributors to the memorial. This was a collaborative process that would allow the individual artists to form cohesive ideas and designs regarding the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

Even though the lead designer was selected, delays and controversies continued. The proposed costs were deemed too high, and concerns also arose from outside interest groups about the potential environmental ramifications of the proposed designs.

On July 28, 1982, Congress responded by passing an act stating that the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial would be built according to the Halpin design that the Commission of Fine Arts approved on September 20, 1979. This act of Congress did not grant the budget to build the

September 20, 1979 design, but it was the final step of approval necessary for the memorial to be placed on the National Mall.

In 1985, Don Hodel was instituted as the Secretary of Interior. This change of power was vital to the continual progress of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial that had once again been stalled by voices of opposition. Hodel stated that when it comes to memorializing Roosevelt, Congress should have the determining voice in the where and how (Parsons 2012).

In 1988, Claude Pepper was instituted as the Chairman of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission, bringing new enthusiasm to the long process and efforts to the establishment of a memorial to Roosevelt on the National Mall. His role mainly focused on securing the funding for the approved memorial design.

Pepper did secure the funding for the memorial, in perhaps the purest form of politics. Chairman Pepper was diagnosed with terminal cancer and on the morning of April 5, 1989, left his hospital bed to testify in front of the Congressional Appropriations Subcommittee for the Interior Department and other agencies. President Bush then visited Pepper while he was on his death bed, and Pepper seized the opportunity, making President Bush swear to him that he would place startup funds for the memorial in the budget. Bush held to his promise.

On September 16, 1991, site preparation began, and construction on the memorial formally began in 1994. Fifty-one years after its initial introduction on the House Floor, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was dedicated by President Clinton on May 2, 1997.

The original memorial design did not include Roosevelt in his wheelchair. Strong and vocal opposition arose almost immediately from the public and disability rights groups. Congress responded quickly, directing an addition to the memorial that contained Roosevelt in his

wheelchair only 2 months after the initial dedication. The memorial was rededicated with this new sculpture by Clinton on January 10th, 2001.

Overall, it took almost fifty-five years for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial as it stands today to come to fruition. In contrast to the elite-driven process characterizing the creation of the Lincoln Memorial, the Roosevelt Memorial reflects a consistent dialogue between elites and the public, a dialogue that at time resulted in dramatic changes to the memorial itself. This elite-public conversation is also reflected in the creation and design of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

1.2.1.3 Timeline of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is the last figure memorial to have been placed on the National Mall. Unlike the processes of the Lincoln Memorial and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was introduced to Congress by Dr. King's fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha, reflecting both public and political backing. The members of Alpha Phi Alpha wanted a memorial that was a beacon of hope for both the United States and the world (Harris 2018) for the continual change and progress that still needed to take place.

Congress passed the bill allocating a space for Martin Luther King, Jr. on the National Mall in December of 1995. During this initial stage of approval, there was opposition within Congress, especially from the Southern Representatives in both the House and the Senate (Harris 2018). On November 12, 1996, President Clinton signed into law the Congressional authorization needed to continue with the creation of a memorial to Dr. King on the National Mall. Clinton's approval of the authorization also established the creation of the King Memorial Project Foundation Committee, and gave fundraising approval for the memorial (Pub.L. 104-333).

Memorial supporters advocated for its placement in "Area 1," which is the most "prestigious" location on the National Mall. This would place Martin Luther King, Jr. among the figures of Lincoln, Jefferson, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as well as near the Washington Monument, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and World War II Memorial. This proposal was met with immediate opposition (Harris 2018). Opponents argued that this is the area for U.S. Presidents.³ On July 16, 1998, Congress enacted Public Law 105-201, allowing the use of Area I of the National Mall as the site of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial despite the voices of opposition.

Following the approval of the site for the memorial, a design competition was held. The winner of the design competition was the ROMA Design Group, who was picked in September of 2000. On November 13, 2006, the ceremonial groundbreaking of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial took place.

The ROMA design centered Dr. King in the middle of the memorial space, with a background of a stone mountain, and a wall filled with Dr. King's quotations. The design of the Mountain of Despair and a Stone of Hope was intentional. Those who were intimately involved in the creation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial wanted to be focused on more than the speech⁴ he gave during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom (Harris 2018).

In February of 2007, sculptor Lei Yixin was selected to create the central sculpture of Martin Luther King, Jr, precipitating another major wave of controversy. Yixin is known for his work on the figure statue of Mao Zedong that stands in China; this coupled with his Chinese

³ There was a suggestion made about possibly placing a memorial to Reagan in this area, though no official plans were on record (Harris 2018).

⁴ This speech is commonly identified as the "I Have a Dream" speech. This is not the original title of the speech. The original name of the speech is "Normalcy Never Again." Dr. King's Lawyer, Clarence Jones, filed a copyright for the speech in the weeks following the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and this gave it the title of the "I Have a Dream" (Harris 2018).

citizenship and ethnicity raised concerns by some that the statue created would be less representative of Dr. King as a peaceful leader, and instead present him in the image of despotic political leaders and values (Margolin 2013). Further, there were individuals who thought it was inappropriate for a Chinese citizen to design and sculpt a statue of an American historical figure that would sit in a federal space in the United States (Margolin 2013). The Commission of Fine Arts responded by rejecting Yixin's original depiction of King on the grounds that it was "too confrontational" because similar styles of statues depicting political figures and events had been torn down in other countries (Ruane 2008). Lei Yixin submitted a redesign for the sculpture of Dr. King in May of 2008. This new depiction of approved in June of 2008, and in August the preliminary site preparation began.

The material that the memorial would be constructed from was yet another point of controversy. The lead architect of the project, Ed Jackson, expressed that the Foundation wanted a light-colored stone to complement the other monument structures on the National Mall (Harris 2018). However, the stone that was desired was not available among the black and gray granite in the United States, and so it too was chosen from China (Harris 2018).

The inscriptions of the Dr. King Memorial were made by stone carver Nick Benson. These carvings were completed in June of 2011, and include the inscription of "Out of a Mountain of Despair, a Stone of Hope" on the left side of the sculpture of Dr. King. Originally, Benson also engraved the right side of the sculpture with "I was a Drum Major for Justice, Peace, and Righteousness." In July of 2011, the final piece of the memorial was put in place, and the lighting system that would be used to illuminate the memorial at night was unveiled.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Dedication was one of the rockier dedication ceremonies scheduled on the National Mall. In April of 2011, the Memorial Project Foundation

initially released an announcement that the ceremony of dedication would take place on August 28, 2011. This would have allowed the dedication ceremony to fall on the 48th Anniversary of the 'I Have a Dream Speech.' However, Hurricane Irene presented a threat to Washington D.C., and surrounding geographical areas, and so on August 25th the decision was made to move the Dedicatory Ceremony to October 16, 2011. Officially, however, the date recorded for the dedication of the memorial is August 28, 2011.

The postponement of the dedication ceremony was not the only important timeline event that took place on the 25th of August. At 8:42 p.m., Rachel Manteuffel posted an opinion piece to The Washington Post that called for the removal of the "Drum Major" quotation engraved on the right side of Dr. King's statue. Manteuffel (2011) argued that the quotation was not only a misrepresentation of the overall speech given by Dr. King, but that it also painted him in an pompous and self-absorbed light. The full statement given by Dr. King read:

"If you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice, say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter" (King 1968).

The inscription of "I was a drum major for justice, peace, and righteousness" was viewed as a crudely mashed together misrepresentation of the original quotation.

Following publication of Manteuffel's opinion piece, Dr. King's family quickly voiced their displeasure with the quotation, and they were joined by a broad swath of elites, interest groups, and interested citizens. In January of 2012, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar directed the National Parks Service to remove the offending quotation and propose an alternative. A quotation was never picked to replace the original, but the offending quotation was removed.

These brief memorial timelines highlight the important role Congress plays in the narrative formation of the memorials. Lincoln and Roosevelt were both initially placed on the National Mall through the decision of the political elite. Congress and the bureaucratic entities involved in the building up of the National Mall then host a selection of artists, architects, and sculptors to design the memorial structures in the various ways they see fit. At any point, Congress can allow a bill that would place a new memorial or monument structure on the National Mall to die. The United States has seen Congress change their minds before.⁵ The timeline of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial shows major lags in time where Congress lost interest in pushing through to see the final product of a memorial to Roosevelt.

These three timelines also reveal the cycle of communication that can exist between the public and Congress when it comes to the idea formation, depiction, and creation of the memorials on the National Mall. For the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, this cycle of communication was evident in the public's voice against the confrontational way that the original design depicted Dr. King, but also when the public demanded that the "Drum Major" quotation misrepresented Dr. King and needed to be removed. For the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, this was seen as three designs were accepted by the political elite but rejected by the public, and also in the successful public calls for a depiction of Roosevelt in his wheelchair. Alternatively, the creation and design of the Lincoln Memorial was characterized by consensus on the need for a more "appropriate" structure to memorialize President Lincoln.

The creation phase of the memorials further reveals that time is a contextually important factor in the cycle of communication. The process of creation of the Lincoln Memorial was a streamlined process where minimal public involvement took place because there were few ways

⁵ For example, Congress has killed the placement of a World War I Memorial on the National Mall twice.

the public could communicate their opinions and oppositions to the political elite during that period of time. The creation processes for the Roosevelt and Dr. King Memorials were lengthy and complicated ones due to continually increasing forms of direct tools of communication between the public and the political elite.

By examining the procedural process and timelines of the memorials, it is clear that in the initial creation phase of the memorials, Congress is not the only group of political elites being represented. The executive branch is also heavily involved in the process of creation, design selection, and construction. Bureaucratic involvement is continually seen in the process of the three memorials, and the same institutions are continually involved.

There is also some direct Presidential involvement during the creation stage of memorials and monuments on the National Mall. During times of intense, seemingly immovable stalemate, we see presidents step in. For example, it took President Bush's involvement to fund the actual creation of the Roosevelt Memorial. During high points of controversy surrounding various stages of development and creation, we see presidents work to mitigate and move past the controversy. We saw this explicitly as President Johnson signed an executive order designating the twenty-seven acres of land to be used as the site for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. In the creation stage of the memorials, the Legislative Branch is communicating with the public, but so too is the executive branch.

At the initial stage of definition and narrative formation, Congress, the Executive Branch, and the public are all involved in the shaping of memorials and monuments on the National Mall. The cycle of communication is used to determine who gets to be on the National Mall. Further, in the creation process, what the memorials physically look like is not up to just one branch, it is not even just up to one artist or architect. Rather, I argue the cycle of communication makes it

possible for Congress, the Executive Branch, and the public to be involved in the shaping of the narrative of the National Mall and its individual structures.

1.2.2 Stage Two: Dedication and Post-Dedication

The second stage of memorial definition takes place post design and construction or beginning with the dedication and all the years following. I argue that this second phase reveals an ongoing cycle of communication between the president and the public. Beginning with the dedication, the President assumes their role as head of state, and sets the overall definition and narrative for what it means and how the memorial is to be perceived. From here, the public reacts to that narrative and definition, and either accepts, modifies or rejects this narrative.

I argue that presidents seek to structure a concrete definition and narrative for memorials out of abstract depictions of political thoughts, times, events, and people (Beasley 2011). This initially begins at a dedication speech, where they stand before a completed memorial and accept the memorial on behalf of the American people. The president's dedication speech assigns meaning to the memorial through a reiteration of themes that reflect how the president believes the memorial should be interpreted. The president's speech also provides a starting road map for how the memorial fits into the overall narrative of the National Mall.

An extensive body of scholarship shows that there is a unique sway and impact that the President of the United States has over public opinion. For example, scholars find that when presidents explicitly name issues in their State of the Union speeches, that issues salience raises among mass public opinion (Oliver, Hill and Marion 2011). This scholarship is foundational in my argument that the president not only gets to define the memorials, but that the public hears and reacts to the presidents messaging.

The line of communication that shapes policy and governance within American democracy is not just from the political elite to the public, however. Scholarship shows that there is also lines of communication between the public and public opinion which shape the behavior of political elite (Bond, Fleshier, and Northrup 1998).

The president's dedication speech will not be the only time the memorials get utilized by the presidents. As the memorials are permanent structures on the National Mall, they will serve as settings for political speeches throughout time. Thus, I expect to find that the presidents that proceed the original dedication speech will build onto the original dedication speech in order to shift and craft their own political memory and narrative at a memorial. Large, dramatic shifts from the definition and narrative set in the original dedication speech will not be observed from presidential utilization to presidential utilization. Rather, presidents will slightly change meaning and definition by further defining original themes and meanings the presidents before them used to define the memorial by. While this might not be an intentional build-on from president to president in terms of writing a speech based explicitly on the last speech given, I expect that this is a pattern that will emerge because there is a cycle of communication that defines the space of the National Mall at all times.

The president's dedication speech is the beginning of the cycle of communication, not the end. While the president conveys to other political elites and the public their assigned meaning for a memorial, the question is then whether the public will adopt this assigned meaning or create its own. The public may also adopt portions, while challenging others, leading to a narrative that shifts over time as presidents and the public alike continue to use -- and assign meaning to -- the memorials that stand on the National Mall.

The Lincoln Memorial's dedication provides a good example of how this cycle of communication begins and then continues through time. One wall inside of the Lincoln Memorial includes an inscription of the Gettysburg Address, and the other Lincoln's second inaugural address. Both of these inscribed speeches emphasized themes of unity, including racial unity. But, at the time of the Lincoln Memorial dedication, while African Americans could no longer be enslaved, they also did not exercise equal rights to whites. African Americans who attended the dedicatory ceremony were forced to stand in different spaces than whites in attendance. While those in attendance at the Lincoln Memorial heard messages of unity, racial justice, and emancipation,⁶ they experienced a very different reality as they stood segregated. In fact, the only African American speaker at the dedicatory ceremony wrote in an initial draft of his speech that the Lincoln Memorial was a mockery of what Lincoln stood and died for (Laban 2022). He labeled the Lincoln Memorial a symbol of hypocrisy (Laban 2022).

Over time, African Americans and other Americans redefined the political narrative of the Lincoln Memorial and the reflection pool (Sandage 1993, 2014) as a symbol of the fight for civil rights, as well as a public space of assembly.⁷ The public gave voice to Harding's original dedicatory message of racial justice by hosting an NAACP event at the Memorial, inviting then President Truman to give an address. While Truman's speech again focused on themes of civil

⁶ See Chapter Two for the full content analysis of the Lincoln memorial speeches, which include the dedicatory speech given by President Harding.

⁷ Explicit signage is posted at the Jefferson Memorial that reads: "Please respect the Memorial and help preserve the atmosphere of calm, tranquility, and reverence. Consequently, no demonstrations allowed." It is clear that there is control of the large, overarching behavior on the National mall, and that there are 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' places to behave in certain ways while on the National Mall. This creates interesting questions that should be asked of the space and who is truly in control of setting those overarching definitions and narratives. For example, if political elite did not want the Lincoln Memorial to become a space for public practice of democracy, holding protests, marches, and other politically focused events, would they have stopped that from occurring? Could they have stopped that from occurring?

rights, the opportunity for him to contribute to the narrative at the Lincoln Memorial was provided by a public, citizen-led organization.

I argue that the continued presidential and citizen use of the Lincoln Memorial, as well as the shift in political narrative that occurred due to these usages, is a vital aspect of a continual cycle of communication between political elite and the public. The Lincoln Memorial, as well as the space in front of the steps and the reflecting pool, now serves as the home of marches, protests, concerts, and events for other fights of justice and equal rights because of the definition assigned by the public. This redefining and purposeful inclusion of minority groups and causes as a redefining for the Lincoln Memorial was not done by the political elite. It was initially transformed by African Americans, and those who supported and fought for the equal rights of African American people in the United States. This is one of the predominating examples of the cycle of communication that exists between political elite and American citizens on the political memory and American Narrative created on the National Mall.

The history of the Lincoln Memorial highlights three important facets regarding my overall theory about the cycle of communication. First, the overall definition that is set by the political elite during the dedication is created by both the content of the speech and the political environment of the dedication. Together, these factors have the potential to elicit immediate public opposition and response. The individual experiences of citizens then shape and impact the perception, importance, and overall meaning that the individual memorials and monuments on the National Mall hold. Ultimately, this lends support to the argument that the continual cycle of communication that defines the second stage of narrative formation begins with the dedicatory speech of a memorial.

Second, a key feature of the cycle of communication proposed here is that the definition and meaning of the individual memorial spaces on the National Mall are ever-changing. Even when the creation and design phase reflect a top-down, politically elite driven process, the narrative can shift immediately following the dedication of the Memorial as the public decides whether to accept, modify or reject the initial elite narrative. Thus, the cycle of communication that takes place in the second stage is a more bottom-up driven relationship between the public and the political elite. I expect to find that the presidential definition of a memorial will change throughout time. I also expect that there will not be thematic deviations from presidential speech to presidential speech. Presidents will shift definition of a memorial by adding or further detailing definition to the previously used themes assigned to a memorial.

Lastly, the public's use of the National Mall is an integral part of this process of narrative formation. Public groups hold continual events and ceremonies on the National Mall. These groups then invite political elite to speak at their events. Through these invitations, the public presents political elite with the continual opportunity to re-configure their definition of the memorial spaces and the narrative of the National Mall. These various opportunities to utilize the spaces on the National Mall offer multiple opportunities for a single president to use a space on the memorial multiple times throughout their time in office. In these various utilizations of a single memorial, presidents can shift a memorial's narrative to more thoroughly define and assign meaning that they want to be reflected in political memory and narrative.

However, the public also interacts with and perceives the National Mall and its spaces on a daily basis. As discussed previously, millions of people visit the National Mall every year. They discuss the memorials, interact with the memorials, and make their own decision on the meaning and definition of the memorials within the time they spent at the memorial.

Bellentani and Panico (2016), as well as Mayo (1988) link the behavior and interpretation of memorials to existing social and cultural norms surrounding the memorial space and the personal interpretation of the memorial (see also Tu 2023; Attwa, Refaat, and Kandil 2022; Given and Kuys 2022). Ladino (2019) and Dwyer and Alderman (2008) further adds to this by linking emotions and emotional response to memorial structures specifically concerning American historical sites (Doss 2008). These lines of literature suggest that visitor behavior around memorials provides insight into the interpretations and perceptions visitors have of the memorials.

Further, a small but substantial body of literature finds that those who assign meaning and value to the artifacts and exhibits in museums will translate that perception into behavior (see for example Haskins and Rancourt 2017; Stevens 2012; Klaassens, Groote, and Breen 2007). I argue that there is a similar relationship between artifacts in an art or history museum and the memorials that stand on the National Mall. Thus, I posit that the visitors who perceive and assign meaning and value to the memorials on the National Mall will behave less like they are in an outside park space, and more like they would in an art museum or chapel. I expect to find that the public on the National Mall will behave and converse in patterns reflective of the themes the presidents set for the memorials. Further, if the public is given a set of democratic values and ideals to identify for a given memorial, they will assign the democratic values and ideals presidents thematically assign as definitions and meanings to the memorials.

The above discussion of the dedication ceremony of the Lincoln Memorial is one exhibition of this theoretical argument. Through demonstration, protest, and events, the Civil Rights Movement - lead by the American public - communicated a rejection of the narrative and definition of the Lincoln Memorial set by Harding. The presidential utilization of the Lincoln

Memorial following the Civil Rights movement then responded to the demonstrations and protests and shifted the meaning and definition of the Lincoln Memorial to align more with what the public was expressing a want for. This then suggests that the visitor behavior and personal interactions with the memorial is one way the public signal communications of their perceptions and definitions of the memorials to political elite. If the public is behaving and assigning value and importance to memorials that are not in line with what the political elite want, signs and information panels will be added to the memorials to help communicate political elite expectations to the public.

Once a memorial is placed on a National Mall, I argue that it can be used by political elite and the public for the remainder of time. There is the potential for all memorials and monuments to be used indefinitely, allowing for an ongoing cycle of communication where the narrative and definition of the memorials continually change through presidential administrations and social and cultural changes. I therefore argue that a crucial feature of the cycle of communication is that the definitions and meanings of the memorials will change through a continual dialogue between the political elite and the public. Presidents begin the conversation by establishing a meaning for memorials at their dedications. The public then hears these messages and can decide to accept, modify, or reject them altogether. This cycle continues through time, as presidents and the public use the memorials on the National Mall to set agendas, send messages, and ultimately craft the American political narrative.

The remainder of this project focuses on the second phase of the cycle of communication, and the narrative that has been created at the memorials of Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. In detailing the separate ways in which the U.S. presidents and the public have utilized, and continue to utilize, the spaces of the National Mall, we are able to see

the continual cycle of communication that exists between the political elite and the public when it comes to narrative creation and change in the United States.

1.3 Outline of the Project

In order to assess the cycle of communication that is strategically used to shape and craft narratives off of the National Mall, Chapter 2 begins with the role presidents play in beginning the cycle of communication by assigning meaning to memorials at their dedications. It also addresses the presidents ongoing role in defining and redefining these memorials through time. In this chapter, I preform a content analysis of all presidential speeches, memorandums, and social media posts (referenced all-together as 'presidential utilization' throughout the project) given at the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials. By identifying the major topics and themes that individual presidents assign to memorials, as well as how these value assignments have changed over time, Chapter 2 identifies the messages transmitted to the public by the U.S. head of state. These speeches reveal how history is re-framed and reshaped as time and political context colors the narrative that is used from President to President.

However, to what degree are these messages heard and accepted by the public? Chapters 3 and 4 answer this question by investigating citizen engagement with the memorials on National Mall. Chapter 3 reports findings from non-participant observation field work and surveys conducted in Washington, D.C. What meaning do visitors assign to these memorials? How do visitors behave at the memorials and what does this behavior suggest about the purpose and messages sent by these memorials? Chapter 4 continues this investigation by assessing what messages those not physically present on the mall assign to the three memorials under

assessment. It specifically examines the degree to which the values and meanings the public assigns to the memorials mirror or depart from the meanings assigned by presidents.

The final chapter summarizes the findings and conclusions this assessment of political narrative formation and the cycle of communication, and the implications of these findings for our broader understanding of how political narratives are created and also changed over time. Chapter 5 also discusses fruitful avenues of future research. I turn now, in Chapter 2, to the starting point of the communication cycle and the messages presidents assign to memorials.

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2 POLITICAL ELITE COLORING THE NARRATIVE OF THE NATIONAL MALL

Political memory is an important element of any country's sustainability and progress. Understanding the events, histories, central figures, and symbols of a country is part of that political memory. Of the many elements that make up the memorials and monuments central to the political memory of a state are the memorials dedicated to the central figures that make up the history of the state. For the United States, the figure memorials that sit on the National Mall Space are those who are put at the front of the American Story crafted and pushed by the National Mall.

Who are the 'central figures' that make up the history of a state? Who gets to decide who those 'central figures' are? In the United States, the National Mall serves as a central location which acts as a reflection of an American Narrative. In this space, a version of the history of the United States is crafted into a narrative that addresses who is to be credited for the democratic practice and political landscape that is the United States today.

The narrative that forms at the memorials begins at the dedication ceremony of a memorial, when the President accepts the memorial and proceeds to deliver a speech about the meaning and significance of the memorial. As detailed in Chapter One, this is the beginning of the second stage of the cycle of communication, and it requires examination of the ways that the presidents have utilized the memorial spaces in the form of speeches throughout the existence of the memorial. This chapter is then a qualitative content analysis of these presidential utilizations of the memorials in order to understand the meaning and definitions the political elite assign to the memorials. In doing so, I am able to examine the political elite end of the cycle of communication and draw conclusions regarding the narrative they strategically set.

Looking at the presidential usage of the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorials⁸ I explore two important questions about who sets the narrative and definition of a memorial, and how the narratives and definitions of memorials develop and change across time. First, what do the political elite say is the meaning and importance of each memorial? By exploring the presidential utilization of the memorials through a qualitative content analysis, I am able to provide a detailed and nuanced analysis of the definitions and meanings the presidents individually assign to the memorials. This is done through the identification of the themes that the presidents center their utilization around. As the themes of speeches are revealed from president to president, I am able to identify the prevailing definitions and assigned meanings of each memorial. Thus, I am able to capture the narrative the political elite have strategically crafted around each memorial.

Second, my examination investigates the important question of how and when definitions and narratives change over time. Are the messages sent by a memorial set at the time of dedication by the President's dedication speech? Or, do they change over time through the continual usage of the memorial by the presidents? Are these messages defined by the president who dedicated the memorial, or can later presidents redefine the message and meaning of a memorial? Further, if the meanings and definitions sent by the memorial are not those set by presidential utilization, are they set by the political elite in the first stage of the cycle of

⁸ As detailed in Chapter One, the case studies used to examine the theoretical argument of this project are a sample of the figure memorials on the National Mall. The selected case studies of the Lincoln Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial provide a cohesive timeline of the figure memorials on the National Mall. The Lincoln Memorial was the first figure memorial placed on the National Mall, and though the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was not technically the last, the addition of his memorial was done in 2011. As well, it was the last figure memorial placed on the National Mall when this project began. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is a figure memorial that was added in between that of Lincoln and Dr. King. Further, these memorials are all in Area I of the National Mall. Though these memorials are all very close to each other, and set along the same walking path on the National Mall, they offer very different experiences for those who visit them, though the representations of the three men are similar in grandeur.

communication that creates narrative as set forth in Chapter 1? Or are they set by someone else entirely, such as the public?

Answering the questions provide important insights and support for my theoretical argument. In a broader context, however, answering these questions provides important insights into the way that political elite - specifically the President of the United States - shape and manipulate political narrative and memory (Wilde 1999) using public memorials. This provides deeper understanding and insight into the way that American democracy functions, but also deepens our understanding of narrative formation and manipulation of political memory within democracies, where public opinion has to contribute to political narrative formation (Hayward 2015; Hodges 2013; Bradburn 2009; Boyd 2008; Campbell and Jamieson 2008; Ganz 2008; Polletta and Lee 2006; Schwartz 1991; Lewis 1987).

2.1 Research Design

In order to assess how the presidents have utilized and framed the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in their acting role as Head of State, and how the usages and framing have changed over time, I assess how presidents utilized the figure memorials over time. I examine the presidential utilization of these memorials across time by conducting a qualitative content analysis.

In order to qualify for the data set of presidential utilization, the president had to deliver the speech directly at the groundbreaking of the memorial, or at the physical memorial, or release a press statement that directly mentioned the memorial. The press releases generally took the form of a memorandum released by the president centering around an event that was taking place at the memorial site that they - as the president - would be unable to attend in person, or laying a

wreath at the memorial location. The inclusion of the Instagram⁹ posts began with President Trump, as this is where social media began to come into play in terms of political campaigning, as well as when the president of the United States began having their own official Instagram accounts.¹⁰

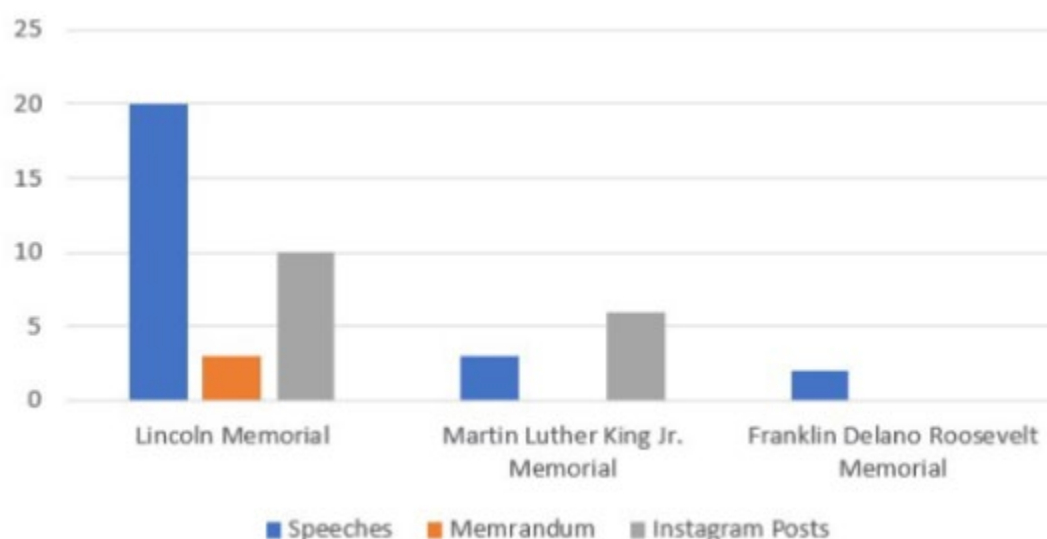


Figure 2.1: Presidential Utilization of the Memorials

In order to gather the data set, I performed archival searches through the president's archived websites and archived Instagram Accounts,¹¹ as well as relying heavily on The Presidency Project for speeches and press releases. I began by using google search, studying the

⁹ The inclusion of Instagram posts is representative of both Facebook and Twitter postings, as these accounts for the presidents are linked and posting to Instagram also uploads the same post to Facebook and Twitter. The specification of 'Instagram' is to ensure that all that all of the caption was included in the qualitative content analysis as twitter had a maximum character count, and not all of the Instagram captions would be captured.

¹⁰ {Prior to President Donald Trump, social media was not something that governing bodies paid particularly close attention to. Rather, the White House took to media with the approach of using an official administrative photographer posting official white house photographs of the current administration. Under this model however, the social media presence was not one in which the president communicated directly with the voters of the United States, it was more to give a "behind the scene" approach to humanizing and creating an air of relatability to the office of the president.

¹¹ {For the utilizations gathered for President Biden, his website and social media platforms are the current operating president platforms as he is currently the acting President of the United States. His platforms are the only ones that are not "archived."

timelines of each of the memorials, and then looking through news articles surrounding the political usage of the individual memorials. The data set includes every presidential utilization of the three memorials from the dedication of the memorial¹² to 2023. After gathering the speeches, press releases, memorandum, and Instagram posts of the presidents for the three memorials, I performed a qualitative content analysis of all 44 pieces.

To perform a qualitative content analysis, I hand coded each individual speech, memo, and social media post for words and phrases that were explicitly used by the presidents to determine distinct themes that were used to define and assign meaning to the memorials. All the data relevant to each category were identified, examined, and sorted into broad thematic categories such as: unity (examples: together, all, as Americans, collective, unite, Union, common goal, and shared experience), legal documents of the United States Government (examples: Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, Emancipation Proclamation, rule of law, and states rights), globalism (examples: world, global, expand democracy, and across the globe), and civil rights (examples: racial equality, color of skin, African Americans, white men, and justice).

Using manifest qualitative coding and constant comparison for each individual speech, I pulled out words and phrases that were repeated as the central ideas of the speeches.¹³ This tended to result in the themes and sub-themes emerging as the subject of more than one paragraph in each speech or memo. The entire content of the social media caption tended to be one or two lines, and all a single subject, rather than various paragraphs with various subjects.

¹² The Lincoln Memorial was dedicated in 1922, making the data set 1922-2023 for the utilizations of this memorial. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was dedicated in 1997, making the data set include utilizations from 1997 to 2001. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was dedicated in 2011, but there was a groundbreaking speech for this memorial that was delivered in 2006, expanding this data set to include utilizations from 2006-2023.

¹³ Please see Appendix C for the qualitative coding procedure.

From the explicit use of words and phrases, I identified groupings or words and phrases that created explicit themes and sub-themes throughout the speech. Primary sub-themes contextualized, as well as defined the theme in various presidential utilization's of the memorials.

I employed an exploratory qualitative content analysis of each individual speech to find the primary themes and sub-themes each president uses, rather than testing the speeches for a pre-determined dictionary or codebook of words and phrases. Each piece (speech, memo, or social media caption or post) was qualitatively analyzed independent of any of the other speech, for each memorial, each president, and each piece given by a single president. This allowed me to approach the meaning and themes of the presidential utilization with a more holistic lens that allowed for prominent patterns of thematic usage to emerge in each utilization, without having to make the piece fit into a pre-defined category. This allows for time and change in thematic approach across presidents to be traced. Had these pieces been tested against a pre-determined codebook, the important nuances that presidents employ to shift and craft political memory and narrative at the memorials would not have been fully captured.

Within the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial, I identified the three primary themes of: foundational values of American democracy, civil rights, and unity. I identified the sub-themes of founding legal documents, values and ideals, and the American public body, war, and defenders of democracy within the foundational values of American democracy. I also identified a sub-theme of an 'us' versus 'them' mentality under the primary theme of unity.

Within the presidential utilization of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, I identified three primary themes: Roosevelt as the president of hope, the institutions that built modern day American democracy, and unity. I did not identify any sub-themes for the Roosevelt memorial.

Finally, within the presidential utilization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, I identified three primary themes: Dr. King as an ordinary citizen, call to complete the incomplete work, and unity. Within the theme of unity, I identified two sub-themes: race and gender.

The Lincoln Memorial data set includes 20 speeches, three memorandum documents, and ten Instagram posts delivered by the presidents of the United States from 1922 to 2021.¹⁴ The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial data set includes only two speeches, both delivered by President Clinton, in 1997 and 2001. The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial data set includes four speeches delivered in 2006, 2011, and 2021, and six Instagram posts posted from 2018 to 2023.

The remainder of the chapter presents the qualitative content analysis itself. I perform the qualitative content analysis in chronological order with the Lincoln Memorial being placed on the National Mall first, followed by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and finally the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, wrapping up the qualitative content analysis with an evaluation on the way in which the memorials speak to each other, and create an overall narrative of the National Mall.

2.2 Qualitative Content Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Lincoln Memorial

The Lincoln Memorial data set begins in 1922, at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial by President Harding. Following the dedication of the Memorial in 1922, there was gap between presidential use of the memorial until 1947 when President Truman attended and spoke at the 38th Annual Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held at the memorial. This was the one and only time Truman used the Lincoln Memorial as a backdrop to a political speech. We then see the Memorial used again in 1962 by President

¹⁴ There are years between 1922 and 2021 where there was no use or direct mention of the memorial by the executive branch.

Kennedy to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. This case is a unique one in the data set as the speech given by Kennedy was recorded at the White House, and then broadcast at the Lincoln Memorial during the Centennial Ceremony, rather than being a speech given by a President Kennedy literally standing on the steps of the Lincoln memorial.

President Johnson was the first president to repeatedly use the Lincoln Memorial. The first use of the memorial by Johnson was in 1964, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the death of Lincoln. Johnson then uses the Memorial twice in 1967: a speech in February celebrating the Birthday of Abraham Lincoln, and a memorandum in October following a peaceful protest at the Lincoln Memorial. He then spoke at the 1968 celebration of Abraham Lincoln's Birthday Ceremony.

Following the example of President Johnson, President Nixon commemorates the birth of Abraham Lincoln in 1974, and speaks at the celebratory event taking place at the Lincoln Memorial. Nixon then releases a memorandum to Bob Haldeman, the White House Chief of Staff under the Nixon Administration, concerning events that took place at the Lincoln Memorial May 8, 1970, in which Nixon made an unscheduled stop at the Lincoln Memorial and talked with and greeted the group of students who were there. This is an important memorandum to include in the data set for the Lincoln Memorial because it details the events of that night, and the messages Nixon gave to the students that were not recorded as it was an unplanned event. This provides vital insight into the unplanned, unscripted behavior and messaging of a president at a figure memorial on the National Mall.

The data set then jumps from 1970 to 1981. President Reagan instituted the tradition of an Inaugural Opening Ceremonies Concert at the Lincoln Memorial. However, Reagan did not give an address at his opening ceremonies concert, nor did he release an official statement of any

kind related to the concert event. Rather, Reagan gave a speech and participated in a wreath-laying ceremony that took place at the Lincoln Memorial in 1981, celebrating the birth of Abraham Lincoln.

President George H. W. Bush then used the Lincoln Memorial in 1989, becoming the first president to formally give a speech at the Lincoln Memorial during the Inauguration Week Opening Ceremonies Concert. Every president from here forward delivers remarks at their Inaugural Opening Ceremonies Concert, accounting for the 1993 data set entry under Clinton, the 2001 entry under W. Bush, the 2009 entry under Obama, the 2017 entry under Trump, and one of the 2021 entries under Biden. Though these speeches are given by these individuals under the official title of "president-elect," they are vital entries to the data set. The speeches delivered by the "presidents-elect" give an ending point to what the old president set the message and memory of the Lincoln Memorial and National Mall as and offers a goal and overall starting point regarding where the upcoming president wants to make adjustments to the overall narrative and political memory of the National Mall.

Besides the opening ceremonies entry, Obama uses the Lincoln Memorial again in 2013 for a speech commemorating the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. In 2019, Trump uses the Lincoln Memorial as a backdrop to a 4th of July Celebration, in which he delivers a speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Then, in 2020, Trump uses the Lincoln Memorial in an unprecedented, and generally prohibited,¹⁵ Town Hall with Fox News.

¹⁵ The beginning of the columns of the Lincoln Memorial structure mark the beginning of the space of the Lincoln Memorial which is protected by federal law 36 CFR § 7.96. The inside of the Lincoln Memorial as a host to a Town Hall for a sitting president is an unprecedented event, as we truly have never witnessed a president using this space in this way before. However, due to the conditions created by the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Secretary of Interior granted Trump permission to use the space saying: "Given the extraordinary crisis that the American people have endured, and the need for the president to exercise a core governmental function to address the nation about an

Along with the speeches given at the Lincoln Memorial, Trump made ten Instagram posts where the Lincoln Memorial is the background of the photograph. One post was in regards to the 75th anniversary of the Victory in Europe Day in 2020, one was in regards to Marine One and the overall view of the Mall from the back of the Lincoln Memorial in 2020. His remaining eight Instagram posts were in regard to the Fourth of July Celebration hosted by the president at the Lincoln Memorial in 2019.

Biden also contributed a secondary data entry in 2021 beyond his speech at what would have been his Inaugural Week Opening Ceremony Concert.¹⁶ On January 29, 2021, following the taking of the Oath of Office, Biden used the Lincoln Memorial and the Reflecting Pool as the backdrop and setting to the Honoring and Remembrance of every U.S. citizen who had lost their life to the Coronavirus.

2.2.1 The Foundational Values of American Democracy

The first theme of foundational values in American Democracy I find emerges in three distinct ways: use of foundational legal documents, examination of democratic values and ideals, and the role of the American people in American democracy at home and abroad.

2.2.1.1 Founding Legal Documents

Starting with Harding at the dedication of the Lincoln Memorial, I identify that presidents have continuously referred to the founding documents to emphasize American democratic values and the legitimacy of the United States as a sovereign nation. One way to do this is explicit titling of founding legal documents that establish a countries rule of law in their speeches (Bernal 2017). Harding focuses on the Constitution by using words such as 'constitutionally founded,'

ongoing public-health crisis, I am exercising my authority to facilitate the opportunity for the president to conduct this address within the Lincoln Memorial” (Bernhardt 2020).

¹⁶ There was no concert due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

'constitutional methods,' 'constitutional union,' and 'federal authority.' I argue that this explicit repetition of words that remind a listener about the Constitution that founded American democracy is not necessarily to achieve a legitimacy in rule of law as argued in past literature (for example Bernal 2017) but to legitimize the decisions of the Government to place the Lincoln Memorial on the National Mall.

President Truman utilizes all of the founding documents, explicitly naming the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. He names the Bill of Rights two times, and emphasizes its importance in the insurance of rights, not only for American citizens, but also as the place to look to begin and defend the spreading of democracy on a global scale. However, Truman also names the Emancipation Proclamation among his listing of the foundational documents of the United States. In doing so, he includes Lincoln as a founding father, but he also creates a list of foundational documents that more fully encompass the historical foundation of the modern-day American Democracy and story that is promoted on the National Mall.

President Kennedy follows Trumans narrative and names the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Emancipation Proclamation. By explicitly mentioning the "framework of the American Constitution" (1962), and also on "fulfilling the promises of the Declaration of Independence," Kennedy continues the initial narrative set by Truman to emphasize the insurance of foundational rights that are explicitly unique to the American Democracies founding documents.

By offering continual support for the inclusion of the Emancipation Proclamation in the list of foundational legal documents, Kennedy signifies the inability to deny those foundational rights to anyone who is an American citizen. Kennedy further uses phrases that link the

Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation. I find that Kennedy's utilization of the Lincoln Memorial centers the documents of the Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation as two inseparable documents that go hand-in-hand: "But the Emancipation Proclamation was not an end. It was a beginning" (Kennedy 1962).

President Ford continues this narrative by pointing to the Constitution as the same source of legitimate power that existed from President Washington - the beginning of the United States - to today. However, he also uses the Constitution as a way to address the unique rights of freedom and self-governance that is supposed to be guaranteed to each individual in the United States. He also uses the Declaration of Independence to emphasize these points.

President H.W. Bush utilizes only the Declaration of Independence in his speech at the Lincoln Memorial.¹⁷ Bush mentions the Declaration of Independence to uphold the initial values of freedom and liberty that built the American Democracy that surrounds them today as citizens of the United States, as well as the democracy that has been spread around the world.

Across his speeches given at the Lincoln Memorial, President Obama follows President H.W. Bush's narrative example and only uses the Declaration of Independence to highlight the natural rights that were the foundation of American Democracy. Obama's use of the Declaration of Independence differed from that of Bush, however. Where Bush uses this document as a way to legitimize the foundational values and ideals of American Democracy, Obama uses it as a way to highlight what the ideals and values of American Democracy are supposed to be, and where the United States has failed to uphold those foundational values.

Following the example of Ford and Nixon, President W. Bush uses the Constitution is to emphasize the enduring power and position that the United States holds inside its own borders,

¹⁷ Reagan makes no use of any of the founding documents in his use of the Lincoln Memorial.

and around the globe. However, it is also used as a pointed way to highlight the American citizens and the democratic ideals they exude that uphold and further American Democracy (Bush 2003).

