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Author(s): Randall Collins

Source: *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 22, No. 1, Theories of Terrorism: A Symposium (Mar., 2004), pp. 53-87

Published by: American Sociological Association

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3648959>

Accessed: 04/06/2010 03:39

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Rituals of Solidarity and Security in the Wake of Terrorist Attack*

RANDALL COLLINS

University of Pennsylvania

Conflict produces group solidarity in four phases: (1) an initial few days of shock and idiosyncratic individual reactions to attack; (2) one to two weeks of establishing standardized displays of solidarity symbols; (3) two to three months of high solidarity plateau; and (4) gradual decline toward normalcy in six to nine months. Solidarity is not uniform but is clustered in local groups supporting each other's symbolic behavior. Actual solidarity behaviors are performed by minorities of the population, while vague verbal claims to performance are made by large majorities. Commemorative rituals intermittently revive high emotional peaks; participants become ranked according to their closeness to a center of ritual attention. Events, places, and organizations claim importance by associating themselves with national solidarity rituals and especially by surrounding themselves with pragmatically ineffective security ritual. Conflicts arise over access to centers of ritual attention; clashes occur between pragmatists deritualizing security and security zealots attempting to keep up the level of emotional intensity. The solidarity plateau is also a hysteria zone; as a center of emotional attention, it attracts ancillary attacks unrelated to the original terrorists as well as alarms and hoaxes. In particular historical circumstances, it becomes a period of atrocities.

The attack of September 11, 2001 (referred to as 9/11) gives an opportunity to study the process by which social solidarity occurs in response to external conflict. People draw together; symbols are rallied around; leaders are exalted; control becomes more centralized. This is standard sociological theory. But how long do these processes last? When are they at their height? Do they operate uniformly throughout the population, or are they clustered in pockets? How long and in what way does external conflict divert attention from internal conflict? As we shall see, ritualistic mobilization about solidarity and security generates its own processes of conflict, as persons in particular social locations struggle over control of symbols and access to the center of collective attention; and these produce ancillary conflict and sometimes violence in their own right, in a period I call the hysteria zone.

Sociological theory does not pay enough attention to the dynamics of processes over time. We tend to be stuck in a meta-theoretical dichotomy between static comparisons of how structures hang together and an actor-centered view of fluid action. But processes have shapes in time, patterns of intensity, rapid shifts, and gradual declines, which sweep people up at one moment and bring them down at another. What follows is a contribution to theorizing one important type of time process.

*Address correspondence to: Randall Collins, Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 3718 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6299; email: collinsr@sas.upenn.edu.

SOLIDARITY AND POPULARITY OF SYMBOLIC LEADERS

The principle enunciated by Simmel [1908] (1955) and Coser (1957) is that conflict produces solidarity. The statement is vague in a number of respects. At what phase of conflict is solidarity highest? Is solidarity strongest when a group perceives itself as being attacked, or when it attacks another? On this point, as on others, the issue has been little studied. I will examine a variety of kinds of evidence.

At least on the scale of large national democracies, evidence suggests that the first moment of being attacked is a peak moment of solidarity—so are the moment of going on the offensive and the moment of celebrating victory. Prestige polls for American presidents show all three of these patterns:

- 90 percent approval rating for George W. Bush, September 21–23, 2001: 10–12 days after the 9/11 attack.
- 89 percent for George Bush, February 28–March 3, 1991: one–four days immediately following victory in the four-day battle of the Gulf War (February 23–27).
- 87 percent for Harry Truman, June 1–5, 1945: 24–28 days after Victory in Europe (V-E) Day in World War II.
- 84 percent for Franklin Roosevelt, January 8–13, 1942: one month after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the declaration of war and the same percentage two and a half weeks later, January 21–25, 1942.
- 83 percent for John F. Kennedy, April 28–May 3, 1961: 11–16 days after the disastrous U.S.-supported invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs (Gallup polls, CNN/Gallup Poll; USA Today, September 24, 2001 and January 18, 2002; see also Page and Shapiro 1992).

Note some of the fine detail of these time patterns. The popularity of George W. Bush was 86 percent on September 14–15, 2001, in the immediate three–four days after the 9/11 attack; it grew still higher (to a record 90 percent) in the following 10 days. It declined again into the mid-80s through early October and then jumped again to 89 percent (nearly the all-time peak) just after the United States began its air attack on Afghanistan. U.S. victory in Afghanistan ostensibly happened by mid-December; nevertheless, Bush's popularity fell slightly during this period, to 83 percent on January 11, 2002. Similarly, George Bush's popularity remained high after the Gulf War victory for another month (from the 89 percent peak at early March 1991, declining slightly to 87 percent March 7–10; 86 percent March 14–17; 84 percent March 21–24; and 83 percent April 4–6). Roosevelt's popularity stayed at its peak for almost two months after Pearl Harbor. The solidarity aftermath of the 9/11 attack in this respect is unusually prolonged, with George W. Bush still at historically quite rarified levels of popularity four months later, declining to 75 percent in March, and toward a more normal strong presidential position (in the 60s) during summer 2002, 9–12 months later.