President Trump utilizes the Constitution, explicitly calling out constitutional amendments and constitutional rights, and the Declaration of Independence.¹⁸ Trump uses the Declaration of Independence two time, both times calling it 'the Declaration' and contextualizing the way that it came to be, the way it was purposefully written, and how it set up the foundation for the documents that followed which created the United States. In this set up, Trump uses the Declaration of Independence explicitly, and other founding documents implicitly, in order to legitimize the governing institutions of American Democracy today.

As the presidents use the Lincoln Memorial as a background to their speeches, I found a prominent theme founding legal documents emphasised from president to president, and from speech to speech. Though various presidents present different combinations of the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Emancipation Proclamation in their speeches and memorandums, they all utilize founding documents in order to achieve similar objectives. I argue that presidents primarily use of the documents to legitimize the overall government structure of American Democracy. However, I argue that it is also used as a way to promote global expansion and overall call to protection of democracy and its values around the world. Among some, such as Bush and Obama, I found that there is a specific concentration on the continued need to protect democracy and its values inside of the United States, and not just abroad.

¹⁸ Trump is the last president to mention founding documents in his speeches given in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Neither of President Biden's speeches mention any founding documents.

2.2.1.2 *Values and Ideals*

Within the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial, presidents rely on using core democratic values (Hendriks 2022; O'Mahony 2009; Almedia, Kingstone, and Power 2008; Dahl 1956) to define what the Lincoln Memorial is to represent for American democracy and its history (Banjeglav and Dragojevic 2021; Vieregg 2015; Stevens 2014; Mayo 1988).¹⁹ Initially, I argue that the foundational values fall into two groups. First, I find that there are the Declaration of Independence values: Freedom, justice, liberty, prosperity, and continual progression. These values are emphasized across time in front of the Lincoln Memorial. The second category I find reflects the foundational values and ideals of the governing structure of American Democracy: majority rule, rule of law, voting, attention and reaction to public opinion through the electoral process, protection against tyranny, states' rights, legitimacy of the federal government, and sovereignty.

Harding initially uses these two categories of foundational values and ideals by defining the importance of the values and ideals set in the Declaration as the guiding light of Lincoln's presidency and leadership of the United States. However, he sets the values of freedom, justice, and liberty as broad categories that need to be further defined and claimed: "... a progressive civilization, clinging to majority rule, properly restrained, which is "the only true sovereign of a free people," and working to the fulfillment of the destiny of the world's greatest republic!" (Harding 1922).

In quoting and contextualizing Lincoln, Harding defines the two distinct types of values and ideas - one that supports the people, and one that supports the governing structure - and adds the values of progress, majority ruling, and sovereignty. However, he goes a step further and

¹⁹ Please reference Chapter 1 for a more detailed description of the core democratic values.

details Lincoln's belief "in maintaining inviolate the rights of the states, but he believed no less firmly in the perpetuity of the Union of the states" (Harding 1922). In doing so, he places special emphasis on the structure of federalism as a unique and foundational principle of American Democracy.

While Harding identifies that there are different categories of foundational values and ideals that built and sustain American Democracy, Truman begins to identify and shape a third category: civil liberties. In June of 1947, Truman spoke at an event held by the NAACP which took place at the Lincoln Memorial. Truman begins to form this categorization of civil liberties as a value and ideal of American Democracy that stems from broad ideas within the Bill of Rights: "The Occasion of meeting with you here at the Lincoln Memorial affords me the opportunity to congratulate the association upon its effective work for the improvement of our democratic process" (Truman 1947).

While Truman does not explicitly name the Bill of Rights here, he opens with the value of protest, and the importance of protests, movements, and free speech in the sustaining of American Democracy. This foundational right found in the Bill of Rights adds to, and further defines the Declaration of Independence category of values and ideals. Truman adds the values of protest and freedom of speech to the list of values and ideals essential to American democracy. However, I argue that Truman also expands the title of "Declaration of Independence Category" to include the Bill of Rights, leading to a category of values and ideals outlined in all of the foundational legal documents of the United States.

In his use of the Bill of Rights, Truman builds an argument for human rights as a third category of the values and ideals that make up American Democracy. Truman proclaims:

We must not tolerate such limitations on the freedom of any of our people and on their enjoyment of basic rights which every citizen in a truly democratic society must possess. Every man should have the right to a decent home, the right to an education, the right to adequate medical care, the right to a worthwhile job, the right to an equal share in making the public decisions through the ballot, and the right to a fair trial in a fair court. We must ensure that these rights—on equal terms—are enjoyed by every citizen (Truman 1947).

Here, Truman emphasizes the application of the Declaration of Independence values and ideals to all men within the United States, but he also places values and ideals inside of the Civil Liberties category. I find that Truman begins to define what Human Rights in the United States means and adds the values and ideals of education, medical care, and work all applied in an equal way across the population.

Truman's inclusion of civil liberties is reiterated by President Johnson in 1964. Johnson gives almost the same statement as Truman, stating:

The American promise will be unfulfilled, Lincoln's work--our work will be unfinished so long as there is a child without a school, a school without a teacher, a man without a job, a family without a home; so long as there are sick Americans without medical care or aging Americans without hope; so long as there are any Americans, of any race or color, who are denied their full human rights; so long as there are any Americans, of any place or region, who are denied their human dignity (Johnson 1964).

The repeated use of "so long as there are any Americans" (Johnson 1964) draws explicit lines of who democratic values and ideals of civil liberties are to be applied to.

On a surface level, it appears as though President Johnson is promoting a more isolationist policy vision to American Democracy. However, deeper examination of Johnson's view of the application of all the democratic values and ideals is to promote and fulfil the "destiny of the world's greatest republic" (Harding 1922) and to fully fulfil "its historical destiny" (Johnson 1968). This call back to the initial narrative set by Harding at the Lincoln Memorial dedication highlights the theme that the foundational values and ideals that support and promote American Democracy.

When Johnson utilizes the Lincoln Memorial in February of 1967, he states that the application of equal rights of civil liberties, and all other foundational values, "has taken more than a century for us as a nation to assert the ideal that Lincoln had barely formulated" (Johnson 1967a). This statement credits Lincoln with identifying and cultivating the values and ideals that shape modern American democracy.

In October of 1967, Johnson had the opportunity to release a press statement regarding the Lincoln Memorial due to an anti-Vietnam war protest. What was intended to be a peaceful protest - and was for the majority of those who attended - turned into a riot-type situation. Johnson put out a press release in response in which he stated: "Their [law enforcement personnel] actions stand in sharp contrast to the irresponsible acts of violence and lawlessness by many of the [anti-Vietnam War] demonstrators" (Johnson 1967b). This press-release reiterates the initial narrative of foundational values and ideals that was pushed by Harding, and sets aside the focus of civil liberties. Further, it dives deeper into exactly what the presidents define as the foundational values and ideals expressed in the founding legal documents. Here, Johnson does not address "protest" as a foundational value of American Democracy. Rather, peaceful, nonviolent protest is the foundational value of American Democracy.

I argue that Johnson's attention to law enforcement further defines the category of governing structure in American democracy. Here, Johnson directs attention to law and order, established under rule of law. Preservation and the enforcement of law and order is a foundational value under governing structures of American Democracy rather than encompassed under the values of the Declaration of Independence because it is in alignment with philosophical arguments that bringing order and protection are a foundational goal and purpose of any governing structure.

Johnson's final use of the Lincoln Memorial in 1968 continues the narratives of the three categories of foundational values and ideals. He introduces the initial argument that global expansion of democracy should be included in the groupings of the foundational values of American Democracy. In support of the Vietnam War, Johnson argues that the United States cannot gate-keep the foundational values, ideals, and rights of American Democracy (Johnson 1968). Rather, the United States has a responsibility to help ensure that other nations across the world, or that the United States does not really hold those values at all (Johnson 1968).

In promoting his decision of the continuation of the United States in Vietnam, Johnson uses his office as president to emphasize the importance of continual democratic practices within the United States, even during times of war, as originally stated by Lincoln (Johnson 1968). He further emphasizes his right to make these decisions and call on the American Public by quoting Lincoln, saying: "Lincoln once said: "Let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty" (Johnson 1968). This - on its own - does not create a new category of foundational values and ideals of the American Democracy, but it does support the two foundational value categories initially narrated by Harding. However, in this particular call to attention of these founding

values and ideals, Johnson is not looking to expand the understanding of these categories, but to remind the American Public of rights, responsibilities, quality of life, and overall benefit of living under the American Democracy in order to promote support for the Vietnam War.

The combination of the promotion of war as a responsibility of the United States and the continuation to uphold democratic systems within the United States during those times of war create a fourth category of foundational values and ideas. This fourth category is the responsibility to protect, promote, and institute the values of American Democracy outside of the sovereign borders of the United States.

President Nixon supports Johnsons creation of a fourth category of foundational ideals and values by bringing the goals of spreading American Democracy abroad back to Lincoln himself:

What we sometimes forget is that Abraham Lincoln was a world statesman at the time that America was not a world power. Here on these walls are inscribed many of his very famous sayings. One from the second inaugural comes to mind when Lincoln said: to do all that we may to achieve and to cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and between all nations. This is Lincoln 110 years ago when America... with both North and South working together to build a greater country, could not and would not even play a great role in the world for years and years to come. And yet Lincoln, with that mystical sense of destiny and vision, saw it all ahead when he said, "Ours is earth's last, best hope" (Nixon 1974).

Johnson sets the wheels in motion for the expansion of American Democracy abroad through war to be accepted as a noble goal. However, Nixon connects acceptable forms of war and expansion policy back to the foundation of the United States. In drawing attention to the globalist

ideals of Lincoln, Nixon helps Johnsons fourth category of foundational values and ideals to hold a historical backing. In doing so, Nixon also echoes both Harding and Johnson in their vocabulary of 'destiny' and their characterization of the United States and her democracy as a savior. But Nixon also echoes the literary set up of Johnson, reminding the public that all of the freedoms, rights, and protections they enjoy should be spread abroad and enjoyed across the world as well.

President Ford brings the attention of the foundational values and ideals of American Democracy back to the sovereign borders of the United States. In both 1975 and 1976, Ford speaks at the events at the Lincoln Memorial celebrating Lincoln's birth. In 1975, Ford brings the narrative back to the civil liberties category of foundational values and ideals and states: "None of our problems today are as severe as those facing Lincoln - human slavery and civil war between the States - but we are confronted with the need to achieve economic emancipation" (Ford 1975). Ford uses the space of the Lincoln Memorial in 1975 further defines what the original Declaration of Independence values and settles on the right to economic freedom and security.

This is a value and ideal that has been hinted on by past presidents by emphasizing the right to property and prosperity. In other ways, it has been hinted at in the category of civil liberties, such as in the identification of the right to job opportunities and work. However, no president has explicitly identified and names economic opportunity and security as civil liberties up to this point.

Fords use of 'emancipation' shows specific purpose in the crafting of the speech, due to the Emancipation Proclamation authored by Lincoln. Following the example of Nixon, Ford

links economic freedom as a foundational value back to Lincoln, and the beginning of the modern-day American Democracy.

In 1976 however, Ford shifts his focus to the integrity of the institutions in the United States as founded by the Constitution. This speech is much more aligned to the first speeches given at the Lincoln Memorial. Ford emphasizes trust in government institutions, protection of democratic values, the preservation of order, and a re-dedication of the nation, as the formal representative of all American citizens, to those foundational values and ideals.

Both speeches delivered by Ford use words and phrasing that broadly address foundational values and ideals that not only echo former presidential speeches at the Lincoln Memorial, but also Lincoln himself. He states: "We honor the memory of Lincoln best not only by formal ceremonies but by doing our best to preserve for the next generation the legacy he so proudly handed down to us - a government of the people, by the people, and for the people" (Ford 1975).

The emphasis on simple, broad category values and ideals that are not defined, and specific concentration of trust in the governing institutions that are legitimized by the established Constitution is no surprise given the context of the political state of America. Following Nixon, the public trust in governing institutions was incredibly low. This off the heels of the Vietnam War, and the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy, and various other traumatic events set the scene for Fords use of the Lincoln Memorial. His focus on messages of foundational American Democracy values and ideals, along with his specific word choice use that echoes Lincoln's greatest achievements, work in an effort to bring the Union back symbolically back together the same way Lincoln did.

President H.W. Bush picks up the torch last carried by Nixon and resumes crafting the narrative of the global spread of American Democracy and Americas 'destiny.' "And today, just as we have for more than two centuries, our nation stands from sea to shining sea as the beacon of freedom for people from all around the world" (Bush 1989). Bush praises the example of American Democracy and the influence it has around the globe, echoing and normalizing the mentioning of American Democracy in the same breath as foundational ideals and values.

However, this speech given by Bush denotes a shift in the overall use of the Lincoln Memorial. This is the first time the Lincoln Memorial has served as a backdrop to the Inaugural Week events where the president elect has addressed the nation.²⁰ The 2000 presidential election controversy regarding an overturn of a recount request in Florida created a tense environment for Bush's inaugural week events.

Because of this environment surrounding the inaugural week concert and speech, Bush took the opportunity to further add to the list of foundational values and ideals that define the Lincoln Memorial. I find that Bush further defines the category of 'governing institutions of American democracy' category by adding the peaceful transition of power from president to president as an institutional value of American democracy.

Bush succeeded Reagan, a fellow Republican. Of the transition from Reagan, Bush comments: "I am following a great president, and a great presidency. In part because of our success these past 8 years under the leadership of President Reagan our nation has much to be thankful for. America is strong once again" (Bush 1989). The transition of power from a president of one party to a president of the same party is not necessarily what is thought of in

²⁰ {Reagan was the first president to have the Inaugural Week Opening Ceremony Concert at the Lincoln Memorial. However, he did not give a speech at his concert out of respect to the crewman who passed due to falling from the scaffolding while setting up the concert. Bush was the first president to give a speech in this setting at the Lincoln Memorial.

2023 as the meaning behind the peaceful transition of power. However, Bush highlights that the passing of one presidency to another marks significant change for the United States and goes on to discuss that there are still changes and progressions that need to be made in order to fulfill that ever present concept of the destiny of American Democracy. This is also emphasized because the results of the 2000 election between Bush and Gore resulted in skepticism and many calling the win for Bush an illegitimate result.

Clinton continues the narrative of the peaceful passage of power in a way that is much more familiar, and that the word 'peaceful' more truly represents. In beginning his speech, Clinton discusses what it means to "reclaim our country for the American people" (Clinton 1993). This verbiage is specific and pointed, and while he does not address his predecessor in the way that Bush addressed Reagan, the definition of Bush's established governing structure value is echoed in this very opening line of Clinton's speech.

I argue that the initial message of Clinton's speech can be read as less than a peaceful exchange of power from a republican president to a democratic president. In this, Clinton echoes the assigned definition to the category of the governing structures of American democracy which almost all of the other presidents before him used. With an referral back to Lincoln, and the emphasis on the Union, Clinton draws attention to the infamous Lincoln quotation, reminding the Nation: "And Lincoln said that a house divided against itself cannot stand. Our history is clear proof that out of diversity can come strength and a deeper unity rooted in the virtues of respect and love and humility" (Clinton 1993). Clinton draws attention to the foundational principle and value of unity, while also focusing on the role that the values of civil liberties has played in the development of modern-day American Democracy.

Clinton's acknowledgement of the power exchange are echoed by President W. Bush in 2001 when he says: "As Vice president-elect Cheney has said, every inaugural continues the oldest commitments of our country to the rule of law and the enduring power of our Constitution. At the same time, a new administration is an opportunity for change and a new direction" (Bush 2001). Where Bush emphasizes rule of law and the legitimacy of the constitution, he also emphasizes opportunity.

Opportunity, and access to opportunity, is a theme that is finely touched on through the speeches of the presidents at the Lincoln Memorial. The opportunity to change jobs, to pursue higher education, to vote and participate in democratic practices, to change ones station in life are all examples of the way that past presidents have painted opportunity in the United States. Ultimately, attention to opportunity points to the unpainted picture of the American Dream that exists because of the opportunity that is available through all of the founding principles and values of American Democracy. Bush then further defines the category of Declaration of Independence values and ideals by adding the value of opportunity.

President Obama echoes these definitions in his speech addressing the Nation as president elect by focusing on hope, opportunity, and the progress that can be made during his presidency because of the foundational values that shape and support modern day American Democracy. "What gives me that hope is what I see when I look out across this mall. For in these monuments are chiseled those unlikely stories that affirm our unyielding faith -- a faith that anything is possible in America" (Obama 2009). The aligning of hope, opportunity, and possibility are all consistent across Obamas speeches at the Lincoln Memorial, and they are again echoed in 2013 when he spoke at the 50th Anniversary for the March on Washington. Consistent use of the possibility and opportunity that is available in the United States keeps the

messages and narratives shared at the Lincoln Memorial in line with the application of American Democracy inside the sovereign borders of the United States. From Bush's addition of opportunity, Obama further defines the category of the Declaration of Independence values and ideals by adding hope and possibility.

Obamas use of the Lincoln Memorial in both 2009 and 2013 consistently align with the messages of civil liberties detailed by Johnson in 1964. Obama focuses on access to quality education, work environments, job security, and healthcare. However, he also adds to the category of civil liberties values and ideals by emphasizing the importance of freedom from violence, freedom of sexual preferences, religious freedom, gender freedom, and widespread equality. Some of these values, such as freedom of religion, is one that is pulled from the Bill of Rights. However, the others are both civil liberties, and also who civil liberties apply to. From president to president, each one details who they want the foundational values of American Democracy to apply to, or they state it broadly, addressing America as a whole. Obamas explicit pulling out minority groupings and detailing who civil liberties apply to within the United States indicate who the civil liberties - as well as other rights and founding values - have been withheld from.

Following Obama, President Trump's use of the Lincoln Memorial at his inaugural concert in 2017 echoed Clinton, Bush, and Obamas inheriting of power from the opposite political party. Trump states that there is various forms of changes that need to happen, and follows the familiar wording of H.W. Bush, Clinton, W. Bush, and Obama that "we (our political party) are taking America back" (Trump 2017). In his second use of the Lincoln Memorial in 2019, Trump then focuses on the broad base foundational values and ideals of American Democracy:

Devotion to our founding ideals led American patriots to abolish the evil of slavery, secure civil rights, and expand the blessings of liberty to all Americans... This is the noble purpose that inspired Abraham Lincoln to rededicate our nation to a new birth of freedom, and to resolve that we will always have a government of, by, and for the people... The future belongs to the brave, the strong, the proud, and the free. We are one people, chasing one dream, and one magnificent destiny (Trump 2019).

Between his uses of the Lincoln Memorial, Trump wraps founding values and ideals from the Declaration of Independence that give structure to the governing system of the United States, to civil liberties. Further, he focuses on the transition of power all together. Trumps simple touching on, but refraining from deeply elaborating on and adding specific values to categories is reflective of the style used by Harding, Truman, and Johnson. Each president getting more broad and less specific as time goes on between speeches. I argue that Trump follows the examples of the presidents who defined the Lincoln Memorial in a top-down approach, rather than those who defined the memorial following a more bottom-up approach (such as Kennedy and Obama).

However, it is important to note the interesting language that Trump uses to contextualize the civil liberties values and ideals that he briefly mentions in addressing the abolition of slavery, and civil rights. Rather than expressing civil liberties as expanded beyond white men in the United States, Trump uses the word "blessings of liberty" (2019) to describe inherent rights detailed in the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights. This creates a paradoxical narrative as pushed by the president that foundational rights, which should not be optional, are on the same level as blessings, which in the context of religion, are not guaranteed and given to everyone.

The last presidential usage of the Lincoln Memorial in my data set is by President Biden. In the two speeches he gave at the Lincoln Memorial, Biden chose to pinpoint certain values: "Opportunity, liberty, dignity, and respect, and to unite against common foes: hate, violence, disease and hopelessness. America's story depends not on any one of us, not on some of us, but on all of us. On we the people" (Biden 2021). While slightly following the example of all the presidential usages of the Lincoln Memorial, Biden generally mentions all four groups of values, but also specifically names the ones that promote progress and opportunity due to the 'destiny' of American Democracy. Biden's specific points broadly lead to an overall emphasis on the Declaration of Independence values and ideals of life, liberty, and freedom. However, due to the global Coronavirus pandemic that surrounded his Inauguration, Biden also pinpoints trust in government institutions and the right to safety.

Across the presidential use of the Lincoln Memorial, the presidents pull out four broad groupings of foundational values, ideals, and principles that have shaped American Democracy. The broad groups include Declaration of Independence Values (which I find the presidents following Harding transition into founding legal document values), Governing Structure Values, Civil Liberties Values, and the Global Expansion Values. These four groupings develop over time, and are continually added to and defined by the presidents as they act as Head of State and Government (Neustadt 1960).

I argue that the meaning and definition this assigns to the Lincoln Memorial is both incredibly specific, and also incredibly broad. The presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial continues to show that presidents continually add to the list of democratic values and ideals that the Lincoln Memorial is supposed to represent and be defined by. This definition began as two, broad categories that were not incredibly defined. However, my analysis of this

theme has identified many instances across the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial where they not only define the values and ideals that fall into the original categories Harding sets but adding two more distinct categories.

I find that the presidents continually add specific democratic values and ideals to the things that the Lincoln Memorial is to represent. Continually adding more and more specific democratic values and ideals to the definition of the Lincoln Memorial suggests that there is no limit to the values and ideals that define the Lincoln Memorial. Through time, the messages and meanings of the Lincoln Memorial have been shifted by the presidents to encompass and represent much more than originally set out by President Harding at the dedication of the memorial. This lends support to my theoretical argument that the presidents continually shift the narrative and definition of the Lincoln Memorial, and the overall narrative of the National Mall.

2.2.1.3 The American Public Body, War, and Defenders of Democracy

Harding originally steers the definition of the Lincoln Memorial towards globalization. Harding sets the initial narrative that the global spreading of American democracy on is a responsibility of all Americans. Harding begins this narrative by connecting Lincoln to the global world by praising the "Monuments to his memory throughout the world" (Harding 1922). But the theme of responsibility to promote and institute democracy is a widespread message across all presidential utilizations of the Lincoln Memorial. The narrative of globalism is one that is strategically prompted by the presidents as a natural progression of the democratic ideals and values that make up the foundation of the American Democracy.

From Harding to Biden, the United States moves from being firmly rooted in isolation policy practices to practices of containment and democratic promotion. These policy changes are reflected in the messages given and contextualize very clear pleas of acceptance of globalism

from the public. Harding goes to both Lincoln and Washington as he lays the seeds for this narrative: "Washington and Lincoln offered outstanding proof that a representative popular government, constitutionally founded, can find its own way to salvation and accomplishment" (Harding 1922).

Harding then takes this farther by claiming: "Not only was our nation given a new birth of freedom, but democracy was given a new sanction by that hand of divinity itself which has written the rights of humankind and pointed the way to their enjoyment" (Harding 1922).

Invoking both Washington and Lincoln strategically legitimizes future arguments of expanding democracy through violence and war. However, it also invokes the continual use of empowering the American public by reminding them that democratic values and ideals is what allowed America to form in the first place.

Truman capitalized on this theme by focusing on "America and abroad" (1947). He invokes Lincoln's use of divinity and states:

Abraham Lincoln understood so well the ideal which you and I seek today. As this conference closes we would do well to keep in mind his words, when he said, "if it shall please the Divine Being who determines the destinies of nations, we shall remain a united people, and we will, humbly seeking the Divine Guidance, make their prolonged national existence a source of new benefits to themselves and their successors, and to all classes and conditions of mankind (Truman 1947).

Truman invokes a religious quote used by Lincoln to achieve two goals. The first goal is in efforts to legitimize the establishment and structure of America and her governing system. Rather than pointing to Lincoln and Washington for legitimacy, Truman points to Lincoln, who points to God, the divine. In doing this, there is clear indication that American Democracy is

destined and legitimized in the eyes of the divine. This speaks to Truman's second goal of establishing legitimacy in spreading that divinely appointed American Democracy across the globe.

Johnson continues the call for spreading democracy. Initially, he uses the global community to emphasize that equal rights and opportunities can be achieved in the United States because the world is aware of American Democracies founding principles of law and leadership (Johnson 1964). However, his next utilization of the Lincoln Memorial focuses on spreading civil rights and racial justice across the globe (Johnson 1967). His use of the memorial in 1968 shifts once again to an entire speech dedicated to the promotion of war as the means to promote and spread American Democracy.

Johnson then carries on this theme, and begins by stating that Lincoln and his leadership was known around the world:

Since Lincoln's time, that idea - that revolutionary American dream of human dignity and equality for all - has been spreading across the world. And so, today when Americans are asked to help Lincoln's ideas flourish in places far from these steps we ask ourselves the hard and searching questions: Are these ideas still valid? Do they deserve a hearing elsewhere if free men so choose" (Johnson 1968).

The repetition of global themes emphasizes the place of American Democracy in the world structure. Further, it serves as a qualifying factor that defends any action taken in order to defend global freedom and the American lead spread of Democracy across the world. This plea makes it unequivocally American to fight a violent war to achieve the spreading of American Democracy and makes it anti-American to not.

Nixon carries on this narrative, further connecting Lincoln and the global place of America. He reminds the public that Lincoln was a statesman when the United States was not a world power, when globalism was not a widespread concept. Harding, Truman, and Johnson have presented an argument of the responsibility and foundational value of spreading American Democracy across the World. Ford legitimizes this with invoking higher beings and divinity. But Nixon uses the magic word that has broadly been professed across other speeches at the Lincoln Memorial in varying forms of application: Americas Destiny. Nixon then speaks for Lincoln:

[Lincoln] would have hoped that America, with its strength and its wealth, would not turn away from greatness despite the fact that some other nations in the world turn inward, failing to assume their responsibilities for building a peaceful world. Lincoln would have said a great nation, a strong nation, a rich nation, and a great people will use their strength and their wealth to build a world in which peace and freedom can survive for themselves and for others as well (Nixon 1974).

This narrative is strategically crafted by the Nixon and past presidents to introduce the promotion wide spread democracy as a foundational value of American Democracy.

Nixon is the last president to push almost entirely in his use of the Lincoln memorial for American support of violence and war as a means to support global spread of American Democracy. However, continual themes of globalism, the benefits of democratic government over other forms of government, and support of the military are consistently used themes when utilizing the Lincoln Memorial.

The repetition of global themes emphasize the place of American Democracy in the world structure. Further, it serves as a qualifying factor that defends any action taken in order to defend global freedom and the American lead spread of Democracy across the world. Thus,

inside of the foundational values and the great American Heart of American Democracy is the value of war and those who fight in those wars. The idea of fighting for Democratic rights, principles, and practices is how the United States got its start, and is thus the most foundational level of American Democracy. Harding emphasizes this point when stating that prior to Lincoln, war was the initial event that gave birth to America and her democracy. However, the Civil War - because of Lincoln's actions as president - gave birth to a new American which has been unchallenged and lived under ever since (Harding 1922).

2.2.2 Civil Rights

Lincoln sits as the great emancipator from his temple style memorial setting the Lincoln Memorial as a site unlike any on the National Mall. The physical placement and location of the Lincoln Memorial on the mall, in relation to the Capitol Building, the White House, and the Supreme Court make the Lincoln Memorial a site attractive to movements and protests. The reflecting pool and its symbolic meaning make this an even more attractive site. Thus, the setting of the Lincoln Memorial as a place that became synonymous with the Civil Rights Movement was almost pre-destined.

The inability to divorce Lincoln from racial freedom and the Civil Rights Movement is a narrative carefully created by the presidents from Harding, all the way to Biden. Harding begins to form this narrative by focusing on messages of Lincoln as the savior of the Nation. In telling the story of emancipation, Harding focuses on the fact that Lincoln did not in fact hate slavery, and that his goal in taking office was not to free the slaves, rather it was the means to ending and reuniting the union, and when it was all said and done, he became more anti-slavery and more pro-racial equality (Harding 1922).

Harding highlights an honest depiction of Lincoln as someone who had to come to the realization that African Americans deserved the same application of rights and values set forth in the Declaration of Independence. In doing so, I argue that Harding carves a narrative of the Lincoln Memorial and African Americans. This narrative is not one that advocates for the advancement of racial equality, rather it is a narrative that acknowledges that the Gettysburg Address and 'Great Emancipator' are carved into the walls of the memorial. I find that Harding is somewhat constrained by the structure and its features, and cannot ignore the design and creation of the memorial when assigning meaning and definition to it, even with his presidential power (Neustadt 1960).

Truman carries on the Civil Rights torch, specifically utilizing "civil rights" ten times in his 1947 speech at the Lincoln Memorial while speaking at an NAACP event. He takes this opportunity to credit claim what he has done as president to further Civil Rights.

I appointed an Advisory Committee on Civil Rights last December. Its members, fifteen distinguished private citizens, have been surveying our civil rights difficulties and needs for several months... I have asked the Congress to pass legislation extending basic civil rights to the people of Guam and American Samoa so that these people can share our ideals of freedom and self-government. This step, with others which will follow, is evidence to the rest of the world of our confidence in the ability of all men to build free institutions (Truman 1947).

Along with credit claiming and consistent repetition of 'civil rights' as an idea, Truman issues a responsibility to all Americans to lead the charge of civil rights changes in the United States, and to support the growth of democratic values that support civil rights abroad. Truman tells the

people that this is going to have to be done with "wisdom, imagination, and courage" (Truman 1947).

Truman uses his speech to link the beginning of American democracy to Lincoln, rather than Washington, because of the path that Lincoln cleared for civil rights and the advancement of African Americans in American democracy. Where Washington and all of the presidents before Lincoln governed in a democratic republic, the presence of slavery halted the United States from truly governing under the foundational values and ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence. Lincoln finalized the puzzle, and American democracy took on its final and full form, with Lincoln marked and credited as the president who issued it into practice.

Kennedy carries this theme of civil rights by focusing on the actions taken by African Americans to save themselves. In what Kennedy describes as the purest and most incredible practice of American Democracy, even when the actual structures of American Democracy failed:

A structure of segregation divided the Negro from his fellow American citizen... despite humiliation and deprivation, the Negro retained his loyalty to the United States and to democratic institutions. He showed this loyalty by brave service in two world wars, by the rejection of extreme or violent policies, by a quiet and proud determination to work for long-denied rights within the framework of the American Constitution. The second is that despite humiliation and deprivation the Negro has never stopped working for his own salvation. There is no more impressive chapter in our history than the one in which our Negro fellow citizens sought better education for themselves and their children, built better schools and better houses,

carved out their own economic opportunities, enlarged their press, fostered their arts, and clarified and strengthened their purpose as a people (Kennedy 1962).

Kennedy exemplifies the African American experience as that which makes up the perfect embodiment of American democracy. While African Americans were not protected and given the inherent values of the founding legal documents that white individuals had been given, they were able to use the governing systems and values of American democracy to progress racial equality when political elites would not. In this way, African Americans are an example of American democracy in practice.

Kennedy then calls for continual work to be done in the pursuit of civil rights and racial justice in the United States. This is a literal call that he makes, but it is also one that he makes thematically throughout the speech. Where the African American population was denied any human right, to the point of literally being viewed not even as human beings but as property, Kennedy does not waste time in pointing out that they still found a way to their freedoms. African Americans, though not being counted in the democratic process, embodied democratic values and found their own freedom.

This is not the first time we see an American president invoke this kind of rhetoric. Rather, this is a rhetorical device that allows the democratic process to continue though that very democratic process fails so many minorities and inter-sectional individuals. By turning the narrative of oppression into one of opportunity, Kennedy fundamentally intertwines foundational values and ideals of democracy with civil rights, further solidifying the narrative of civil rights and Lincoln together.

Johnson focuses on the inaccessibility of education, healthcare, shelter, and hope on a racial level, but his major focus in stating this is to then push a narrative that more closely aligns

with the push for the spread of American Democracy throughout the world. In 1967, Johnson focuses on the global failure to apply racial justice, and the need for America to pursue achieving that justice.

Today, racial suspicions, racial hatreds, and racial violence plague men in almost every part of the earth: in Asia, in Africa, in Europe, in Latin America, in the United States. It is man's ancient curse and man's present shame. The true liberators of mankind have always been those who showed men another way to live--than by hating their brothers (Johnson 1967).

In his other usages of the Lincoln Memorial, Johnson continues this explicit theme of the pursuit of racial justice abroad, rather than fulfilling the needs of civil rights at home stating that "in Lincoln's spirit, we will achieve "a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves and with all nations" (Johnson 1968).

Nixon continues Johnson's rhetoric of the importance of globally expanding values of American Democracy because of widespread racial inequality and injustice. However, in a private and unplanned gathering that took place at the Lincoln Memorial, Nixon points out to his gathered audience of the inequalities that take place towards African Americans inside of the United States. However, Nixon adds all minority groups, as well as specifically naming Mexican Americans, to those who need to be thought about in order to promote real racial equality and justice in the United States (Nixon 1970).

Following his speech at the Inauguration Week Opening Concert at the Lincoln Memorial, W. Bush released a press statement for the 40th anniversary of the Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr. "I Have a Dream Speech."²¹ This messaging focused squarely on civil rights, where Bush claims that the "I have a Dream" speech, as well as the life of Dr. King "caused Americans to examine their hearts and live up to the ideals of our Constitution" (Bush 2003). The draw of Dr. King's speech to the constitution alone rather than the Declaration of Independence differs from the typical messaging of civil rights and Dr. King. Bush closes with the familiar call to continue the work of the Civil Rights Movement, and continual pursuit to fulfill Dr. King's unfulfilled dream.

Obama brings much more pointed attention to the continuing issue of civil rights, racial injustice, and inequalities in the United States beginning in 2011. Obama drew attention to Lincoln's ability to have hope in America. He also draws attention to Lincoln's ability to inspire hope in Americans even in the times of greatest division. Obama uses Lincoln's past hope as the foundation to call for hope, and then ask the American people to take action through their support in him in his actions as president.

In 2013, Obama puts full attention to the issue in the opening lines of his speech that "that promise - those truths - remain unmet." As he continues with the same definition and thematic usage of the past presidents of the required courage and conviction to not give into the hardships that come with wanting change by those who will not get the spotlight for the work they do, but he takes an additional approach to emphasize this. Obama states that it is not enough for the oppressed to fight for racial equality and justice, but that it also requires those who are not oppressed to fight for the racial equality and justice of those who are oppressed (Obama 2013).

²¹ This ceremony took place at the Lincoln Memorial and was titled the 40th Anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" Speech rather than the 40th Anniversary celebration for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom because this is the ceremony where the step of the Lincoln Memorial where the "I Have a Dream" speech was marked.

Obama gives the tools for the fight beyond what is mentally and emotionally required to take on the call of the fight. Obama capitalizes on "the march," repeating the word 'march' 29 times in his speech given at the 50th anniversary celebration of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Obama calls on everyone to march but gives distinct call outs to "the tireless teacher," "that successful businessman," "the father," "the battle-scarred veterans," finally culminating to "everyone who realizes what those glorious patriots knew on that day, that change does not come from Washington, but to Washington" (Obama 2013).

Trump reflects the words, phrases, and themes of Harding and Truman, indicating that "devotion to our founding ideals led American patriots to abolish the evil of slavery, secure civil rights, and expand the blessings of liberty to all Americans" (Trump 2019). Trumps reference to Lincoln support both the ideas that Lincoln is the father of modern American Democracy, reiterating him as the first president of the new America. He continues on to say that: "This is the noble purpose that inspired Abraham Lincoln to rededicate our nation to a new birth of freedom, and to resolve that we will always have a government of, by, and for the people... For Americans, nothing is impossible" (Trump 2019). This invokes themes used by Kennedy, Nixon, and Obama that there is work to do, that Americans are to be continually inspired by Lincoln and his actions, and that because of the founding ideals and values of American democracy, anything is achievable.

Throughout the presidential use of the Lincoln Memorial, the same themes are followed, with every president at least giving a nod towards civil rights, racial justice, and freedom across America. However, they also all give a nod to Lincoln as the emancipator who changed the entire projection of the United States and American Democracy.

The presidential rhetoric of civil rights in the United States promotes the idea of Lincoln as the beginning. He marks the defined and current democracy that is practiced, and has been in practice, since the end of the Civil War as that of American Democracy. This is a theme consistent through every speech given at the Lincoln Memorial, as well as through every narrative formed on the National Mall. Lincoln ushered in American Democracy that included civil rights and is thus among the founding fathers.

2.2.3 Unity

Expectations of unity are set in a very purposeful way at the Lincoln Memorial. The word 'unity' was not explicitly used until Johnson in 1968. However, this does not mean that messages of unity were not present at the Lincoln Memorial prior. The messages of the Lincoln Memorial center around civil rights, foundational values of American Democracy, and praising Lincoln as the founder and legitimizer of modern-day American Democracy. These themes are inherently messages of unity within the sovereign borders of the United States. As such, they present a unique dictionary of vocabulary to describe and paint the picture of unity.

Harding begins defining messages of unity in ways that draw reference to the Union and Lincoln's bringing back together of the North and the South. Harding utilized multiple words and phrases such as 'constitutional union,' 'American Union,' 'concord of union,' 'reestablished union,' 'reunion,' 'serve the union,' 'chorus of the union,' 'preserved the union,' 'faith in the union,' 'maintained union,' and 9 other uses of the word 'union' in his speech. The attention paid to the union invoked the unity formed through Lincoln, and the resulting American Democracy practiced and preserved today.

Johnson, Clinton, and Obama echoed this example and referenced Lincoln's union at least once during their time in front of the Lincoln Memorial. While there is use of the explicit word

'union' among the 21st century presidents, it is these presidents whose lack of the word and phrasing of the 'Union' is clear. This transition moves attention of Unity from Lincoln and to the people. However, it also is in line with the transition into the presidential use of the word 'unity' among their speeches.

Across the speeches delivered at the Lincoln Memorial, the word unity is used only 12 times. Johnson is the first president to actually use the word unity, when he said, "Lincoln sensed that our unity as a people would flow from diversity..." (Johnson 1968). He goes on to use the word 'unity' twice more in this one speech, stating that Lincoln took a long-sighted view of unity when there was discourse in America (1968). Initially, the themes of unity points to racial justice and equality, the Civil Rights Movement, and the inherent disunity that was present in the United States.

However, the last time Johnson uses the word unity, he does so in a way that promotes individuality as an inherently American pillar. He said, "Lincoln knew that unity in America was not to be confused with the sleek face of conformity" (Johnson 1968). This is in direct alignment with the containment policy that the United States had taken on. In this way, Johnson sets the word unity in line with American Democratic values, and in doing so, sets it far away from association with the communist thought that America had been starchily fighting against during, and before Johnson's time as president.

Clinton and Obama continue the direct use of the word 'unity.' Clinton states that the history of diversity is what gives America roots of unity, and from that unity comes the ability of a people to band together and stand as one country (Clinton 1993). While promoting a theme of unity, Clinton draws attention to the Gettysburg Address carved into the structure of the Lincoln Memorial linking Lincoln with the public. As well, Clinton links the public to the overall success

of the United States. In doing so, I argue that Clinton uses the structure of the Lincoln Memorial to support his overall desired message and definition for the memorial. This suggests an alignment of narrative and definition between Clinton and the political elite involved in the design and creation phase of the memorial.

When Obama uses it next, he continues on this same line of thought, but in an opposing way. Obama calls out the way that unity and racial politics in the United States go hand in hand. "Racial politics could cut both ways, as the transformative message of unity and brotherhood was drowned out by the language of recrimination" (Obama 2013). In this messaging, Obama carries on the narrative of unity being foundational to America's greatness. However, he directly calls out the ways in which there is not unity in the United States, and indicates that because of the disunity that is rooted in racial injustice, the greatness of America is being impeded.

Trump uses the word 'unity' six times across his usages of the Lincoln Memorial. In 2019, He continues the theme set by Clinton and supported Obama that the greatness of the United States comes from its unity, but he sets it back to the very founding of the United States stating "That love and unity held together the first pilgrims, it forged communities on the Great Plains... and it keeps our nation thriving today" (Trump 2019b). He then explicitly calls out the United States military as his unit of focus for the foundational promotion of unity within America. He states that "At Shiloh, Antietam, and Gettysburg, our soldiers gave the last full measure of devotion for the true unity of our nation and the freedom of all Americans" (Trump 2019b). The focus on the military as the source of unity in the United States is continued through the messaging of this speech. Finally, Trump's last use of the word 'unity' in this speech is to promote personal characteristics of unity within the American public.

In 2020, Trump delivered his Town Hall on the Coronavirus Pandemic at the Lincoln Memorial. In this, he uses the word unity three times. He states, "There was great unity and dissent at the same thing. With all of that unity we have, in one sense, we have great unity" (Trump 2020) to indicate unity within the United States during a controversial time. However, he does also mention that there have been decisions that have been made even without full unity.

Biden's use of the word echoes that of Clinton, Bush, and Trump, when he states that "to overcome the challenges in front of us requires the most elusive of all things in a democracy: Unity" (Biden 2021). This message is one that reflects the unique ability for the American public to act together in order to overcome and achieve the great destiny of American Democracy. But it also echoes Obama's attention to the ways in which unity is being hurt and tamped down.

Though the explicit use of the word 'unity' is only used 12 times throughout all of the uses of the Lincoln Memorial, it is clear that this is a vocabulary word and a specific phrase of the last 55 years. This indicates that, like other themes examined in the presidential speeches at the Lincoln Memorial, that there has been movement from specific instances of unity within the United States, to a broad categorization that is communicated through the word 'unity.' Because 'unity' is repeated by Obama, Trump, and Biden, it is reasonable to expect that the future speeches that take place at the Lincoln Memorial include specific use of the word 'unity.'