Periods of intense solidarity around a political figurehead hit their peak about two weeks after the dramatic onset of conflict and stay very high for another month or two; thereupon they go into a slow decline, falling back to normal levels of support for a leader within about six–nine months.

The same pattern exists in support for wars; widespread enthusiasm for wars is typical at their beginning and stays high only for short wars (Ostrom and Simon 1985; Norporth 1987). The intense period of solidarity lasts only a few months but is replaced by normal levels of patriotic solidarity while a war goes on. It takes considerable war casualties and lack of decisive victories over a period of two to four

years for a war to become widely unpopular (Keegan 1977:274–77). Soldiers often enlist at the beginning of a war in a mood of high enthusiasm (Holmes 1985:275; Scheff 1994:94–96).¹ Within a few months of combat, they withdraw from nationalist and other ideals, or at least from their overt expression, and fight mainly out of solidarity with a small local group of co-fighters (Holmes 1985:276–77).² Thus, even with the continuation of external conflict, the intense surge of solidarity falls back to normal political commitment at best; although an initial defeat, even a disastrous one, generates solidarity, continuation of even moderate solidarity becomes contingent on victory.

Compared to the rallying around at the outset of a war, popularity peaks from winning a war are not so prolonged; Truman's June 1945 peak is never approached again. When conflict stops, the surge of solidarity drops to levels that may be below majority support. George Bush fell from an 89 percent approval rating after the Gulf War victory to losing an election 20 months later. Winston Churchill, despite immense wartime popularity, lost an election 10 weeks after the end of the European War. And losing ventures give only a sudden jolt, like Kennedy's in April 1961. The moment of attack also gives a jolt; the beginning of air bombardment of Iraq on January 16, 1991, gave George Bush an 83 percent rating January 23–26, 7 to 10 days later. In contrast, endings of wars that become bogged down in lengthy stalemates do not give popularity for political figureheads; there are no strong popularity surges associated with the end of Korean War or with the Vietnam War.

The Simmelian principle needs to be refined; not just any conflict results in high levels of group solidarity. The key to such a pattern is the dramatic incident, the attention-focusing event: a sudden attack and response to the attack, or a dramatic celebration at the end of a conflict.³ Solidarity is produced by social interaction within the group, not by the conflict itself as an external event. What creates the solidarity is the sharp rise in ritual intensity of social interaction, as very large numbers of persons focus their attention on the same event, are reminded constantly that other people are focusing their attention by the symbolic signals they give out, and hence are swept up into a collective mood. Individual reactions to violent conflict generally are fear or paralysis (Marshall 1947; Grossman 1995); solidarity is not the aggregation of individual emotions about conflict but is an entirely different emotional process.

The onset of a period of intense solidarity often is a sharp contrast from what went before. George W. Bush's popularity, for example, varied between 52 percent and

¹The initial mood is so powerful that it tends to attract temporarily even those who are critical politically. An instance is the behavior of Max Weber: For over a decade prior to World War I, he was highly critical of the German government for its increasing diplomatic isolation from Britain and other former allies, and from late 1915 onward he was active politically in attempting to bring a negotiated end to the war. Yet during the enthusiasm of the war outbreak in August 1914 he immediately volunteered for war service (although 50 years old at the time) and was disappointed at being given a merely administrative position on the home front. On August 28, 1914 three and a half weeks after the beginning of the war, he wrote in response to a relative's death in battle: "For no matter what the outcome—this war is great and wonderful" (Weber 1988:521–22). By the end of 1914 Weber attempted to resign from his administrative duties, although his resignation was not accepted for another nine months. His period of war enthusiasm covered at most five months.

²In World War II, one of the strongest taboos among U.S. combat troops was against conventional patriotic expressions and flag-waving.

³The surge of presidential popularity at the end of WWII came after victory in Europe (May 7, 1945); the war with Japan went on another three months (until August 15) but without a comparable surge of presidential popularity and with notably smaller public celebrations than the spontaneous crowd gatherings that took place after V-E Day. The first celebration preempted the second one. The tail end of solidarity surges is something like an emotional refractory period, which keeps a second peak surge from happening during the time when the first surge is decaying. As we shall see, the attempted shoe-bomb attack on an airliner on December 22, 2001, occurring toward the end of the three-month solidarity plateau, did not result in renewal of high levels of solidarity ritual; the time pattern of long-term decline in collective focus was too massive a shift in emotional inertia to be disrupted.