2.2.3.1 Creating an 'Us' versus 'Them' Mentality

Reference to the United States as the Union is not the only unique language used to convey unity at the Lincoln Memorial. The other most glaring thematic approach to referencing unity, without referencing the union or unity, is the use of the American People. Harding begins this trend in using phrasing of the American people such as 'American Heart,' 'American gratitude,' 'heart of American citizenship,' and 'conscience of the American people.' This

language characterizes the American public as something beyond the actual individual people. Not only is the body that participates in American Democracy vital to the union and the success of American Democracy, but Harding is indicating that something mystic and divine is purposefully intertwined in the American public. This idea of Americans being distinct and special is furthered by Harding through his use of phrases such as "American heart", "gratitude", and "conscious". This language is one that performs an 'us versus them' function²² where the in-group is the special, set apart American who lives under the glories of American democracy, and the out-group is everyone else in the world.

This 'us' versus 'them' narrative is perpetuated and continuously shaped by every president. Truman repeats the phrasing of 'all Americans,' 'as Americans,' and 'Americans achievements' though-out his speech. In a further effort to craft this narrative, he expands the sovereign borders of the United States and mentions 'American Samoa.' This expands the 'us' group to include another country, ultimately showing that because of the 'destiny' of American Democracy, the 'them' group can become part of the 'us' group.

Kennedy pushes the 'us' versus 'them' narrative by beginning to define up who is included in the 'us' bin. He defines the 'us' bin by emphasizing the place of the African American among "his fellow American citizen" (Kennedy 1962). Johnson continues to define who is in the 'us' bin by beginning his address with "my fellow Americans" starting the speech in an immediate messaging of 'us' versus 'them' mentality, and including himself and the seat of president in the 'in' group. He continues to repeatedly use the phrases of 'the American promise,' 'sick Americans,' 'aging Americans,' 'any Americans,' 'American community,' 'full rights as Americans,' and 'American Soul.'

²² See Wodak 2008 and Perdue et al. 1990 for more information regarding the political structuring of 'us' versus 'them' theory.

Clinton sets the definition of who is included in the 'them' bin by stating, "This [unity] is a lesson the world still has not learned. AS we see today so painfully in Bosnia, Somalia, Iraq, and elsewhere" (Clinton 1993). In contrast, Clinton sets the United States in the 'us' bin as he states that the United States has yet to perfect unity, but unity is something we have worked towards, and will continue to work towards.

Obama echoes Clinton and continues to define those in the 'them' bin:

Raising before us stands a memorial to a man [Lincoln] who led a small band of farmers and shopkeepers in revolution against the army of an Empire, all for the sake of an idea. On the ground below is a tribute to a generation that withstood war and depression -- men and women like my grandparents who toiled on bomber assembly lines and marched across Europe to free the world from tyranny's grasp (Obama 2009).

Here, Obama pulls out the 'Empire' in reference to Great Britain, as well as the governing structure of an autocracy. However, he goes further to include any government that imposes tyranny. Also, he explicitly calls our 'Europe' not necessarily in a way that places all of Europe in the 'them' bin, but that does place the axis powers of World War II firmly in the 'them' bin.

In 2013, Obama continues this explicit narrative crafted by Kennedy and Johnson and calls out various groupings that make up American calling out his "fellow Americans" (2013) that included 'African Americans,' 'Asians and Native Americans,' 'Americans with a disability,' 'Japanese Americans,' 'Jewish Americans,' 'working Americans,' 'Native American veteran[s],' 'middle-class Americans,' 'all Americans.' He takes the overall goal of Kennedy in naming these inclusions of who falls into the 'in' groups, and says:

That when millions of Americans of every race and every region, every faith and every station, can join together in a spirit of brotherhood, then those mountains will be made low, and those rough places will be made plain, and those crooked places, they straighten out towards grace, and we will vindicate the faith of those who sacrificed so much and live up to the true meaning of our creed, as one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all (Obama 2013).

Obama also repetitively uses 'American renewal' and 'generation of Americans' to reinforce the long standing in group and destiny of American Democracy.

Trump also highlights who is in the 'us' group, as he highlights 'African Americans,' 'Asian Americans, and 'Hispanic Americans.' But his main focus and groupings are not necessarily concerning racial or ethnic qualities of an Individual. In his Town Hall, Trump highlights the 'American comeback' by repetitively addressing 'American families,' 'American business,' 'American workers,' and 'American companies.'

Ford highlights that an explicit way to reinforce the 'us' versus 'them' is to wrap the 'in' group into the generations of Americans that came before. Ford claims that he "believe[s] the reason each generation of Americans find inspiration from Lincoln's life is because he seems, above all, to have been so human himself" (Ford 1975). Highlighting the past generations that at one point made up the 'in' group reinforces the narrative that the in and out groups have always been a vital structure that has shaped American Democracy, and that should continue to inspire the sustaining of American Democracy.

H. W. Bush and Clinton's reinforcement of this narrative are along similar lines of thought. Bush pushed the narrative by repetitive use of the phrases 'proud to be Americans' and 'American people.' Clinton uses the repetitive phrases of the 'American promise,' 'American

home,' 'fellow Americans,' 'American reunion,' 'American people.' Together, Bush's and Clinton's phrasing bring back the theme of the divine destiny of American Democracy but place the divinity of America's destiny on the American people directly.

W. Bush highlights the 'American people' in a repetitive way, humbly including himself as a 'fellow American' to explicitly reintroduce the 'us' versus 'them' narrative. However, where H.W. Bush and Clinton only hint at the destiny of American Democracy through the 'us' category by their phrase choices, Bush explicitly ties the American People to it. "Wherever you come from, whatever your political party, thank you for taking part in this great tradition [the presidential Inauguration] of our country... The presidency does not belong to any one person, but to all of us; it belongs to the American people" (Bush 2001). I argue that throughout Bush's speech, the messaging and thematic emphasis create a narrative in which the success of American democracy is due to the American people.

Trump and Biden both echo Bush's example of really calling out the intertwined nature of American Democracies destiny with the 'us' versus 'them' theme. Trump references the 'American spirit,' 'American character,' 'American hero,' 'American Freedom,' 'American Independence,' 'American lives,' 'American resolve,' 'American warriors,' 'American livery,' 'the spirit of American Independence,' and 'every American patriot' various times throughout his Fourth of July speech. Biden repetitively references the 'American people.' However, his biggest contribution to the 'us' versus 'them' narrative is in his phrasing of 'defines us as Americans' and 'ordinary Americans who do extraordinary things.' These phrasings truly highlight where American Democracy allows 'ordinary' people to do 'extraordinary' things, and the people who are doing those things are the American people.

The 'us' versus 'them' narrative that is created and pushed from the Lincoln Memorial is both a message of unity and inclusiveness, as well as an inherent message of division. While there is a call for unity within the borders of the United States, there is a call for division and discord with those ideals and values outside of the American Democracy. It is in this paradox that the presidents really have the opportunity to utilize the power of Nationalism and allow the support for their policy goals and agendas to begin to take place, especially in areas of foreign policy.

2.2.4 Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Lincoln Memorial

The presidents center the definition and narrative of the Lincoln Memorial around the foundational values of American democracy, civil rights, and unity. To create a foundation for the narrative of American democracy at the Lincoln Memorial, the presidents rely on continual thematic use of founding legal documents, explicitly defining the values and ideals of democracy that can be identified at the Lincoln Memorial, and highlighting the role of the American people in the practice and spread of American democracy. Through different periods of time, I find that the presidents add to, and further define each of these categories all in a strategic attempt to craft and shape the political memory and narrative they want.

Presidents begin utilizing the Lincoln Memorial by broadly addressing and defining the foundational values of American democracy, civil right, and unity. I found an ebb-and-flow pattern where the defining of the Lincoln Memorial began in a top-down, political elite driven form. Under this approach, presidents used broad and general themes in an effort to define the Lincoln Memorial, and its place in the overall narrative of the National Mall. As the approach to defining the memorial began to shift into a more bottom-up, public and political elite defined memorial, the definitions and narratives became much more detailed and defined. However, in

the last ten years, I identified where a shift has started to occur that began with Trump where there has been a resurgence of the top-down approach to shifting the definition and meaning of the Lincoln Memorial.

As I continued to analyze the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial through time however, I identified shifting points within each theme that showed movement towards a more bottom-up approach to further defining the Lincoln Memorial. Within the themes of the foundational values of American democracy, civil rights, and unity, presidents would begin to be more specific in exactly what they mean and who is included in the conversation. This allows the themes to become much narrower, while allowing the definition and narrative of the Lincoln Memorial to be much broader.

From my qualitative content analysis of the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial, I find important examples of communication between political elite in the first stage of the cycle, and the president. I argue that the example of Harding's lengthy acknowledgement of Lincoln as the Great Emancipator,²³ without actually advocating for racial equality, reveals a constraint on the president. During the Presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial, presidents cannot simply ignore the structures that make-up a given memorial. Rather, their strategic defining of the memorials has to somewhat align with what is physically built and presented. This suggests a relationship between the president and the political elite who contribute to the first stage of the cycle of communication as outlined in Chapter 1.

Further, I argue that unity is an important message to set as president that drives reliance on primary themes of unity. However, this is also a natural theme to use to define the Lincoln Memorial because of the Gettysburg Address, and Lincolns role in uniting the North and the

²³ As argued in the "Civil Rights" subsection.

South following the Civil War. Unity within the United States does not always indicate that every single person, in every single situation agrees or acts on the same thing in the same way. Rather, unity is the ability to work together, make decisions, take action, and promote the ideals and values of American Democracy. This is applicable to both peaceful ways within the sovereign borders of the United States, and in times of war and violence outside of the United States. This is both an important message that the president has power and authority to call for, but it is also a message that is inherent in the design of the structure. This suggests a cycle of communication that takes place between the first and the second stages I argue in Chapter 1, where there is communication between the political elite involved in design and creation, and the president.

Lincoln was the only figure memorial placed on the National Mall during such an extreme time of limited representation and allowed political participation. Major strides in voting rights, constitutional amendments, and political representation had even been made in 1943 when the Jefferson Memorial was placed on the National Mall. However, with the addition of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial in 1997, both universal suffrage and tools of communication between political elite and the U.S. public were solidified. Does the political climate and situational context a memorial is placed on the National Mall under create an initial narrative that is either top-down or bottom-up driven? Does the experience of the Roosevelt Memorial reflect the second time period of the presidential defining of the Lincoln Memorial rather than the first period? Or is the top-down, political elite driven process the norm in narrative creation until the memorial has been on the National Mall for a certain amount of time?

2.3 Qualitative Content Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial data set consists only of two entries, both of which are speeches delivered by President Clinton. In 1997, Clinton dedicates the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Originally, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is dedicated without the depiction of President Roosevelt in his wheelchair. However, prior to the dedication, but not before the memorial is complete, members of the FDR Memorial Commission introduced a bill that was signed into law that directed the Interior of Design to construct an additional statue and portion of the existing Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial that explicitly depicted President Roosevelt in his wheelchair. Thus, in 2001, with nine days left in office, Clinton accepts and rededicates the fully completed Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial with the depiction of President Roosevelt in the wheelchair. Three central themes of FDR as the president hope, the institutions of American democracy, and unity emerge.

2.3.1 FDR as the President of Hope

In both speeches, President Clinton uses the opportunity to explicitly define the purpose of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial as a place of hope and an inherent ability to overcome any obstacle placed in the path of America because of the virtues America is built upon through Roosevelt's Presidency, "the greatest presidency" according to Clinton (1997). This theme is repeated throughout both speeches given by Clinton, and in the dedication, speech given in 1997 addressed this purpose explicitly claiming:

...His memorial will encourage us, reminding us that whenever America acts with certainty of purpose and FDR's famous flexibility of mind, we have always been more than equal to whatever challenges we face... Our mission is to prepare

America for the time to come, to write a new chapter of our history, inspired always by the greatest source of hope in our history (Clinton 1997).

Clinton describes President Roosevelt as "the greatest source of hope in our history" (Clinton 1997). This point is made at the end of his speech but is built up to throughout the entire script through repeated use of words such as 'faith,' 'destiny,' 'possible,' 'mission,' 'confidence,' 'doubt,' 'forged,' 'responsibility,' 'future,' 'conquer,' 'prosperity,' and 'dominance.' Clinton used the word 'faith' alone 23 times in the five-page speech. The consistent use of words that invoke strength and happiness are used to describe the person the President Roosevelt was, as well as the challenges he overcame to lead a country for four consecutive terms. Clinton connected these words with messages of anything being possible, and anyone being able to overcome any obstacle as exemplified by President Roosevelt (Clinton 1997).

In his 2001 speech, Clinton cuts the use of 'faith' to only once, but still colors his speech with overwhelmingly positive words such as 'courage,' 'hope,' 'overcome,' 'productive,' 'encourage,' 'brave,' 'fight,' 'spirit,' and 'persistence.' These words were all used to describe Roosevelt, following the same message he relayed in his original 1997 speech.

Varying from his 1997 speech, however, Clinton creates separation between negative words and phrasing that would produce a need for incredible hope. One example of this is a pointed example where Roosevelt presented himself, as the president of the United States, in his wheelchair, an incredibly rare occurrence.

...In the summer of 1944 President Roosevelt spent an afternoon at a naval hospital in Hawai'i. The men there had been seriously wounded, and many had lost limbs in the war. He insisted on wheeling himself into their wards. He wanted to show them that he, the president of the United States, could not walk away better

than they, but he could still show courage and hope and inner strength (Clinton 2001).

Given the incredible controversy and fight that brought forth the depiction of the former president of the United States in a wheelchair, it makes sense that the current president would use this space and time to defend the depiction of Roosevelt with a positive, hope inspiring message to the Nation. In this light, Clinton dedicates the speech to the reconfirming the idea that disability can be overcome and made an inherent strength, one that moves an individual to doing things they otherwise would not have been able to achieve had they not had the disability. This is explicitly expressed twice in this speech, first through expressing a quotation by Eleanor Roosevelt:

...The quote behind the statue, by Eleanor Roosevelt, who pointed out that before he was stricken with polio, President Roosevelt had never been forced to become a truly great man, had never been forced to develop those habits of infinite patience and persistence without which life cannot be fully lived (Clinton 2001).

He then points back to this theme in the closing of his speech stating that Roosevelt was more free and more capable in leading a nation out of the trenches and into soaring prosperity because of his polio, directly translating and driving home the words of Eleanor Roosevelt. However, this is not just the overarching theme of the speech, rather, it is a ramp that builds up to a more potent and patriotic theme that gives more dimensionality to the symbol of hope that Clinton defines Roosevelt and the memorial to him as. In both 1997 and 2001, Clinton paints the picture of President Roosevelt as the brightest example of hope with the ultimate conclusion that his hope and ability to overcome the negative impacts of his polio were due to the availability of

hope and freedom one can find when living under the system of American Democracy, thus making Roosevelt the perfect example of the Ideal American citizen.

Further, the structure of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is also a space that will not allow Roosevelt to be lost to time. "This memorial will be the embodiment of FDR's faith, for it will ensure that all future generations will know. It will ensure that they will all see the "happy warrior" keeping American's rendezvous with destiny" (Clinton 1997).

2.3.2 The Institutions that Built Modern Day American Democracy

When his 1997 speech was delivered, Clinton knew²⁴ that there was going to be another ceremony, just as large, just as important, and perhaps even more publicized as the initial dedication of the entire memorial because of the incredibly controversial addition of the statue of Roosevelt in the wheelchair that had been legally mandated prior to the dedicatory ceremony of the memorial in 1997. Thus, in 2001, Clinton further defined the memorial, stating:

This is a monument to freedom, the power of every man and woman to transcend circumstance, to laugh in the face of fate, to make the most of what God has given. This is a statue of freedom. I, too, am glad that the statue is built at a scale not larger than life but lifelike; not raised on a pedestal but available, touchable, for people who are in wheelchairs and people who cannot see. The power of the statue is in its immediacy and in its reminder to all who touch, all who see, all who walk or wheel around that they too are free, but every person must claim freedom" (Clinton 2001).

²⁴ As discussed in the memorial timeline in Chapter 1, the law had been passed that would place a statue of Roosevelt in the wheelchair following the dedication of the already standing memorial. Clinton was a part of that law-making process, and was aware of the stipulation that it would be included following the original dedication of the memorial.

Clinton connects the impact of the New Deal programs to the way that American citizens then turned around, and provided relief, aid, and interconnectedness as they began to take individual responsibility for each other both on the home-front, and well as abroad taking up arms to fight not only in a war for the United States, but the whole world. In this, Clinton expands Roosevelt's impact beyond the United States, and makes him a symbol of hope for the entire world. This is driven home by his mention of the United Nations, and expanding education with the GI Bill, as well as the statement:

With that faith, he committed our Nation to lead the world, first as the arsenal of democracy and then at the head of the great crusade to free the world from tyranny. Before the war began, the four freedoms set the foundation for the future and made it clear to the whole world that America's goal was not domination, but a dominion of freedom in a world at peace... It was that faith in his own extraordinary potential that enabled him to guide his country from a wheelchair... he lifted a great people back to their feet and set American to march again towards its destiny (Clinton 1997).

Clinton not only used the impact of Roosevelt's policy implementation as a way to touch on globalization and the modern government of American Democracy today. Rather, he also uses the opportunity to connect the New Deal programs to the things he himself has achieved in office and highlight his success as the current leader of the United States. In fact, Clinton not only mentions the increase in jobs and the low unemployment rate currently leading the United States to yet another place of prosperity, but he also credit claims the fulfilling of Roosevelt's overall work and goals:

And at this time, where the pinnacle that Roosevelt hoped America would achieve in our influence and power has come to pass, we still, strangely, fight battles with doubts, doubts that he would treat with great impatience and disdain, doubts that lead some to urge us to pull back from the world at the very first time since Roosevelt's time when we actually can realize his vision of world peace and world prosperity and the dominance of the ideals for which he gave his life. Let us honor his vision not only with this memorial today but by acting in the way he would tell us to act if he were standing here giving this speech, on his braces... We are Americans. We must have faith, we must not be afraid, and we must lead (Clinton 1997).

Following the claim that he has brought about goals of Roosevelt, Clinton then uses the speech as a time to call upon the citizens of the United States to continue to work with him, trust him, and believe in him as the president of the United States as he was just beginning his second term in office.

Then, in 2001, Clinton again harps on the New Deal, but from a different point of view to achieve a different goal. With nine days left in his second and final term in office, Clinton uses the space of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial to summarize his success as the 43rd president of the United States of America, and he delivers this in the same way he delivered his credit claims in 1997, first by highlighting the New Deal, and then tying it to his presidency.

He said that returning Americans with disabilities to active and productive lives was a great objective for the Nation, one of the greatest causes of humanity... It was one of the basic tenets of the New Deal, the inherent worth of all Americans, our shared responsibility to empower them. That is what we have sought to do here for

8 years, to avoid any barrier that would keep the potential of any American from being fully tapped. We have tried to reward work and give people the support they need to live their lives in freedom. Even in the last days of the administration, we are still working on efforts to increase employment of Americans with disabilities, to provide alternatives to institutions, and we're going out with a report on the progress we've made and what we still have to do. We must always remember that in the end, the story of America is the story of freedom and interdependence (Clinton 2001).

Though the opportunity to credit claim success is as natural to political figures as breathing is to human beings, this distinct utilization of the space and context to credit claim highlights Clinton's assigned definition and meaning of the Roosevelt Memorial. This instance of credit claiming at the memorial differs from the first because Clinton is no longer asking the public to trust and work with him as president of the United States for the next four years. Rather, this is a moment of last opportunity to solidify a permanent political memory of his time in office, and his place in American History as communicated by the National Mall.

In this specific instance of credit claiming, Clinton achieves something no one else has been able to do on the National Mall: solidify their name with a memorial that is not actually a memorial to them. Rather Clinton solidifies his name to a memorial to someone else. This is partially due to Clinton and his policy agenda while in office entangled with a rare opportunity to dedicate the same memorial twice, but it is also due to chance.

2.3.3 *Unity*

In both dedicatory speeches, Clinton continually focuses on the fact that Franklin Delano Roosevelt led the country through atrocious times, ultimately leading the Nation to victory, in a

wheelchair. This is in part due to the overall themes of hope and approachability he wanted to define the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial by, but also to bring up broad messages of unity, and the need for continual work on unity and equality in the United States in order for the United States to reach its full potential and "destiny."

Clinton broadly achieves messages of unity by directly addressing issues with the term 'unity.' He begins in 1997 by connecting the achievements of the United States winning World War II and pulling out of the toughest financial time the United States had faced, the great depression. Clinton remarks:

...By showing President Roosevelt as he was, we show the world that we have faith that in America you are measured for what you are and what you have achieved, not for what you have lost. And we encourage all who face their difficulties and overcome them not to give in to fear but to believe in their possibilities. And now, again, we need the faith of Franklin Roosevelt in an entirely different time, but still no ordinary time, for in this time, new livelihoods demand new skills... We must struggle to make our rich racial, ethnic, and religious diversity a source of strength and unity when such differences are the undoing of millions and millions around the world (Clinton 1997).

In this quotation, Clinton calls attention to three types of unity the United States must keep working towards to achieve the greatness and worthy goals set out by Roosevelt. First, Unity as Americans. By invoking the victories, the United States won under the administration of Roosevelt, Clinton calls into focus the need to unify as the entire body of United States citizens. Further, Clinton invokes the imagery of Roosevelt by stating "we need the faith of Franklin Roosevelt in an entirely different time" (Clinton 1997), pulling in the messaging of 'a president

for everyone, not just one party' that the population of the United States often hears during the transition of administrations, as well as throughout a presidential administrations time in office due to partisanship issues woven into the fabric of American Democracy. Finally, the idea that 'we are stronger when we work together' create a dramatic and effective call for unity as a people who all have the shared identity of a citizen of the United States.

Second, Clinton sets a standard that focused on race and uniting those who have different skin tones. This is the only time race and ethnic equality is explicitly mentioned by Clinton. However, Clinton draws attention to the issues of racial equality in the United States through phrases such as, "there came a time when men of good will found a way to unite and produce and fight to destroy the forces of ignorance and intolerance and slavery and war," as well as nods to the four freedoms speech (Clinton 1997).

In 2001, Clinton continues themes of reaching towards racial equality and justice by capitalizing on words and phrases such as "to advance the cause of both freedom and community," "the inherent worth of all Americans," and perhaps most notably, "... we have sought to do here for 8 years, to avoid any barrier that would keep the potential of any American from being fully trapped" (Clinton 2001). In referencing his own success in passage of law that provided opportunity and security across the United States to Roosevelt's success with the programs of the New Deal, Clinton equates his goals of unity to that of Roosevelt. Further, the consistency of focus on racial equality in both speeches is in line with the heavy messages of working collectively to achieve the fullest of the freedoms that can be found and fulfilled within the United States due to the virtues of democracy that are the foundation of the United States Constitution

The largest theme of unity explored by Clinton in both 1997 and 2001, however, is unity behind the disability movement in order to create equality between the able bodied and those with disabilities. Clinton said, "The think I like about the disability movement today is, it has moved beyond trying to get the rest of us to the right thing out of compassion, doing the right thing because it's the right thing and the only sensible thing to do" (Clinton 2001). Through this, Clinton addresses and challenges a core issue that - to this day - is still an overarching message set within social culture and norms: those with disabilities are strictly limited, of lesser value than those who are fully able bodied, and do not need to accommodate for.

Though this is the overarching theme of the 2001 speech, it is also a theme that can be followed in the speech delivered in 1997. Clinton speaks in awe of Roosevelt's inability to let his polio and reliance on wheelchairs, leg braces, and crutches stop him from attaining the highest level of public office one can take in the United States (Clinton 1997).

Though the political context of the times varied, as well as Clinton's remaining time in office, Clinton did not change the overall narrative and definition of the FDR Memorial that he wanted to exist in 1997. Rather, Clinton only reiterated the original themes and definitions he had originally spoke on in 1997 in his 2001 speech.

2.3.4 Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

Perhaps the least used memorial on the National Mall, the themes and narrative of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is defined solely by President Clinton. I find the three themes kept consistent by President Clinton of hope for the American people, unity, and a trust in institutions that govern the United States. Among the themes of unity, Clinton calls for unity among individual American's, unity among those of different races, unity on a global level, and

unity between those who are able bodied and those who are disabled. I find that key phrases and vocabulary are used to convey the themes that create a narrative of meaning and purpose for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

In the two separate times of dedication for this memorial, Clinton utilized the inherent ability to credit claim the placement, finalizing, and unveiling of the memorials space during his time as president. This gave President Clinton the unique ability to solely act as the defining, authoritative voice for the overall purpose, meaning, and importance of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the way it connects to, and changes the overall narrative of the National Mall.

However, Clinton only uses the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial two times. Further, in both these usages, Clinton is acting in his official capacity to accept a federal memorial on the National Mall. Trump and Biden do not even post a caption-less photograph of the memorial on their Instagram's. While the two utilizations of the memorial are used to set a narrative for the memorial in relation to the broader narrative of the National Mall, the reality is that the narrative of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is that it is not included in the overall narrative.

2.4 Qualitative Content Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial data set begins in 2006 with the groundbreaking ceremony for the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial site by President Bush. Following the groundbreaking ceremony, President Obama spoke of the upcoming dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial on August 30, 2011, and then the dedication speech given on October 16, 2011. Following Obama, Trump brought attention to the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial with three Instagram posts of the stone structure of Martin Luther King Jr, all in observance of

MLK Day in 2018, 2019, and 2020. However, in 2019 Trump participated in a wreath laying ceremony at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial following public criticism that his schedule did not include any type of public acknowledgement of MLK Day. The 2019 post captures this wreath laying ceremony rather than a singular picture of just the memorial. This post is substantively different than the 2018 and 2020 post because both he and Vice President Pence are in the picture with the stone structure of Dr. King.

Biden's initial use of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is a speech at the 10-year anniversary of the King Memorial in 2021. Like Trump, Biden has utilized Instagram to send messages regarding the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. His posts consist of one photograph in October of 2021 in observance of MLK Day where the stone structure of Martin Luther King Jr. is the center of the photograph. A second post was made in March of 2022 with Vice President Harris and himself walking along the quote wall to the left side of the stone structure of Martin Luther King Jr., in honor of International Women's Day. Biden posted this photograph in honor of the first female vice-president and selected to post a photograph of the two of them at the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial in honor of her African American ancestry, which is also a first for the office of the vice president. A third post - a video post - was made in honor of the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington, with the still cover shot being that of the stone structure of Martin Luther King Jr., with Biden's message narrating the video.

2.4.1 Martin Luther King, Jr. as an Ordinary Citizen

Bush points out that Martin Luther King Jr. stands on the National Mall as "a great man" (Bush 2006), an important distinction as he stands as the only figure memorial on the National Mall who was not a president. This is a theme echoed by President Obama in his interview

regarding the change of date of dedication for the memorial, as well as in his dedication speech in 2011.

It is an important definition as to undeniably link the March on Washington, 'I Have a Dream' speech, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial as it allows for the definition and thought surrounding the memorial to be one that only invokes the 'I Have a Dream Speech' to the average visitor of the National Mall. I argue that the placing of a non-political figure on the National Mall had to be justified, and it was done so through the 'I Have a Dream' speech, and the March on Washington which irrevocably has connected Dr. King to the National Mall space prior to his memorial being erected.

The entanglement of Lincoln and Dr. King existed on the National Mall prior to the placement and dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in 2011. However, the building of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial was not the beginning of Martin Luther King Jr.'s place in the narrative of the American Story built on the National Mall.

The thematic repetition of the emancipation proclamation and racial unity used by the presidents at the Lincoln Memorial from the time it was dedicated in 1922 to 1953 created an environment that made the Lincoln Memorial an attractive setting for the civil rights demonstrations that started in 1954. The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom and the deliverance of the 'I Have a Dream Speech' in 1963 further solidified a definition of the Lincoln Memorial as a symbol of civil rights and the fight for racial justice and equality in the United States.

In 2003, the step where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered the "I Have a Dream" speech was engraved, exactly where King stood. This placed a permanent, tangible reminder that the Lincoln Memorial is to stand as a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement. In making a tangible

symbol of Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement on the National Mall, there was a permanent spotlight placed on the racial tensions and injustices that exist in the United States. Further, placing Dr. King's name on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial permanently entangled the names of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. in the American Story as told on the National Mall.

Even with the placement of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial on the National Mall, there is still utilization of the Lincoln Memorial for presidential speeches that primarily center around Martin Luther King Jr. due to the ceremony or event title. A primary example of this is Obama's 2013 speech given during the 50th anniversary for the March on Washington. This event took place at the Lincoln Memorial, which is appropriate given that it was the primary location for the rally of the March on Washington. However, the speech given by Obama more heavily focuses on Martin Luther King Jr. and his role in the Civil Rights Movement rather than the event of the March on Washington itself.

The theme of the ordinary man, rather than a president and great political figure for the United States is an obvious one. This is not something that the average person visiting the National Mall is not aware of. Yet, in both speeches at the King Memorial, and in his interview, Obama heavily emphasizes the fact that King was in fact, not the president of the United States. Beginning in the interview in August of 2011, Obama began emphasizing this theme by noting that "this is a man who didn't have a title, didn't have a rank in the military, but just led a nation in rediscovering its ideals and its values" (Obama 2011a).

The same theme is echoed in his dedicatory speech, but it is emphasized in two ways. First, following the line of thought from the interview, Obama states in his first opening lines:

In this place, he will stand for all time, among monuments to those who fathered this nation and those who defended it; a black preacher with no official rank or title who somehow gave voice to our deepest dreams and our most lasting ideals, a man who stirred our conscience and thereby helped make our union more perfect (Obama 2011b).

Obamas emphasis of Dr. King as a man with no title or rank is reflective of his statement on the memorial in August of 2011. Drawing attention to the fact that the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial not only stands as a memorial that brings racial diversity to the National Mall, but also brings a Memorial fully representative of the public body of America.

Yet, in another form, Obama draws attention to King as an ordinary man of flesh and blood, fallible, doubt holding, and imperfect, regardless of the massive depiction of King in the giant, stone sculpture that invokes strength and him being larger than life (2011b). He goes so far as to issue a warning to the public, stating: "This sculpture, massive and iconic as it is, will remind them of Dr. King's strength, but to see him only as larger than life would do a disservice to what he taught us about ourselves" (Obama 2011b).

A clear and important goal of Obama's is to give a piece of the National Mall and American history to the credit of the people. This is a refreshing breath of air as it is not a message hidden in the theme of participating in democracy by voting as is often seen in the messages delivered at the Lincoln Memorial, or for sacrificing one's life in a military defense of democracy as is often seen in the messages delivered at federal war memorials.

But Obama was not the first to do this. At the groundbreaking ceremony, Bush also recognized the place of the everyday citizen in the changing and shaping of American history. He deliberately harps on the power of movements, and as an example, the power of the Civil

Rights Movement to speak to and change the policy in the country at both legislative levels as well as judicial levels. He said:

Dr. King liked to say that our Civil Rights Act was written in the streets by citizens who marched for the idea that all men are created equal. He was right; yet there is no doubting that the law came as it did when it did because of the courage and leadership of Martin Luther King (Bush 2006).

For both Bush and Obama then, the purpose of presenting Martin Luther King Jr. as an ordinary, everyday American citizen is twofold. First, it creates a distinction between the Martin Luther Jr. King Memorial, and every other memorial that is set on the National Mall. Bush initially sets clear this narrative line in his groundbreaking speech by closing with the line of "I'm proud to dedicate this ground on behalf of the American people" (Bush 2006). In this, I argue that we can understand that the placement and dedication of the King Memorial includes the everyday public citizen into the narrative of created by the National Mall. The addition of and focus on Dr. King as an ordinary citizen puts the American people - rather than the political elite - at the heart of the American Narrative pushed and preserved on the mall.

Second, however, it is also a call to unity and the ability to face any challenge, even those of poverty, barriers to education and political participation, oppression, and infinite other forms of difficulty and challenge because of the unique values, ideals, and democratic processes that are unique functions and founding principles of the United States. This is especially driven home at the dedicatory speech of the Memorial when President Obama said:

And that is why we honor this man -- because he had faith in us. And that is why he belongs on this Mall -- because he saw what we might become. That is why Dr. King was so quintessentially American -- because for all the hardships we've

endured, for all out sometimes tragic history, ours is a story of optimism and achievement and constant striving that is unique upon this earth (2011b).

Where King is an ordinary citizen, he is also an extraordinary citizen who was able to lead a charge and bring the modern-day civil rights system into existence. Bush highlights Dr. King's extraordinary qualities, and states that Dr. King, was able to do because he lived under the free democracy of America, where he believed in: "...our Founders' words, "a promise that all men" yes, black men, as well as white men" would be guaranteed the unalienable right of liberty, life, and the pursuit of happiness" (Bush 2006). Dr. King, "continued to trust in the power of those words, even when the practice of America did not live up to their promise," (Bush 2006) and because he did, even the oppressed were able to make way for his own freedom. This both highlights that Dr. King was extraordinary, but at the same time, is used in order to attribute an air of being an example that is not out of reach for American citizens. Ultimately, I argue that this is done under to showcase Dr. King as an ordinary citizen who was able to do extraordinary things because of the systems and support of American democracy.

Not only is Martin Luther King Jr. a central American figure that every citizen can relate to, but they can also take up the charge set by King, as well as the charges set by the presidents surrounding the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial that call for an upholding of the founding democratic values and principles that make up the modern-day American Democracy.

Further, the emphasis on the change that the average American citizen is able to achieve for their country and for their fellow American is a heavy emphasis found across the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial speeches. It is a preamble to the two "calls" that then occur across the speeches: a call for unity in order to be able to overcome any challenge and to complete the work that Martin Luther King Jr. lays out in his 'I Have a Dream' speech.

2.4.2 Call to Complete the Incomplete Work

One of the largest overarching themes that can consistently be found from president to president at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is that the work addressed by Dr. King has yet to be finished. This wording and overall theme is always followed by a call to continue the work of Dr. King, and the unique ability for the citizens of the United States do achieve whatever they put their minds to.

Bush began the running theme of the charge of completing Dr. King's work by telling citizens that "as we break ground, we recognize our duty to continue the unfinished work of American freedom" (2006). Not only does Bush claim a call to finishing the work, but he also addresses the racial injustice and inequality in the United States by saying that people need to not only do the work, there is a need for people to rehear and be inspired by Dr. King's words and the things he said that lead the entire Civil Rights Movement.

Obama continues to proclaim that there is still work to be done in order to achieve Dr. King's dream. This is addressed during all of Obama's usages of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. However, where Bush credits and uses King as the solitary inspiration for continued work and change - only mentioning Rosa Parks once in order to establish that she was a catalyst point that inspired Dr. King - Obama credits King as well as "an entire generation of heroes" (Obama 2011a). By only mentioning other historical figures of the Civil Rights movement once, Obama and Bush both place Dr. King as the unequivocal leader of the movement in the narrative of the National Mall.

However, this difference between the interpretation of the work addressed by Bush and Obama brings in interesting emphasis on first, the very capable ability of the citizens to shoulder the burden and carry on the movement and fulfil the dream of Dr. King. But it also calls into the

spotlight the way in which the work can be one of a singular experience, and also a collective experience. Both must be met in order to achieve dreams. Individual people must change their hearts and minds, and be inspired by King to fulfil the dream of King, but it is not a work that can be achieved by one person alone, it will take everyone, from entire generations banning together for the dream.

Within the call to continue on the work, there is a running theme repeated that we have to "dig deep, and be thinking about our fellow citizen" (Obama 2011a). Obama continues this line of thinking in his dedicatory speech, first by addressing the fact that "there are the multitudes of men and women whose names never appear in the history books" (2011b) but without whom the civil rights work that had been done would never have been achieved. His emphasis on this does not stop here, however, he continues on to call not only Dr. King the hero, but "all those men and women who through countless acts of quite heroism helped bring about changes few thought were even possible" (2011b).

Obama capitalizes on this idea by quoting Dr. King's words, finishing the line of thought that Bush initially employed when he said that there are those in the United States who need to hear and allow Dr. King's words to inspire them.

"By the thousands," said Dr. King, "faceless, anonymous, relentless young people, black and white...have taken our whole nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in the formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence." To those men and women, to those foot soldiers for justice, know that this monument is yours, as well (Obama 2011b).

Using the words of Dr. King is one of the ways that Obama's utilization of the memorial is divorced from the way that of Bush. Where both presidents call on the continuation of King's work, Obama defines and gives explicit meaning to what it means to continue the work. He does not just say 'but the work isn't finished, we have got to keep it going. God bless America!' Whereas Bush only spends a couple of sentences in his speech passing the comment that the work is not done, and so we have to keep doing the work. Obama gives the inspirational words of King that were used to inspire and lead the original Civil Rights Movement. Furthermore, Obama tells the public body of the U.S. what it is going to require doing the work and defines what that work actually is.

To outline what completing the work will take, Obama uses repeated dictation of 'courage,' 'moral imagination,' 'together' and 'alongside,' 'draw strength, and 'marching' to address that the reality of what he is asking of the public body will not be easy and will take painstaking dedication to do hard things. However, in the way that Obama works to ensure that there is credit to the nameless and faceless people that brought about change, he also points to the life of Dr. King as one that was filled by continual hardships, hate, belittlement, and the unwavering ability to muster all the courage possible and look past the trials and tribulation and march anyway. Obama links Dr. King to each and every one of the citizens of the United States in doing this.

He moves the definition of the Martin Luther King Jr. from a single stone of hope that sits as a reminder on the National Mall, to a billion stones of hope that make up the voting body of the United States. He wants the US citizens to see themselves on the National Mall when they see the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, but he wants that vision to then be carried away from the National Mall.

From addressing the mental tools and conviction required to take up the torch, to addressing exactly who is needed to carry the torch, Obama then moves to define what the work is, what the dream actually is. Stating with the interview, Obama addresses that the dream is not solely justice where there is and has been injustice, but specifically, that the march and the dream were for jobs, economic justice, and poverty (2011a). In the dedicatory speech, these categories are laid out and Obama specifically addresses what the work of today is:

... All the work that we must do -- rebuilding an economy that can compete on a global stage, and fixing our schools so that every child -- not just some, but every child -- gets a world-class education, and making sure that our health care system is affordable and accessible to all, and that our economic system is one in which everybody gets a fair shake and everybody does their fair share (Obama 2011b).

Obama brings to light that there is need to broaden the mission and the dream of Dr. King on a global level. In 2011, Obama emphasizes political equality, economic equality, living wages, access to education, as well as better quality of education, job opportunities, peace, and mutuality.

Beyond Presidents Bush and Obama, Trump and Biden utilize the space of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, not in person or through speeches, but through Instagram posts. President Trump, however, takes on a different approach, stating that: "Dr. King's dream is our dream. It is the American Dream. It's the promise stitched into the fabric of our nation, etched into the hearts of our people, and written into the soul of humankind" (Trump 2018). Similar wording is used by both Bush and Obama, but it is used in a way that communicated that the ideals written in the Declaration of Independence and found throughout the inherent virtues of American Democracy were the things that drove Dr. King to lead the Civil Rights movement. It

is also used in a way that is meant to inspire all those hearing the delivered messages. Trump's interpretation varies, claiming instead that Dr. King's dream has actually been achieved, so much so that it is the very make-up of the democracy practiced in modern day America.

Biden, however, utilizes his Instagram post to bring attention and the narrative back to the definitions and meanings of the memorial originally iterated by Bush and Obama stating that the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial "serves as a reminder of how far we have come - and how far we have yet to go" (Biden 2021). Again in 2023, he reiterates this theme stating that "in timely and timeless conversation that inspires us and challenges us, reminds us of far we've come, where we need to go, and how much longer the journey is" in his Instagram post for the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington.

Biden brings the central message of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial to the March on Washington, and the "commitment to continue walking towards our nation's founding promise. Reminded of how far we've come. And where we need to go" (Biden 2023). Along with bringing the messaging of the memorial to the call of continued work, he also brings the overarching definition of the memorial as one for equality and racial justice, echoing the words and themes defined by President Bush rather than President Obama.

The detail to the call of continued work allows the inference of two vital things. First, the presidents use the call to continue the work to achieve Dr. King's dream simply means that there is work to continue to do and that the dream has not yet been reached. Second however, is what the presidents call for. The more prevailing narrative is simply the call to work to achieve Dr. King's dream. Under the use of Obama however, the call to work is clear, concise, laid out for readers and listeners, and fortified by the standing on the shoulders of those who marched and fought their way out of a more horrific and deeply oppressive America than there is today. This

idea can be stretched to also touch on how the presiding administration interprets the March on Washington and what actually the dream is: a march for freedom, or a march for jobs and freedom.

2.4.3 Unity

George W. Bush set the initial definition for the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial at the groundbreaking ceremony event that was held on November 13, 2006. At the time, there was no figure memorial, only open space that would hold the promise of the figure of Martin Luther King Jr. This event is considered an important event to those who remark on the timeline of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

At the point of deliverance, there was not an official structure of a the memorial available for the speech to be delivered at. Regardless, Bush took the opportunity to frame the Memorial, its purpose, and the importance of it in the political narrative of the United States. In doing so, highlighting the space as a symbolic parallel to the hope of unity, equality, and justice found within the 'I Have a Dream' speech iconically given by King: "The memorial will reflect the arc of Dr. King's life, his search for justice, and the enduring beauty of his words... And on the banks of the Potomac, visitors will walk from the Mountain of Despair to the Stone of Hope, where Dr. King's image is rendered" (Bush 2006).

President Bush defined the memorial as a tribute to the ideals and values that Dr. King held and guided his life by (Bush 2006). He highlighted that King was a message of hope, and that the memorial that was to be built in the space was one that would stand as a consistent reminder of that message of unity and hope. However, he took this a step further by saying that "the ideas that guided his work and his life are eternal" and "we will raise a lasting memorial to

those eternal truths." I argue that is wording was specifically chosen in an attempt to entangle the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial with a godly and religious coloring.²⁵

In his dedicatory speech, Obama capitalizes on unity by stating that while the work of Martin Luther King Jr. is thought of and considered a work of unity, justice, and equality today, that has not always been the case. During his life, King was not always labeled a "unifying figure" (Obama 2011b). The competing narrative of Dr. King simultaneously being a unifying figure, and also a divisive figure, is representative of the public body that call for and lead movements in the United States. The essence of the statement highlights the difficulties that anyone trying to be a force of change will be perceived as both a unifying and a divisive figure. This is to be a reminder for every citizen that they are represented by Dr. King on the National Mall, and in the overall American Story pushed off the Mall Space. This aids in his overall goal of having the memorial be a space of inspiration to take on the charge by Dr. King, and continue the work to achieve Dr. King's dream.

Messages of unity begin at the groundbreaking ceremony held by Bush, before the Memorial even stood, and continue to be utilized by Obama, Trump, and Biden to invoke a greater call to unity in order to protect the democratic values that the Civil Rights Movement was built on. A particular charge of this unity is given by Bush when he mentions that President Clinton is the one who signed legislation which allowed the planning and eventually building of the Memorial. Later in his speech, he credits President Johnson - yet another democratic president - as the one who signed the Civil Rights Act. This particular call out of unity is representative of the peaceful succession of power from a Democratic President Clinton, to a

²⁵ These words and themes are echoed through the many speeches and press releases which praise the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial for being a truly representative space and structure of the sacrifice that was, and still is, required to protect the creed in the Declaration of Independence that all are created equal by god, even though the policy and governing structures of the United States stray from that decree.

Republican President Bush who, while both holding differing platforms and policy goals, hold instances of unity that inherently seem to come from being the president of the United States of America, rather than the leader of the democratic or republican party.

Further, simple vocabulary is used by all presidents to point out the inherent unity from person to person within the United States. Continual use of "Our Declaration of Independence," "any American," "our duty," "we're working," "we gather here," "we celebrate," and "we draw strength" are all examples of purposeful reiteration of the theme of American Unity for freedom, justice, and prosperity for all. In his Dedication speech alone, Obama uses the word 'we' 41 times in the same phrases of unity as mentioned above. He does this again at the 50th Anniversary of the march on Washington, repeating 'we' phrases 29 times in order to reiterate underlying messages of unity.

Both the explicitly stated instances of unity call outs, combined with the covert, literary use of unifying vocabulary paints a broad theme of the need for unity within the United States in order to uphold the founding principles of American Democracy, and a promotion of national peace. Under the broad theme of inherent unity due to the ability to ban together under the same flag, similar, pinpointed themes of unity are drawn out from president to president. These highlighted themes of unity most strongly represented are those of race and gender.

2.4.3.1 Race

Perhaps the most prominent theme of unity under the narrative of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is that of the need for racial unity and equality. Race is inherently something that cannot be divorced from the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Bush and Obama fill their speeches with language that capitalizes on the need for racial unity and equality within the

United States, while Trump and Biden scarcely use any language in their Instagram posts that would point to or explicitly call out race.

Table 2.1: Count of 'Racial' Language Examples in Presidential Utilizations of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

President	Civil Rights	African Americans	Black	White	Race
Bush	4	1	1	2	2
Obama	4	1	3	1	0
Trump	0	0	0	0	0
Biden	3	1	17	7	0

Table 2.1 shows repetitive use of vocabulary that explicitly depicts race as a leading theme within the speeches of Bush and Obama. Interestingly, where race is pertinent for the majority of time that the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is on the National Mall, it is never explicitly stated under any of the terms typically associated with race or racial issues under Trump, and the phrase "civil rights" is only used one time in an Instagram post by Biden, no other terms that would denote racial themes. This brief look at the racial vocabulary the leads the speeches of the presidents at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial - or that does not lead - shows that the primary narrative that surrounds the memorial is one that is centered around racial unity and equality within the United States in a prevailing way.

Bush sets a firm stance with the theme of racial unity in the United States by quoting Dr. King and stating: "He called our founders' words, "a promise that all men," yes, black men, as well as white men "would be guaranteed the unalienable right of liberty, life, and the pursuit of happiness"" (Bush 2006). Bush's explicit call out that both black men and white men are to be thought about in Dr. King's quote raises the initial attention towards racial unity. This idea pushes the theme of racial unity as a still pervasive issue, hence the need to specifically call out that there should be an equal application of founding American virtues across races.

Both Bush and Obama highlight starting points of the Civil Rights Movement, with Bush pointing also to Rosa Parks and the refusal to give up her bus seat for a white man as the beginning and ultimate inspiration for Dr. King's legacy. Obama points to this moment as well but adds other's names to the list of those who made the Civil Rights Movement possible as effective. The introduction of the Civil Rights Movements beginning is a strategic way to frame issues of race and racial injustices inside of the United States without explicitly stating the extent of the oppression and atrocities faced, and that are continually faced, by African Americans.

Obama pushes the definition of those included in the urge towards racial unity to go beyond just white Americans and African American racial groups. Where Bush only highlights racial unity between white Americans and African American's, Obama's speech pushes and advocates for the expansion of racial unity in the United States. He mentions various ethnic groups and by doing so, advocates for not only racial unity, but also ethnic unity. However, his expansion also includes religious unity and tolerance, unity between those with varying abilities and disabilities, and unity among all American citizens. This point is only emphasized by Obama's non-use of the actual word 'race' in his utilization of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

On one hand, it is obvious that the Civil Rights Movement, and issues of racial disparity in the United States is central to any message given in front of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Martin Luther King Jr. was the central figure of the Civil Rights Movement, monumental policy and structural changes within the United States. He is a historical figure who shaped the American democracy that exists today. This was highlighted by Obama in his dedicatory speech stating:

And that is why he belongs on this Mall -- because he saw what we might become. That is why Dr. King was so quintessentially American -- because for all the hardships we've endured, for all our sometimes tragic history, ours is a story of optimism and achievement and constant striving that is unique upon this Earth. And that is why the rest of the world still looks to us to lead. This is a country where ordinary people find in their hearts the courage to do extraordinary things; the courage to stand up in the face of the fiercest resistance and despair and say this is wrong, and this is right; we will not settle for what the cynics tell us we have to accept and we will reach again and again, no matter the odds, for what we know is possible (Obama 2011b).

It seems impossible to divorce Martin Luther King Jr. from ideas central to race, civil rights, inequality, and injustices. As mentioned above, King was one of the central figures in the Civil Rights movement, modern day American democracy, and thus American history. He is taught about as the leader of the Civil Rights Movement in public schools across the United States. He holds a national holiday title. Both Bush and Obama keep this as their focal point, and thus focus, in part, on racial unity.

Yet, on the other hand, I find that Trump does divorce these things from Martin Luther King Jr. By completely avoiding any language that would depict or explicitly draw attention to race, civil rights, injustices, and inequality in the United States, Trump's Instagram posts of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial are often caption-less, with just a picture of the memorial depicted. The one post with a caption contains a picture of the memorial with one of Dr. King's most infamous quotes: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that" and is captioned: "Dr. King's dream is our dream. It is the American Dream. It's the promise stitched

into the fabric of our Nation, etched into the hearts of our people, and written into the soul of humankind" (Trump 2018).

The words utilized by Trump points to the civil rights movement as it is reflective of the "I Have a Dream" speech given by King, as that is what Martin Luther King Jr. is most known for, but it is never explicitly stated. Rather, Trump's vague and hazy language firmly sanitizes the issues of racial injustice, inequality, repealed voting rights, issues of poverty and high unemployment rates, and other various forms of oppression that still are pervasive in the United States today.

Though Biden's use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial only uses explicit racially colored vocabulary one time (using 'civil rights') his strategic use of placing Vice President Harris in his photos, as well as the use of various clips placed into one video that depicts Biden working with various African American groups, legislators, Supreme Court Justices, and advocates continues the use of themes of race, though implicitly communicated.

2.4.3.2 Gender

Bush and Obama go to great lengths to include women in the narrative of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Rather than just leaving the notion of gender to the word 'men,' both put emphasis on "and women" in their speeches. Following his message of racial unity, Bush follows his quoting of Martin Luther King Jr. highlighting racial justice for black men as well as white men (Bush 2006) by stating that, "Dr. King's message of Justice and brotherhood took hold of the hearts of men and women across the great lands of ours" (Bush 2006).

Later in his speech, Bush highlights the role of African American women in the Civil Rights Movement by including the narrative of Rosa Parks as the catalyst to Dr. King's actions:

In 1955, a woman, Rosa Parks, challenged these wrongs on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, when she refused a driver's order to give her seat to a white man. Her act of defiance inspired a young Baptist minister and changed our Nation forever. Within days of Rosa Parks's lonely protest, Dr. King helped organize a boycott that captured the attention of our country (Bush 2006).

The use of Rosa Parks role in influencing Martin Luther king Jr. is an important tool used by Bush because it allows the narrative of unity, citizen led movements, and ability to change the direction of American policy as one that can start and be led by women, not just men. Not only can they be led by women, but they have also been led by women.

In his interview regarding the postponed dedication of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, Obama continues to carry on this theme by mentioning Ruby Bridges and her solidified place in history as the first African American to integrate any public school in the United States (Obama 2011a). Obama also follows the lead of Bush and mentions other Civil Rights leaders who carried the torch with Martin Luther King Jr., specifically naming Rosa Parks and Dorothy Height (Obama 2011b).

Obama's messaging towards gender unity is further pushed by continual use of 'men and women' phrasing throughout both his dedicatory speech, and the speech given at the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington. Phrasing that includes "multitudes of men and women whose names never appear in the history books," "all those men and women who through countless acts of quiet heroism helped bring about changes few thought were even possible," "he had seen men and women and children conquer their fear," and "to those men and women, to those foot soldiers for justice, know that this monument is yours, as well" (Obama 2011b) explicitly point to the ability of the United States to achieve instances of gender unity and

equality. However, it also continues on the line that the of gender unity pushed by Bush that women can and have lead significant movements that change policy within the United States.

With no context surrounding Trump's Instagram posts of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, there is an obvious pause in the crafting of any real defining narrative of the memorial space. However, when Biden took office, he offered more nuanced posts that lend to the continuation of the gender unity and equality narrative set by Bush and Obama.

In all three Instagram Posts, Biden stands by Vice President Kamala Harris. This posing is not necessarily groundbreaking, as one of Trumps posts included a photograph of him and his vice president as well. However, standing with the first woman Vice president highlights the gender narrative crafted and pushed as a defining and reoccurring theme of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Another specific way Biden highlights the narrative of gender unity and equality is by having Harris narrate the majority of the Instagram video that was posted for the 60th Anniversary for the March on Washington in 2023.

Further, Biden is the first president to use the space of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial as a space to publicly celebrate International Women's Day. Biden utilizes the left hand quote wall of the memorial space rather than the front, memorial structure depicting Dr. King in front of the quote "We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice" (King 1968).

In this post, Biden uses the space of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial to highlight being: "...Proud to serve alongside Vice President Harris and so many other women leaders in my Administration. Because of their trailblazing careers, future generations of girls will grow up seeing themselves in a new light" (Biden 2022). Biden uses the space to highlight women and continue the projected narrative of the importance of gender unity and equality. However, Biden

also uses the space to credit claim the progress he has made, under his administration, for women, and particularly with his highlighting of Vice President Harris, African American women.

2.4.4 Analysis of the Presidential Utilization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

The continual tying of themes back to a call for continued change and needed progression in the United States highlights the important meanings and definitions that are primarily driving the narrative and definition that is set by the presidents for the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. The overarching theme of Martin Luther King Jr. being an ordinary citizen who lead the movement that forever changed the projected history of the United States builds on this theme of incomplete work. Together, these two overarching themes color the entirety of the speeches and public statements that take place at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

The theme of unity, and all of the ways that the presidents highlight where the presidents specifically care about unity - race, gender, and as American citizens - all are given under the pretense of further driving the emphasis of the theme of the call to complete the incomplete work. Messages of unity are meant as a tool that allows the citizens of the United States to directly be focus on the ways in which the incomplete work can be worked on in order to achieve equality and justice that is yet to be fully seen in the United States.

Overall, the three overarching themes of King as an ordinary citizen, call to the incomplete work, and unity all work together to create the definition and narrative of the first memorial placed on the National Mall that is representative of the citizens within the American Story. The definition and overall message narrating the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in the place of the story of American History on the National Mall is threefold. First, each narrative formed at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial will fall into one of two camps guided by how

the president titles the March on Washington: either the camp of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, or the camp of the March on Washington for Freedom.

Following the stance made in either camp, the president either offers praise the citizens of the United States for driving change and policy formation, or they credit claim. This specific choice is colored by the camp the president plants themselves in because it defines why the president is using the Martin Luther King Jr Memorial site, rather than another one to convey the message they are giving. Here, there are three pervasive options. First, to deeply highlight the way in which change still needs to be made in the United States, and how citizens can go about continual work on that change. Second, to use the memorial as a "photo opportunity" as a distraction from the inaction of the presidents to pursue real policy change regarding these issues. Finally, to implicitly credit claim policy and legislative work done as president of the United States.

All of these categories that the presidential speeches fall under overarchingly convey that the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is truly a different figure memorial on the National Mall and is representative of the public body of the United States rather than the political elite. It also serves as a memorial that can act as a public space in which citizens can 'rally around the flag.' This creates an environment around the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial that is palpably different than the other figure memorials on the National Mall. Yet it also creates an opportunity for political figures - such as the president - to ignore racial tensions, injustices, oppression, hate, and inequalities when it comes to policy and legislation in exchange for a conveniently timed photo-opportunity and inspirational Instagram caption at the memorial on MLK Day and an anniversary of the March on Washington.

2.4.4.1 The Camps for the March on Washington

The groundbreaking ceremony speech given by Bush set the initial definition for the Memorial as a forever nod to the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom not just a memorial dedicated to the overall life and work of Martin Luther King Jr. Rather, the memorial and all of King's work, culminated to that single point in time when Dr. King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and delivered "a message of hope" (Bush 2006). In an overwhelmingly simple effort to view the fight for racial equality, justice, and civil rights, President Bush sanitized the site where the memorial was to be built, and attributed any and all civil rights change and legislation to the work of Dr. King.

Dr. King liked to say that our Civil Rights Act was written in the streets by citizens who marched for the idea that all men are created equal. He was right; yet there is no doubting that the law came as it did when it did because of the courage and leadership of Martin Luther King (Bush 2006).

From this, Bush continues on, slightly touching on the fact that the "I Have a Dream" speech was not just a speech about civil rights, but that it was a fight for equal opportunity to receive an education, to escape from poverty, and to receive and hold jobs that allow for people to work towards and achieve the American dream regardless of the color of their skin. I argue that this is a particularly important part of Bush's speech, as it is an emphasis often forgotten when addressing the work of Dr. King, and the overall messaging of the 'I Have a Dream' speech throughout the presidential use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial space. However, it is only slightly touched on by President Bush towards the end of his speech, where the majority of emphasis was put on the racial inequality inside of the United States.

Pointing to the success of King, and also the continued work that America has to do in order to fully achieve Dr. King's dream, Bush creates the initial narrative of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial as one that is to be reflected on when thinking about the 'I Have a Dream Speech,' and the March on Washington. This created two overall camps for interpretation of the Memorial as would be chosen to be used by future presidents: one where the March on Washington was for Freedom, a call to racial justice and equality - a rather empty phrase unless the president painstakingly and explicitly relays what that means, and the other where the March on Washington was for Jobs and Freedom as forms to fight for equality and justice. This assigned meaning is reiterated by President Obama in his multiple speeches and press releases given in front of, or about, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

Following Bush's set narrative regarding the to be constructed Memorial to Martin Luther King Jr., Obama gave an interview in which he addressed the dedication ceremonies date change. He simply stated that there was yet to be a new date set, but that the Memorial is finished and is an incredibly moving and impactful addition to the National Mall. Obama takes this opportunity to remind the interviewer, and all those watching of the camp he falls into when it comes to the March on Washington:

But I think it's always important to remember that when Dr. King gave the "I Have a dream" speech, that was a march for jobs and justice, not just justice. And in the last part of his life, when he went down to Memphis, that was all about sanitation workers saying, I am a man, and looking for economic justice and dealing with poverty. And so it's not enough for us to just remember the sanitized versions of what Dr. King stood for; he made a real call for us to dig deep and be thinking about

our fellow citizens and people around the world who are in desperate need and figuring out how we can help them (Obama 2011a).

In this, Obama recognizes that two camps have been established, one which is sanitized, and one that is holistically representative. Prior to his delivering the dedicatory speech of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, President Obama takes a stance in the camp of the March for Jobs and Freedom, and openly communicates that he explicitly has a definition for what fighting for racial justice and equality means and literally looks like. For Obama, racial freedom and justice is about the jobs available to every single person, regardless of any factor that makes up their human-hood, as it was to Dr. King.

In both October of 2011, and 2013, President Obama firmly plants himself into this camp, one that is a more accurate portrayal of the 'I Have a Dream' speech, and one that treats the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial with more purpose, meaning, and potential for impact. Obama defines a functionality behind the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial both as in the past – reminding all of the work actually done, and the charges led by Dr. King - as well as in the future and the progress that has yet to be made, but that we know can be made because of the groundbreaking change brought on by the efforts and work of King. This is not just a spot to cover the fact that legislatively and politically, racial equality and justice is talked about but not really actively being fought for.

The less impactful camp is then the one which titles the March on Washington as one for freedom, rather than for jobs and freedom. This crafts a very sanitized narrative of the March on Washington and the overall Civil Rights Movement as symbolized by the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Further, it creates a path dependency that keeps the racial history of the United States very sanitized and oversimplified. From this sanitized and simplified recollection of the entire

Civil Rights Movement allows the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial to be used as a space to draw attention to the racial injustices, oppression, and needed changes, without actually drawing attention to any of the racial tensions in the United States. Simply put, it allows the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial to be a photo-opportunity spot for political elite, and as evidenced by Trump and Bidens use of the memorial on Instagram, the president of the United States.

Trump leads this camp with a brightly lit torch as he only uses the Memorial for Instagram, hardly captioning the photographs of the memorial, and re-posting the same wreath laying event for MLK Day in 2019 and 2020 that included no caption or press release statement to contextualize the event. Further, on the one post that was conceptualized, Trump's message is one that exclaims the dream of Martin Luther King Jr. has been fulfilled. Biden also follows more in this camp. While contextualizing his postings and noting that there is more work to be done to fulfil Dr. King's 'dream,' there is no specific goals, tools, or legislative and policy objectives called out as the things that need to take place in order to actually work towards the fulfillment of that dream.

2.4.4.2 A Noticeable Lack of Credit Claiming

Interestingly, both Bush and Obama's speeches at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial did not include credit claiming concerning their time in the oval office. For Bush, this is surprising given the way the country naturally had become deeply entrenched in the rally around the flag nationalism that was sparked after 9/11. Perhaps there was an inherent need not to credit claim because he was nearing the end of his second term as president, and the events of 9/11 brought a solidification of his narrative as the president that acted and brought unprecedented unity to the United States.

However, Obamas lack of credit claiming for the policy that he passed that aided in the efforts of bringing about healthcare equality, job creation and lowering unemployment rates, and bringing the nation out of the 2008 housing market crash and depression - all areas specific to the ideas marched for during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom - falling in line with a definition that is in direct cooperation with working towards the fulfillment of the "I Have a Dream" speech.

Both Bush and Obamas lack of credit claiming instituted the beginnings of a pattern where the use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is a space that is not for credit claiming. Following the narratives given by Bush and Obama, Trumps use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial also excludes explicit credit claiming opportunities. There is almost no use of the space as a tactic to credit claim his own personal policy actions in office. With Trump, this is not surprising given his narrative followed the lines of the work of Dr. King being completed and fully achieved.

However, the use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in a year to year fashion, either around the time of MLK Day, or the anniversary of the March on Washington is a strategic way to use the memorial to credit claim issues of racial justice and equality as a top priority that is being focused on by the president of the United States, and their role in policy creation. The simple act of posting a picture of a memorial down the street from the White House that is representative of the continual fight for racial equality and justice in the United States is a way to draw attention away from in-action. This is amplified by the picture posts being uncaptioned, which two of Trump's Instagram posts were.

Biden's Instagram posts do deviate from this particular pattern of avoiding explicit credit claiming, but only slightly. Starting with his second post of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial,

he posts a photograph of himself and Vice President Harris walking along the left-hand side of the quote walls that serve as the background to the 'stone of hope' statue of king. Biden posted this photograph on International Women's Day in 2022, where he stated: "On this international women's day and every day, I'm proud to serve alongside Vice President Harris and so many other women leaders in my administration. Because of their trailblazing careers, future generations of girls will grow up seeing themselves in a new light" (Biden 2022).

Not only is Biden using the space of a trailblazer to draw attention to the way that Harris is also an African American Woman who is a trailblazer such as Dr. King, he is also using the space to credit claim bringing about that change as her vice presidency is tied to his presidency. Again in 2023, Biden uses the space of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial to post a video for the 60th Anniversary of the March on Washington, to subtly credit claim. The video posted shows Biden with his Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first African American Women to sit on the bench of the Supreme Court. However, it also shows him in various settings, signing various documents, and holding meetings with African American individuals and groups. While there is not specific mention of his Supreme Court Justice addition, no specific bill or document named, and no labels put on the meetings he had with various individual or group, it is a clear message of credit claiming, and the moments in his Presidency that appear to be work towards the continual work that is called on time and time again to fulfill Dr. King's dream.

With the exception of Biden's behavior and use of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, the noticeable lack of explicit credit claiming at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial leads to an important inference regarding the purpose and narrative surrounding the Martin Luther king Jr. Memorial. Credit claiming is an act that is specific to, and only to the president speaking. I

accomplished this, I pushed this policy through, I instituted this program, I. 'I' statements are in direct opposition to the overall thematic narrative and purpose of Martin Luther King Jr. being placed on the National Mall as the one representation of the whole of the American People. Credit claiming takes away from the narrative that the people can enact change when the political leadership of the United States fails to do so.

This brings a literary structure to the narrative and speeches given at memorial locations on the mall. Memorial speeches given on the National Mall typically have at least one example of juxtaposing ideas. The speeches given at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial bring this to the forefront of the conversation. The idea that any change can take place in the United States through a citizen led movement because of the foundational values, freedoms, and ideologies that brought forth American Democracy, while at the same time, are the same foundational values that built the United States and its governing system are those of oppression and white superiority is a powerful paradox. These are remarkable opposing statements, yet Bush and Obama both use them in a way that encourages and builds up the overall idea that because of the freedoms and ideals that wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, American citizens can bring the legislative change to Washington (Obama 2013) rather than the idea that ingrained in the Declaration and Constitutions are systems of inherent oppression.

Yet another finding I argue from the same line of thinking is the idea of a failure of the democratic practices under American democracy. In the speeches of both Bush and Obama, there is the pursuit of the idea that the Civil Rights Movement found success because of the democratic process written in the Declaration of Independence and Constitution. But this ignores the fact that the democratic process gives the American public the ability to elect their political

leaders, and thus have their interests and basic freedoms supported, protected, and defended at state and federal levels. Both legislatively and judicially.

Where with the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, there are repeated themes of unity, and the need to be unified across the specific themes of race, trust in government institutions, gender, and globalization, there is also an inherent theme of separation and division that comes from the nature of the topic of the Civil Rights Movement, and the fight for justice and equality across a deeply unjust and oppressive system of government that thrives on - and in fact only really functions under - a system of the majority versus the minority.

Bush also puts an interesting spin on the overall narrative of unity and the fight of the Civil Rights Movement, justice, inequality, and economic freedom by saying "We go forward with trust that God, who has brought us thus far on the way, will give us the strength to finish the journey" (Bush 2006). He continues on with a conflicted narrative by ending his speech with "...we go forward with the confidence that no matter how difficult the challenge, if we remain true to our founding principles, America will overcome" (Bush 2006).

This is of course, in partial reference to the founding idea of Jefferson that all are created equal, with inalienable rights. But it is also in reference to the other founding principles not spelled out in his speech that supported and built a system of inherent divide, slavery, and oppression for almost every person that was not a white, Christian man. This supports the narrative idea pushed by the Lincoln Memorial, that the "American Story" starts with Abraham Lincoln. Further however, that American history is that which took place "under the shadow of the Great Emancipator" (Obama 2013).

2.5 Conclusion

The way in which the presidents use the space of the National Mall creates a political narrative of the United States. The utilization of the figure memorials explicitly identifies who is at the center of the narrative. Through qualitative content analysis, I found that simply placing a figure memorial on the National Mall does not automatically include that figure in the narrative. Rather, there must be consistent presidential utilization and attention paid to the individual memorial or monument space in order to include a figure in the narrative. This is exemplified through the case studies of the Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorials.

The consistent presidential utilization of the Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorials create a narrative that credits them as the two individuals who are most responsible for modern day American Democracy. The more 'one-off' experience of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is central to understanding that simply being on the mall does not mean you will be placed in the Narrative. The way that presidents ignore the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial blocks Roosevelt from being a central figure in the narrative of the American Story. Clinton tried to define and control Roosevelt as a central figure in the shaping of American Democracy. However, with no other presidential use of the Memorial, the real messaging is clear: When it comes to the American Story promoted from the National Mall, Franklin Delano Roosevelt is not a part of it.

Yet another finding that answers more of the guiding question of who gets to be placed on the National Mall is revealed through my qualitative content analysis. Standing as the only pure citizen figure memorial, King occupies one of the largest memorials of citizen and minority representation found on the National Mall. The presidential utilization of the Martin Luther King

Jr. Memorial compared to the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial shows distinct differences in the word, phrasing, topic, and thematic approaches of the speeches.

The cyclical motion of democracy described in both Bush and Obama's speeches at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is a unique one applicable only to the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. However, it speaks to the larger questions and definitions of the overall National Mall narrative, and answers the question who are the figure memorials on the National Mall representative of? Memorials are either for the public body of the United States, or they are for the political leaders of the United States. The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is the figure memorial which is representative of the citizens of the United States. Because of the lack of political credit claiming and the description of the cycle of democracy Bush, Obama, and Trump define the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial as one for and of the people. The overall message of the ability of the average, every day, ordinary citizen to be extraordinary and lead a movement that forever changes the courses of American Democracy - not in opposition to the founding principles of democracy that led to oppression, but rather because of them - makes it clear that the prevailing narrative of the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is not one that political elite relate to. Rather, citizens relate to and are represented by the memorial in a way the other figure memorials of past presidents cannot.

Chronological analysis of the speeches delivered at the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorials reveal that the narrative of each memorial, and the overall National Mall, does change over time. However, the large overarching themes of unity, civil rights and race, and institutional legitimacy are consistent from president to president. These themes are also consistent from memorial to memorial, and so not only are presidents

defining individual memorials, but they are creating a cohesive narrative for the whole National Mall at each individual space.

My analysis reveals an unspoken communication cycle between the presidents as they utilize the memorials. Presidents build onto the definitions and meanings set by past presidents in order to shape the political memory and narrative that the past presidents have set. I found that that while the political climate, current events, and societal norms contextualize the individual speeches given at the three memorials, the largest shifts in narratives occur in the form of a president either narrowing down a topic, or broadening and generalizing a topic that has already been established in past presidential utilization of the memorials.

Throughout the usage of the three memorials, in fact, I find only two major deviations from past narratives set for the memorials. Both deviations take place at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. The first deviation centers around the presentation of the continuation of Dr. Kings work. Within Trump's utilization of the memorial, I find that the message and definition of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial centers around the completion of Dr. Kings work. This is both supported by Trump's failure to explicitly state that there is work that needs to be pursued, as well as using words and phrases that credit Dr. King for the "equality experienced in the United States" today (Trump 2018; Trump 2020).

The second, and perhaps more potent deviation from the pre-set presidential narrative I find centers around Biden and his utilization of implicit credit claiming at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Where Obama and Trump avoid credit claiming while utilizing the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial, Biden heavily credit claims. This signifies the changing narrative of who the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial is to represent, shifting it from a memorial for and in

the name of the citizen to yet another memorial that represents and garners inherent legitimacy for the office of the president.

Not only are the messages delivered from the spaces on the National Mall beginning to shift in significant ways, so too are the forms of communication between the president and the citizens. Presidential utilization of the memorial spaces on the National Mall takes on many forms as observed in the collected data set assessed. From standing directly in front of the memorial structure and giving a speech, to recording messages from the Oval Office and projecting it on a screen in front of the memorial, to laying a wreath and having a press statement released, to legal memorandums detailing the messages delivered at an unscheduled event at a memorial, the presidents have utilized the space of the National Mall in many ways. However, the usage of social media to utilize the memorials and the space of the National Mall has become the most prominent utilization tool for Trump and Biden. Historical use of memorandum to communicate short and simple statements to the public are beginning to be found in a social media post.

Each space on the National Mall is individually defined by presidents, and these definitions take place inside of, and contribute to, the space of a cohesive "American story" narrative. Continual use of the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials show that significant time and effort is continually dedicated to crafting narrative on the National Mall by the office of the presidents. Yet, the presidents and political elite are not the only ones defining the memorial spaces. How the public receives and responds to the narratives and definitions set by the presidents on the National Mall also contribute to the overall definition and understanding that gets passed on from person to person, and generation to generation. Are the narratives and definitions crafted by the presidents approved by the public, or are they rejected and changed at a

grassroots level? Investigating the way that the public interacts with and utilizes the memorial spaces is then vital for understanding the definitions and narratives of the National Mall.

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3 THE NATIONAL MALL THROUGH THE EYES OF THE VISITORS

A continuous loop of communication exists between political figures and the American public (Broockman and Butler 2017; Matsubayashi 2013; Thomassen 1999; Fenno 1978). The continuous loop of communication is naturally born as a result of the democratic governing system of the United States. This cycle of information and action allows for both political elites and citizens to act strategically to facilitate a cycle of communication that produces political narrative and memory.

For political candidates, congressional members, first term presidents who hope to gain a second term, or a vice president who has further political aspirations, the need for electoral support always colors their behavior (Downs 1975; Mayhew 1974). For the second term president who does not need electoral votes, strategically shaped political memory in the form of an American Narrative focused on their power and accomplishment is of deep value (Claxton 2015; Hufbauer 2005; House, Spangler, and Woycke 1990; Walker and Falkowski 1984; Winter and Stewart 1977; Winter 1973; Donley and Winter 1970). For anyone involved in the political process, political narrative and memory is an important element of shaping and holding national identity and political power (see for example: Xu and Zhao 2023; Plummer 2020; Hagstrom and Gustafsson 2019).

Similarly, strategic shaping of political memory and narrative aids in garnering political support and votes down the line for congressional members, first term presidents, and vice presidents by providing a potent form of political credit claiming (Wittman 1983; Mayhew 1974). Strategically acting in order to credit claim has only become more important since the 1950s, as U.S. Representatives have seen a decrease in the incumbency advantage from election to election (Burton, Miller, and Shea 2015; Jacobson 2015; Ahlquist and Levi 2013). An

important part of this process is the underlying assumption that the National Mall is an intentionally elite-designed place of tourism and leisure meant to connect American Citizens to the social and cultural messages in the ever-changing American narrative (Pippert 2020; Stokowski 2002).

Political elite do this through political propaganda and engagement with their strategically cultivated history and story of American Democracy. In the United States, the National Mall is a place that is taught about in the public schools across the country beginning in elementary school (Bradford 1995). This message is reiterated in importance through every schooling level, with middle school and high school still emphasizing the importance and prominence of the National Mall, and Washington D.C. (Savage 2011; Bradford 1995).

The reiteration of the importance of the spaces on the National Mall, combined with the hallowed space of the Nation's Capital, transforms the National Mall into a pilgrimage like experience for each and every American Citizen (Savage 2009). While on the National Mall, I observed public school field trips at every education level (elementary, middle, and high school). Even at a collegiate level, trips to Washington D.C. took place within individual classes, honors societies, and other College sponsored organizations. Girl Scout and Boy Scout organizations organize trips over the summer and winter breaks, and I observed many troops on the mall during my field observations. Church groups, homeschooling groups, youth outreach programs, extracurricular groups, sporting teams, and other organizations visit the Nation's Capital, with the National Mall serving as a major portion of these trips' itineraries. Individual family units make trips to the Nation's Capital and can be found spending at least a day on the National Mall. Military groups from every branch and individual grouping can always be found in and out of uniform on the National Mall.

Foreign visitors are also an everyday presence on the National Mall. The international presence at the National Mall brings out questions and aspects of the importance of the American Narrative that is being promoted from the National Mall. Further, increased globalized presence on the National mall brings to light the importance of the iconic spaces that represent the history and values of American Democracy that perhaps once was not at the front of thought when designing the National mall as a whole, as well as individual spaces on the National Mall.

A multitude of important questions must be asked. First and foremost, what are visitors of the National Mall experiencing and perceiving? Is there behavior on the National Mall that places the mall in a category akin to an art museum or chapel, or to any other park? Are there discussions taking place on the mall that indicate a reflection of the presidential definitions and meanings of the memorials? Are visitors on the National Mall for photo opportunities or something else? Is there an alignment between the political elite usage of the National Mall and the public interaction with the mall? Or are visitor interactions on the mall indicative of something else?

The following chapter will explore behavior and discussion on the National Mall from the perspective of the everyday visitor, rather than the political elite view of the mall and its memorials as examined in Chapter 2. I now move to an examination of the public's role in the cycle of communication. From this analysis, I draw conclusions regarding the alignment of political elite assigned definitions and meaning of the memorials, public assignment of definition and meaning of the memorials, and the overall cycle of communication in narrative formation.

3.1 Contextualizing A Theory of Public-Political Narrative

As discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, political elite design, construct, and set the narrating tone for the National Mall and the individual structures on it. Within this first stage of the cycle

of communication, the public has been seen to play a substantial role in the design and construction phase of the memorials on the National Mall. For example, the Vietnam Veterans Memorials artist and design was chosen by an open application competition. As well, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was proposed by members of Dr. Kings fraternity. Both of these routes to getting a new memorial on the National Mall present public involvement in the narrative creation stage from the very beginning of a memorial's life.

The National Mall is approached, interacted with, and interpreted by visitors in ways that may depart from the elite created narrative. With little to no informational panels explicitly defining the structures on the National Mall for each visitor, the memorials are open to the interpretation of each citizen.²⁶ While there is an individualistic approach to each memorial on the National Mall from political elite, a much different approach is taken by the visitors on the National Mall.

Following the procedure of placing and maintaining structures on the National Mall, the President is the first political actor to speak at the memorial. This dedicatory speech allows the President to set the definition and meaning behind the memorial. Further, Presidents' use of their bully pulpit allows them to consistently shape and re-shape the narrative of the individual memorials and the overall National Mall as shown and examined in Chapter 2. This gives power to the continual use of the National Mall beyond the utilization at a memorial's dedicatory ceremony.

Following the dedication ceremony of a memorial, it then becomes a site for tourism and public interaction. It is in this stage that the public enters into the second stage of the cycle of communication argued in the first chapter. This defining process for citizens and visitors can

²⁶ There are informational panels at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial that describe what the various structures are representing.

start at the dedication ceremony - as seen through the example of the Lincoln Memorial - but really takes shape following the dedication ceremony. For the political elite, the National Mall is the setting they use to create the national narrative and political memory that they want to spread. However, for citizens, I argue the National Mall serves as the conduit of this elite-crafted narrative. The National Mall is the primary space whereby political memory is received by the citizens.

Rather than approaching the National Mall as the individual spaces that sit on it, I will show below that visitors view the space as a whole. Each memorial speaks to one another and serve as just one small piece of the overall narrative of American democracy and history that is pushed at that time. However, the overall narrative is projected from the entirety of the National Mall, and that narrative is what citizens visit the National Mall to experience (Benton-Short et al. 2018). This is not to say that there is not singular attention paid to individual memorials when people are at individual memorial sites, but, as I observed while on the mall, there is a continuous movement from memorial to memorial, as well as a continuous connection of each memorial in some inter-related way to one another that in part is prescriptive of the set-up of that National Mall.

This inter-memorial connection might not have always been the case. I argue, based on the field work presented below, that the addition of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial forever shifted the overall narrative of the National Mall. This is because the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial intimately connects the individual spaces of the National Mall in a way that did not exist prior to him being on the mall in two ways. Firstly, prior to the addition of Martin Luther King Jr., the only figure memorials on the National Mall were those of past presidents.²⁷ In other

²⁷ Within the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Eleanor Roosevelt is given a statue, the first and only First Lady to be represented on the National Mall. While she does have her own statue, the memorial itself is not

words, only the political elite, as well as political institutions, were named and represented in the overall American Narrative created from the National Mall. With that being the case, the overarching narrative was until this point, one that emphasized the role of political elites and intentionally excluded the place of the citizens in that Narrative.

Further, prior to Martin Luther King, Jr. being placed on the National Mall there was, and still remains,²⁸ a clear lack of black or minority representation and contribution to the overall American Narrative despite the economic building of the United States resting firmly on the shoulders of African American women and men (Inwood 2023; Hall 2019; Coates 2016; Schermerhorn and Schermerhorn 2015; Jennison 2012; Kelley 2002). As the National Mall serves as an authoritative place of narrative for American democracy and history (Savage 2011), leaving out the role of slavery, racial tensions, and radical injustice in the name of white supremacy is incredibly problematic.

The way the political elite grapple with tough issues suggests that there are unsavory parts of the nation's building and existence that should remain unmentioned. The examination of the presidential utilization of the memorials in Chapter 2 revealed themes of unity and continuation of Dr. King's work, but rarely was the most unsavory parts of the United States history dwelt on. At the very least, they were not major themes that I pulled out of the speeches. Further, the discussion of slavery and harsh racial injustices was mostly found in the analysis of the Lincoln memorial, rather than Dr. King's memorial.

dedicated to her. Yet, in this argument of Martin Luther King, Jr. being the only true form of citizen representation in the figure memorials, as well as within the war memorials, being the First Lady of the United States of America, and the first United States Delegate to the United Nations places Eleanor Roosevelt in the category of a political elite, somewhere Martin Luther King, Jr. does not fall.

²⁸ See, for example, Hollett 2010, who argues that without a memorial dedicated to slavery in America, the National Mall is just another broken American Narrative that inaccurately depicts the history, positions, and racial inequality of the United States.

This lends thus support to my argument that the presidents painstakingly craft political narrative and memory on the National Mall in an attempt to control and promote a certain narrative. Thus, it is essential to investigate the way that the public interacts with and perceives the memorials on the National Mall. Are the themes used by the presidents to define the three memorials actually perceived by the visitors on the National Mall? If they are perceived, are they received or rejected? In other words, do the visitors on the National Mall accept the definitions and values assigned to the memorials if they do perceive them?

As detailed in Chapter 1, I argue that public perceptions, interpretations, and definitions the memorials will be embodied in the behavior of the visitors on the National Mall. Further, behavior and interaction are indicative of the spaces of the National Mall being similar to that of ordinary parks or art museums and chapels. Those who assign less value to the memorials, or do not perceive the memorials to be important structures will exhibit loud and playful behavior wherever they are on the National Mall. This can include running around, playing games, screaming, and climbing all over the structures. However, those who assign value, definitions, and meanings to the memorials will perceive them as important structures and will behave in a more tranquil and introspective way. Under these perceptions, visitors will read the quotes on the walls, they will stare at the memorial structures, they will discuss the memorial structures, they will be quieter, they will abstain from screaming, or talking loudly, and they will not climb on or play around the memorial structures.

This chapter reports on field work conducted in the Spring of 2023 at the National Mall to better understand how Mall visitors interact with and receive the messages sent by the monuments on the National Mall. In the next section, I briefly explain my field work as well as highlight a group of citizens who quickly emerged as integral to how visitors experience and

interpret the Mall. I then discuss in greater detail what my research revealed about three specific memorials: the Lincoln Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., memorial.

3.2 Visiting and Experiencing the National Mall

In the Spring of 2023, I utilized naturalistic, shadowing observation field work (Angrosino 2016) to identify behavioral and conversational patterns that take place at the Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials on the National Mall. I also utilized paper surveys to understand how visitors perceived and interpreted the definitions and meanings of the memorials.

For one week, I observed visitor behavior at the three chosen memorials. This week took place during the 2023 Cherry Blossom Festival. The festival was on the street, beginning at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Information Center and Gift Shop, and ending right before the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial entrance. I took notes of the behavior observed with a pen and legal pad. I kept meticulous notes of any behavior I saw and conversations that I overheard. I did not begin the observational field work with a predetermined set of behaviors or phrases to look or listen for. Rather, I chose locations that allowed me to view the majority of the memorial the best I could, while also capturing the discussions and behaviors people were exhibiting at each memorial from day to day.

When noting overheard conversation and behavior, I sometimes noted demographic information I perceived about the visitors whose behavior and conversation I was noting. As I was taking in behavior and conversation at the same time, as well as for an expansive space, it was not always possible to note extensive demographic factors, or any demographic factors.

Going into the field work "blind" (or without a code-sheet or pre-determined list of behaviors and conversations to look and listen for) allowed me to gather the behavior and conversation that was actually exhibited by visitors, rather than insert preconceived patterns of behavior into the data that would bias and skew the behaviors that take place on the National Mall. I observed "blind" every day I performed observational field work. This was for two reasons: firstly, there are very little empirical studies that explicitly cover the behavior and conversation of the visitors on the National Mall. Because the majority of National Mall literature centers around art, architecture, and geographical studies, little has been done explicitly under the lens of political science theory. The scholarship that has been done either does not employ observational field work (for example: Savage 2011; Benton-Short 2016) or does not focus on the memorials on the National Mall (for example: Benedetti 2018). This resulted in no pre-existing dataset that has gathered data in order to define patterns of behavior and conversation on the National Mall, at the memorials.

Further, the empirical studies that have employed field work on the National Mall have primarily done so prior to the Coronavirus pandemic. Protocols on the National Mall and at the individual memorials are different than those that would have been observed pre-pandemic. While this is not the primary reason that drove the decision to employ the methodological approach of naturalistic observation work, it does contribute to an inability to base procedure and a code-book type observation style to this project.