63 percent over the seven months preceding the 9/11 attack, with a low point in early September 2001. A dramatic conflict episode raises popularity 20 to 50 percentage points, depending on how low the starting point was. New York then-mayor Rudy Guiliani was regarded with considerable hostility among a large proportion of his constituents in the two years preceding 9/11, undergoing an abrupt shift in local popularity in the week following the attack, as he became the leading figure in local activities surrounding the catastrophe and their news reports. Rallying around a leader is a symbolic gesture that swallows up rational assessment and is not based on a summary of good and bad points of the individual's record.

POPULAR DISPLAY OF SOLIDARITY SYMBOLS OVER TIME

Private individuals' display of solidarity in national conflict follows the same time pattern as solidarity around leadership symbols. As we shall see, however, private displays are confined to minorities of the population, although sometimes substantial ones; rallying around a leader appears to be the easiest and most widespread of all symbolic gestures.

My method was formulated in the immediate stir of the 9/11 atmosphere—initially by noting all indicators of solidarity display and then by settling onto counts of flags or other national symbols on buildings, cars, and personal clothing. The display of such symbols went through four phases.

The first period spanned the first two days after the attacks. For most people, there was little display of solidarity behavior except in private relationships. Individuals spread news of the attacks to one another, including some talk among strangers (as in elevators and on public transportation). The mood was largely quiet, indeed, emotionally stunned. There were few immediate outbursts of patriotic enthusiasm or of anger at an enemy.

These were days of extremely widely shared focus of attention. The major television channels broadcast all news through the fourth day, although some minor channels had gone back to entertainment shows and had resumed advertisements by the third day. Normal programming everywhere resumed the fifth day, although sports events were cancelled for the first weekend (the attacks occurred on a Tuesday). By the sixth day, newspapers scaled back coverage of the 9/11 attacks from almost total monopoly to relatively few pages and resumed normal local news; sports sections indicated that everyone was ready for resuming scheduled games. The same evening, for the first time in a week, I heard sounds of a party in the streets below my downtown Philadelphia apartment house—the usual hoots, loud drunken voices, laughter. The weekend hiatus felt right ritually for resumption of normalcy. The official ritual of national mourning, however, flags at half staff, was not ended (by presidential order) until the 12th day (the second Saturday after 9/11)—again using the weekend as a breaking point.

This early period of being emotionally stunned happened at the outset of other large-scale conflicts. The day the Civil War broke out in America, an eyewitness describes people gathering on the streets in New York City the evening the news arrived of the Confederate attack on Ft. Sumter, April 13, 1861: "One of us read the [newspaper] aloud, while all listened silently and attentively. No remark was made by any of the crowd, which had increased to thirty or forty, but all stood a minute or two, I remember, before they dispersed" (Whitman [1882] 1982:706). This early hushing of emotions into shared silence was followed, within three–five days (April

16–18), by excited popular meetings in American towns across the North; “for a time there were no party distinctions; all were Union men, determined to avenge the insult to the national flag” (Grant [1885] 1990:152).

This immediate period of one or two days of hushed emotions before overt enthusiastic solidarity breaks out is found almost invariably at the outset of deadly ethnic riots (Horowitz 2001). A “calm before the storm” intervenes between the dramatic precipitating event (usually some symbolic threat from an enemy) and the actual outburst of ethnic violence. During this time, usually one or two days long, normal social activity ceases; people notably are absent from public places and business venues; they are gathered in private, spreading rumors, while a militant minority prepares for violent action. On the national level, the response to the outbreak of conflict does not call for much private initiative, but in other respects the social process is similar. It is quieter than usual, with almost everyone’s attention focused on the dramatic event. The act of monitoring others is helping to assimilate the emotional shock; only after this takes place do widespread public solidarity displays begin.

The second period is the rapid build-up of public display of national symbols, reaching full bore within three–seven days and turning into a strong consensus on the proper ways that symbolic solidarity should and should not be displayed. And the third period is a plateau of high solidarity, lasting two to three months. This is followed by a fourth period of long tailing off in solidarity, falling back to normalcy around six months in most respects, although other patterns remain somewhat elevated for nine months or a year. The pattern is complicated because the most intense solidarity displays are episodic, going through a series of recapitulation and revival rituals; these are most effective during the first three months, with declining appeal thereafter.