Secondly, however, the mixed-methodological approach taken in this project allows for a rich theoretical development of the social, cultural, and political relationships the American public and political elite have with the National Mall and narrative formation. Pure, naturalistic observation allowed me to examine and gather data on the organic, everyday patterns of public

interaction and behavior at the memorials on the National Mall. Pure naturalistic observation, then, requires elimination of laboratory and experimental approaches to data gathering (Angrosino 2016). For this project specifically, that required "going in blind" and simply noting all behavior and conversation my eyes and ears could capture.

Following the field work, I spent about two weeks transcribing the notes from paper to a computer. The transcription of my notes was done for the purpose of identifying trends, patterns, and outliers in behavior and conversation at each memorial. To qualify for a pattern, a behavior had to take place more than five times, by five different sets of visitors, every day that I was at the memorial. Outliers were singular behaviors I observed or overheard while at a memorial. Patterns in conversation were grouped by overhearing the same or similar statements two times, over the course of a day, every day, from two different individuals while at a memorial. The difference in behavior qualification and conversation qualification is simply due to human error. It was easier to observe and note behavior when I could see multiple things, from multiple people, all happening at once. I could only hear and focus on one thing at a time as I also was observing behavior and making note of the observations and conversations.

I spent two hours every day²⁹ at each memorial. To observe behavioral changes that might be due to varying times of day, I cycled through the memorials at different times of the day throughout the week.³⁰ The expansive layout of all of the memorials required I move in order to capture the various behaviors and narratives that take shape at each memorial.

²⁹ Except for Saturday due to weather complications.

³⁰ The first block of time was 11:00 am to 1:00pm. The second block of time was 1:30pm to 3:30pm. The final block of time was 4:00pm to 6:00pm. I began on a Monday, with the first block at the Lincoln Memorial, the second block at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and ended with the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. On Tuesday, I began at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, followed by the Lincoln Memorial, and ending with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Wednesday began with the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, followed by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and ending with the Lincoln Memorial. The pattern then repeated for the course of the week.

At the Lincoln Memorial, I observed the outside space of the stairs for half of that time. On the stairs, I sat at the bottom and top of the steps on both the left and right sides. I began on the bottom left side of the stairs, and the next day moved to the top left side of the stairs. The third day, I moved to the right bottom side of the stairs, and finally on the fourth day I moved to the top right of the stairs. I then cycled through these spots for the remaining days of observational work. This provided important and ample time to observe the behavioral patterns that visitors exhibit going up to the inside of the Lincoln Memorial, as well as leaving the Lincoln Memorial.

The other half of the time was spent observing behavior from inside of the memorial. While inside the memorial, I observed both the left and right sides. I situated myself at the entrance on the left side, against the columns. On the second day, I moved to observe the inside space from the left side column that sits behind Lincoln. I repeated these positions on days three and four, but on the right side. I then cycled through these locations for the remaining days of my observational work. This allowed me to observe the actual space of the memorial where Lincoln sits. Observation of the steps and the inside of the building revealed important, vastly different behavioral and conversational patterns for those visiting the Lincoln Memorial.

At the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, I spent an hour on the entrance by the Tidal Basin where the statue of Martin Luther King, Jr. stands, and an hour on the entrance where you can only see the 'mountain of despair.' On the first day, I sat on the left side of the Dr. King statue, and on the right side behind the mountain structure. On the second day, I switched sides both at the statue of Dr. King, and behind the mountain. This also revealed different behavioral and conversational patterns for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, including the observation

of educational moments that primarily take place before groups go through the mountain to the statue of Dr. King.

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial required more frequent movement because it spans seven acres of land and is built in four distinct 'room' like patterns that obstruct other rooms from being viewed all at once. I spent 40 minutes at the 'Prologue Room' where the statue of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in his wheelchair sits. I then moved and spent 40 minutes at the large statue of Roosevelt and his dog Fala. Finally, I spent 40 minutes in the 'Fourth Term Room' where the funeral procession of Roosevelt is depicted, as well as the statue of Eleanor Roosevelt, and the carvings of the Four Freedoms. At this memorial, similar patterns of behavior and conversation emerged at each location I observed the visitors at. However, an important and distinctly unique thing to note for the Roosevelt Memorial is that many visitors to the memorial did not know that they were at a memorial at all. This is an important note because it contextualizes the behavior patterns specifically observed around the "Big Man and Fala" statue.

I did not observe any large deviation in behavioral patterns in the various blocks of time in which I observed the various memorials. Rather, the behavioral patterns exhibited were consistent not only across the time of day, but also most across the memorials. Though the various structural designs presented nuanced behavioral patterns, there was mostly consistent behavior across memorials.

I also conducted short surveys four out of the seven days I was at the memorials. I set aside half an hour at each memorial to approach individuals and ask them if they would be willing to participate in a brief survey to aid in an academic research study. To distribute and collect as many surveys as possible, I handed out paper surveys that asked the individual to identify the memorial they were currently at. I also asked three open-ended questions: why they

were visiting the memorial, what they believed the meaning and messaging of the memorial was, and about how much time they spent at the memorial.³¹ A maximum of four surveys were conducted at once.³²

These surveys were handed out in the last thirty minutes I had at each memorial. I purposefully ended the naturalistic observational study, and then pursued survey work in order to maintain the integrity of the naturalistic observation work. I did not want people to identify me as a researcher and change their behavior as such. Because of this, the behavior and conversations I observed while handing out the surveys were not included in my notes, nor were they factored into the patterns of behavior and conversation I later identified.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, the surveys were handed out in an attempt to collect a nuanced sample of the exact public perception and assigned meaning of the memorials they were at. The surveys would provide insight into public's reflection of a definition and narrative assigned to the memorial and National Mall as set by the president. However, if the visitors who took the survey indicated different definitions and meanings that they themselves assigned to the memorials and National Mall, that would show a divorce in the president's messaging that is assigned to the memorials. Regardless of a reflection or divorce from the president's definition, these nuanced insights speak more broadly to the theoretical argument by helping answer the question of who is setting the definition and meaning of the memorials?

Each memorial had consistent trends in participant acceptance of taking the survey. The individuals at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial received the surveys the best resulting in

³¹ As well, I gathered demographic information about party identification, gender, race, and age. This demographic data was originally gathered under the hope of being able to run a quantitative analysis from the surveys. However, my number of survey observations ended up being simply too low to run regression models under.

³² Please reference Appendix B for the full survey.

thirteen acceptances out of thirty asked.³³ The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial produced eight surveys out of twenty-five asked. This is not solely because the space offered less candidates who would be eligible to take the survey³⁴ than the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, but also because the expansive nature of the memorial made it so that people would have to literally halt their memorial experience to take the survey.

Finally, the Lincoln Memorial resulted in the lowest amount of survey acceptances. Only two people agreed to be surveyed out of forty asked. However, this space is the least conducive to surveys, or other research participation. While I was conducting my field work, the elevator that allows one to avoid the steps up to the inside of the Lincoln Memorial was out of order. This required every person to take the stairs if they wanted to reach Lincoln. This provides insights into the steps that help to explain some of the behavior that was observed. Massive amounts of individuals take breaks, eat lunch, and plan the rest of their day on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

I turn now to an in-depth discussion of behavioral and conversational patterns of visitors at each of the three memorials. While each memorial presented its own nuanced patterns in behavior and conversation, I found consistencies between patterns that inform the overall way we understand the cycle of communication that shapes the narrative of the National Mall. First, there does appear to be a direct connection between the Presidents and citizens. Increased presidential usage of the specific memorial sites seems to be reflected in the behavior and conversations of the visitors. I observed visitors identifying values and themes that presidents assigned to the individual memorials as discussed in Chapter 2. This is especially exemplified by

³³ I was only able to conduct surveys three days at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial due to rain, and no protected shelter area at the memorial site.

³⁴ Minors were not included in this study.

the patterns of behavior and conversation at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial where Presidents ignore the memorial, and citizens are unaware of it. Yet, the Lincoln Memorial serves as another primary example of the alignment of the Presidential narrative and the citizen narrative where focus is on the Emancipation Proclamation though the inscription in the memorial is the Gettysburg Address.

Second, my observations reveal that an important group within the public in the cycle of communication is school groups on the National Mall. I observed that the school groups prioritized education moments prior to or during the student's interaction with the memorial. The narrative presented by these educators is one that is reflective of the tones and themes set by the presidential utilization of the memorials. Education narratives stayed consistent across the different school groups at the various memorial sites, and they match a broad overview of American history and democracy that was outlined in Chapter 2.

However, my observational work also brings to light a breakdown in the cycle of communication between the President and the public visitors on the National Mall. When individuals not in school groups interact with the memorials, the sites on the National Mall are treated like any other "fun" place to stop and take pictures. Yet, within school groups as well, students who are allowed to break from groups or who do not have adults who assign meaning and value to the memorial structures allow students to behave in a loud, playful, and rowdy way at the memorials. This behavior indicates little assignment of value and meaning to the memorials. The use of the mall as a simple tourist stop, rather than as a reflection of an American narrative, shows how the messages elites desire to send are not always fully received by the citizens. I discuss these important points below with respect to each of three memorials.

3.3 Observing Visitor Patterns of the Lincoln Memorial

3.3.1 *The Lincoln Memorials Physical Placement on the National Mall*

The Lincoln Memorial is the first figure memorial placed on the National Mall. The temple in which Lincoln sits has gained the name of the 'Temple of Democracy,' and serves as an iconic symbol of the United States. It was the only memorial on the National Mall that I observed being guarded by federal police officers on a regular basis.³⁵ You can find it in movies, television shows, commercials, history textbooks, and other books. It is a setting of fiction and nonfiction storylines alike.

It sits at one end of the National Mall, opposite the United States Capitol Building. Symbolically, I argue that this structures the narrative of the modern-day American story with the 16th President as the beginning and continues on living and breathing today in the very halls of the Capitol building. In some ways this is a representative picture of American history and the current American narrative crafted across the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial because the Civil War is framed as incredibly transformative time for the United States.

Lincoln sits in the temple enclosure, and the words: "In this temple, as in the hearts of the people for whom he saved the Union the memory of Abraham Lincoln is enshrined forever," are chiseled above his head. This is where the National Mall's American narrative begins. The physical set up of the National Mall has Lincoln looking towards the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial. Symbolically, I argue that this represents Lincoln looking towards the influence of both Washington and Jefferson, inspiring his transformative presidency. As found in Chapter 2, the presidential utilization of the memorial centers the memorial's definition and

³⁵ This is not all together surprising given the discussion in Chapter 2 that highlights that the inside of the Lincoln Memorial is protected by federal law.

meaning around Lincoln's actions that ended the Civil War and rebuilt the union. In this I find that the presidential narrative of Lincoln on the National Mall includes his ability to see more than Washington and Jefferson were able to, especially when it came to fundamental minority rights. Lincoln then leads American democracy in that direction. In the literal setting of the National Mall, we see this as the Washington Monument, situated directly in front of Lincoln, the Jefferson Memorial, set to the right-hand side of Lincoln, and the U.S. Capitol Building standing at the other end of the National Mall.

This structural set-up of the National Mall and the meaning and connective narrative of the three memorials set by the presidents suggest a working relationship between the political elite in the first stage and second stage of the cycle of communication in narrative creation. Presidential utilizations of the Lincoln Memorial explicitly draw attention to this set up. Thus, I argue that the assigned presidential definitions and meanings give direction to how the visitors of the mall should be perceiving and interpreting not just the singular memorial, but the individual memorials. But, is this how the public perceives the Lincoln Memorial? Or is there a disconnect between this politically elite drawn narrative?

During my observational work, I observed a behavioral and conversational pattern of public attention to the Washington Monument while at the Lincoln Memorial. I observed adults pointing to other memorial and monument locations on the National Mall from the top of Lincoln's steps. I also observed visitors capturing pictures of themselves with the Washington Monument from various locations on the stairs, as well as at the top of the stairs, inside the first line of columns at the entrance of the memorial. Many describe the placement and setting of the National Mall from the top of Lincoln's stairs as "a pretty great view from up here." I also observed others stating that they "just have to get a picture going that way [facing the

Washington Monument]." On separate occasions, I heard adults of kids explaining the significance of the Washington Monument as they took photographs with it from the top of the stairs of the Lincoln Memorial. One group I observed climbed to the very top of the stairs, and a man in the group then turned around (towards the Washington Monument) and exclaimed: "Oh here we go! Look at this!" To which the women he was with turned around and conversed with one another stating, "Kira, look at this, that's a great photo!" following which they took a multitude of photographs. Others would simply state "we have to get a picture of that" or "did you get a photo from this angle?"

Further connection of the Lincoln Memorial to the rest of the National Mall took place in reference to the reflecting pool. Because it was still very cold when I did my observational field work, the pool was not full, and many adults pointed out to the children they were with that "normally the whole thing is full of water." One male adult told the child they were with that "in the reflecting pool, you can see the reflection of the Washington Monument." This is a simple phrase, but one that starts to build a cohesive understanding of the design of the National Mall. Another adult explained to their child that the reflecting pool is "meant to reflect the memorials back and forth" connecting the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument. Another adult explained (incorrectly) why the Washington Monument was two different colors to the group of people she was with while they sat on the top of the Lincoln Memorial stairs. In this, I argue that the reflecting pools allows the public to fully draw connections between a cohesive narrative of the memorials and monuments on the National Mall that the Presidential utilizations of the Lincoln Memorial point to.

3.3.2 *The Steps of the Lincoln Memorial: An Intentional Visit*

While the Lincoln Memorial stands at the Head of the National Mall, it is set apart from the Mall's distinct walking path. The offset positioning of the Lincoln Memorial, with the monstrous, iconic steps that must be taken to get to Lincoln himself³⁶ makes visiting the Lincoln Memorial a very intentional action. I observed one family take a photograph on the stairs with the Lincoln Memorial in the background, after which they turned around and took a photograph with the Washington Monument in the background. Following the photographs, the adult man asked the adult woman in the group if "we are going all the way to the top?" To which the adult woman answered "yes" and then they went the rest of the way up. This is just one example of the intentional visit to the actual Lincoln Memorial. This is not a memorial that can just be stumbled upon while walking the National Mall like the Martin Luther King, Jr. and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorials. There is no accidentally walking up to, or through, the memorial space where Lincoln sits, without knowing it existed or was even on the National Mall.³⁷

I repeatedly observed visitors to the Lincoln Memorial exclaiming that their visit to Lincoln was very intentional. One adult told the children he was with that they "are going to climb all the steps so that we get the full experience." I overheard various conversations while at the Lincoln Memorial that provide insight into the intentional trip to the Lincoln Memorial. For some, visiting the Lincoln Memorial was personally important to them because "Lincoln is his favorite president." Some visitors are bringing their companions to the Lincoln Memorial for the

³⁶ While there is an elevator that can be taken to the inside of the memorial space, making the Lincoln Memorial an accommodating memorial space, the elevator is not always in service. This was the case while I was performing my field work for this dissertation. While the elevator being out for the entire duration of my field work, and was just a simple note made at the side of my pages every day, this is one of the most important environmental observations made at this memorial site. Not only does this speak to the ways in which some memorials meant to enshrine parts of the American Story are to be accessible and accommodating, they most definitely are not always accommodating or accessible. This resulted in some not being able to visit the top and inside of the Lincoln Memorial on their visit.

³⁷ Like was so often observed at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

first time, and upon positive responses to the memorial, agree by stating "oh yeah, it's a great one; one of my favorites." Other visitors I observed debate making the arduous trip of the steps, but following the journey up, into the memorial, and back down, would express that they were "glad we did this!" One couple who made the trip up the stairs seemed to want to make the trip up more worth it, and one person asked, "do you want to walk around the edge of this since we are up here?" These observations of intentionally visiting - or making the intentional decision to go all the way up the stairs - the Lincoln Memorial suggest that there is an importance and value that people place in the existence of the Lincoln Memorial.

Yet another behavioral and conversational pattern I identified through my observational work is of the Lincoln Memorial exceeding expectations. I overheard some visitors exclaim "Oh my god, this is so cool!" in the same way a child in a candy store would exclaim happiness to be there. I saw one child wearing an Abraham Lincoln top hat because he "wanted to match Abraham Lincoln." On another day, I overheard an adult call their child Lincoln, and tell him that "this is who you are named after." Another group of two women visiting the memorial were having a lengthy conversation in which they were planning to take their children to the National Mall during their summer break. One of the women stated that: "they should see it but I'm watching these other kids and I'm like uh!" She expressed that she was very concerned about the kids and the steps as well as their possible behavior inside the memorial but stated that "it is important that they see it." These conversations and behaviors show a reflection of the importance and prominence of the Lincoln Memorial that is set by the presidential utilization of the memorial.

Yet another interesting conversational pattern observed further lends support to this part of my theoretical argument. This pattern indicated that the actual experience of the Lincoln

Memorial exceeded expectations was of the size and detailing of the Lincoln sculpture. I often overheard people express "there it is. It is bigger than I thought," "he's so tall," or "he's bigger than I expected!" One individual asked if "it is a shrine" indicating that they perceived the Lincoln Memorial as having a place of prominence and importance to the National Mall and its narrative. These are all public perceptions of the Lincoln Memorial that align with the larger than life and extraordinary definitions that the presidents assign to the memorial.

In a disconnect from the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial that suggest the placement of Lincoln on the National Mall is important, I observed outliers of disappointment among those who made the trip up the stairs. One individual commented to their companion that "that really wasn't worth it." Another specific conversation I overheard was between a group of women where one commented, "this is it? There isn't anything else around?" Another women on a different day of observation commented that "all of this and I asked what was underneath. Nothing! There is nothing else!" One day, I observed the disappointment for a child where they stated, "is this it?" with their shoulders slumped, and another child responded with "yep, that's it."

These outliers suggest a breakdown in the public perception of the Lincoln Memorial both between the political elite involved in the first stage, as well as the second stage of the cycle of communication of narrative formation. The messages of value and importance to the modern-day American democracy as detailed by the presidential utilizations of the Lincoln Memorial are either not perceived or not agreed upon by these individuals. However, perhaps a more accurate understanding of this statement is that the design of the steps, and the work it takes to get to the top of the stairs fails to match the end result that awaits at the top. This then signifies a

breakdown of the cycle of communication between the political elite in the first stage as detailed in Chapter 1, and the visitors at the Lincoln Memorial.

Yet another behavioral pattern I observed more than three times every day I was at the Lincoln Memorial was the use of the Lincoln Memorial steps as parts of workout routines. This observation lends support to the argument that visiting and interacting with the Lincoln Memorial is an intentional action. Those who were on runs, jogs, or walks for work-out purposes intentionally planned to utilize the steps of the Lincoln Memorial within their workout plan. Of the runners observed, none would run up the stairs and into the inside of the memorial space. Rather, I observed two sets of runners: first, those who would run up the steps, and turn immediately around and run back down the steps. The second group would run up the steps and then around the outside perimeter of the Lincoln Memorial.

While incorporating the steps and space of the Lincoln Memorial lends support to the idea that visiting the Lincoln memorial is an intentional action, this is an observation that speaks to the cycle of communication in another way. Visitors to the National Mall have probably not just started to incorporate the steps of the Lincoln Memorial into workout plans. Kamala Harris reflects this public behavior in one of her first public outings as Vice President in February of 2021. This video captured her exercising as she ran up and down the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. As shown through my observations, this is not a unique or strange way to utilize the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, but it does speak to a communication that the Vice President exhibited to the public. First, it recognizes and repeats a specific public behavior and utilization of the Lincoln Memorial. However, Kamala Harris is not a public visitor to the mall, she is a political elite figure who is representative of the Executive Office. I argue that this then is a potent example of a cycle of communication between the public and the political elite that gives

nod to the casual, everyday utilization of the Lincoln Memorial in the lives of those who either live in D.C. or who work-out in D.C., on the National Mall, while visiting the area. Not only is there a reflection of the presidential definition and meaning acknowledged by the public, but the public behavior and interaction with the memorials is acknowledged by the political elite.

This finding nuances the cycle of communication between political elite and the public in the shaping and crafting of narrative off the National Mall. Not only does the political elite - public relationship cycle have to do with literal meaning and definition that is attributed to the memorials, but also accepted behavior and everyday utilization of the memorials and mall.

3.3.3 Identifying the Lincoln Memorial Correctly

Despite the Lincoln Memorial being an iconic American symbol, as well as it being an intentional site to visit while on the mall, there are those who incorrectly identify Lincoln while at the memorial. On my first day of observations, a man face-timed two people while inside the memorial and exclaimed that "this is the Washington Memorial!" I again heard people asking their companions if "the statue (is) Washington or Lincoln?" To which various people would respond with Washington, and some with Lincoln.

However, my observations of behavior and conversation at the Lincoln Memorial revealed that the majority of visitors to the Lincoln Memorial correctly identify the memorial. There are various names people use to identify Lincoln as the figure represented in the memorial. I overheard the names of "Abe," "One of the Presidents," "Abraham Lincoln," "Lincoln," "President Lincoln," "President Abraham Lincoln," "Honest Abe," "Abe Lincoln," and "the 16th President Abraham Lincoln."

I observed a behavioral pattern of children asking their adults "who is that?" while pointing to (or simply referencing) the statue of Lincoln. Many adults correctly identified

Lincoln, responding with phrases such as "That's Lincoln, wasn't he a big guy?" or "that's Abraham Lincoln. That's a statue of Abraham Lincoln."

Some people correctly identify Lincoln, and then add a trivia type factoid to their identification such as "he ran for it, couldn't get elected, and so he switched [parties] and then won." Another group observed correctly identified the Lincoln Memorial to one friend and then discussed the funeral procession for Lincoln following his death.

In some observations that I observed where individuals correctly identified Lincoln, they connected their identification to broad yet specific statements of amazement. An adult male made the comment of: "when you think about the fact that Lincoln (shrugs) he was really just a person" to the two children he was with. Another important observation was a woman who stated: "you can see the nation that Lincoln actually built reflected in the memorial." These kinds of statements are very reflective of the values and definitions that the presidents assign to the Lincoln Memorial, indicating an alignment between the presidential definition and public understanding of the memorial.

Another pattern of identifying Lincoln that I observed was the naming of Lincoln to talk about the speeches inscribed on the inside walls. The two most prominent groups people fell into were: firstly, "that's Lincoln's second inaugural address." The second group is: "that is one of Lincoln's speeches," or "that is another speech Lincoln gave." The second group was both in reference to the second inaugural address and the Gettysburg Address. This is public behavior is again reflective of the attention that the presidents give to the speech inscriptions in their utilization of the Lincoln Memorial.

3.3.4 The Inscribed Speeches of the Lincoln Memorial

At the Lincoln Memorial, there is not just reflection on the statue of Lincoln. Public attention, behavior, and conversation also focuses on the inscriptions of the Gettysburg Address and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. This is in direct reflection of the attention presidents pay to the inscriptions inside the Lincoln Memorial.

3.3.4.1 The Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural Address

I observed various interactions with the wall that houses the words of the Gettysburg Address. Some visitors stress the importance of the Gettysburg Address in America's history by stating, "I can't even think about what it might have been like to have heard that." Others simply used phrases stating "impressive, isn't it?" in describing the Gettysburg Address wall.

Other visitors discussed the differences between the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural Address. I observed the overwhelming majority of parents point out the speeches on both walls to their kids. Some parents read the speeches to the kids; others ask their kids if "they would like to hear the speeches?" When adults would read the Gettysburg, some only read the first line, some read multiple lines but not all of them, and on three separate occasions I observed three adults reading the full Gettysburg Address to the children they were with. Some kids inquire about what the speeches before their parents bring it to their attention. In this case, the majority of responses given were "it's one of the speeches" or "it's one of Lincoln's speeches."

I did not observe anyone fully read the second inaugural address to the children that they were with. However, there were adults who would read the first line, or a few of the lines to the kids. Multiple times, I overheard adults discussing how much of the second inaugural address they read. One man said, "I got about halfway and I'm like, nope." Another adult stated, "that's

way too much to read." And on another occasion, another adult said, "I gave up there's just too many words."

As mentioned previously, the Gettysburg Address is etched into the right-hand wall of the Lincoln Memorial, and it is not labeled. On the left-hand wall of Lincoln, his second inaugural address is etched, and is also not labeled. This lack of labeling seeps into the experience that individuals have when at the Lincoln Memorial, and it acts as a barrier to fully understanding the Lincoln Memorial. This was observed through the most repeated phrases heard within the memorial space: "it's a speech." Some adults would address their child's questions of "what is that?" both towards the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural Address with "its a famous speech," "it's one of the speeches," "speech thing," "a speech," "oh that's his speech," "another speech," and "a speech given by Lincoln."

On a few occasions, I did observe visitors respond to the questioning of what the speeches were with an honest, "I don't know." The inability to identify the unmarked speeches suggests a potential lack of political and historical knowledge among those who are on the National Mall. It also possibly suggests a lack of political salience. This is important as it points to and can potentially help to explain potential breakdowns in the cycle of communication between the political elite and the public because sometimes, the public just does not know, and even sometimes might not care to know.³⁸

³⁸ The availability of phones and a quick internet search is not ignored here. In fact, while in the memorial space, it was witnessed that multiple people would look up what the speeches where on the sides of Lincoln. However, this speaks to the inherent design and purpose of the Lincoln Memorial when it was design and built from 1914 to 1922. With all attention to detail and the known prominence and importance of the Lincoln Memorial, the choice to leave the speeches unlabeled was an intentional world. The time and availability of information was very different than it is today in 2023. No one had the ability to do a quick internet search for that information while standing there in front of the walls themselves. With the design structure and the ability to remedy this barrier in the time between 1922 and 2023, I think it is important to note that the intentional leaving out of the labeling inhibits foreign and American visitors from grasping all that the Lincoln Memorial is meant to memorialize, as well as contribute to the overall American Narrative.

Another important pattern I observed while at the Lincoln Memorial was the mislabeling of the Gettysburg Address and the Emancipation Proclamation. It was not until the fourth day of my observation work that the Gettysburg Address was properly identified for the very first time. Every day before that, and many times after, I observed visitors referring to the Gettysburg Address as the Emancipation Proclamation.

On one hand, this is surprising as one group of visitors who I observed at the memorial would connect the Gettysburg Address to their primary school experiences. Throughout my observational work, I overheard conversations where one person would ask: "what is that?" or "Is that the Emancipation Proclamation?" Visitors travelling with them would give the answer of "That is the Emancipation Proclamation" and "yes." In the United States public education curriculum, it is common to have to memorize at least the beginning of the Gettysburg Address. "Four score and seven years ago" are recognizable words to many, and many individuals made comments of "...didn't we have to memorize this in school?" and "Oh, I remember having to memorize that and perform it in front of my teachers and our whole class." Some of these comments were followed by the incorrect labeling of the speech as the 'Emancipation Proclamation.'

This is not all together surprising as it matches the overall narrative of the Presidential speeches delivered at the Lincoln Memorial. Across the messages given at the Lincoln Memorial, citizens hear the presidents consistently use "emancipation," "freed the slaves," and the "Emancipation Proclamation." Not once was the Gettysburg Address named as one of the speeches that is engraved on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial. In fact, only the battle of Gettysburg was explicitly named, and it was only named one time. The primary narrative pushed by the Presidents is of the Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address.

While none of the Presidents misname the Gettysburg Address, they do not name it or address it at all. Rather, the prevailing narrative is of the Emancipation Proclamation, and thus, the Emancipation Proclamation is the document most commonly attached to Lincoln. It is then not surprising that the reasonable, average person on the National Mall would address one of the speeches engraved on the walls of the Lincoln Memorial as the Emancipation Proclamation.

On the other side of the memorial, Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address was most commonly referred to by visitors as "another famous speech given by him." This is the most common name given to the address by parents to kids, friends to other friends, and adults to other questioning adults. This is particularly interesting, even with the lack of labeling, because of the distinct wording of: "At this second appearing to take the oath of the Presidential office there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first."

The attention paid to the walls creates a pattern of behavior that affects the way visitors experience the memorial. I observed the pattern of the average flow of experiencing the Lincoln Memorial as follows: someone walks into the space following walking up the massive stairs in front of the Lincoln Memorial Temple. After passing through the first two rows of columns people go directly to Lincoln's statue. Some just take pictures with him and move on. Others take their photos and look at Lincoln in a pondering and thoughtful way for some time. Visitors then move to the right or left wall, whichever one they are closest to first. Here, an interesting line is formed on both the right and left side right in front of the columns, imitating an invisible line where no one can stand in front of. After skimming the wall, they move to the other side of the building, and check out the other wall. Following this, they leave, and spend time on the stairs. Surprisingly, the most amount of time spent at the Lincoln Memorial is actually spent on the

steps, and on the outside of the Lincoln Memorial, rather than in the inside of the Lincoln Memorial.

3.3.4.2 The Inscription Indicating the "I Have A Dream" Speech

The attention of the public is not only paid to the inscriptions on the walls inside the memorial. I observed a behavioral pattern of attention paid to the inscription on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial that indicate where Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered the "I Have A Dream" speech. This, again, is in line with the themes the presidents use to define and assign meaning to the Lincoln Memorial across time.

Under the behavioral pattern of attention paid to the step inscription, I observed teachers of school groups asking students to locate the step, and take a picture with it. From this, I observed teachers, group leaders, and adults in charge of small groups leading discussions that centered around the "I Have a Dream" speech and the Civil Rights Movement. I also observed individual groups visiting the mall paying attention to, and seeking out, the inscription of this spot.

The visitor's attention to the inscription of the "I Have a Dream" speech location did not end on the steps. When I was inside, I observed a pattern of discussion regarding the "I have a Dream" Speech, as well as Martin Luther King, Jr, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. This is another way in which the public continues to connect the Lincoln Memorial to the whole of the National Mall, and the overarching narrative thereof.

3.3.5 The Inside Versus the Outside of the Lincoln Memorial

A key behavioral pattern I found from my observational work is that behavior at the Lincoln Memorial is the location of the visitor while at the memorial. Distinct patterns of behavior emerged from the visitors inside of the Lincoln Memorial, and the visitors outside of

the Lincoln Memorial. The inside of the Lincoln Memorial includes Lincoln himself, and the inside walls behind Lincoln, and to the right and left sides of Lincoln. The outside of the Memorial includes a line of columns, the steps, and a platform between the Reflecting Pool and the first step.

Outside of the memorial space, I observed people taking breaks on the steps, planning the remainder of their day on the National Mall, taking social media breaks, talking on the phone, looking out at the Washington Monument, and eating. Kids are running around loudly playing on the steps, and school kids were allowed to run around the outside of the memorial space.

One of the biggest behavioral patterns I observed on the outside space of the Lincoln Memorial is the public turning of the white marble sides of the steps into 'slides.' Age and gender do not matter on this one. All types of visitors from little kids, to teenagers, to adults cannot seem to resist sliding down the sides of the white marble steps. Every day at the Lincoln Memorial I observed children, teenagers, and adults sliding down the sides of the white steps throughout my entire time period of observation.

I often observed conversational patterns of visitors exclaiming that they wanted to use the side of the white steps as a slide. One person exclaimed "oh my god, I want to slide down that" pointing to the white slabs as her group climbed the stairs to go into the Lincoln Memorial. Some see the white slabs, and label it by stating, "look at this slide!" following which they use the slab as a slide. Both solitary individuals and groups of visitors engaged in this behavior.

The use of the sides of the white steps are not just initiated by children and teenagers. I observed adults also participate in using the sides as a slide who had no children with them at all. As well, I also observed adults encourage the children and teenagers with them to use the sides as a slide. An adult woman with five teenagers filmed and high-fived each of the teenagers as

that slid down the side of the steps. On a different occasion, I observed an adult woman point out that "you can slide down the steps side!" and asked the group of children she had with her if they wanted to slide down. The children did, and she stood at the bottom to catch them. Following this, she asked the adult man with them if he wanted to slide down, but he declined. There were various other occasions where adults would stand at the bottom of the slabs, encourage their children to slide down, and catch them.

A conversational pattern I observed was the pointing out of sliding down the sides of the white steps in the past. While walking up the steps, one person in a group pointed out to the others that "we slid down that thing" and "I also climbed on that" referring to the giant lanterns at the end of the white and concert slabs on the side of the stairs. Upon exiting the Lincoln memorial, a group of three younger girls saw the white slabs, to which one stated, "oh look the slide's still there!" One of the other girls in the group then asked, "do you want to go down the slide?" They all then took turns sliding down the white slab until an adult man they were with saw them and stopped the behavior stating, "Don't do that. Don't do that. Bad idea. It's not a slide. Don't do that."

There is not a pure consensus between the public on the white sides of the steps being "slides." Some visitors appear to be more neutral. One example I saw of this was a woman sitting on the steps who saw kids sliding down the side of the steps and said, "of look at the kids having fun." She laughed and observed them, and then asked, "is it made for that purpose?"

Where there are behavioral patterns that indicate that a group of the public believes it is appropriate to use this part of the structure as a slide, there is also a group of the public who does not. I observed some children point to the white step sides and proclaim, "Look! There is a slide!" to which her adult stated, "I don't know if you're supposed to do that" and did not allow

the child to use it as a slide. Other adults flat out told their children "no" to sliding down the side of the white steps when the child asked to do so. Another child pointed out that "you can slide down that!" but their adult did not allow them to do so. Another nuanced example I observed was a high-school aged group of boys touring the National Mall with their high school, who made an immediate b-line for the slabs, to which their guardian immediately knew what they were going for and put a stop to the behavior before it could begin. I observed this pattern multiple times where those on school trips would try to use the white slabs as slides and their teachers and guardians would put a stop to the behavior.

Another group consisted of a child, teenager, and adult, and when the child expressed a desire to slide down the white steps as a group of teenage boys was doing, the teenager replied with "that's not what it's for." Immediately following the teenager's response, the adult states "it's disrespectful that's what it is." Another adult follows the same reasoning of disapproval for this behavior by stating that "this is a national monument, not a playground" when the children with him expressed their desire to slide down the side of the white steps. Yet another example is a child who asked their adult if they could use the side of the steps as a slide the same way other children were doing to which his adult said, "no we are not going to do that." The child pressed on and asked "why? Other kids are sliding?" to which the adult responded, "we aren't going to do that, it is not really respectful."

Visitors to the Lincoln Memorial extend this behavior to attempting to use the handrails of the stairs as slides as well. This was a less common occurrence than the use of the white sides of the steps as a slide. This was a behavior only employed by children and teenagers. Further, this was a behavior that I never observed being initiated by adults who were in charge of children, or who had children with them.

This behavior outside of the Lincoln Memorial is one of the largest behavioral patterns visitors exhibit that has to do with direct interaction with the memorial structure. This behavior, and the comments made by the adults who explained to the children why they could not use the structure as a slide, suggest that a visitor's perception of the space determines some form of behavior. Where adults and children assigned value, importance, and a special meaning to the structure because it is a "national monument," they did not allow the children with them to slide down the side of the white steps. Where adults and children did utilize the memorial structure in this way, there is a possible separation of the stair structure as being disconnected from the actual memorial, or that it just does not matter how one acts in the space at all.

This begins to lend support to my theoretical argument that perception and assigning of value and importance to a memorial determines behavior. However, it also speaks to both a reflection and departure from the presidential definitions of the Lincoln Memorial. The presidents present the definition and meaning of the memorial as a whole - this includes the steps and outside area of the memorial. However, not all visitors' behavior is reflective of this.

Behavioral patterns on the inside of the Lincoln Memorial further support a disconnect between the public and the presidential definition and meaning of the memorial. I observed the overwhelming visitor behavior on the inside of the Lincoln Memorial being more reflective of the behavior practiced at an art museum, or in a cathedral. People spoke at lower volumes after they walked through the entrance of the memorial than when they were on the steps. Adults took their children's snacks and drinks and gave them back following their exit of the memorial. When children cried or screamed, adults would take them out of the memorial. Some men who wore hats took them off as they walked through the entrance of the memorial.

However, there was deviation from this pattern. The largest deviations I observed concerned the volume people spoke with and adults not keeping children close to them. One example of this was an adult man who took a phone call and set the phone on speaker. Many of those within the memorial space turned and stared at the visitor who did this. Another example I observed was an adult who allowed a child they were with to run around and scream. The echoes of the scream made heads turn, and many people whispered about the adult who did not take the child out.

These are simply inverse behaviors of the behaviors that appeared to be socially acceptable within the memorial space. I did observe outliers in disruptive and distinctly different behavior, however. On one occasion, I observed an adult smoking a cigarette inside of the memorial. This resulted in many exiting the memorial, and it was the emptiest I have ever seen the inside of the Lincoln Memorial. Yet another outlier in behavior was a teenage boy who posed with the Lincoln memorial in a seemingly inappropriate and crass way. This posing caused many to give the visitor side-eyed looks, and there were comments made regarding how "inappropriate and disrespectful to pose that way with a statue of a past president." Another example of an outlier I observed was an adult that screamed out a child's name while inside the memorial. This echoed incredibly loudly and resulted in everyone immediately going silent and staring in the adults direction.

Teenagers and middle-school aged kids on school group tours also contributed to the behavioral patterns of behavior that suggest a divorced in value and implications of importance the presidents assign to the memorial. Throughout my time at the Lincoln Memorial, I observed groups of middle-schoolers clapping with hollow shaped hands in order to initiate a loud and disruptive echo throughout the memorial space. Another common middle-schooler behavior was

done to illicit the reverberation of the whistle throughout the memorial. I also observed two separate occasions where teenage boys would call on a certain person in their group to "cause a scene."

These behaviors are in direct opposition to the "Quiet Respect Please" signs posted at the right and left of the Lincoln statue. These signs are only posted within the inside space of the memorial, and they signal two important messages. First, there is a distinct expectation of behavior inside the memorial, versus outside of the memorial. The second message builds off the first: the signs indicating expected behavior within the inside space of the memorial signal expected and appropriate behavior of the public visitors as set by the political elite.

On some days throughout my observational work, I observed the signs explicitly monitoring public behavior inside of the memorial. One example I observed of the sign curtailing behavior was between three adult women. One woman yelled out a pose placement with Lincoln for one of her companions. One of the other women with her then tapped her on the shoulder and pointed to the "quiet" sign. The woman who yelled then covered her mouth and stated "oh!" and was quiet the rest of her time inside the memorial. This is an important example that illustrates how political elite attempt to communicate the behaviors they believe are appropriate to exhibit at a memorial, and that it does work.

The "Quiet. Respect Please" signs lend significant support to my theoretical argument regarding a cyclical cycle of communication between the political elite and the public. In 2019 when I first visited the National Mall and began this project, there were no signs indicating "Quiet. Respect Please." at the Lincoln Memorial. This illustrates that there were patters behavior and volume of the public visitors that political elite did not find acceptable. They then

communicated their expectations of behavior, and the behavioral patterns they find inappropriate, via signs.

The attention to the walls, the steps, and the ceilings in addition to the statue of Lincoln is a direct reflection of the presidential attention to the whole of the Lincoln Memorial in the themes identified in their speeches.³⁹ This is yet another example of public reflection of the presidential definition, attention, and meaning of the Lincoln Memorial. This is also a pattern of behavior, rather than just conversation. This is important as it highlights public interaction with the memorial's walls, which is a behavioral reflection of the presidents attention paid to the various parts of the Lincoln Memorial. Not only is attention paid to the wall but so too is there attention paid to various other parts of the memorial, such as adults pointing out the ceiling to children, people identifying the wires at the top of the columns to "keep birds out," discussing the columns, looking for their state's seal at the top of the building, and people pointing out the art work at the top of the walls. Where the presidents view the whole of the Lincoln Memorial as the memorial, and not just the statue of Lincoln, so too does the public.

Further, the posting of signs following identification of behavior deemed inappropriate allowed political elite to explicitly communicate with the public. This communication curtails various behaviors, but it also lends support to my theoretical argument that the cycle of communication is cyclical. Further, it adds a nuanced arrow of causality between the political elite and the public where the political elite identify something they are unhappy with on the National Mall, and they then communicate this to the public. The public then responds.

The behavioral and conversational patterns that I identified through my observational work reveal that there is reflection and alignment of the speeches and the definition set by the

³⁹ Please see Chapter 2 for a full discussion of this.

political elite in the behavior and personal interactions of public visitors on the National Mall. However, some patterns of behavior and conversation reveal the beginnings of public deviation from the speeches that indicate a different interpretation of the memorial among the visitors. Is this cycle of communication consistent across the figure memorials on the National Mall, or is it one unique to the Lincoln Memorial? I will now turn to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial to begin assessing the cycle of communication across the space of the National Mall.

3.4 Observing Visitor Patterns of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

3.4.1 “Who Even Knew This Memorial Was Here?”

As identified in Chapter 1, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is a controversial and ever-changing memorial. Honoring the four-term president⁴⁰ the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is a completely accessible and accommodating outside, art museum like experience honoring the life and work of one of the best-known Presidents of the United States. Yet, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is also one of the least known memorials on the National Mall.

While performing my observational work, I identified conversational patterns that suggested that Many people visiting the Roosevelt Memorial just stumble upon it. Along with these patterns of conversation, I also identified a behavioral pattern that works hand in hand with the stumbling upon the memorial. I observed that most people would walk along the path of the cherry blossom trees coming from the Jefferson Memorial. As they came from this direction, they would not walk directly along the tidal basin, but would walk into the Roosevelt Memorial through the memorials exit. Some visitors comment on their experience starting from the exit.

⁴⁰ Three and a half of those terms being served as President before his death halfway into his fourth term in 1945.

One example is two women who walked the whole memorial staring from the exit. One stated, "this is the end lets go," to which her friend responded, "I thought we came through the entrance back there" and then the first woman stated, "I did too, but I guess not." Eventually, a pattern emerged in my field observations that people were not always aware they were at a memorial at all. This was identified through observation of people seeing the "Big Man and Fala" statue of Roosevelt and making a statement Following such as, "Oh! That is a memorial!" and "Oh is this a memorial? Who is this a memorial of?"