The early period of solidarity growth after 9/11 consisted in spontaneous and idiosyncratic expressions. Newspaper photos taken on September 13 and 14 (the third and fourth days following) show crowds at public prayer services, virtually none of whom are wearing flag symbols or patriotic colors; occasional trucks or cars are depicted with large American flags of a size normally displayed on flagpoles (three–six feet).

The small flags (less than two feet), which became standard a few days later, had not appeared yet. One man is depicted in a photo-news story driving from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, up through New Jersey with a big flag on his truck, getting no further than the end of the New Jersey Turnpike (since New York City was closed off) so he could see the city across the river.

The pattern of isolated and idiosyncratic displays is congruent with my own observations. On Saturday, September 15 (the fifth day following the attack), around noon a car circled Rittenhouse Square (one of the main residential squares in downtown Philadelphia) covered in flags and banners; the doorman said he had been circling around repeatedly. At about 5 p.m., a large camper van circled the square once, blaring “God Bless America,” a schmaltzy arrangement of strings and chorus of voices. No one on the sidewalk looked at the van or made any gesture of participation. On Sunday (the sixth day), at 6 p.m., a lone bicyclist pedaled around the square with a big American flag, wearing a backpack with the logo “I love New York.” No one on the sidewalk looked at him—another solitary act of witness.

News photos from Friday, September 14 (fourth day) showed sixth-grade children in school wearing improvised signs of patriotism; mostly these consisted of red, white, and blue clothing items, with a few individuals wearing a flag as a head bandana or

Table 1. Flags or Patriotic Emblems on Clothing

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| September 15, 2001 (fourth day) | 5% (of 150 persons observed) Philadelphia park |
| September 22–24 (12–14th days) | <2% (65) Philadelphia park |
| October 6 | <1% (85) Philadelphia park |
| October 12–13 | 1% (300) San Diego park |
| October 20 | <2% (400) Virginia and Maryland hiking parks |
| October 28 | 1% (400) Yosemite National Park |
| April 28, 2002 | 0% (85) Philadelphia park |
| May 11, 2002 | 0% (120) Philadelphia park |

dyeing their hair in red and white stripes. News photos choose the most extreme examples, but even in these photos it is apparent that the majority of persons do not display these kinds of improvised flag emblems. Corroboration comes from my own observations of runners, bikers, and hikers in parks. Table 1 shows the counts of flag emblems or patriotic insignia, mainly on sweatshirts, sweaters, and hats.

The only considerable display of patriotic emblems on clothes was the first weekend after 9/11, and this reached only 5 percent. Wearing patriotic emblems on clothing never became institutionalized as a solidarity symbol;⁴ it dropped to around 1 percent by the second week, remained at that level for about two months, and then disappeared. During the Christmas shopping season, flag jewelry and other patriotic-themed clothing items were displayed prominently in many store windows, but people rarely were seen wearing these. During late October and November, I occasionally saw women wearing high-style fashion items with American flags (several by wealthy Chinese ladies in Hong Kong in late November); and a year later, fashion designers were offering firefighter-style coats (priced at \$525 by Anne Klein for women and at \$995 by Hickey-Freeman for women: *USA Today* Nov. 15, 2002).

The percentage of such displays, however, must have been tiny fractions. The only mass displays of such clothing symbols occurred on the one-year anniversary of September 11, when those crowds that assembled for public memorial services generally wore red, white, and blue colors; however, this had the character of an episodic special occasion.

Symbolic display settled into a standardized pattern around the first weekend after the attack. On the fifth day, flags and bunting in national colors appeared in most shop windows; by Monday (the seventh day), all hotel lobbies had them. High-class shops had artistic flag displays; cheaper stores had cheap plastic flags pasted in windows. During the following week, flags appeared on private homes, apartments, and vehicles, and these became the accepted form of display for the flag. Since the displays by organizations seemed not to have varied until after New Year's Day and came to take on a rather artificial official character, I concentrated on private displays.

⁴Emblems are worn much more frequently on casual and exercise clothing than on other attire. For work clothes, some middle-class persons wore flag lapel pins, especially in fall 2001. I have no systematic count of proportions, which appear to vary a great deal by particular settings. At universities, flag lapels were worn by some of the secretaries, especially among those in middle administration such as office supervisors; among faculty, almost never except among professors with some connection to the federal government; and fairly frequently among higher administrators. Students, at least at major research universities, rarely wore national symbols of any kind. As in the display of flags generally, universities generally were enclaves resisting national solidarity symbols. I made no systematic observations of other kinds of office employees, where the wearing of lapel symbols might have been higher.