Other statements made it unclear if people recognize the space of the Roosevelt Memorial as an official part of the National Mall as they made comments of, "Oh look! There is a statue! And a dog statue!," "Let's go and see if we can find more statues!," or "There is another statue!" I draw this possible conclusion due to the overwhelming public conversation pattern surrounding the statues on the National Mall being explicitly being identified as "memorials" and "monuments" by those on the mall. This does not mean that within a memorial space, visitors do not assign the word "statue" to the statues, as they do at all three memorials. However, the conversational pattern I observed across the three memorials had visitors combining the words of "memorial" and "statue" in the same sentence.⁴¹

Observing those who accidentally stumbled upon the Roosevelt Memorial from the exit side are not the only ones who expressed surprise regarding the existence of the Roosevelt memorial. I am unable to draw conclusions regarding visitors "stumbling" upon the memorial as they enter from the entrance of the memorial, but I observed similar conversational patterns from visitors entering the memorial at the official entrance that I did from those who began using the

⁴¹ This is further extrapolated on by the general knowledge that when at the Lincoln Memorial or Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, I did not observe patterns of shock, surprise, or unknown that the space an individual was standing in was a memorial space.

exit. In a group of visitors, one person commented, "this is a really good one! I haven't been here before." Another example is among two visitors where one asked their companion what they thought about the memorial now that they have experienced it, to which they received the response, "it was great. I can't believe I haven't been here before." Two older men exchanged similar expressions where one stated, "I wonder how long this has been here. I've never been over here!" to which the other man responded, "I know!" Among a group where one person appeared to live in D.C. and was acting as a tour guide for those visiting him, his group expressed surprise at the memorial's existence, and that it has been standing for so long. He then offered the statement of, "Don't worry, you're definitely not alone. No one knows what this is or that it's here. It's kind of like the mall's best kept secret."

Other conversations took on the pattern of one person expressing surprise over the memorial's existence, some adding that they also cannot believe they had never seen the memorial before, to which someone else responds, "I was just going to ask you if you've been!" Another common conversation observed along very similar lines is one person asking, "Have you ever been here before?" to which they then received the above comment of "I was just going to ask you that!" and then receive the response from the initial person of, "Never even heard of it!"

Another group of visitors that were located in about the middle of the memorial stopped at the "Big Man" and Fala statue where one woman said, "it's [the memorial] really big? It definitely has to be part of the newer stuff." This is in reference to the set of memorials that have been added more recently to the mall such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. and Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial. However, as discussed in the timeline descriptions of the memorial in

Chapter 1, this is in fact not true. This is just one example I observed where visitors expressed their lack of knowledge regarding the existence of the Roosevelt memorial.

I argue that this is a particularly important example because it begins to provide some insight into the rationale and thinking visitors apply to the space of the National Mall. The visitor's connection of the size of the memorial to it having to be new possibly suggests that this visitor would have known about the memorial if it had not been among the newer additions to the National Mall. This suggests that this visitor has been to the National Mall previously, and just never knew or stumbled upon it before this current visit. I argue that this points to some visitors on the National Mall valuing experiencing the National Mall and having an overarching knowledge at least regarding the memorials and monuments that sit on it.

The pattern of general unawareness that the visitors have of the Roosevelt memorial is reflective of the complete lack of presidential utilization of the memorial following the dedication ceremonies as discussed in Chapter 2. This is not to say that the conclusion being drawn from these observational patterns are caused by presidents ignoring the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Rather, it suggests that there is an alignment in the presidential view and the public view of the memorial. Where the presidents across time have utilized various spaces at different rates across the National Mall, the only presidential utilization of the Roosevelt Memorial occurred during a required ceremony that he had to attend. This is not a memorial that receives presidential spotlights the way that the Lincoln or Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial's do.

I argue that this supports my theoretical argument that the presidents set an overarching, government approved definition and narrative for each memorial. When they do not prioritize setting this definition, or drawing attention to a memorial, the level of knowledge and salience

reflected in the public regarding that memorial will be low. This is particularly highlighted with this specific set of patterns observed because the 2023 Cherry Blossom Festival was taking place and ended directly at the memorial. This set the stage to highlight the memorial and draw visitors' attention to it. Yet out of all three memorials, I observed that the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial had the least amount of foot traffic. This was true even when the Cherry Blossoms, which utterly surround the memorial space, were still in full bloom.

Thus, I argue that public knowledge of the existence of the Roosevelt memorial is reflective of the presidential attention paid to the memorial. However, I also argue that important conclusions can be drawn between the public and the political elite in the first stage of the communication cycle. The design of the National Mall allows people to walk directly to or from the Jefferson Memorial along the Tidal Basin, or along the walking path of the Roosevelt Memorial. Unless visitors want to walk along this 0.8 mile stretch twice, one experience or the other will be missed. This is due to the separation of the Tidal Basin and the Roosevelt Memorial by trees, areas that have fences, a rather steep slope upwards from the basin path to the memorial path, and grass. Though they are directly alongside each other, my observational work revealed that those walking the Tidal Basin can completely miss the memorial. The same is not true for those walking through the memorial, however. This led to another interesting behavioral pattern observed: where some would begin the Roosevelt Memorial walking path through the back entrance, they would look to their right, see the water, and walk down either the grass or first available walking path from the memorial to the Tidal Basin.

I argue then that there is a caveat to relationships revealed along with a reflection between public behavior and knowledge and presidential behavior and utilization of the memorial. The public's behavioral and conversational patterns that show a general lack of

knowledge is also a communication to the political elite involved in the design and creation stage. Simply put, the conversational patterns observed lend support to the statement that the Roosevelt Memorial is miss-able. Every day, people walk by and walk through the memorial space, having no idea that a memorial exists at all. This is then a reflection of a failure by the political elite in the design and construction phase that is recognized in the behavior of the public.

Where there are inherent problematic elements in the placement and staging of the Roosevelt Memorial within the setting of the National Mall, the I observed conversational patterns regarding the design and structures of the memorial that indicate it is really well received by the visitors. I observed on much younger child comment to their adult: "I am really happy with the location of this memorial." The adult laughed, and responded with "me too, bud." This exchange, as it came from a young child, indicates happiness with the memorial's aesthetic and environment, and not a nuanced comment on the memorials physical location. The water to the child's left combined with the pink cherry blossoms, and the deep gray and black stone structures create a pleasant environment for the child. However, for the Roosevelt Memorial, the environment is in part created by the physical location and placement of the of the memorial in relation to the Tidal Basin and cherry blossoms on the National Mall. This comment then suggests a relationship between the physical location of the memorial on the mall, and the produced environment that surrounds the memorial.

I also observed other important conversational patterns that centered around discussion of the memorial structure itself. I observed conversations that took the form exemplified by a man and a woman who discussed that "it's much more story telling than well, any of the other memorials." Other patterns of conversation directly pointed to the physical structure and make-

up of the memorial making statements such as, "it's really distinguished. I love the organic feel of it," "I like the simplicity," and "it's just a remarkable use of rocks, the space." Other patterns of conversation focused on the size, with visitors making comments such as, "this is like, a big memorial," "Wow! This this really big! Who would have thought?" I began to observe a conversational pattern that expressed almost gratitude for how large the memorial is, where visitors would say something such as, "I like the layout. I like how it spreads out, so you don't have a bunch of people congregating in one spot." Some comments focused on the size, but not in ways of amazement. Statements such as "so, is all of that a tribute to Roosevelt?," and "it's almost too big you know what I mean? It's one president" were observed every now and then. This indicates that there are visitors who perceive the memorial as too over the top for one president. This suggests possible limits to what the public wants or will accept as acceptable 'memorials.'

I observed some conversations that centered around the design of the memorial. One example was a lady who upon recognizing the design, pointed to the inscription of "Fourth Term" and exclaimed, "Oh! So it's the first term, second term, third, term, fourth term! Okay I see!" This pattern of conversation the centers around the design of the memorial shows a visitor recognition of the goals of the designers and political elite set out in the first stage of the cycle of communication.⁴² There are also patterns of conversation that show a reflection of the information that political elite wanted the public to receive. I observed frequent discussion about Roosevelt as president, the war, New Deal programs, the great depression, being a four-term president, leading regardless of his polio, and so much more. There is a rich conversation that is centered on Roosevelt and American democracy that I observed taking place. This is in

⁴² Please refer to Chapter 1 for a full discussion of the timeline and design goals of the creation of the Roosevelt Memorial.

alignment with what political elite in stage one of the cycle of communication for narrative creation wanted to achieve.

However, upon my first day of observational work at the Roosevelt Memorial, I noted informational panels had been added to the space in all five of the 'rooms.' I asked a park ranger how long these panels had been at the memorial, to which she responded, "They were actually just installed about a month ago." These panels are interactive, where a visitor can read them, have the panel read to them as well as tell them additional information. The panel also contains braille translation of the text, as well as mini replicas of the major structures of the memorial that people can touch. I observed continual patterns of behavior where visitors interacted with these panels. The most used panels were the 'Prologue Room' panel, the 'Second Term' panel, and the funeral procession panel in the 'Fourth Term' room.

These information panels were the newest addition to the Roosevelt Memorial. Like the "Quiet. Respect Please." signs posted at the Lincoln Memorial, the addition of the information panels to the memorial indicates messages, definitions, and education of the Roosevelt Memorial that political elite want the public to gain. Unlike the Lincoln Memorial, these information panels explicitly detail how visitors should perceive the memorial. I argue that this is in an attempt to craft and control the narrative of the Roosevelt Memorial from the political elite involved in the first stage of design and creation, not the president.

One particular comment combines the environment with a low level of knowledge regarding the existence and meaning of the Roosevelt Memorial. To contextualize this example, an individual who lived in Washington D.C. was acting as a tour guide for a group of their friends. One visitor in the group asked, "so what's the point of this memorial?" The person who was acting as the tour guide responded, saying "It's just a nice place for people to hangout. It's

really nice and pretty in the fall and now [cherry blossom time]." This is an incredibly important observation that exemplifies the value that some attribute to the Roosevelt Memorial. The question asked recognized that space was a memorial. However, the response and answer to the question did not include an answer that typically would be associated with a memorial, such as remembrance, reflection, education, or connection to history or a person (Ware 2008; Rowlands and Tilley 2006; Dory, Ruggiero, and Lavender 2003; Mitchell 2003). This further supports an alignment between the presidents and the public: where the presidents show that they do not place high value in the Roosevelt Memorial because they do not utilize it, the public does not assign value and definition that is typically assigned to memorial spaces.

Together, the suggested relationship between the president and the public, plus the relationship between the creation and design stage political elite and the public create an interesting and important conclusion regarding the cycle of communication that creates narrative. The Roosevelt Memorial, spanning 7.5 acres, cannot be moved. The federally protected cherry blossom trees that aid in dividing the memorial from the Tidal Basin also cannot be moved. Thus, the job of awareness and attention to the Roosevelt Memorial falls to the President whose job of Head of State is to create and draw attention to public narrative. However, the addition of information panels by the political elite in the first stage of the creation and design phase suggests a communication between the first stage political elite and second stage political elite. If the president will not engage in the cycle of communication to craft political narrative and memory for a memorial, the political elite in the first stage will. This lends further support to my theoretical argument regarding the two distinct stages of the cycle of communication. It also lends support to the political elite players I assign to each stage.

3.4.2 'Prologue' Room Roosevelt and 'Third Term' Room Roosevelt

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial also is representative of those with disabilities. Roosevelt is depicted in a wheelchair in a statue that was added after the original dedication of the memorial in 2001. The wheelchair depiction of Roosevelt is located in the prologue room at the entrance to the memorial. However, my observational work identified a pattern of visitors often missing the statue as they walk into or out of the entrance. One reason I observed visitors missing this statue is the location of the bathrooms at this end of the memorial being immediately adjacent to the Tidal Basin. The bathrooms for women and men are located on the backside of the small museum and gift shop building that is attached to the memorial space. Given the amount of people who end the memorial at the beginning, those who opt to take this path closer to the Tidal Basin in order to get to the bathrooms completely miss the prologue room. However, I also observed a pattern of behavior where people would go to this set of bathrooms, and then start the memorial from there, again, missing the prologue room.

Yet another pattern I identified that aids in explaining how or why people miss the wheelchair statue of Roosevelt is because of its life-like size. This is coupled with consistent patterns of educational moments being taken in the prologue room. I identified that the educational moments taken prior to entering the memorial space often have the school group gather around the statue when the space is empty.⁴³ When the school groups will gather in this space for that educational moment, they cover the statue, and it truly cannot be seen by those walking by. I further observed that the depiction of Roosevelt would be hidden if small groups of more than two individuals stopped in the space.

⁴³ Educational moments are taken at the exit side of the memorial for those groups that do the memorial backwards.

An important aspect in understanding this is to recognize that when depicted as a life size statue, Roosevelt is seated in the wheelchair, and is not very tall. This makes it an easy statue to be able to block from those who are walking up to or out of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. I observed that the prologue room holding this depiction of Roosevelt created a natural gathering point. Due to this, it was crowded with school groups and tour groups more than about eighty percent of the time that I observed this space. This is overall an important observational take-away from this memorial because it suggests that some who visit the Roosevelt Memorial do not engage with the full memorial simply because of its design. The wheelchair depiction of Franklin Delano Roosevelt is vital to the messages of representation on the National Mall as it depicts disability. However, the natural patterns of behavior the public adopt easily hid the statue, and it was then missed by those visiting the space at the same time. One woman pointed the statue out, saying "there he is, its tiny. You can barely see it."

3.4.2.1 Identifying Roosevelt

Closely related to the general lack of knowledge of the existence of the memorial, I observed a consistent mislabeling of the 'Big Man' statue of Roosevelt as other presidents on the mall. One child from a high school group said, "oh, this is the Jefferson memorial" upon walking up to the 'Big Man' statue of Roosevelt. More than one person asked, "who is that?" when approaching the 'Big Man' statue. Overwhelmingly, the misidentified of the 'Big Man' statue was to identify Roosevelt as Jefferson, but there were a few individuals who identified it as Washington.

3.4.3 Public Patterns of Behavior

3.4.3.1 Patterns of Educational Moments

Consistent patterns emerged regarding the educational moments held at the memorial. These patterns combine to reveal a cohesive narrative that teachers and tour guides relay to students and groups regarding the narrative of the Roosevelt Memorial. First, I observed that almost every group leader points to the efforts that Roosevelt and his team went through to keep the public from seeing him in any type of 'disabled' light. They explained that this was because it would make him look weak, and therefore incapable of leading a country. Many teachers also point out that it would have affected his ability to get re-elected as president. Further, almost every school group teacher told their students that there is only one single photo of Roosevelt in his wheelchair, and that is what the statue in the Prologue Room is fashioned after. They then proceed to address how amazing it is now to depict a "message of hope and ability" on the National Mall by showing him in the wheelchair.

I observed that some tour guides and teachers take this message further and would address the accessibility of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. They addressed messages of ability that are supposed to be pushed off of the memorial because of it. Though the wheelchair depiction of Roosevelt was dedicated in 2001, the original dedication took place in 1997, and held those inherent messages of accessibility and ability to rise above disability to do anything one wanted. This is one area where there is an observable alignment between the presidential definition of the memorial and one version of the narrative crafted by teachers and tour guides. As found in Chapter 2, Clinton used themes of hope and ability in his utilization of the memorial. This narrative being pushed as well by groups of the public at the memorial suggests an alignment between the political elite and subsets of the public.

The definitions and meanings assigned to the Roosevelt Memorial by educators and tour guides appear to be in line with the presidential themes and definitions. However, this is not necessarily the conversation that is taking place within the memorial by those who are not in the school groups and tour groups. This is especially seen throughout the surveys I conducted at the Roosevelt Memorial. I specifically asked visitors what they thought the messaging and meaning of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial are. Three of the eight respondents state that the message of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is "faith in god is so so important," and the "spiritual and moral" guidance of the political leaders. Two of these individuals identified as Republicans, and one identified as neither Democrat nor Republican.

This suggests a connection of the message the public takes away from the memorial and their party identification is important. As examined by extensive scholarship, there is a connection between pre-existing beliefs one holds, and the way that they then intake and interpret new information to confirm those beliefs. I argue that individuals on the National Mall are approaching memorials the same way that they approach obtaining other forms of political information (Wlezien 1995). Information that conforms to their pre-existing beliefs is accepted and sought out, and information that goes against their beliefs is rejected. As neither party really focuses on access and accommodation, there should be little attention paid to these issues when it comes to the National Mall. And that is exactly what is seen when observing the space of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Simply put: people pay attention to the messages of the National Mall that align with the current political statements that are making the headlines, as well as the current social and cultural norms dominating the day.

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial also recognizes Eleanor Roosevelt. The depiction of Eleanor Roosevelt revealed important patterns of conversation and behavior that

took place within the space of the memorial specifically regarding educational moments. The design of the FDR Memorial places many quotations and achievements of Roosevelt in the giant rock structures that makeup the overall structure of the memorial. I observed patterns of school groups spotlighting the impact of placing Eleanor Roosevelt on the mall and in the memorial space. In the educational moments taken before entering the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, as well as the education moments teachers took at the Eleanor Roosevelt statue, there was a cohesive message of the role Eleanor Roosevelt played in running the country under the name of her husband while he was experiencing especially challenging times due to his polio. One teacher tells his students from the United Kingdom:

I don't want us to just talk about FDR, we also have to talk about Eleanor. She was a jewel leader, and she enhanced FDR's role as President, like Hillary Clinton, Abigail Adams, Michelle Obama, and Edith Wilson.

Many other teachers made similar comments to their students regarding the role of aid, and confidant, and leader that Eleanor Roosevelt played to and in place of Franklin Delano Roosevelt during his time as President. But the other group of comments made regarding Eleanor Roosevelt was her place as the United Nations Delegate. This is not surprising given the inscription by Eleanor's statute reads: "Eleanor Roosevelt. First United States Delegate to the United Nations" with the official seal and emblem of the United Nations above the inscription. This is purposeful and speaks to the independent role that Eleanor Roosevelt played as a political elite in her own right, as well as re-emphasizes the inter-dependent, globalized world we live in, and that the President has to function under, today.

Eleanor Roosevelt's statue is the only form of representation of women on the National Mall besides the Vietnam Womens Memorial and is the first figure memorial of a named

woman.⁴⁴ Though placing Eleanor Roosevelt on the National Mall was done under the full Memorial of her husband and not in her own right, it is still an important form of minority representation added to the National mall. One outlier in the patterns of conversation that surrounded Eleanor was of an individual told the group he was with that, "Eleanor did not want to be remembered as just FDR's wife. Even though its printed right there beside her, people still ask who is this? and then say, 'oh it's just his wife' and that is really sad and disappointing."

This statement highlights two conversational patterns I identified through my observations. First, I identified patterns of visitors identifying the statue of Eleanor as "this is the last statue, it's his wife, Eleanor," or "there's the first lady." Another pattern of conversation more followed the inscription placed by her statue that she was the first US delegate to the United Nations. For example, a pair exchanged a conversation where the women asked her male companion, "did you know that Eleanor was the first US delegate?" To which he responded, "I did not. The woman then said, "She's the only lady on the National mall. She deserves it." Some conversations combine the two. For example, one person said, "Eleanor Roosevelt was the first US delegate to the United Nations. The first lady. It was just so good cause it was like, building up to the presidencies" in reference to doing the memorial backwards - but thinking they were doing it the correct way - and that Eleanor was the first statue presented at the memorial.

Not only is she the only First Lady of the United States on the National Mall, but she is also the only female figure memorial depicted on the National Mall. My observations identified patterns of primarily women taking pictures with her statue. Further, I identified patterns of

⁴⁴ While the Vietnam Womens Memorial depicts three women caring for a wounded male soldier, the women are nameless and representative of the specific stature and role of women who served in vital roles during the Vietnam War. Though they differ in many ways, it is important to see representation of women in both forms on the National Mall. As well, the Vietnam Womens Memorial was placed on the National Mall prior to Eleanor Roosevelt, being dedicated in 1993, and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial being dedicated in 1997.

school groups taking educational stops at Eleanor's statue. Acting as a mass form of representation on the National Mall, the statue of Eleanor Roosevelt within the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial begins to place women into the American Narrative and also explicitly spells out and brings attention to the United Nations and the role of globalism and the current age of inter-dependency that the world - not just the United States - lives under. These are messages that are in line with overarching themes that presidents assign to the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial as discussed in Chapter 2. This suggests a projected, cohesive narrative that the first stage political elite craft as they add memorials, monuments, and other structures to the National Mall.

3.4.3.2 Public Interaction with Memorial Structures

Through my observational work at the memorial, I formed the argument that the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial takes on an air similar to an art museum. However, because of its placement outside as well as encouraged interaction with the Second Term room, it does not command the same behavior as the inside of an art museum. This is explicitly seen through two primary patterns of behavior that emerged from my observations.

The first pattern of behavior that emerged specifically focused on the fountain structures of the memorial. While I was performing my observational work, the seven water fountain and pool elements of the Franklin Delano Memorial were turned off. This is how the memorial space can be found around eight months out of the year. When the water features are off, I observed that the memorial space is seen and approached as a giant playground for those who know it is there, or those who stumble upon it by accident. I observed patterns of behavior among children, teenagers, and adults alike climbing inside of the largest fountain structure of the memorial that can be found in the 'Fourth Term' room. I repeatedly observed grown men climbing the wall to

the very top of the fountain structure and walk across the top of the fountain like it was a balance beam. I observed two photo-shoot sessions take place in this same fountain structure. I observed two teenage boys using the fountain and the arena in front of the fountain for skateboarding tricks.

The second pattern of behavior is one that emerges due to adults who are in charge of children. Teachers, guardians, and parents tend to have a brief educational moment prior to entering the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial - one that echoes the same education moment as given above by the first approach - and then to allow the group to break up into their subgroups, explore the memorial, and then meet back at a pre-appointed meeting location at a given time. In this approach, the students are not told to stay together. Rather they are set loose to explore the memorial that more resembles an outside playground or art gallery. It is here that kids are allowed to run around the space of the memorial, play in the fountain spaces, and climb on the rock slab formations that make up the symbolism of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Some guardians do not let their groups of kids climb and play on the parts that make up the memorial, keeping a closer eye on their kids than others, while others gently suggest "maybe we don't climb on the big rocks that can hurt us if we fall" but do not really play an enforcer role.

Some sit on the benches on the sides and truly give their group of kids full, free range. Some adults join the kids in climbing and playing on the structures themselves. There is a variety of different combinations of the behaviors that adults who are in charge of groups of kids allow the kids to exhibit or not, but the majority of behaviors of the groups of kids are simply reflections of the behaviors that adults deem as acceptable and appropriate behaviors for the space in which they are in. Not only are kids learning from the moments of education in which

they are told information, asked questions, given things to think about, and hear instructions on what to look for and how to approach the memorial spaces and varying other parts of the National Mall, they are also learning and defining for themselves the importance and differentiating spaces of memorials, monuments, and the space of the National Mall at large through the behaviors that they see adults practicing as they approach and interact with the sacred and hallowed spaces on the National Mall (Benton-Short 2016; Hass 2013; Savage 2011).

While the stories being taught at each memorial about each memorial align in a mostly cohesive way, with specific details that are more important to one teacher than another standing out as honorable mentions, the educational moments that are taken before, during, and after the tours of the individual memorials and monuments on the National Mall tell a clear story regarding the way that citizens are learning about the individual structures. Further, it lends insight into the way those narratives are coloring the overall American Narrative painted by the National Mall. While there are people who tuned into the Presidential speeches given at each memorial, these educational moments are the ones that are beginning to shape the National Narrative school age kids have coming off of the National Mall.

This pattern of behavior is possibly due, in part, to the accessibility and encouraged interaction with various parts of the memorial. Everything is very large and looks like a playground. The braille markings that can be found across the memorial space encourages and perpetuates an air of interaction and a hands-on experience. The second term room, with the massive pillars and five paneled artistic depiction of this time in Roosevelt's Presidency is akin to playgrounds and I observed patterns of behavior here that is comparable to the water pads in waterparks where water shoots out of the ground and children play. This is a room that encourages touching, and interaction with the art that is the memorial. The ability to interact with

the second term room does not stop at the second term room, but rather sets an overarching, playground, and interaction tone to the memorial space as a whole.

Yet, it is also in part due to the nature of human beings, and the lack of signage posted to mitigate behavior within the memorial space. There was one sign posted at the first fountain space in the first term room that chained off the empty fountain basin and told visitors to please stay out of the fountain basin. Of all seven water features that make up this memorial space, this was the only one that had signage and chains to control a certain behavior that the political elite want to curtail, similar to the signs of the Lincoln Memorial.⁴⁵ In my field observations, I found that signs marking off fountains were typically followed. However, this was not true all the time. There were still those who ignored the signs, children, and adults alike.

The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial lends important support to my theoretical argument of the cycle of communication that creates between political elite and the public. Similar to the findings at the Lincoln Memorial, signs are posted in certain areas of the Roosevelt Memorial to control behavior the political elite find appropriate.

However, where this is the only sign at the Lincoln Memorial, the political elite attempts to directly shape perceptions of the public in regard to the meanings and definitions attributed to the Roosevelt Memorial. This is observed thought the addition of the memorials information panels that are spread throughout the memorials design.

Important messages are communicated from the public to the political elite as well. Not only is there a public pattern of misidentification of Roosevelt, but there is also a general lack of

⁴⁵ You can often observe individuals in the fountain of the World War II Memorial, regardless of it being on and running, or off and empty. You will also often find individuals in the reflecting pool, either swimming along or playing in the water, or dipping feet in on hot days when the pool is full, or walking inside of the reflecting pool basin when it is cold, and the water is turned off resulting in a less full, dry sided reflecting pool basin. To the average person on the National Mall, the pools and water fountain features are not the areas like the inside of the Lincoln Memorial or Jefferson Memorial that command respect and church-like reverence behavior.

knowledge regarding even the existence of his memorial on the National Mall. This is a particularly important and interesting finding. As discussed in chapter 2, there is almost a complete ignorance of the Roosevelt Memorial from the office of the president. Where this suggests a reflection in the public knowledge of the memorial and the presidential perceptions of value and importance of the memorial, this raises an interesting question of whose job it is to raise awareness and knowledge of the memorial? Is it the president's job, or is it the political elite in the first stages job to shine a spotlight on the memorial? I argue that, based off of the presidential utilization of the other memorials on the National Mall throughout their lifetimes, it is the president's job. However, with lack of willingness to shine a spotlight on the memorial from the president, a power vacuum was left where the political elite could jump in and work to define and shape the narrative of the Roosevelt Memorial. This can be seen in the addition of information panels, and park rangers giving "park ranger talks" at the memorial.

Under the case study of the Roosevelt Memorial then, there is support for my theoretical argument where there is a consistent cycle of communication between the political elite and the public. However, there are nuances: if a president will not act as the political elite who defines, shapes, and creates political memory and narrative at a memorial, the political elite almost exclusively involved in the design and creation stage will step in.

3.5 Observing Visitor Patterns of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

3.5.1 The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials Physical Placement on the National Mall

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is between the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial when taking the left side of the tidal basin path. When taking the right side of the tidal basin path, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial stands between the Lincoln Memorial and the

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. When looking at an aerial view of the National Mall, the placement of the Martin Luther King Jr., Thomas Jefferson, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorials all are placed to the right of the Lincoln Memorial, and the main straight of the National Mall path. Though not directly placed in the middle of the National Mall, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial sits in a central position between Lincoln, Jefferson, and Roosevelt. As well, it is a focal point of the Japanese Cherry Blossom path that surrounds the tidal basin of the National Mall.

This positioning highlights existing ties the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial has to other memorial spaces on the National Mall. Further, the positioning showcases the narrative of civil rights and racial justice that seems to be an important overarching narrative on the National Mall today. When at the space of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, I observed these clear ties through patterns of conversation of behavior of the visitors. One important pattern of conversation at the Dr. King memorial was the discussion of the "I Have a Dream" speech, accompanied by pointing to the Lincoln Memorial as the location in which that speech was given.

Further patterns of conversation emerged where I observed people discussing the step the speech was given on, and how it is now marked at the Lincoln Memorial. The gift shop has buttons, stickers, magnets, and posters of the March on Washington that was the setting of the infamous speech. Another behavioral pattern I observed was visitors pointing to the direction in which Martin Luther King, Jr. is facing. In this pattern, a conversational pattern also emerged where visitors would discuss how Dr. King is an African American man who is "staring down Thomas Jefferson." This distinct pattern of behavior from the visitors suggests a visitor perception of first, amazement that someone of a minority group would be placed on the

National Mall. This suggests that there is a visitor perception of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial regarding intentionally. Visitors perceive that the placement of Martin Luther King, Jr. on the National Mall, and in relation to Jefferson and Lincoln were all intentional actions taken by the political elite.

I identified patterns of conversation the focused on the location of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial at the Tidal Basin and across from the Jefferson Memorial. These patterns emerged from many teachers would lead their students to the front of the memorial space, and say, 'here is your view of Thomas Jefferson with the Cherry Blossoms. "However, this pattern of conversation was also upheld by some visitors to the mall who were not part of school groups. I observed these visitors making comments such as, "I like the view of the [Thomas Jefferson] memorial from down here." One person remarked to her companion that she "kid of realized if you walk down this way you get this stunning full water view of Jefferson."

This pattern of visitors connecting the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial to the other memorial spaces on the National Mall is reflective of the behavior of connection observed at the Lincoln Memorial. Similar to the Lincoln Memorial as well, this pattern is reflective of the connection that the political elite draw on in their utilization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial as detailed in Chapter 2. The suggests an alignment between the political elite and the public in the creation and recognition of a broad overarching narrative of the National Mall as a whole. Further, this begins to suggest that overarching themes and narratives on the National Mall also fall into this cycle of communication, not just the individual memorials on the mall.

3.5.2 Engagement with the Sculpture of Dr. King versus Engagement with the Quotation Walls

As with the other memorials on the National Mall, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is not just a single statue depicting Dr. King. Rather, the whole of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial includes two quotation walls that lead to a mountain structure. The mountain structure serves as the entrance to the memorial. Finally, in front of the mountain, is the stone sculpture of Martin Luther King, Jr. the incompleteness of Dr. King's body presents him as a figure of hope in the explicit fight for civil rights, racial equality, and justice as discussed in more detail in Chapter 1 and 2. The quotations walls contain fourteen of Dr. King's well known quotations.

Where the Lincoln Memorial is focused on as a cohesive whole by both political elite and public visitors as discussed above, the patterns of behavior I observed at the memorial focus more on just the mountain and the Dr. King structures. I observed very little patterns of visitors engaging with the quotation walls, but many more patterns of behavior and conversation focused on the mountain and Dr. King. These patterns of visitor behavior are reflective of, and in line with, the presidential utilization of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, however. As discussed in Chapter 2, the presidents focus their themes and definitions of the King Memorial not on the quotation walls, but on the statue and design of the "from a mountain of despair, a stone of hope" design.

I observed patterns of conversation that placed the larger than life, incomplete carving of Martin Luther King, Jr. (Margolin 2012) as central to the conversations that take place across the National Mall. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is not a giant, completed replica statue of Dr. King standing or sitting inside of a temple like Lincoln. In fact, the carving of Martin Luther King, Jr. is not even fully complete. Rather, the structure stands as a block, with Dr. King

partially carved into the front. I often observed that those who were approaching the giant block from the back, walking through the mountain that stands behind the stand-alone structure, could not see the carving of Dr. King at all. It is not until they got to the front of the stone structure, or the side of the stone structure, and look all the way up, to the point of essentially having to tilt your head back, that they were able to see the face and fullness of the incomplete Martin Luther King, Jr.

I observed a particular pattern of behavior where many people walk through the side entrances that were ensconced with cherry blossom trees asking "where is the memorial? I don't see it" only to come all the way through the tree path, standing almost directly at the bottom of the memorial, and exclaim, 'Oh there it is! I didn't even see that!' One particular individual asked, while at the side of the King Statue, "Is this the start of FDR? No? This is, who is this?" and then in walking around to the very front of the statue, turning around, and tilting her head straight back, exclaimed "oh! It's MLK!" It is a memorial that can be missed, and one that many do just walk through in order to get the view of the tidal basin and Jefferson Memorial.

I also observed that the incomplete form of Martin Luther King, Jr. inspires patterns of conversations focusing on "the work is not done." This is a pattern perpetuated by many teachers in their school group educational moments, as well as by tour guides, adults to kids, friends to other friends, and adults to other adults discussing the memorial. This is reflective of the dedicatory speech given by President Obama in 2011 as discussed in Chapter 2. However it is also a reflection of the presidents continual discussion of the work not being finished.⁴⁶

Patterns of public behavior and engagement with the statue of King also emerged from my observations. There were cameras capturing photographs at every angle imaginable. People

⁴⁶ For the full discussion of this theme, please refer to Chapter 2.

posed with the statue of Dr. King, as well as with the mountain. Others just took pictures of the various structures of the memorial. In this outside space, adults allow children to run around and be loud. Yet I did observe a kind of "memorial specific norm" where a small half-circle would form in front of the statue of Dr. King. Within this space, children did not run around and play. However, I often observed children, teenagers, and adults trying to sit on the left corner of the Dr. King sculpture when they were taking photographs with the memorial. The behavior at this memorial is very reflective of the behavior at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the behavior on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

I also observed patterns of behavior and conversation that created a distinctly excited and happy environment around the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. One little girl pointed and exclaimed, "Martin Luther King!" when coming up to the statue. This was a common pattern of behavior I observed for little kids, both girls and boy, as well as of a verity of races. In another pattern specifically identified among children and teenagers, people would run up to the statue of Dr. King and just stare at it with huge smiles on their faces. Yet another pattern of behavior that cultivated an environment of excitement was with school groups who would gather and take photographs with the memorial. Within these groups, I often observed a pattern of African American students wanting to take a photo with the memorial with just them.

Patterns of posing with the Dr. King statue also emerged from my observations. I often observed adults and children emanating the crossed arm, serious looking stature that Dr. King is depicted doing in his statue. Both men and women did this. However, a pattern in frequency of this posing also emerged. African Americans attempted to pose like Dr. King at much higher frequencies than White Americans, Asian Americans, or any other races.

While the memorial imparts a message of the fight of civil rights that is not yet complete, the quotations presented on the walls to the right and left sides of the Martin Luther King, Jr. stone impart a different message (Hagopian 2020). There are six quotations on the South Wall. While there is a general sense of the importance of civil rights and access to equality and justice, there is a more present tone of focus on the Vietnam War, and other violent conflict that supports the continuation of American democracy. There are eight quotations on the North Wall. These quotations also speak to both violence and the form of war, as well as civil rights and racial justice. But only one of the eight quotations on the North Wall explicitly spells out that the subject of the quotation is civil rights, equality, and justice. The other seven quotations point toward war and a message beyond the issues taking place within the borders of the United States.

While at the space of the memorial, I observed that the average visitor did not really interact with the quotation walls in any capacity. In fact, when it came to the quotation walls, I observed the pattern that most visitors skipped the quotation walls entirely. The pattern that emerged instead was visitors opting to walk through the ensconced paths of the cherry blossom trees. Those who did interact with the quotation walls began to read the quotes beginning on whatever side they entered the memorial space from. However, I observed that they generally did not read the entirety of the quotation walls, and instead would typically walk away from the walls after three or four quotations.

Rather than further engaging with the quote walls and the narrative that they try to impose on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, individuals were more likely to stop engaging with the quotes and go to the stone sculpture of Martin Luther King, Jr. This is reflective of the way the presidents engage with the memorial in their speeches. The predominate theme of

presidential speeches center around Dr. King, his work as a Civil Rights Movement Leader, and as the man who gave the "I Have a Dream" speech. Presidents do not read or even draw attention to the whole of the memorial in the same way they do with the Lincoln Memorial. Rather, if there is concentration on the design of the memorial, it really only focuses on the mountain of despair design. Thus, this is a finding that lends support to my overall theoretical argument.

3.5.2.1 Public Perceptions of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

To the right of Martin Luther King Jr., reads, "Out of a Mountain of Despair, a stone of Hope," with line carvings across the whole side of the stone that match identically the side carvings of the two sides of the mountain you walk through at the entrance to the memorial space. This is a potent and important part of the figure memorial, and something that is mentioned by parents, couples, school groups, tour groups, friend groups, and others who visit the memorial site. This single quotation is really the only one I observed continual interaction with while at the memorial. Two of the thirteen respondents explicitly cite the design of the "Out of a Mountain of Despair, a Stone of Hope" design as the overall message that defines the memorial. This is the definition and meaning that the citizens on the National Mall want and assign to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, as well as in connection to other spaces on the National Mall.

Not everyone is happy that Martin Luther King, Jr. was placed on the National Mall. One woman commented, "I don't know why they gave him a memorial. MLK would be a racist today" to her partner as they walked past the memorial and through the mountain entrance. Another woman said, 'I don't think this memorial should be here' to which a second woman who was with her replied, "yeah, we shouldn't have stopped." Others ignored the memorial completely and made a straight line for the space that offers a view of the Thomas Jefferson

Memorial. While there are present voices of opposition at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the predominate narrative is one that is focused on the necessity of Dr. King on the National Mall, and in the overall American story.

Yet, the importance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and its overall meaning as perceived by the public seems to have something to do with the race of the visitor at the memorial. One African American man noted, 'I'm just excited we made it... after all this time. It's exciting" upon walking up to view the Dr. King statue. A school group made up of predominately African American students held visible excitement and engagement upon seeing the statue. One student from this school group yelled out "oh shoot! It's Martin Luther King, Jr!" I observed that this was a consistent trend with the school groups of predominately African American students. However, when school groups were made up of predominately white students, I observed less visible excitement, as well as total skipping of the memorial, and straight attention to the tidal basin and the Jefferson Memorial. The school groups of predominantly white students also would tend to congregate off to the side of or behind the King Statue, but rarely in-front of the King state.

One outlier worthy of note was a conversation I observed between an African American male adult, and the African American younger boy with him. The adult commented to the child, "I wish it was granite, that would make more sense." This is in reference to the white stone that the statue of Dr. King is carved into. This is an interesting outlier in the general comments made that expressed happiness with the memorial, and the memorial standing on the National Mall, but it raises important questions regarding qualification of representation in art and design further studies should address.

I observed that African Americans were not the only ones who appreciated and approached the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial with excitement as shown through their made statements and behaviors. One white woman and man had an exchange that "he was the leader; he was the boss. He pushed that stone out, he pushed for equality for everyone... This might be my favorite one.. This might be my favorite one. It's just seriously beautiful symbolism."

Out of the three memorials, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is the one that was most correctly identified. Rarely did I observe people incorrectly misidentifying Dr. King. Rather, I heard individuals ask, "who is this?" and then being correctly told that it was "MLK," or when parents would ask their kids to tell them who Martin Luther King, Jr. was, the child would respond that Dr. King was "a president." Interestingly, the misidentification that predominantly took place at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was of the Jefferson Memorial. One example of this was a student from a high school group who made the comment that she "liked how MLK is starring down Lincoln," in reference to the positioning of Dr. King across from the Jefferson Memorial. I observed several times where people echoed this sentiment, making statements such as "I didn't know you could see the Lincoln Memorial from here [the front of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial]."

However, in one outlier, I observed an important conversation between an adult and an older child. The adult asked the child "do you remember who Martin Luther King was?" to which the child responded, "a president." The adult then said, "No not a president. He was a reverend." The littler girl then responded with, "Oh, he's the man that gave the 'I Have a Dream' speech!" Though this is a conversation between a child and an adult, I argue that this is an important interaction that suggests that the public has not adjusted quite as quickly to the National Mall holding space for figure memorials not of presidents. While the overwhelming

response to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was one of appreciation and excitement, it is quite a shift to hold space for public representation. This is a narrative of the National Mall that the political elite in the first stage of the cycle of communication did try to utilize in defense of not putting Dr. King in Area 1 after all.⁴⁷ This might suggest a possible alignment between certain political elite and certain members of the public but is not a conclusion that can be made for certain in this context.

Their survey responses gathered at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial lend significant insight into the public perception of the memorial. Respondents were asked what meanings and messages the respondent believed the memorial conveyed. Some answered "Hope, Faith, Inspiration," "Sacrifices," "messages of hope and strength; for African Americans a message of hope and unity, a symbol of pride for me [an African American woman]; it is important to have representation on the mall," and "symbolizing the efforts and legacy of MLK's life." Others did not have such warm and fuzzy responses for this question, however. One African American man stated that the meaning and message of the memorial is "strength, firm foundation, and divide."

It is important to note that while some answer that this memorial symbolizes hope and unity, for others it is a symbol of the racial and minority divides that existed and still exist within the United States. Another African American woman helps to contextualize this perception that the memorial is representative of 'divide' by stating that "hope, far-fetched hope if you ask me" is what the memorial symbolizes. While Dr. King is supposed to be a symbol of hope (as is the description that is etched onto the slab of his statue) some of the visitors on the mall do not feel that there is hope in achieving the 'dream' or the work that Dr. King devoted his life to. One other respondent gave the answer that, "the Dr. King Memorial is about diversity, equality, and

⁴⁷ For full details, please refer to Chapter 1

inclusion. we can and should do better in this area." While the public does have positive perceptions of the King Memorial, they also acknowledge that there is far more work to do in the United States in order to bring about racial and minority equality and justice.

This perception held by the public is in line with the definition and narrative set by Obama and Biden. This suggests an alignment between the public and political elite narratives that surround the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. Further, it lends support to my overarching theoretical argument that there is a continuous communication between the public and political elite because the narrative shift attempted by Trump was quickly changed back to align with Obamas definition by President Biden. This suggests that the public definition and meaning assigned to the King memorial was in-line with Obama and did not shift. Rather, Trump indicated an attempt to shift the definition and meaning, and the public did not allow that to take place, which is reflective in Biden's alignment with Obama's definition.⁴⁸

The discussion of Martin Luther King, Jr. and civil rights extends beyond the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and highlights the calls of racial equality, justice, and civil rights that can be found in elements of the Lincoln Memorial, and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. This is illustrated as the point of view of citizens by one individual's response to the question of what they believe the meaning and message of the memorial is:

I think the quote: "Out of the Mountain of Despair, a Stone of Hope" signifies how essential and pertinent MLK's role in American history was and continues to be. The fact that this memorial is located so close to Jefferson's, Washington's, Lincoln's memorials is an important commentary on American history and the

⁴⁸ Further discussion of the presidential movement of this narrative can be read in Chapter 2.

eradication of black and African Americans rights and civil liberties. I think the statue of MLK himself is particularly striking vs the less "human" monuments.

Not only does the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial bring a cohesive connection to other memorials across the National Mall due to civil rights and racial injustice in the United States, it also brings a cohesive and relatable message to the National Mall's American narrative by placing a citizen figure memorial on the National Mall in a central location. Not only did Martin Luther King, Jr. give voice to African Americans in his fight for civil rights, he continues to give voice to all citizens by being the figure of citizen representation on the National Mall, and in the American Narrative. This is an attractive feature that, in part, allows the environment of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial to be one of hope, representation, repeatability, excitement, and anticipation.

The public perception and behavior surrounding the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial suggests an alignment between the presidential narrative and the public narrative of the memorial. As the presidents highlight the importance of the King Statue and the Mountain, so too do the public. Both the presidents and the public neglect paying attention to the quotation walls.

Further, like the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, I observed that patterns of discussion that took place at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial were inspired by the design of the memorial, as well as discussion of Dr. King, his life, and his overall connection to the other spaces on the National Mall. These discussions were also reflective of the themes and narratives set by the presidents in their utilizations of the memorial, lending further support to my theoretical argument regarding public and presidential communication in setting definition and narrative.

3.6 Conclusion

A cohesive narrative of the National Mall is made up of the connections of themes that consistently are employed at each memorial by the presidents (such as unity). I argue further that it is also a cohesive narrative that is built off of the individual memorials being connected in some way, beyond the actual placement of a memorial on the National Mall, and the assignment of themes and messages to them by the presidents. The individual memorial narratives and the overall National Mall narrative is initially set by the presidents as examined in Chapter 2. This chapter finds overwhelming alignment between the narratives set by the presidents, and the narratives present on the National Mall established by the public.

The Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials provide vital insights into the way that citizens participate in the shaping of the narrative that is sent by the items placed on the National Mall. The overall definitions and meanings assigned to the individual memorial spaces on the National Mall are created by both the public, and the political elite. However, this chapter identified that "political elite" is not just that of the president. Political elite also entails those who were involved in the first stage of design and creation as identified at the Roosevelt Memorial.

As shown in Chapter 2, political elite use the National Mall and the individual memorials and monuments on it to garner political support and conjure up nationalism. Citizens visiting the National Mall, however, search for a more cohesive and overarching narrative that fits the current social, cultural, and political norms and understandings that they live under. Visitors come to the National Mall to "chaperone 8th grade trips," as "local tour guides escorting a group from North Carolina," "to educate [their] kids and sight-see," to "walk around the Tidal Basin and see the Cherry Blossoms," to give their "grand-kids knowledge of history," to "admire the

historical and social impact" of various figures memorialized on the National Mall, for "vacation," and to "learn something new."⁴⁹ The various reasons people visit the National Mall contribute to their overall perception of the narrative they are creating and taking from their experience on the National Mall, and at the individual memorial sites. Their individual answers to the specific question of why they are visiting the memorial they are currently at are constant across the memorials. Overall, the narrative is shaped out of an initial longing for education on the American History offered by the National Mall either for themselves, or for someone else who they are with.

Beyond the individual perspective versus the overarching perspective, my observational analysis identified that there is a direct connection between the political elite narrative and the citizen narrative on the National Mall. This narrative is created through a perpetual cycle of communication between the president and citizens. However, it is also a cycle that can include the political elite involved in the first stage if the presidents will not assign meaning and value to the memorials. One way that the presidential narrative is communicated to the citizens is through educators who bring students to the National Mall.

School groups are not the only ones on the National Mall, and it is here that we see a divergence from the Presidential Narrative. When individuals begin to interact with the memorials on their own, they behave in a way that indicates that there is a breakdown in the cycle of communication between the presidential narrative and the citizen creation of narrative. However, the political elite respond to this breakdown by using signs that direct specific

⁴⁹ These direct quotes are answers from those surveyed at the Lincoln Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. They are answers to the question why are you visiting the memorial? While answers are specific to the memorial they are at while they are taking the paper survey, they are consistent and applicable across the spaces of the National Mall.

behavior. As well, installment of information panels suggests that political elite are also attempting to directly influence public perception of the memorial that they are at.

Educators leading class tours through the National Mall pass on a specific definition and meaning of the individual memorials. These narratives stayed consistent and reflect the overarching messages expressed by the Presidents. Educators most frequently would stop and take educational moments at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial and at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. The least number of educational moments observed was at the Lincoln Memorial.

While on the National Mall, I was able to identify patterns of conversation and behavior that lends overall support to my theoretical argument regarding communication cycles between the political elite and the public. The National Mall provides environments at each memorial that are primarily created by the perceptions of a memorial's value and corresponding behaviors. Where the political elite did not agree with these behaviors or perceptions of value, they use signs and information panels to try and transmit their approved definitions and meanings. But, what about those what are not on the National Mall? What happens to the public perception of the memorials and the National Mall when citizens are not physically present on the mall? Are the sites recognized? Do individuals perceive the same messages of American democracy that political elite set and that some on the National Mall recognize? Is there different thoughts regarding appropriate behavior on the National Mall and at the individual memorial sites? Is there only a breakdown between political elite and the public visiting the National Mall, or is there a further breakdown between the public on the National Mall and the public off of the National Mall?

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4 PUBLIC PERCEPTION OFF OF THE NATIONAL MALL

The National Mall is visited by over 20 million American and foreign visitors a year (Aden 2018; Daniels et. al 2009). While this is a substantial number, there is an even greater number of public citizens and individuals who do not visit the National Mall. On the National Mall it is natural that these visitors are thinking directly about the memorials, monuments, and other structures because the structures are right in front of them. Further, the visitor has likely made plans to visit the National Mall as well as other historical, political, and educational museums, buildings, and exhibits across D.C. These places center around focal messages of American democracy and create an informational environment that holds the potential to change the way individuals are thinking about and receiving information while on the National Mall. What happens when the information environment created by a physical presence on the National Mall is removed? Does the public off of the National Mall receive the same focal messages and definitions of the memorials if they are not on the National Mall? If you remove the memorial from the environment of the National Mall, does the public perceive and identify messages and definitions of the memorials differently than those on the mall?

Each individual might perceive the memorials on the National Mall differently while physically on the mall then if they are thinking about them away from Washington D.C., and under the context of their everyday life. As detailed in Chapter 3, significant educational moments take place on the National Mall. This was explicit through observational work where I identified patterns of educational moments detailed by teachers to student groups touring the National Mall, as well as tour guides educating tour groups. These field trips to the National Mall are used to deepen understanding, learning, and knowledge (Manner 1995), and to connect students directly to the history and narrative created by the National Mall. This was also

identified through behavioral and conversational patterns across the National Mall. A prominent example of this is the number of individuals visiting the National Mall who stumbled upon the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and learned that there was a memorial to Roosevelt on the National Mall.⁵⁰ These findings lend support to my theoretical argument of an existence of a cycle of communication that takes place between the political elite and the public which shapes that narrative crafted and pushed off of the National Mall.

As well, Chapter 3 identified that information panels and signs posted at the various memorials on the National Mall indicate communication from the political elite to the public regarding correct interpretation of the memorials and appropriate behavior the public should exhibit. When the signage of the National Mall is taken away, does the public off of the mall interpret the memorials meanings and definitions the same, or do they perceive the definitions and meanings differently than those on the mall? And if there are competing narratives and definitions the public receives of the memorials due to physical presence on the mall versus not being on the mall, what does this mean for the cycle of communication that shapes and crafts narrative? The answers to these questions will allow me to identify who the "public" variable in the cycle of communication encompasses: is the public variable that of just the public on the National Mall, or is it an all-encompassing public? These results will ultimately shape conclusions that can be drawn regarding political elite behavior in shaping narrative because it adjusts the audience the political elite are interacting with.

Beyond school groups, visitors from all over the US and abroad visit the National Mall each day. There they can learn about the memorials and take away from these visits the messages they learned through their visits. But what about those who never visit the National Mall? Many

⁵⁰ Please see Chapter 3 for a full description and discussion regarding the educational moments and patterns I identified through my observational field work.

of the memorials and monuments on the National Mall are used frequently by politicians and others to buttress policy appeals and campaign promises. Even those who never visit Washington, DC, are likely to recognize pictures of the Washington Monument or the Lincoln Memorial. This reality raises an interesting question concerning physical presence on the National Mall: does the public off of the mall have a role in the cycle of communication that shapes political narrative from the National Mall? Further do individuals not physically present at the National Mall assign the same democratic values and meanings to the memorials as those visiting them? If the answer to both of these questions is yes, then support is lent to my argued theory of the cycle of communication, and we have a greater understanding of the way political memory and narrative is shaped, crafted, and manipulated. This in turn, allows for a deeper understanding of the political memory and narrative that contextualizes politics, elections, nationalism, and the overall practice of American democracy.

Do individuals who simply see images of the monuments and memorials assign the same values and meanings to the memorials? Are the memorials on the National Mall correctly identified by those who are not on the National Mall, or who might never have been to the National Mall? If the answer is that there is a separate cycle between the public off of that National Mall and the political elite, there are important implications that individualize the way political elite reach and craft messages to the public off of the mall in order to establish a cycle of communication. However, if there are separate cycles of information, further investigation is required in order to understand who the National Mall is for, and if there are messages, definitions of American democracy and history that are strictly reserved for those who visit the National Mall. While a well-developed literature examines narrative formation through the use of memorials and monuments (see e.g., Cox 2021; Levinson 2018; Benton-Short 2016; Hass

2013; Savage 2011), much of it focuses solely on social movements, war memorials, confederate memorials, and the architectural design and changes of the National Mall. The scholarship fails to look at the overall effect of the figure memorials, as well as the explicit role that the National Mall plays in the shaping of political memory and narrative in the United States. In order to fully assess the way that citizens perceive and define the spaces on the National Mall, citizens off of the mall and outside of Washington D.C. must be examined.

In analyzing the survey data, and thus respondent perceptions of the memorials off of the National mall, I am able to gather a more complete picture of the cycle of communication that exists regarding the public and the political elite narrative formation process. Is there a public voice in the narrative formation process that takes place off of the National Mall? Or is the public voice in the cycle of communication purely the visitors on the National Mall? Are messages of representation and nationalism transmitted to those perceiving the memorials of the National Mall? Do the definitions and meanings of the memorials set by the presidents translate to the public that is not physically on the National Mall?

As explicated in Chapter 1, I theorize that the president sets the overarching meaning and definition for the memorials on the National Mall. In doing so, they strategically craft an overall narrative of the National Mall that tells a story of American democracy and history. The public then perceive these meanings, definitions, and narratives at the individual memorials on the National Mall. The use of the memorials and National Mall is not just meant to impart political narrative and memory among the public who are on the National Mall. Rather, the public body in the cycle of communication is made up of both those on the mall, and those off of the mall, as the whole of the public engages in the creation and manipulation of political narratives within a democratic society (Helberger 2020; Levac and Wiebe 2020; Young 2000; Livingstone and Lunt

1994). This chapter thus tests this latter part of my theory about the role of the public in the cycle of communication and narrative formation as it pertains to those not currently visiting the National Mall.

4.1 Survey Research Design

To examine the perception and definition visitors have of the memorials off of the National Mall, I surveyed undergraduate students at one university in Georgia. These undergraduate students were primarily political science majors. The survey was focused on teasing out the way that students perceived the messages transmitted by the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. memorials. This survey was distributed through Sona Systems and Qualtrics in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2023 and resulted in 520 respondents. Of the respondents, 71.14% indicated that they had never been to the National Mall, providing a significant number of responses that aid in the ability to create a fuller understanding and definition of 'the public' and their role in the cycle of communication.

Table 4.1 shows counts and percentages of the respondents' demographic characteristics. The age of the respondents ranges from 16 to 63, with the highest percentage of respondents (30.80%) being nineteen years old. The second highest percentage of respondents (23.00%) are eighteen, and the third being twenty (21.15%). Of the 501 respondents, 64.67% are female, and 31.94% are male.⁵¹ 22.20% of the respondents described their racial identification as white, 34.60% as Black or African American. 30% of respondents identified their race as Asian, 1.20% of identified their race as American Indian, and 12% identified their race as 'other.' 54.49% of

⁵¹ 1.40% of respondents reported that they were non-binary or third gender, and 2.00% of the respondents preferred not to say.

respondents identified that their political party identification was democrat, while only 9.78% of respondents claimed the Republican party, 25.95% as independents, and 9.78% as 'other.'

Table 4.1: Survey Respondent Demographics

Demographic Variable	Categories	Total	Percentage
Age	16-20	381	78.24%
	21-25	73	14.99%
	26-30	12	2.47%
	31-35	8	1.86%
	36-40	5	1.04%
	41-45	2	0.42%
	46-50	1	0.21%
	51-55	3	0.62%
	55-60	-	-
Gender	Female 324	64.67%	
	Male	160	31.94%
	Non-Binary or Third Party	7	1.40%
	No Answer	10	2.00%
Race	White	111	22.20%
	African American	173	34.60%
	Asian	150	30.00%
	American Indian	6	1.20%
	Other	60	12.00%
Political Party Identification	Republican	49	9.78%
	Democrat	273	54.49%
	Independent	130	25.95%
	Other	49	9.78%

The survey addresses general public knowledge and perceptions of the meanings of the memorials on the National Mall. This is to expand my collection of information regarding the public perceptions and understandings of the memorials on the National Mall. However, it is also to understand the definition that each memorial contributes narrative of the National Mall, without a physical presence or contact with the National Mall. Do the perceptions of people off the mall align with the definitions set by presidential utilization of the memorials? Does the

second stage of the cycle of communication used to create narratives only exist between the president and the public physically on the National Mall? Or is there a participation in the communication cycle regardless of physical presence on the National Mall? Or is it that there is a cycle of communication between the President and those off of the National Mall that functions differently than the cycle with those on the mall?

Respondents were asked general demographic questions along with questions specifically focused on the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. memorials. The goal of the survey is to identify if visitor perceptions of the memorials on the National Mall match the perceptions of the public off of the National Mall. This goal aims to examine if there are differences in the public on the mall and off the mall. I ask respondents if they have ever been to the National Mall, as well as questions gauging their belief in the importance and educational value of the mall. This gauges the importance of the narrative of American democracy that exists on the National Mall. I also seek to identify if respondents are capable of correctly identifying the figure represented by the memorial, or if there are similar misidentifications of the memorials similar to what I observed on the National Mall.

The survey also seeks to assess whether respondents assign the same messages and themes presidents assign to the memorials. The goal with this line of questioning is to test the alignment of perceptions between those off the mall, and the presidential narratives surrounding the memorials. Is there an acknowledgement of the presidential definitions and meanings assigned in their speeches? By asking respondents what values and ideals they assign to the three memorials, I am able to begin to identify the way the public perceives the three memorials. This section of the survey then connects respondent views with the findings of the content analysis of the presidential speeches presented in Chapter Two. As well, it compares the values and

meanings I observed visitors of the National Mall discussing as detailed in Chapter 3 to the values and meanings of those off of the mall.

The analysis of the survey thus identifies the more day-to-day public perceptions of the figure memorials on the National Mall. While limited to students at Georgia State University, the assessment of perceptions off of the National Mall is vital to having a clear picture of the way public perceptions marry-up to each other, as well as the way that political elite messages translate to the public who are not present on the National Mall.

4.1.1 The Lincoln Memorial, Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial

In order to gauge general knowledge of the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. memorials, respondents were presented with a photo of each of the three memorials and asked to identify what memorial the photograph represented. I then asked respondents to select the name of the memorial that is depicted in the photograph. Respondents were given the names of all of the memorials on the National Mall to choose from. This is a vital portion of the survey that allows for a baseline measurement of the political knowledge survey respondents hold regarding the National Mall, as well as general figures in American history.

The photographs used to depict the images of the three memorials were chosen based off of the images used by the National Park Service on the individual internet-page of each memorial. When choosing the photographs that would be used to depict the memorials, it was important to include as much of the memorial as possible, while also primarily highlighting the figure the memorial is of. This was a simple task for the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. memorials, but was not possible when choosing the photograph of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

Figure 4.1 shows the Lincoln Memorial as depicted in the survey instrument. This photograph shows both the "temple" portion of the memorial and shows the Lincoln Sculpture highlighted in spotlights. The steps, as well as the Gettysburg Address and Lincolns Second Inaugural Address that are engraved on the two inside walls are not included in the photo used to portray the Lincoln Memorial.



Figure 4.1: Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

Figure 4.2 shows the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial as used in the survey instrument. This photograph depicts the mountain background from which the 'stone of hope' that Dr. King is partially carved into emerges from. The walls that emerge from both sides of the mountain structures are not fully captured in this photograph. These walls are where the quotations are engraved, but they are not readable unless the single quote is the sole focus of the photograph, and so they are not included in the portrayal of the memorial.



Figure 4.2: Lincoln Memorial

Figure 3 is the final photograph used in the survey instrument and is the depiction of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. This photograph shows the "Big Man" statue depiction of Roosevelt, as well as the statue of his famous dog 'Fala.' It also includes one of Roosevelt's quotations which reads: "They who seek to establish systems of government based on the regimentation of all human beings by a handful of individual rulers... Call this a new order. It is not new and it is not order."

There is not a single photograph that could be used that encapsulated the entire space of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt other than overhead, aerial photographs. It is not reasonable to assume that the average citizen would recognize this memorial from an aerial photograph because a bird-eye-view is simply not how this memorial is seen and experienced by the average citizen.

I opted to use the "Big Man" statue of Roosevelt rather than the wheelchair statue of Roosevelt for two reasons. First, the "Big Man" statue is more in line with the depiction of Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. These three statues are all larger than life and present the figures in the same grandeur form. Presenting the "Big Man" statue keeps the same theme of the

figure memorials across the chosen case studies. Further, the statue of Roosevelt as the "Big Man" is the original statue of Roosevelt on the National Mall.



Figure 4.3: Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

Following the identification questions, respondents were randomly assigned two of the three memorials to answer specific questions about the values and meanings assigned to each. The fully survey instrument is reported in Appendix A.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 Connection and Representation on the National Mall

A link between those off the National Mall and the narrative formation surrounding the memorials of the mall can be found in general questions asked regarding the space of the National Mall. 73% of all of the respondents agreed that visiting memorials and monuments in

any capacity is important for learning and education⁵² (28.86% of the respondents had been to the National Mall). Moving beyond general memorials and connecting citizens directly to the National Mall, 72% of all respondents reported that they believe that the memorials and monuments on the National Mall are vital for understanding and remembering history.⁵³

While focusing explicitly on the National Mall and the place of it in the overall creation of political memory, narrative, and nationalism, 42% of all of the respondents agreed that the memorials and monuments on the National Mall highlight the most important figures and events in American history.⁵⁴ 66% of all of the respondents agreed that the memorials and monuments on the National Mall connect U.S. citizens to their history.⁵⁵ 50% of all of the respondents believe that in visiting the spaces on the National Mall, visitors are reminded of the values and ideologies of American democracy.⁵⁶

These findings are in line with the scholarship regarding the place of the National Mall in the creation of political narrative and memory for the United States (see for example Benton-Short et al. 2018; Daniels et al. 2015; Evans and York 2013; Hass 2013; Savage 2009; Benton-Short 2006). However, they also set the space of the National Mall apart from other outside spaces such as local community parks (Savage 2009). A majority of the respondents link education, nationalism, and American history to the space of the National Mall. However, there is also a personal link associated with the spaces of the National Mall.

⁵² 3.46% strongly disagree, 8.15% somewhat disagree, 16.09% neither agree nor disagree, 43.58% somewhat agree, and 28.72% strongly agree.

⁵³ 4.85% strongly disagree, 6.67% somewhat disagree, 16.16% neither agree nor disagree, 45.45% somewhat agree, and 26.87% strongly agree.

⁵⁴ 3.67% strongly disagree, 10.18% somewhat disagree, 43.79% neither agree nor disagree, 34.22% somewhat agree, and 8.15% strongly agree.

⁵⁵ 1.84% strongly disagree, 8.37% somewhat disagree, 24.29% neither agree nor disagree, 49.59% somewhat agree, and 15.92% strongly agree.

⁵⁶ 5.30% strongly disagree, 12.22% somewhat disagree, 31.57% neither agree nor disagree, 38.49% somewhat agree, and 12.42% strongly agree.

Respondents who indicated that they had been to the National Mall before were asked if they felt they were represented by the individual figure memorial when they were there.

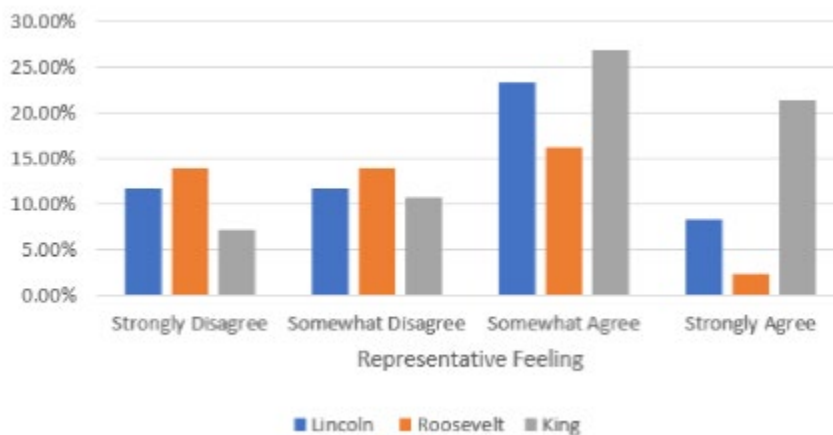


Figure 4.4: Identifying Personal Representation Through the Memorials

Figure 4.4 shows a graph representing the percentage of the respondents who felt they personally were represented by each memorial. Of the three memorials, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial was found to be the most 'representative.' 48.22% of the respondents indicated that they felt personally represented by the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial. 26.79% of these respondents somewhat agreed, and 21.43% of these respondents strongly agreed. 31.66% of the respondents indicated that they felt personally represented by the Lincoln Memorial. Among these respondents, 23.33% somewhat agreed, and 8.33% strongly agreed. Finally, 18.56% of the respondents indicated that they felt personally represented by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Among these respondents, 16.28% agreed, and 2.33% strongly agreed they were represented by the Roosevelt Memorial.

Table 4.2: Represented on the National Mall

Variable	Lincoln Memorial	FDR Memorial	MLK Memorial
Visited National Mall	0.513*	0.138	0.009
	0.247	0.273	0.232
Correct Memorial Identification	1.07*	0.899*	1.122*
	0.323	0.234	0.262
U.S. Citizen	-0.101	-0.301	0.253
	0.326	0.297	0.277
Female	-0.644*	-0.122	-0.067
	0.258	0.236	0.244
African American	-0.160	-0.673*	0.064
	0.318	0.288	0.286
Asian American	-0.224	-0.229	0.656*
	0.304	0.289	0.287
Native American	-1.95*	-3.124*	0.391
	0.444	0.740	0.821
Other Race	-0.691*	-0.338	0.114
	0.361	0.356	0.295
Party Identification	-0.105	0.159	-0.0005
	0.181	0.180	0.191
Cut Point 1	-3.627	-4.125	-2.103
	0.504	0.622	0.409
Cut Point 2	-2.486	-3.042	-0.845
	0.469	0.484	0.920
Cut Point 3	-0.298	0.095	
	0.434	0.431	0.333
Cut Point 4	1.754	2.217	2.773
	0.460	0.445	0.363
Psedudo R-squared	0.048	0.046	0.032
N	295	309	296

* *p*-value < 0.05. Standard errors are robust.

Possible explanatory factors to begin to examine why some respondents feel represented by the Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Dr. King memorials while others do not begin with looking at demographic variables. To begin to assess these possible relationships, I run an ologit regression

model for each of the memorials. The dependent variable in these three models is ordinal, based on the level of agree or disagree indicated by the respondents (1 through 5).

I then use the independent variables of a respondent having visited the National Mall before, correctly identifying the memorial, US citizenship, gender, race, and political party identification. The independent variables of having visited the National Mall, correctly identifying the specific memorial, gender, and US citizenship are all binary variables. A respondent that has visited the National Mall is coded as a (1), and a respondent who has not is coded as a (0). The variable where respondents correctly identify the memorial is coded as (1) for correctly identifying the memorial, and (0) if it was incorrectly identified. This variable is further specified for each model. The model for the Lincoln Memorial is run with the independent variable of the respondent correctly identifying the Lincoln Memorial. The model for the Roosevelt Memorial is run with the independent variable of the respondent correctly identifying the Roosevelt Memorial. Finally, the model for the Dr. King Memorial is run with the independent variable of the respondent correctly identifying the Dr. King Memorial. The gender variable codes (1) as a female respondent and (0) as a male respondent. The US citizen variable is coded as a (1) for those who are US citizens, and (0) for those who are not.

Each variable measuring race is also coded as binary variables. The African American variable is coded (1) for all respondents who are African American, and (0) for those who are not. The Asian American variable is coded (1) for all respondents who are Asian American, and (0) for all who are not. The Native American variable is coded as (1) for those who are Native American, and (0) for those who are not. Finally, the other race variable is coded as (1) who indicated that they are any race other than White American, African American, Asian American, or Native American, and (0) is for those who fall into any of the other four categories measured.

These race variables are run against the White American variable that is left out of the models as the baseline.

The last independent variable based on demographic information in these three models is political party identification. This variable is coded as a scale where (-1) represents Republican respondents, (0) represents Independent or 'other' political party respondents, and (1) represents Democratic respondents. The models are run using robust standard errors.

Table 4.2 shows the results of the three regression models. Across all the models, there is a positive, statistically significant association found between a respondent correctly identifying the memorial, and the respondent feeling personally represented by the memorial. This is the only independent variable that has a statistically significant association across all of the models. This finding suggests that there is an element of political knowledge, and perhaps salience, that is involved in the way that the National Mall personally plays into the lives of the public. More specifically, it suggests that those who have political knowledge that allows them to recognize the figures on the National Mall are more likely to feel personally represented by those figures in the American story as told by the mall.

Under the Lincoln Memorial model, four other statistically significant associations were found. There is a positive, statistically significant association found between those who have visited the National Mall, and those who feel personally represented by the memorial. There was a negative, statistically significant association found between respondents being female and feeling personally represented by the Lincoln Memorial. This suggests that women are less likely to feel represented by the Lincoln Memorial in the American story relayed by the National Mall. This suggests that the gender represented on the National Mall, and specifically in the memorials on the National Mall, affects feelings of representation among the public.

As well, there were negative, statistically significant associations found among Native Americans and those of races other than African, Asian, White, and Native Americans, and feelings of personal representation by the Lincoln Memorial. The variables of U.S. citizenship, African American, Asian American, and party identification were found to have no statistically significant association with feeling represented by the Lincoln Memorial.

Under the Roosevelt model, two variables of respondent race hold statistically significant associations with representation found at the Roosevelt Memorial. This is alongside the correct identification of the Roosevelt Memorial. There was a negative statistically significant association found between African Americans and feeling personally represented by the Roosevelt Memorial. There is also a negative, statistically significant relationship found between Native Americans and feeling personally represented by the Roosevelt Memorial. There were no statistically significant associations found between feeling personally represented by the Roosevelt memorial and visiting the National Mall, U.S. citizenship, gender, party identification, or having the racial identification of Asian American, or 'other' race.

For the Dr. King Memorial model, the only other statistically significant association found alongside the correct identification of the memorial is a respondent being Asian American. There is a positive, statistically significant relationship between being Asian American and feeling personally represented by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. There was no statistically significant association found between visiting the National Mall, U.S. citizenship, gender, party identification, or the race categories of African American, Native American, or other.

For all three memorials, demographic factors that typically explain feelings of identity and representation (Ondercin 2017; Lawrence 2012; Jacobs 2003; Gay 2001; Mansbridge 1999)

fail to explain why these respondents feel personally represented in the American story by these memorials. As identified in Chapter 3, visitors on the National Mall seemed to exhibit patterns of behavior and conversation that indicated that the National Mall holds important meanings and significance to them. Though I am limited in the conclusions of what exactly these meanings are, the results from this analysis further lend support to the significance of the National mall to the public who is interacting with it. This analysis also suggests that the public off of the mall is interacting with the memorials even when just looking at pictures of them off of the mall.

However, the results from this analysis also indicate that there is association between those who have been to the National Mall feeling more represented by the memorials of the National Mall than those who have not visited the National Mall when it comes to the Lincoln Memorial. This suggests that there is a distinction between the public who is on the National Mall and the public who is not in the perceptions an individual has towards the memorials.

Together, these findings indicate that there are not two separate cycles of communication in the second stage where the political elite communicate with the public off the mall separately than those on the mall. Rather, it begins to suggest that the political elite receive information and perceptions from both the public off of the mall and on the mall. The political elite then responds to both messages, creating a response that is more cohesive of the overall public grievances with the current narrative they have set forth.

4.2.2 Identifying the Memorials

As discussed in the first chapter, placing a memorial on the National Mall is not an easy or simple process. At every step in the creation and design process, various political elites, in various branches of government, have to approve. Basic identification of the figures represented by the figure memorials is then foundational to the narrative created by the National Mall. Does

the question of 'who' gets placed on the National Mall matter to the crafted narrative if the public does not recognize them? And what role does basic knowledge of the central figures in American history play in the cycle of communication between political elite and the public in the creation and manipulation of narratives?

As reported in the previous chapter, at each memorial I observed individuals misidentifying the figures depicted by the three memorials at least once a day. This points to a potential breakdown in the cycle of communication between political elite and the public based on knowledge.

On the National Mall, the memorials are marked in at least one place with the name of the figure represented. The Lincoln Memorial identifies Lincoln directly above the statue of Lincoln. The Roosevelt Memorial is labeled as you walk through the entrance of the memorial. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is labeled on each of the four entrances visitors can take to enter the memorial space. Those who are physically on the mall have direct access to the name of the figure represented. Yet the figures are still incorrectly identified by many visitors.

In order to identify if the mislabeling of the figure memorials is a consistent trend, I asked respondents to identify the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. memorials. Table 4.3 details the results of the respondent's identification of the three memorials. Out of the three memorials, the Lincoln Memorial was the most correctly identified memorial. Of the 507 respondents who attempted to identify the Lincoln Memorial, 77.12% of the respondents correctly identified the memorial as Lincoln. Of the respondents who misidentified Lincoln, 8.09% believed it showed a picture of the Washington Monument. This

was the memorial most incorrectly identified. 8.88% of respondents indicated that they did not know who the memorial represented.⁵⁷

Table 4.3: Identifying the Memorials

Memorial	Lincoln Memorial	FDR Memorial	MLK Memorial
Lincoln Memorial	77.12%	1.87%	0.59%
Washington Monument	8.09%	1.68%	1.57%
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial	0.39%	0.19%	70.25%
Jefferson Memorial	1.38%	1.50%	0.78%
Roosevelt Memorial	1.18%	50.65%	0.59%
Eisenhower Memorial	0.59%	8.97%	2.35%
Vietnam Veterans Memorial	0.99%	1.50%	2.74%
Vietnam Womens Memorial	0.59%	0.93%	0.5%
World War II Memorial	0.59%	1.50%	1.76%
Korean War Veterans Memorial	0.20%	0.19%	0.78%
Don't Know	8.88%	31.03%	18.20%
N	507	535	511

535 respondents attempted to identify the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. For the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, 31.03% of respondents selected that they did not know who was represented by the memorial. Of the 535 respondents, only 50.65% of the respondents correctly identified the memorial as that of Roosevelt. Of the respondents who misidentified the Roosevelt Memorial, the number one incorrect answer was that of Dwight D. Eisenhower as selected by 8.97% of the respondents.

⁵⁷ Among the question choices, respondents had the option of selecting "I don't know."

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial was the second most correctly identified memorial of the three. Of the 511 respondents who attempted to identify the memorial, 70.25% of the respondents correctly identified it as that of Dr. King. Of the of respondents who misidentified the Dr. King Memorial, the number one incorrect answer was that of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (2.74%). However, 18.20% of the respondents selected that they did not know who was represented by the memorial.

These results are similar to my findings on the National Mall reported in Chapter Three. There is a consistent trend of mislabeling the memorials and monuments on the National Mall both when physically on the mall and off of the mall. While it is not an exact majority of individuals who cannot correctly identify the memorials, there is an obvious lack of general knowledge concerning the basics of the memorial structures on the National Mall. This is especially evident with that of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial.

Possible explanatory factors to begin to examine why some respondents correctly identify the memorials while others do not include looking at some demographic factors of respondents. To begin to assess these possible relationships, I run a logit model for each of the memorials. The dependent variables in these three models are dichotomous variables where (1) indicates that the respondent correctly identified the memorial, and (0) indicates a misidentification or that they did not know who the memorial was representing.

I then use the independent variables of a respondent having visited the National Mall before, US citizenship, gender, race, and political party identification. The independent variables of having visited the National Mall, gender, and US citizenship are all binary variables. A respondent that has visited the National Mall is coded as a (1), and a respondent who has not is coded as a (0). The gender variable codes (1) as a female respondent and (0) as a male

respondent. The US citizen variable is coded as a (1) for those who are US citizens, and (0) for those who are not.

Each variable measuring race is also coded as binary variables. The African American variable is coded (1) for all respondents who are African American, and (0) for those who are not. The Asian American variable is coded (1) for all respondents who are Asian American, and (0) for all who are not. The Native American variable is coded as (1) for those who are Native American, and (0) for those who are not. Finally, the other race variable is coded as (1) who indicated that they are any race other than White American, African American, Asian American, or Native American, and (0) is for those who fall into any of the other four categories measured. These race variables are run against the White American variable that is left out of the models as the baseline.

The final independent variable in these three models is political party identification. This variable is coded as a scale where (-1) represents Republican respondents, (0) represents Independent or 'other' political party respondents, and (1) represents Democratic respondents. The models are run using robust standard errors. The results of these models are shown in table 4.4.

Among all three models, positive, statistically significant associations were found between those who had been to the National Mall, and those who correctly identified the memorials. This association is the only one that is consistent across all three models.

Respondents who indicated that they are citizens of the United States⁵⁸ are found to have positive, statistically significant associations with correct identification of the Lincoln Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. There was no statistically significant association

⁵⁸ Within the survey, the only question measuring citizenship was an open-ended question that asked respondents to indicate what country they are a citizen of.

found between those who are citizens of the United States and correct identification of the Roosevelt Memorial.

Table 4.4: Influences on Correctly Identifying Memorials

Variable	Lincoln Memorial	FDR Memorial	MLK Memorial
Visited National Mall	0.916*	0.593*	0.595*
	0.318	0.219	0.271
U.S. Citizen	0.970*	0.306	1.102*
	0.290	0.266	0.280
Female	-0.093	-0.261	-0.209
	0.268	0.215	0.240
African American	-0.711*	-0.196	-0.212
	0.357	0.264	0.323
Asian American	-0.734*	-0.274	-0.562
	0.357	0.282	0.324
Native American	-1.41	-0.466	-0.014
	1.03	0.899	1.223
Other Race	1.08	-0.198	-0.464
	0.680	0.346	0.399
Party Identification	0.241	0.095	0.338*
	0.188	0.151	0.170
Constant	0.767*	0.073	0.278
	0.399	0.343	0.363
Pseudo R-squared	0.102	0.021	0.075
N	460	460	460

* p -value < 0.05. Standard errors are robust.

Under the model for the Lincoln Memorial, there were two statistically significant associations found among the race variables and correct identification of the memorial. There is a negative statistically significant association between African American respondents correctly identifying the Lincoln Memorial. There is also a negative, statistically significant association between Asian American respondents and correct identification of the Lincoln Memorial. There

were no statistically significant associations found within this respondent group between Native American respondents or respondents of other races and correct identification of the Lincoln, Roosevelt, or Dr. King memorials. As well, for the Roosevelt and Dr. King memorials, there were no statistically significant associations found between African American or Asian Americans correctly identifying these two memorials.

Lastly, there is a positive, statistically significant association found between respondent political party alignment and correct identification of the Dr. King Memorial. However, there was no statistically significant association found between political party alignment and correct identification of the Lincoln or Roosevelt Memorials.

While there is consistent misidentification of the memorials both on and off the National Mall, the relationship found suggests that there is an element of learning and education that does take place on the National Mall. However, it might also point to a group of individuals who have a higher level of knowledge and interests surrounding the National Mall that is driven by education and interest in politics and American history. This is in line with education scholarship that links classroom learning to field trips in order to provide deeper understanding and knowledge in students (Manner 1995). In turn, this finding and line of scholarship lend support for my theoretical argument that the cycle of communication between the public and political elite is continual.

Learning is a continual process, and as individuals travel to the National Mall, their likelihood of correctly identifying a memorial on the National Mall increases. This suggests an important element of education posed by the National Mall that must be further investigated. Are there other ways in which having previously been to the National Mall affect perception and interpretation of the memorials?

However, there are also personal demographics that begin to help explain where there is a breakdown in correctly identifying the memorials on the National Mall. Being African American and Asian American, as well as alignment with the Democratic party suggest important associations in correctly being able to identify memorials. Further, being a citizen of the United States seems to lead to respondents being able to correctly identify Lincoln and Dr. King's memorials. This is not to say that being a US citizen automatically means that one will be able to correctly identify historical figures that shape American democracy and history. This is evident in the lack of a statistically significant association between a respondent being a US citizen and correct identification of the Roosevelt Memorial. However, being a US Citizen lends further support to the role of education, political knowledge, and interest in American politics that shapes narrative and political memory within the United States.

4.2.3 Definition and Meanings of the Memorials

I argue that these presidential assignments of certain democratic values help to identify the way in which each memorial contributes to the overall narrative of American democracy (Shank 2023; Upton 2003). Not only do the memorials on the National Mall symbolize those who political elites have credited with modern day American democracy and success, they also convey certain values and messages elites seek to impart to the public (Upton 2003).

As detailed in Chapter Two, presidents have defined each of the memorials analyzed in this project using a core set of democratic values. At the Lincoln Memorial, presidents assign democratic values of founding legal documents, unity, and civil rights. As well, presidents identify many values that make up and define American democracy including freedom, justice, liberty, voting, rule of law, and support of government structures. At the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, Clinton emphasizes values of hope, American democratic institutions, and

unity. At the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, presidents assign the values of American citizenship, civil rights, unity in race and gender, and completing Dr. King's work.

Respondents were shown a photograph of the memorial (the same as depicted above) and given a list of basic democratic values where they were asked to select all of the democratic values they felt were represented by the memorial. Many respondents selected multiple democratic values for each memorial. My results show that, for each memorial, there are clear democratic values that are agreed upon across the respondents.

According to the respondents in this study, the Lincoln Memorial symbolizes the democratic values of happiness, liberty, unity, life, and upholding the Constitution. As discussed, respondents were asked to identify the democratic values they felt were represented by the photograph of the memorial they were shown, and they were allowed to select multiple values. All of these values were selected by more than 40% of the respondents, liberty selected the most frequently by 63% of respondents. These values are all themes that similarly emphasized by the Presidents in their usage of the Lincoln Memorial, from President Harding to President Biden. The democratic values of freedom of speech, voting and freedom of assembly all were selected by at least 29% of the respondents, and are values that are reflective alternatively of the way that the public has practiced American democracy specifically at the Lincoln Memorial. These results suggest that the public's understanding of the Lincoln Memorial reflects both a mirroring of presidential value assignments as well as additional values assigned by the public itself.⁵⁹

Table 4.5 shows the regression results of the models' run. Respondents most frequently assigned the democratic values of life, liberty, unity, freedom of speech, and upholding the

⁵⁹ 28.1% of respondents also selected Economic Freedom as a value reflected by the Lincoln Memorial. This is of note because of the significance of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that has become a focal point not only in the Lincoln Memorials history, but the history of various spaces on the National Mall.

Constitution to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. These values were selected by more than 38% of the respondents, with liberty being selected 50.6% of the time. The democratic value of unity was also emphasized by Clinton in both of his dedicatory speeches.

Table 4.5: Democratic Values Represented by the Memorials

Democratic Value	Lincoln Memorial	FDR Memorial	MLK Memorial
Life	47%	38.2%	59%
Freedom of Speech	38%	38.5%	65.2%
Freedom of Assembly	33%	31%	49%
Liberty	63%	50.6%	71.4%
Economic Freedom	28.1%	32%	32%
Religion	27%	22%	31%
Happiness	40%	29%	53%
Fair Trial	21%	19%	24%
Vote	29%	35%	33%
Checks and Balances	18%	32%	10%
Protest	21%	21%	58%
Unity	57%	44.1%	51%
Upholding the Constitution	42%	40%	22%
Other	15%	13%	9%

Respondents also identified the democratic values of economic freedom, voting, checks and balances, and freedom of assembly by over 30%. These values are much more explicitly representative of the four-term president which was one of the goals of messaging of the designers of the Roosevelt Memorial (Rosenberg 2019). These are values that are not reflective of the themes and messages assigned to the Roosevelt Memorial by Clinton is his utilization of

the memorial. Rather, these are the values and messages of the Roosevelt Memorial as assigned - in part - by the designers of the memorials and are recognized and supported by the public. These views of the memorial representation of Franklin Delano Roosevelt support the original elite driven narrative set in the initial creation stage, but they stray from the presidential message assigned to the memorial.