Table 2. Flags on Homes

| Single-Family Residences in Middle-Class Neighborhoods | | |
|--|------------|--|
| October 14, 2001 | 38% (330) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| October 21 | 37% (132) | Small towns in Maryland |
| October 22 | 28% (320) | Philadelphia rowhouses UMC/MC |
| October 26 | 42% (83) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| Nov. 4 | 46% (50) | Philadelphia MC residential neighborhood |
| Nov. 10–12 | 30% (158) | Iowa City and nearby small towns |
| Dec. 5 | 24% (17) | Philadelphia MC rowhouses |
| Dec. 15 | 25% (158) | Philadelphia rowhouses UMC/MC |
| Dec. 27 | 17% (229) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| Jan. 5, 2003 | 20% (320) | Philadelphia rowhouses UMC/MC |
| March 10 | 15% (45) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| March 31 | 14% (211) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| Jan. 3, 2003 | 9% (244) | San Diego UMC/MC |
| Middle-Class Apartment Houses | | |
| Nov. 10 | 4% (25) | Iowa City |
| Nov. 14 | 3% (240] | Philadelphia |
| Dec. 5–15 | 4% (1250) | Philadelphia |
| Jan. 10, 2002 | 4% (540) | Philadelphia |
| April 2 | 1.2% (760) | Philadelphia |
| April 18–27 | 0.8% (260) | Philadelphia |
| May 11 | 0% (260) | Philadelphia |
| September 12, 2002 | 0.9% (340) | Philadelphia |
| October 10–15 | 0% (340) | Philadelphia |

UMC = upper-middle class; MC = Middle class.

Flag display was not uniform across all kinds of dwelling and vehicles, and this variation gives clues for understanding the processes that produce and sustain solidarity symbols. Table 2 shows the frequency patterns of flag display in various areas.

To get the time pattern, let us examine first the highest frequency patterns, flags on single-family residences in middle-class neighborhoods.

Table 2 shows that the peak numbers are between 28 percent and 46 percent, with the higher part of the range for detached single-family residences and the lower part for middle-class row houses; the plateau lasts through November and then slowly declines in December; by March it has dropped precipitously, although there remains a baseline (about 9 percent) through the following year. By two and a half months, newspapers began to run articles about when it would be appropriate to take the flags down (*Los Angeles Times Magazine* Nov. 25, 2001).

Apartment houses were much lower in frequency of symbolic display, if individual apartments are counted and if flags on the entrance and the collective-use areas, which are part of the official “front-stage” display that characterizes stores, commercial and official buildings, are counted. Table 2 also shows numbers for middle-class apartment houses. The plateau for apartments displaying flags continues through early January 2002; by April, it has dropped to a very low proportion and fades away entirely by early May. There is a brief, mild revival at the time of the one-year anniversary in September 2002, but then flags disappear entirely.

Table 3. Flags on Cars

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| October 8, 2001 | 4% (150) (all flags, no stickers) | Philadelphia suburban park |
| October 12–14 | 4% (1055) (1:3 ratio flags to stickers) | San Diego commercial district, MC neighborhood, and city park |
| October 22 | 7% (350) | Philadelphia MC/UMC neighborhood |
| October 20–21 | 10% (222) (1:2 ratio) | Rural Virginia: country club, hiking-trail parking, mountain road, battlefield monument |
| October 27 | 7% (520) (2:5 ratio) | Yosemite National Park |
| Nov. 4 | 9% (125) | Binghamton, NY, and Allentown, PA suburb |
| Nov. 4 | 11% (148) (1:0) | Philadelphia suburban park |
| Nov. 11 | 7% (213) | Iowa City MC neighborhood |
| Nov. 13 | 10% (40) (1:1) | Philadelphia commercial parking lot |
| Dec. 28 | 4% (78) (0:1) | San Diego movie theatre lot |
| March 20, 2002 | 3% (71) (2:1) | Southern California mall |
| April 18 | 6% (100) (0:1) | Philadelphia freeway |
| May 11 | 5% (100) (1:4) | Philadelphia freeway |

Flags on cars present several methodological problems: they come in two main forms, flags flown on antennas or on miniature flag staffs and decal stickers pasted on windows or panels; the latter are relatively permanent and thus may continue to be displayed after the motivation to show symbolic solidarity has declined. Thus, in Table 3 where possible I present the ratio of flags to stickers. Flags displayed on vehicles vary considerably by social class and racial neighborhood, as it does for houses; the following observations are for cars parked in middle-class residential areas, commercial lots, urban and rural parks, and some observations of highway traffic viewed from an overpass through an urban downtown.