Over 50% of respondents assigned seven democratic values at the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial. 51% identified the value of unity, 53% identified the value of happiness, 58% identified the value of protest, and 59% respondents identified the democratic value of life. These are also themes that have been assigned to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial by the presidents. 65.2% of respondents identified the value of freedom of assembly 65.2% identified the democratic value of freedom of speech, and 71.4% identified the democratic value of liberty. The values assigned to the memorial by the public are also heavily emphasized by the presidents. This exemplifies an alignment in values between the political elite and the public. One possible explanation of this is the assignment of values that represent Dr. King and his life and work that is well known and recognized.

This examination of the cycle of communication between political elites and the public reveals that, overall, the public's interpretation of memorials primarily mirrors the messages crafted by elites. As shown above, the values assigned by the public to the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials are reflective of those assigned by presidents. With the FDR Memorial, the cycle of communication is a bit more nuanced. While I find a disconnect between the values assigned by the public and the presidents, intriguingly, the values assigned by the public do reflect the values most heavily emphasized by Congress, National Parks Service, and the designer of the memorial itself. Thus, it appears that the public's interpretation of these

memorials from afar reflects the intended elite-driven themes. Not only can there be a breakdown in the cycle of communication within the public, but also among the political elite.

However, where the public assignment of democratic values to the memorials are divorced from that of the presidents, their assignment does fall in line with that of the political elite involved in the creation stage of the cycle of communication. This is especially true when looking at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Where Clinton focused on messages of unity, and so did the public, Congress, the National Parks Service, and the designer of the memorial wanted the memorial to represent life, economic freedom, happiness, and general democratic values shaped by Roosevelt.

4.3 Conclusion

Measuring the full scope of public perception of the National Mall, including by those not currently in D.C., is vital for understanding the full scope of the public's role in the cycle of communication that forms narratives on the National Mall. The survey was able to gauge general interest, knowledge, and meaning of the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials. Further, the survey was able to discern the degree to which public perceptions of these memorials reflect the narratives crafted by presidents and other elites.

First, common trends that I observed on the National Mall were also represented by the survey respondents. All three of the figure memorials were misidentified both on and off of the mall. This suggests a potential breakdown in the cycle of communication between the political elite and the public that is potentially due to a lack of knowledge, as well as a potential lack in interest. It could also be explained by a lack of political salience. While a majority of respondents indicated that they find the National Mall to be important in who and what it represents, education, and remembering history of the United States, there is a breakdown in

percentages of respondents who have been to the National Mall, as well as knowledge related to it. This is a breakdown that is consistent between the public off of the National Mall, and the public when visiting the National Mall.

The studying of the public's identification and assignment of democratic values to the memorials reveals perceptions that are in-line with the presidential meanings and definitions that initially set the narrative of the National Mall as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2. The presidential defining of the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is strongly reflected in the public's identification of democratic values. However, my analysis shows a massive breakdown in the values and definitions Clinton and the public individually assigns Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. Where Clinton aimed to assign definitions of hope, democratic institutions, and unity, the public assigned values and meaning of liberty, unity, freedom of speech, and upholding the constitution. The values assigned by the public were much more in line with the political elite narratives set in the creation stage of the memorial. A possible explanation for this breakdown is Clinton attempting to assign values and definitions to the Roosevelt memorial that are too abstract, and not easily tied to the physical structure of the memorial.

The public alignment with a political elite narrative outside of the presidential narrative is an important finding that requires an addition to the theoretical framework of the cycle of communication. Not just a divorce in the president narrative-public narrative for a memorial, but also a divorce among the first stage and second stage where political elite drive the narrative. This reveals that in specific cases, the president is not the first one to give voice to a monument or memorial, even though they are the first who gets to publicly voice an assigned definition and meaning. Rather, there is a definition and narrative set for a memorial in the first stage that the

public can more align themselves with if they do not want to align themselves to that of the presidents.

Given that there is incorrect identification of the memorials by the public on and off of the mall, how do individuals assign values and meanings to the memorials? Stevens (2009) offers insight into this, stating that abstract memorials are meant to relay values and meaning that individuals or events represent, and that a successful memorial conveys these messages without an individual having to know who the memorial is to. Across all three memorials, there is a consistent showing of misidentification of who the memorial is representative of. However, when it came to assigning democratic values to the memorials, there were high levels of consensus, as well as alignment with some form of a political elite driven narratives. Why there is alignment with the narrative crafted in the initial, creation-design stage of the memorial rather than that of the post-dedication, president crafted narrative is a question that then must be examined in future research.

The overall results from the survey lend support to the cyclical cycle of communication between the public and political elite. The analysis of the survey results reveals that the public perception and interpretation of the memorials are rather consistent with those on the mall. Regardless of an individual being on or off of the mall, the trends of their interpretations are similar. The public off of the mall is a voice that must be considered in the cycle of communication because the National Mall does aid in furthering understanding and thought of the narrative set by the political elite. While there are large numbers of people who visit the National Mall each year, there are even more who do not visit the mall, and who perhaps never will. Those who are off of the mall then perceive less of the nationalism and nuanced narrative of the political memory and narrative strategically shaped by political elite. However, they still

learn about the National Mall in primary education, and they still must be considered in the overall narrative of the National Mall. This analysis shows that while off the mall, the public still identifies massively cohesive assignments of democratic values and ideals to the memorials on the National Mall.

In this way, they deepen the understanding of the cycle of communication and reveal an important contextual piece of the cycle of communication between political elite in the creation stage, and political elite in the post-dedication stage that is not examined in this project. Those off the National Mall are still a part of the public body who engage in various forms of narrative and political memory creation. The public, regardless of being on or off the National Mall, engages with the democratic process in America. Political engagement takes various forms and is shaped by the most prominent political narratives of the time. The narrative of modern-day American democracy crafted and pushed on the national mall is one of the narratives that holds the potential to contextualize the political processes and outputs in the United States.

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5 CONCLUSION

The National Mall is a space that is utilized by political and non-political actors alike. It is a space that holds memorials, monuments, and museums. It hosts protests, festivals, art exhibits, and a variety of other events. It is the front yard of the United States (Harmon et al. 2011; Glazer and Field 2008).

The space of the National Mall also serves as one of the places where a narrative of American history and democracy is crafted. Between the standing memorials and monuments, the continual tourism, and the presidential utilization of the space of the mall create naturally create broad questions regarding how this narrative is formed, who gets to form it, and if it changes throughout time.

A deeper, more specific set of questions regarding narrative formation and the National Mall can be drawn from these broad questions: what do each of the memorials and monuments on the National Mall mean? And, perhaps more importantly, who gets to define the meaning and overall narrative of these memorials and monuments? Is the definition and narrative defined and set by the artists who design the structure? Is it the political elite who go through the process of placing the memorials and monuments on the National Mall? Is it the political elite who utilize these structures as backgrounds to public speeches? Or, is it the public who visits and interacts with these monuments and memorials on a daily basis?

I argue that the formation of this political narrative is achieved in a cycle of communication between political elite and the public. This cycle of communication takes place in two stages: design and creation as stage one, and post-dedication as stage two.

The first stage is the design and creation stage. The actors in this stage of the cycle of communication primarily include the legislative branch and the executive branch as the political

elite, and the public. This stage is bound by the amount of time it takes to complete a memorial. The beginning of the proposal of a memorial being placed on the National Mall, to the dedication ceremony of the memorial is the scope of time that encompasses the first stage in the cycle.

Communication between political elite and political elite takes place in this stage. The House of Representatives, Senate, and various bureaucratic organizations communicate in order to design and construct the memorials placed on the National Mall. However, this stage also involves communication between these political elites and the public.

The first stage of the cycle of communication inherently sets a narrative for a memorial that is created. The structures that make up the memorials communicate themes, democratic values and ideals, and embodiment of the figures or events the memorial is standing to. The examination of the timelines in Chapter 1 shows that the public is involved in this process both in the form of acting as the designers and sculptors of the memorials. Further, when the public identifies something, they do not like or accept about a memorial, they place pressure on the political elite through protest, cutting off funding, lobbying, and centering their disdain in the media. These points are identified as the large 'controversies' that surround the creation phase of a memorial. The political elite were found to have responded to the public reactions, and shifted the designs of the memorials.

The second stage of the cycle of communication is the post-dedication stage. The actors in this stage are the president and the public. The public body is made up of both the visitors to the National Mall and those off of the National Mall. Unlike the first stage of the cycle of communication, the second stage has a continuous variable of time. As long as a memorial is standing on the National Mall, it can be utilized by the political elite and the public. This utilization begins with the president at the dedication ceremony of the memorial. Here the initial

definition and assigned meaning of a memorial is set by the president. Following the dedication ceremony, president speak at different events at the memorials, release memorandum and press releases about the memorials, and utilize social media posts regarding the memorials to make small adjustments the assigned definitions, thus slightly shifting political memory and narrative. It is here my first hypothesis is created: The presidential definition of a memorial will change throughout time.

However, a sub-hypothesis is also created from this initial hypothesis. There will not be thematic deviations from presidential speech to presidential speech. Yet another sub-hypothesis is then created where presidents will shift definition of a memorial by adding or further detailing definition to the previously used themes assigned to a memorial.

The public then responds to the definition and meaning assigned to the memorial. They show their support or rejection for the president's definition of a memorial through behavior at and interaction with the memorials. This occurs as the public hold protests, events, speeches, tourist visitation to, published articles, teaching, and various other tools of communication at our about the memorials. One immediate and explicit form of public - political elite communication is in these tools of communications. Members of the public host events at the memorials on the National Mall and invite the presidents to speak at them. This signals a desire of the public to hear from the president regarding specific topics that center around the memorial. This is where my second set of hypotheses is created: the public on the national mall will behave and converse in patters reflective of the themes the presidents set for the memorials. Further, if the public is given a set of democratic values and ideals to identify for a given memorial, they will assign the democratic values and ideals presidents thematically assign as definitions and meanings to the memorials. If the public is behaving and assigning value and importance to memorials that are

not in line with what the political elite want, signs and information panels will be added to the memorials to help communicate political elite expectations to the public.

My theoretical argument is one that takes on a cyclical form in the second stage. This is simply due to the time that the memorials continue to sit on the National Mall. This is inherent to ideas of political memory and narrative creation. As time goes on, political memory and narrative change. As a powerful tool of nationalism, legitimacy, and opportunity for electoral support continued utilization of the memorials will be seen.

In order to examine my proposed theoretical argument of the cycle of communication, I use the Lincoln Memorial, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial as my selected case studies. These memorials were chosen because they represent a timeline of the figure memorials placed on the National Mall. The Lincoln Memorial was the first figure memorial placed on the National Mall, and it was dedicated in 1922. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is one of the last figure memorials to be placed on the National Mall, and it was dedicated in 2011. Finally, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was placed on the National Mall between these other two memorials and was dedicated in 1997.

These three figure memorials were also selected because of their proximity to one another on the National Mall. Though they are all located in Area 1 of the National Mall, they present vastly different environments, messages, and experiences for those visiting the mall. Lastly, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is the only figure memorial that is not representative of a past president.

In detailing the separate ways in which the U.S. presidents and the public have utilized, and continue to utilize, the spaces of the National Mall, we are able to see the continual cycle of communication that exists between the political elite and the public when it comes to narrative

creation and change in the United States. This helps to understand what the dominating political narratives are, as well as what they really mean. It also aids in the understanding of the tools of political propaganda that are utilized by the political elite. Understanding the public role in these things further advances or understanding of the practice of American democracy, as well as the ways the public can exercise their collective power to bring about systematic changes they want to see.

In order to assess the cycle of communication that is strategically used to shape and craft narratives off of the National Mall, Chapter 2 begins with the role presidents play in beginning the cycle of communication by assigning meaning to memorials at their dedications. It also addresses the presidents ongoing role in defining and redefining these memorials through time. In this chapter, I perform a content analysis of all presidential speeches, memorandums, and social media posts (referenced all-together as 'presidential utilization' throughout the project) given at the Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials. By identifying the major topics and themes that individual presidents assign to memorials, as well as how these value assignments have changed over time, Chapter 2 identifies the messages transmitted to the public by the U.S. head of state. These speeches reveal how history is re-framed and reshaped as time and political context colors the narrative that is used from President to President.

My content analysis revealed three primary themes, and four primary sub-themes, that the presidents use to define the Lincoln Memorial. The first theme is that the Lincoln Memorial is representative of the foundational values and ideals of American democracy. Under this primary theme, three sub themes are found. First it the founding legal documents. Here the Lincoln Memorial represents the Constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, and

Emancipation Proclamation. Second, there is specific assignment of democratic values and ideals. The presidents assign four categories of values and ideals to be points of definition for the Lincoln Memorial throughout time: Declaration of Independence values, governing structure values, civil rights values, and spread of American democratic values. Finally, the last category of the foundational values of American democracy is the category of the American body, war, and defenders of democracy. The second primary theme is that of civil rights. Finally, the third theme used to define the Lincoln Memorial is that of unity. The presidents define unity with a sub-theme of an 'us' versus 'them' mentality.

The presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial continues to show that presidents continually add to the list of democratic values and ideals that the Lincoln Memorial is supposed to represent and be defined by. This definition began as two, broad categories that were not incredibly defined. However, my analysis of this theme has identified many instances across the presidential utilization of the Lincoln Memorial where they not only define the values and ideals that fall into the original categories Harding sets but adding two more distinct categories.

I find that the presidents continually add specific democratic values and ideals to the things that the Lincoln Memorial is to represent. Continually adding more and more specific democratic values and ideals to the definition of the Lincoln Memorial suggests that there is no limit to the values and ideals that define the Lincoln Memorial. Through time, the messages and meanings of the Lincoln Memorial have been shifted by the presidents to encompass and represent much more than originally set out by President Harding at the dedication of the memorial. This lends support to my theoretical argument that the presidents continually shift the narrative and definition of the Lincoln Memorial, and the overall narrative of the National Mall.

My content analysis for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial revealed three primary themes that Clinton, the only president to utilize the Roosevelt memorial - use to define the memorial. First, he uses the theme of FDR as the president of hope. The second theme is the institutions that built modern day American democracy. The final theme is unity.

In the two separate times of dedication for this memorial site, Clinton utilized the inherent ability to credit claim the placement, finalizing, and unveiling of the memorials space during his time as president. This gave President Clinton the unique ability to solely act as the defining, authoritative voice for the overall purpose, meaning, and importance of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, and the way it connects to, and changes the overall narrative of the National Mall.

Clinton only uses the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial two times, and his definition and thematic emphasis is consistent across the two speeches. Further, in both these usages, Clinton is acting in his official capacity to accept a federal memorial on the National Mall. Trump and Biden do not even post a caption-less photograph of the memorial on their Instagram accounts. While the two utilizations of the memorial are used to set a presidential narrative for the memorial in relation to the broader narrative of the National Mall, the reality is that the narrative of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is largely ignored by the presidents.

My content analysis for the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial revealed three primary themes and two sub-themes. The first theme presidents used to assign definition to the King memorial is Dr. King as an ordinary citizen. The second theme is a call to complete the incomplete work. And the final theme is unity. The theme of unity has two sub-themes of unity between races and unity between genders.

The presidential messaging across the Martin Luther King, Jr. memorial is also found to be consistent across the presidential utilization of the memorial. However, there are two exceptions. The first is one instance where President Trump diverges from the call to continual work. When Biden was sworn in however, he went back to the set example of Obama, and continued to build on the theme of a continual call to the work. The second is Biden's deviation from a noticeable lack of credit claiming by the other presidents, to massive usage of credit claiming. This indicates a potential shift in the way that the presidents, first, view the Dr. King memorial. At first, the noticeable lack of credit claiming suggested that the Dr. King stood on the National Mall purely as a representative of the public. Bidens use of credit claiming begins to change this narrative as he explicitly politicizes Dr. King's memorial. Continual scholarship should address the continuing utilization of the memorial to monitor the changes in narrative, and the techniques used to create a narrative representative of only the political elite in the American history crafted on the National Mall.

The way in which the presidents use the space of the National Mall creates a political narrative of the United States. The utilization of the figure memorials explicitly identifies who is at the center of the narrative. Through content analysis, I found that simply placing a figure memorial on the National Mall does not automatically include that figure in the narrative. Rather, there must be consistent presidential utilization and attention paid to the individual memorial or monument space in order to include a figure in the narrative. This is exemplified through the case studies of the Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorials.

Further, I found support my my theoretical argument, and proposed hypothesis that the general approach taken by the presidents to shift definition and meaning of memorials in an attempt to shift political memory and narrative is done in incremental shifts in pre-existing

thematic definitions of the memorials. Further, my analysis revealed that the presidents have to work within the confines of the political narrative set by the political elite in the design and creation phase. Presidents are somewhat bound with how they can define memorials on the National Mall due to who they are depicting in the memorial, and the way in which their memorial is structurally and artistically designed.

Chapter 3 reports findings from non-participant, naturalistic observational field work and surveys conducted in Washington, D.C. This field work was done to identify what meaning visitors assign to these memorials, as well as visitor behavior at the memorials. The behavioral and conversational patterns that I identified through my observational work reveal that there is reflection and alignment of the speeches and the definition set by the political elite in the behavior and personal interactions of public visitors on the National Mall. This was found to be true for both the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorials. Though there was alignment, some patterns of behavior and conversation reveal the beginnings of public deviation from the speeches that indicate a different interpretation of the memorial among the visitors.

The observational work done at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial revealed public perceptions, definitions, and assigned meanings did not match that of Clinton's presidential definitions. They did reveal an alignment with the original goals and definitions that were set by the political elite in the design and creation stage of the memorial, however. This revealed two important relationships. First, when the president will not set a narrative, the political elite involved in the first stage of the cycle of communication will. The second is the avenue these political elite utilize to make their definition known. To achieve their set definition and meaning, they use information panels across the memorial space. Because the presidents have decided not to take part in the narrative creation for the Roosevelt Memorial since Clinton's required usage, a

power vacuum was created, and the political elite from the design and creation stage filled it. Thus, the cycle of communication remains being those in the first stage and the public rather than the president and the public.

Lastly, my observational work revealed that political elite communication regarding the approved behavior at a memorial is communication through posted signage that is detailed in how people schools behave. At the Lincoln Memorial, there are "Quiet. Respect Please." signs posted inside the memorial at the bottom of the Lincoln Statue. At the Roosevelt Memorial, there are signs telling people to stay out of certain fountain spaces. There were no signs posted at the King Memorial, however, I did observe patterns of behavior where people climb, sit, and play all over the black walls the line the memorial space. If the political elite decide that this is behavior they do not agree with, or behavior that harms the memorial structure, they will likely post signs similar to those found at the Lincoln and Roosevelt Memorials.

Chapter 4 continues this investigation by assessing what messages those not physically present on the mall assign to the three memorials under assessment. It specifically examines the degree to which the values and meanings the public assigns to the memorials mirror or depart from the meanings assigned by presidents. First, common trends that I observed on the National Mall were also represented by the survey respondents. All three of the figure memorials were misidentified both on and off of the mall. This suggests a potential breakdown in the cycle of communication between the political elite and the public that is potentially due to a lack of knowledge, as well as a potential lack in interest. It could also be explained by a lack of political salience.

Second, the studying of the public's identification and assignment of democratic values to the memorials reveals perceptions that are in-line with the presidential meanings and definitions

that initially set the narrative of the National Mall as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2. The presidential defining of the Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial is strongly reflected in the public's identification of democratic values. On and off the mall, this is a consistent pattern found. However, my analysis shows a massive breakdown in the values and definitions Clinton and the public individually assigns Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. This is also in alignment with the findings revealed in Chapter 3.

The public alignment with a political elite narrative outside of the presidential narrative is an important finding that requires an addition to the theoretical framework of the cycle of communication. Not just a divorce in the president narrative-public narrative for a memorial, but also a divorce among the first stage and second stage where political elite drive the narrative. This reveals that in specific cases, the president is not the first one to give voice to a monument or memorial, even though they are the first who gets to publicly voice an assigned definition and meaning. Rather, there is a definition and narrative set for a memorial in the first stage that the public can more align themselves with if they do not want to align themselves to that of the presidents.

The results from my content analysis of presidential definitions, observational work of public perceptions and behaviors on the National Mall, and assessment of assignment of values and identification of the memorials by those off of the mall all lend support to the cyclical cycle of communication that creates narratives within the United States. Studying the presidential utilization of the three memorials revealed support for the hypothesis that the presidential definition of a memorial will change throughout time. Further, there were not consistent thematic deviations from presidential speech to presidential speech. Where there were substantial deviations from the presidential definitions by one president, there was an adjustment back to the

status quo with the next president. The content analysis also revealed that presidents shifted a definition of a memorial by adding or further detailing definition to the previously used themes assigned to a memorial.

My observational work, along with my survey analysis of those off the mall revealed that there is an alignment in the definitions and meanings set by the public and those set by the presidents. Further, when the public is given a set of democratic values and ideals to identify for a given memorial, they assigned democratic values and ideals that were in alignment with the presidents thematically assigned definitions and meanings. The exception to both of these is, of course, the Roosevelt Memorial. However, the prevailing narrative, definition, and memorials Roosevelt memorial are not really assigned by the presidents, they are assigned with the political elite involved with designing and creating the memorials.

I also found support for the hypothesis regarding public interaction with memorials. When the public is behaving and assigning value and importance to memorials that are not in line with what the political elite want, signs and information panels will be added to the memorials to help communicate political elite expectations to the public. This is consistent across the Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorials.

Support for this cycle of communication that creates narrative allows for a breadth of rich research questions and analysis to be pursued in the future. First, this cycle of communication should be applied to other forms of memorials. Is there a consistency in this two-staged cycle of communication for the war memorials of the National Mall? What does this mean for state sponsored memorials? Are there other memorials on the National Mall where the political elite set definition and meaning is assigned by those in the creation stage of the memorial? If there is, does this support a cohesive narrative across the mall or is there further breakdowns in the

narrative because of varying motivations for control of the prevailing narrative? These questions are both specific to the United States, federal and state memorials, and the National Mall.

Further, there are questions still unanswered regarding the application of this cycle of communication in countries that either are not democracies, or that do not have the means of freedom of speech and expression found in democratic states. Are there cycles of communications in other governing structures that factor in the voice of the people in narrative formation? Or is this a cycle of communication that is strictly applicable only for democratic institutions? The limits of the generalizability of the theory need to be tested in order to full understand the ways in which narrative formation surrounding memorials and monuments is adjusted. But it also needs to be addressed in order to understand the full role that the public body plays in supporting and shaping tools of nationalism and political propaganda (Colley 2019; Limes and Marinelli 2018; O'Shaughnessy 2004; Chapman 2000).

This project also revealed a relationship that was not theorized initially: the relationship between the political elite in stage one and the political elite in stage two. What does the cycle of communication between these two political elite groups look like? How do they communicate? Where does the public fit into that third relationship? Does this create competing elite narratives (Kaiser 2017)? What would those implications be for the narratives being pushed off of the National Mall? This is a stage of the cycle of communication that must be explored in order to fully understand the narrative formation created by this theory.

Another variable not explored in this project, but that is one employed throughout the memorial scholarship is that of education curriculum (Flennegard and Marrsson 2021; Levinson 2018; Bellentani and Panico 2016; Hajek 2010). How are people taught about the memorials in schools? What does the curriculum's detail about the National Mall and its memorials? Is the

narrative taught in schools similar to the presidential narratives set in presidential utilization? This is one way in which political elites spread their set political definitions and narratives of memorials (Binnenkade 2015; Bekerman and Zembylas 2011; Carretero 2011; Koulouri 2011; Hajek 2010)? The various ways that political elite communicate their definitions and narratives of memorials provides important nuanced information regarding how narrative is formed and the impact that narrative has.

Further, the regression models run in Chapter held very low levels of explanatory power for both correctly identifying memorials, and for feeling personally represented by the memorials (Brown and Ibarra 2018; Mitchell 2003). A more representative diverse study should be done that allows for more explanatory variables to be found in order to help further explain the ways in which the public perceives memorials. One possible factor not tested for is emotional response to the memorial (Pavlakovic and Perak 2017). Another includes a measure of personal nationalism levels (Ware 2004). This will aid in the explanation of the motives underlying and direction of definitions that the public uses to set their levels of political elite driven narrative they will accept or reject.

Understanding narrative formation, and the goal of narrative formation is vital to understanding the context under which politics is being practiced. This is true for international politics and domestic politics. Narrative formation is a powerful tool that democracies inherently have to share with the public. This creates a unique narrative where the public is involved because it incorporates another body of power that is fighting for their narrative to be the prevailing one. Political narratives shape nationalism and identity, But the prevailing political narrative also shapes policy, education, media coverage, and issue salience. All of these things overarching shape the direction of a state's politics, governance, and interactions with the rest of

the political world. Thus, understanding how the various political narratives are crafted and shaped allows for identification and political literacy and knowledge to create better structures and standards of government. Further active participation in the narrative formation process supports and advocates for stronger, better democratic health scores and practices (Gross 2021; Wells 2019; Dervin 1994; Sherwood 1994).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Appendix A.1: Survey Consent Form

Georgia State University
Informed Consent

Title: Creating Narratives on the National Mall: Strategic Political Use of the Figure Memorials on the National Mall

Principal Investigator: Dr. Amy Steigerwalt

Student Principal Investigator: Morgan Smith

Procedures

We invite you to take part in a research study. The purpose of this study is to understand how individuals view memorials on the National Mall. You will be asked to answer a set of demographic questions, followed by a set of questions regarding memorials in the United States. Completion of the full survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes.

Compensation

You will receive extra credit in the course you have registered with under the GSU SONA system for your participation in this study. Your course syllabus will provide information on alternative methods of receiving these extra credit points.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal

You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you can drop out at any time. If you do not wish to answer a question, you may simply skip the question. If you do not take part or if you leave the study early, you will not lose any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to.

Confidentiality

We will keep your records private to the extent required by law. Dr. Steigerwalt and Morgan Smith will have access to the information you provide. Information may also be shared with those who make sure the study is done correctly (GSU Institutional Review Board and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)). Through the SONA system you will be assigned an identifier number. We will only be given that identifier number, the study number, and your study responses; there is no way for us to connect your identifier number to your name or other identifying information. Therefore, you will not be, nor can you be, identified personally by your name or other facts that might point to you in any future presentations or publications. The information you provide will be stored on a password- and firewall-protected computer. While data sent over the internet may not be secured, no information will be sent that contains any way to identify you and the transmission itself will be encrypted.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research or your part in it, please contact:

Dr. Amy Steigerwalt, asteigerwalt@gsu.edu or (404)-413-6162.

Consent

You can print or save a copy of this consent form for your records if you would like. If you agree to participate in this research, please click the "CONTINUE" button below:

Appendix A.2: Survey Instrument

Demographic Questions:

Gender

Please Indicate your gender:

1. Female
2. Male
3. Non-binary/ third gender
4. Prefer not to say

Race

How would you describe your race?

1. White
2. Black or African American
3. American Indian or Alaska Native
4. Asian
5. Native Hawai'ian or Pacific Islander
6. Other

Nationality/Citizenship

Open Ended: What country are you a citizen of?

Ideology

Where would you place yourself on a seven point, liberal to conservative ideological scale?

1. Extremely Liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly Liberal
4. Moderate, Middle of the Road
5. Slightly Conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely Conservative

Partisanship

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or what?

1. Democrat
2. Republican
3. Independent
4. Other

(Depending on answer being (1) or (2) in Partisanship identification question): Would you call yourself a strong [Democrat; Republican] or a not very strong [Democrat/Republican]?

1. Strong
2. Not very Strong

Depending on answer being (3) or (4) in Partisanship identification question): Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or to the Democratic Party?

1. Closer to the Democratic Party
2. Closer to the Republican Party

3. Neither
4. I do not know

Age

In what year were you born?

Regionality

What region of the United States would you say you were from?

1. Northeast Region
2. Midwest Region
3. South Region
4. West Region
5. Pacifika
6. Alaska
7. None of the Above

How important to you is being a (Southerner, Midwesterner, Westerner, Northerner, Pacifika, Alaskan)?

1. Extremely Important
2. Very Important
3. Moderately Important
4. Slightly Important
5. Not at all Important

Monuments

General:

Now I would like to ask you questions regarding National Memorials and Monuments.

Below are statements regarding memorials and monuments generally. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. "I enjoy visiting memorials and monuments."
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
2. "I believe visiting memorials and monuments is important for learning and education."
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
3. "I believe that I have a duty to visit the National Mall at least one time as an American Citizen, or that all American Citizens have this duty."
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree

- d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
4. "I believe that memorials and monuments are vital for remembering and understanding history"
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
5. "I believe that it is important to prioritize visiting National Memorials."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
6. "I believe that we should be reverent around memorials."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree

7. I believe that we should behave reverently and respectfully around memorials and monuments.
- a. Both reverent and respectfully
 - b. Only respectfully
 - c. Only reverently
 - d. Neither reverently or respectfully
 - e. It depends on what memorial or monument

If C or A is selected: Would you include any of the following memorials and monuments as memorials and monuments that we should behave reverently and respectfully around? Please choose all that apply.

- a. The Lincoln memorial
- b. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- c. The National World War II Memorial
- d. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial
The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial
- e. None of the above memorials

Below are statements regarding some of the Memorials and Monuments on the National Mall in Washington D.C.. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.:

8. "I believe that the National Mall in Washington DC highlights the most important figures and events in the history of the United States."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree

- c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
9. "I believe that every American Citizen should visit the Memorials and Monuments on the National Mall, in Washington D.C. at least once."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
10. "The Memorials and Monuments on the National Mall allow us to connect with our history."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
11. "The Memorials and Monuments on the National Mall allow us to remember values and ideologies that we want to continue living with in the United States."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
12. "The Memorials on the National Mall are the most important memorials in the United States."
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree or disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
13. Out of the many memorials and monuments on the National Mall in Washington D.C., are there any that you personally believe should be taught about in the public k-12 schooling curriculum in the United States? Please choose all that apply:
- a. Vietnam Women's Memorial
 - b. Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial
 - c. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
 - d. Washington Monument
 - e. Vietnam Veterans Memorial
 - f. National World War II Memorial
 - g. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

- h. Lincoln Memorial
- i. Korean War Veterans Memorial
- j. Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- k. None of the Memorials or Monuments on the National Mall should be included in the k-12 public school curriculum.

Motivations:

I have visited the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial in Washington D.C.

1. Yes, and I would go visit the Memorial again
2. Yes, but I have no interest in visiting the Memorial site again
3. No, but I do want to visit the Memorial
4. No, and I have no interest in visiting the Memorial

(If yes to 1 or 2)

What was your motivation for visiting the [] Memorial during your visit to Washington D.C. (please choose all that apply):

1. Just enjoying the space of the National Mall
2. Introspection of myself as an American Citizen
3. Learning or Education
4. Family ties to the Monument
5. Experiencing the iconic government memorial sites
6. I was there to participate in a protest
7. No real motivating reasons
8. Other: _____

Who, if anyone, did you visit the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] memorial?

1. Visiting alone
2. Visiting with my family
3. Visiting with a park ranger
4. Visiting on a school trip
5. Visiting with a tour group
6. Visiting the site for a protest.

Are there specific democratic values you believe are represented by the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial? Please select all you feel apply:

1. The right to life.
2. The right to freedom of speech.
3. The right to freedom of assembly.
4. The right to liberty.
5. The right to economic freedom.
6. The right of freedom of religion.
7. The right to happiness.
8. The right to a fair trial.
9. The right to vote as a means of participating in the government.
10. Checks and balances of power across the governing branches.
11. The right to protest.

12. Unity of the nation.
13. Upholding and respecting the Constitution which founded the country.
14. Other: _____

Open Ended Questions:

“Did you learn anything while visiting the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial?”

1. Yes
2. No

If yes: In a few words, please describe what you learned at the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial:

“What do you think is the most important message that is sent to an observer or visitor of the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial?”

“What is the most important design element or part of the structure of the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial to you?”

Specific to the National Mall Memorials

1. “I am deeply impacted emotionally by the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial”
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat Disagree
 - c. Neither disagree or agree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
2. “I am represented in the American Story through the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial”
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat Disagree
 - c. Neither disagree or agree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
3. “I get more satisfaction out of visiting the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial than from visiting any other memorial on the National Mall.”
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat Disagree
 - c. Neither disagree or agree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
4. “I wouldn’t substitute the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial for any other memorial.”
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat Disagree
 - c. Neither disagree or agree
 - d. Somewhat agree

- e. Strongly agree
5. The [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial means a lot to me.
- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Neither disagree or agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
6. I am very attracted to the artistic and structural design of the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial.
- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Neither disagree or agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
7. I have a lot of fond memories surrounding the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial.
- Strongly disagree
 - Somewhat Disagree
 - Neither disagree or agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Strongly agree
8. Were there any elements of the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial design that surprised you or stood out to you? Please note what, if any, of those elements are.
9. Did you learn about the [Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Lincoln] Memorial in any of your k-12 school classes?
- Yes
 - No
 - I cannot recall

Identify the Memorials

Below is a photograph of a memorial that is located on the National Mall.

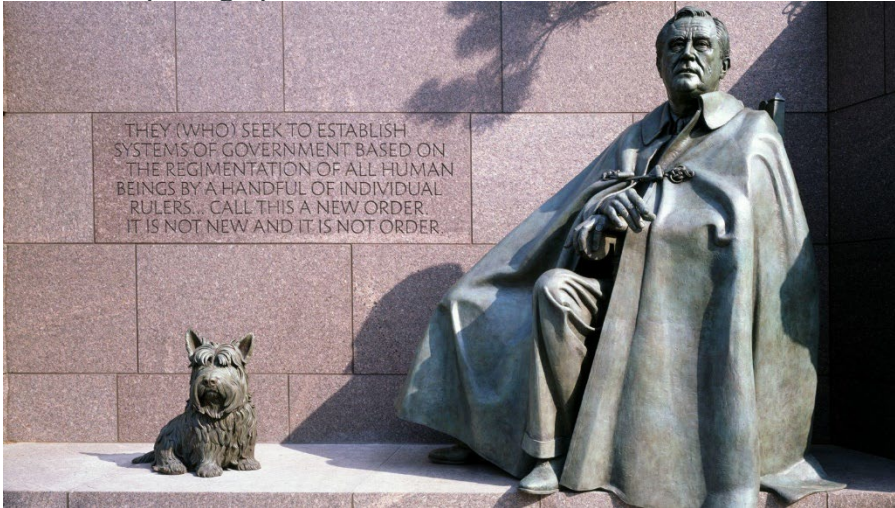


Please select the name of the memorials that is depicted by the above photograph.

- Vietnam women's memorial
- Dwight d. Eisenhower memorial
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial
- Washington monument
- Vietnam veterans memorial

- f. National world war ii memorial
- g. Martin Luther king, jr. memorial
- h. Lincoln memorial
- i. Korean war veterans memorial
- j. Thomas Jefferson memorial
- k. I do not know

Below is a photograph of a memorial that is located on the National Mall.



Please select the name of the memorials that is depicted by the above photograph.

- a. Vietnam women's memorial
- b. Dwight d. Eisenhower memorial
- c. Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial
- d. Washington monument
- e. Vietnam veterans memorial
- f. National world war ii memorial
- g. Martin Luther king, jr. memorial
- h. Lincoln memorial
- i. Korean war veterans memorial
- j. Thomas Jefferson memorial
- k. I do not know

Below is a photograph of a memorial that is located on the National Mall.



Please select the name of the memorials that is depicted by the above photograph.

- a. Vietnam women's memorial
- b. Dwight d. Eisenhower memorial
- c. Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial
- d. Washington monument
- e. Vietnam veterans memorial
- f. National world war ii memorial
- g. Martin Luther king, jr. memorial
- h. Lincoln memorial
- i. Korean war veterans memorial
- j. Thomas Jefferson memorial
- k. I do not know

If there has not been a visit to these memorials:

[The photos used in this section will be the three photos above depicting the Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorials]

1. Do you have any interest in visiting the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial in Washington D.C.?
2. Are there any specific reasons you have not gone to Washington D.C. and visited the National Mall? Please select all that apply.
 - a. Too costly
 - b. I have been to Washington D.C. I just did not go to the National Mall
 - c. I am not a big traveler.
 - d. I have not had the time to travel
 - e. Going to the National Mall has never been important to me
 - f. I had a trip planned, but covid cancelled it, and it never got rescheduled.
 - g. I have no interest
 - h. Other
3. From the photo provided, what do you think is the messaging or meaning of the memorial? (open ended)
4. From the photo provided, do you think that the memorial is an appropriate representation to the person it is supposed to be memorializing?
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree
5. From the following statements below, please indicate if you believe the following behaviors are appropriate while at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 - a. It is appropriate to hold a protest at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree

- b. It is appropriate for children to be loudly playing and running around the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- c. It is appropriate to hold festivals and large celebrations at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- d. It is appropriate for people to touch the individual structures of the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- e. It is appropriate for the President, Senators, and Congress Member to give speeches in front of the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- f. It is appropriate for people to be praying at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- g. It is appropriate for people to take pictures with the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- h. It is appropriate to climb on and around the different structures that make up the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree

3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
6. From the photo provided, do you believe that any democratic values that are supposed to be represented by the memorial? Please choose all you believe apply.
1. The right to life.
 2. The right to freedom of speech.
 3. The right to freedom of assembly.
 4. The right to liberty.
 5. The right to economic freedom.
 6. The right of freedom of religion.
 7. The right to happiness.
 8. The right to a fair trial.
 9. The right to vote as a means of participating in the government.
 10. Checks and balances of power across the governing branches.
 11. The right to protest.
 12. Unity of the nation.
 13. Upholding and respecting the Constitution which founded the country.
 14. Other: _____
 15. None of the above

If having visited the Memorials:

The [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial is a fairly expansive Memorial. Please indicate if you believe that it is appropriate to behave in the following ways at the Memorial site.

- i. It is appropriate to hold a protest at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 6. Strongly Disagree
 7. Somewhat disagree
 8. Neither agree nor disagree
 9. Somewhat agree
 10. Strongly agree
- j. It is appropriate for children to be loudly playing and running around the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
- k. It is appropriate to hold festivals and large celebrations at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree

5. Strongly agree
- l. It is appropriate for people to touch the individual structures of the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
 - m. It is appropriate for the President, Senators, and Congress Member to give speeches in front of the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
 - n. It is appropriate for people to be praying at the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
 - o. It is appropriate for people to take pictures with the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
 - p. It is appropriate to climb on and around the different structures that make up the [Franklin Delano Roosevelt; Martin Luther, King, Jr.; Lincoln] Memorial.
 1. Strongly Disagree
 2. Somewhat disagree
 3. Neither agree nor disagree
 4. Somewhat agree
 5. Strongly agree
1. Is it appropriate for children to be loudly playing and running around the steps and outside of the Lincoln memorial?
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree

2. Is it appropriate for children to be loudly playing and running around the inside of the Lincoln Memorial?
 - a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Somewhat disagree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Somewhat agree
 - e. Strongly agree

Appendix B: Paper Interview Instrument

Thank you for participating in this interview for my dissertation!

1. Please check the memorial are you currently visiting:

- Lincoln Memorial
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial
- Vietnam Women's Memorial
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial
- Washington Monument
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- National World War II Memorial
- Korean War Veterans Memorial
- Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- I do not know

2. Why are you visiting this memorial?

3. What do you believe are the meanings and/or messages conveyed by this memorial?

4. About how much time did you spend at this memorial?

5. Please indicate your political party identification:

- Republican
- Democrat
- Other

7. Please indicate your gender:

- Female
- Male
- Nonbinary/Third Gender
- Prefer Not to Answer

9. Please indicate your race:

- African American/Black
- White
- Asian
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Other

11. In what year where you born:

Appendix C: Qualitative Coding Process for Presidential Utilizations

Lincoln Memorial Coding:

1. Foundational Values of American Democracy:
 - a. Founding Legal Documents: Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, and Emancipation Proclamation
 - b. Values and Ideals:
 - a. Declaration of Independence Values and Ideals: DoI, BoR, inherent rights, freedom, justice, liberty
 - b. Governing Structures Values and Ideals: states rights, court, rule of law, majority rule, voting, protest.
 - c. Civil Rights Values and Ideals: basic rights, every citizen, rights, equal terms, fair trial, fair court.
 - d. Promotion of American Democracy Abroad: protect, promote, fight for, spread.
 - c. American Body, War, and Defenders of Democracy: war, spread democracy, abroad, global, fight for, be an example.
2. Civil Rights: civil rights, civil rights movement, racial equality, racial justice, white man, African American, March on Washington, right to vote, Jim Crowe.
3. Unity: unify, unity, Union, unite, Unifier, together, fellow Americans, one goal, our, together.
 - a. 'us' versus 'them:' as Americans, we, together, unique, greatest democracy, other countries, rest of the world, Iraq, soldiers, defend, we know, we learned, yet to learn.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Coding:

1. FDR As President of Hope: faith in Franklin Roosevelt: strength, overcame, despite, greatest presidency, flexibility, inspire, confidence, dominance, prosperity, courage, strength, exemplified, hope, productive, encourage, brave, fight, spirit, persistence, extraordinary, potential.
2. Institutions the Built Modern Day American Democracy: American democracy, power, military power, home-front, nation, United Nations, GI Bill, free from tyranny, America's goal, New Deal programs, vision, prosperity, dominance.
3. Unity: led, out of despair, victory, destiny, American, democracy, unity, overcome, stronger together, unite, produce, worth of all Americans, unify, faith in the nation.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Coding:

1. Dr. King as an Ordinary Citizen: no title, no rank, American, achievement, worked, assassinated, trust in government.
2. Call to Complete Incomplete Work: work to be done, work is not done, continue to do Dr. King's work, his 'dream' has not yet been achieved, let us work, let us continue the goal of Dr. King.
3. Unity: unite, unity, unifying, union, togetherness, as one, Americans, us, fellow Americans, American People, become.
 - a. Race: African American, White, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, race, racial, color of skin, Civil Rights.
 - b. Gender: woman, man, Rosa Parks, girls, boys, men.