One type of vehicle almost ubiquitously displays flags and other symbols: taxis, especially taxis driven by ethnic minorities. It was typical for a Philadelphia or New York taxi to carry several flags and flag stickers, as well as one or more stickers with a message such as "I am proud to be a Sikh and an American."⁵ This is a protective use of symbols; it is found also on small urban convenience stores where the owners are Middle Eastern or Asian ethnics. These protective flags tended to remain even in spring 2002, after most other store flags had been taken down. Taxis have been excluded from Table 3.

Peak levels of vehicle display of symbols were October and November 2001, though never rising above 10–11 percent in any location. This is congruent with other series of observations, which also peaked in late October 2001.⁶ Thereafter, a baseline remains

⁵Observation made of approximately 70 taxi rides during September–December 2001. Immigrants drive a large majority of taxis in large U.S. cities.

⁶These other series are observations made from moving vehicles, which are less reliable than observing from the ground. One series of observations was made every morning as I took a taxi from downtown Philadelphia 18 blocks to the university; ratios of flags observed never got above 4 percent and declined to 1–2 percent in late November and early December 2001.

Table 4. Flags on Farmhouses

| House Flags | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| October 20, 2001 | 11% (130) | Rural Virginia farmhouses |
| Nov. 4 | 3% (110) | Rural Iowa farmhouses |

of around 3–6 percent, although these become increasingly weighted toward stickers in the later periods (March–April 2002, six–seven months later), suggesting that voluntary display of flags largely has disappeared and that the stickers are left by inertia.

SOCIAL CLUSTERINGS OF SOLIDARITY DISPLAY

The display of symbols is not uniform. Conflict does not generate solidarity simply by creating a psychological current passing through everyone equally. Solidarity is orchestrated in part by rather official processes and in part by more informal and seemingly voluntary actions. Several different processes mesh over time. In the very first period, isolated individuals make idiosyncratic symbolic displays, but these generally are taken as too extreme and are met largely with embarrassment. Then official and quasi-official organizations get into the act; apartment houses put up flags and bunting very quickly in entrances and lobbies around the fifth to seventh day, as did stores. These are front-stage displays in the Goffmanian sense, a statement of what the organizational leaders believe is appropriate to be done much in the same way politicians and speakers on ceremonial occasions say what is expected. Such symbol display is not flexible; it hangs on longer than the unofficial displays, and the contrast in their rhythm after a time gives the official displays a sense of being merely formalistic, empty symbols. But at the beginning of the second period, they are important for orchestrating a sense of social consensus on the ubiquity of symbolic solidarity.

More flexible, and hence more expressive of actual emotions felt, are two further kinds of displays of national solidarity: ceremonial assemblies and popular display of symbols. Most vivid are memorial ceremonies for the victims, of which the most heavily attended and widely publicized through the media are concerts and sports events converted to national rituals. These gatherings increase the emotional significance of symbols for those who are present and to a lesser degree for those who watch them on television; they are peak experiences of solidarity. But these ceremonies mostly are concentrated in the second period (build-up) and the early part of the third period (plateau). Though very successful, they are temporary and ephemeral and can operate just as well to put closure on past events as to keep their memory alive for the future. The least orchestrated of solidarity displays, finally, are voluntary activities such as displaying flags. Despite appearances, these are not for the most part individual actions, since they are situated in local enclaves. Table 4 shows indications of this pattern in the variable locations of flag display.

These figures are much lower than middle-class houses for this period, the height of solidarity display; and they are much lower than nearby small towns or cities (as indicated previously, 37 percent and 30 percent, respectively). We tend to think of farmers as being socially conservative and nationalistic. Nevertheless, the expression of symbols follows its own social process. Rural farmhouses, unlike houses in towns, generally are not in sight of each other; they neither can monitor the flags in other houses easily, nor do they have a sense that many others will see a flag they display. The display of flags is most frequent when it is part of one's recognized identity within

a group. Although the symbol displays solidarity with the national group, not ostensibly with one's local ties, the local group is what sustains the display. People make their displays of solidarity with distant groups by acting together in local groups rather than as individuals.⁷

This may be corroborated with several other comparisons. As already indicated, flag displays are much lower in apartment houses than among single-family dwellings (peak frequencies on the order of 4 percent and 30–45 percent, respectively). Apartment residents may see where flags are displayed when they approach the building from outside, but they generally do not know whom the flags belong to unless they are neighbors. Where flags are displayed on apartments, they tend to clump on adjacent windows; on the same floor on opposite sides of a building (i.e., across the hall from each other); or on balconies, one above the other. Moreover, over time, as the number of flags diminishes, the ones that are clumped most closely tend to stay up the longest. This pattern also is visible among single-family residences.⁸ Thus, it is not only the lower level of local solidarity in apartment houses that keeps the display of national symbols down but also the higher degree of local solidarity, or at least mutual surveillance, in single-family neighborhoods that keep symbolic solidarity display up.

Patriotic display on cars has a similar pattern. Counts of flags are much higher in urban areas than on the open highway; even on the same interstate highway, the rates are much higher passing through a city than in the countryside.⁹ The difference is related to the number of pick-up trucks and commercial vans, which are the most likely to carry flags.¹⁰ This might be regarded as a class difference, with the working class and lower-middle class expressing more patriotism, but that is not the pattern found on houses, where upper-middle class neighborhoods have the highest rates of flag display. An alternative explanation is that pick-up trucks are operated by owners

⁷We know that members of social movement demonstrations and political crowds do not come as isolated individuals but participate as little clumps of friends (McPhail 1991). A likely hypothesis, apparently as yet untested, is that members of crowds at sporting events who do the most cheering and the most extreme displays of symbolic solidarity with a team are attending as members of these little groups.

⁸Thus, the October 26 observation for San Diego: 36 of 83 houses had flags; these tended to cluster in bunches of six to eight in a row, or directly across the street from each other. December 15 observations for Philadelphia: 39 of 158 row houses, of which 20 were adjacent. The pattern was even more apparent over time as the number of flags became sparser. January 3, 2003, San Diego: 23 of 244 (9 percent) had flags, of which 19 were in adjacent clusters. Since I was making observations in the weeks around other traditional festivals, I noted also where Halloween and Thanksgiving symbols were displayed: these also tended to cluster at adjacent houses or closely in sight of each other. A combination of both types of observations comes from January 13, 2003, in Philadelphia: in 18 blocks, there were 4 flags on 340 houses; two other blocks had clusters of American flags, one consisting of 15 of 24 houses, clustered toward the middle of the block, with the flagless houses at the ends. This block also displayed nine other flags, including one German flag and one world peace flag, with the others being "personal"—flags of the kind sometimes flown in upper-middle class houses especially where there are children. The impression was of a contest of flags, between patriots and secularists: two houses (symbolic mediators?) displayed both kinds. The block also was notable in that 21 of 24 houses still had Christmas decorations up three weeks after Christmas, when decorations had disappeared almost everywhere else. A second small cluster occurred in a segment of a block where there were three American flags among five adjacent row houses, with a French flag interspersed.

⁹Five to six percent of vehicles on interstate highways in rural Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and central California; compared to 14–15 percent on these highways in vicinity of Fresno, California, and Philadelphia; October 19–November 4, 2001. These counts exclude semi-trailers.

¹⁰Combining the time series presented above, pick-up trucks, commercial and official trucks, and vans (excluding semi-trailers) made up 39 percent of all urban Philadelphia vehicles observed displaying flags; 37 percent of all highway displays; 35 percent of all urban California displays; and 29 percent of all displays in rural and suburban recreation areas. These observations should be weighted for numbers of different kinds of vehicles in these settings. I counted a baseline frequency only for the urban Philadelphia observations: 22 percent of vehicles were pick-ups and commercial vehicles. The frequency clearly was not uniform in all settings; commercial vehicles were absent from recreational parking areas and were low on the open highway. Flag display on pick-ups and commercial vehicles is approximately twice as high as the frequency of such vehicles in urban Philadelphia; it seems likely that they are overrepresented by a similar order of magnitude in the other settings as well.

Table 5. Flags in Low-Display Neighborhoods

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| October 21, 2001 | 2% (176) | Phila. rowhouses; WC/LMC black neighborhood |
| Nov. 4 | 2% (43) | Phila. rowhouses; LC (poverty) black neighborhood |
| October 21 | <2% (175) (all stickers) | Phila. cars parked in WC/LMC black neighborhood |
| October 23 | 8% [203] | Phila. rowhouses (university neighborhood) |

WC = working class; LMC = lower-middle class.

of small businesses, as are many commercial vans. These are the kinds of businesses that are most dependent upon a local network of personal acquaintances; thus, it is both to their commercial advantage to show their emblems of conventional solidarity (good for business) and also the display of symbols is facilitated by their group solidarity, just as it is among neighbors well known to each other.

Corroboration comes from a negative case: long-haul trucks (semi-trailers) have a much lower display of flags than any other kind of vehicle, on the order of 0.2–0.35 percent.¹¹ The implication is that social class is not the operative factor, since highway trucks are operated by upper-working-class individuals, or in some cases, lower-middle-class small business owners. Long-haul trucks are operating almost entirely at long distance from home and on the highway are in an anonymous environment. They lack a social community toward which they are displaying, or being recognized as displaying, their national solidarity. The apparent paradox is that solidarity with a large anonymous group is organized largely by displays within smaller more personalized groups. The national identity is sustained by the same structures as personal identities.

There are also places where symbols are not displayed. These too are part of the structuring of social clusters: either places where there is little or no informal solidarity locally so that there is indifference to national symbols, or because local clusters are in opposition to national solidarity. Table 5 shows some places where flags on houses and on cars are much lower than the middle-class residential series already presented.

Black neighborhoods show much lower display of flags, both on houses and cars; impressionistically, it appears to be much lower on stores in black neighborhoods as well (whereas in October 2001 such flags were ubiquitous on stores elsewhere). This is not to say that there was no sense of national solidarity among black Americans after 9/11. My observations include three incidents of explicit black-white solidarity focused on the disaster, all of these incidents in the first two weeks of peak solidarity after the attacks.¹² It appears that black solidarity was not as widespread, nor was it as long lasting as in the white community (see Table 5).

Another type of anomaly is illustrated by the observation of house flags for October 23, 2001, made in an area adjacent to the University of Pennsylvania and heavily populated by university faculty and students. Here the level of display (8 percent) is very low for middle-class areas at this time. Universities stood out as enclaves

¹¹Observations of approximately 1,800 vehicles on interstate highways in Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, October 19–21, 2001. Similar pattern November 10–11, interstate highway in eastern Iowa.

¹²Third day: black lady, dressed in middle-class style, on the train downtown read the newspaper over my shoulder, asked about numbers killed. Eighth day: shoe-shiner discussed with me the dangers of being killed in airplanes but gave no political interpretation. Twelfth day: black taxi driver wearing American flag bandana and jacket engaged me in lengthy conversation about the attacks and said blacks and whites were on the same side now.

in opposition to the display of national symbols. This was apparent in conversations as early as the first weekend (observations at a welcoming party September 16—the fifth day—attended by about 80 persons; the 9/11 attacks were virtually absent as a topic of conversation). As noted, emblems on clothing were rare at universities, except when worn by secretaries and manual employees; flag emblems on cars were found only in employee parking lots rather than in faculty lots.¹³ The main exception was among higher administrators, who tended to wear flag lapel pins, which fit with their orientation toward the outer public rather than toward the university faculty and with their playing the role of institutionally correct symbolic leader.

Yet another type of comparison suggests the importance of social connections in regulating the display of symbols. Rather than those who display no symbols at all, consider those at the opposite end of the spectrum: individuals whom we might call “superpatriots”—those who display symbols in an idiosyncratic fashion that exceeds the normal amount and kind. I have noted several of these kinds of individuals already: the vans decked with flags and banners; blaring patriotic music; the bicyclist with the flag and the “I love NY” sign who circled the downtown square in Philadelphia on the fourth and fifth days before the standard mode of display was established; or the black taxi driver on the 12th day wearing several items of flag clothing. Other instances were a homeless man with flag stickers sewn to his bags (Philadelphia, 25th day); occasional cars with two or more flags plus stickers in windows (e.g., old Cadillac with two flags and two stickers, driven by a middle-aged woman in rather elaborate dress (Baltimore suburb, October 19); a Mercedes-Benz with multiple stickers—including “Prolife”—and a personalized license plate carrying a odd slogan “GITCOWS,” driven by an elderly female driver (central California, October 28)). Other people do not emulate or make gestures of solidarity with these individuals, and there are some indications that they are embarrassed by them (e.g., bystanders responded to all of the vehicles circling Rittenhouse Square September 15–16 by looking away). National solidarity quickly falls into a standard pattern of expression, and those who do not follow these patterns are given no support or encouragement. Unlike persons who display the appropriate level of symbolism, these superpatriots do not cluster but instead appear as isolated individuals, making their gestures in an unresponsive world.

CLAIMED VERSUS ACTUAL SOLIDARITY BEHAVIOR

At peak periods, solidarity is expectable public behavior and thus sometimes is faked. In response to a poll carried out September 13, 2001—the third day after the attacks—69 percent of Americans said that they had donated blood to the victims (*Time/CNN Poll*).

There was, in fact, a surge in blood giving after the tragedy occurred; in the four days after 9/11, donations increased by a factor of almost three. But the total given was 250,000 units of blood; given the population aged 18–64 that would have been eligible to give blood, the total should have been 120 million units (*USA Today* October 25, 2001; *Los Angeles Times* June 16, 2002).

Well below 1 percent of those who said they gave blood actually did so. In fact, the blood banks were swamped with a surplus of blood, and much of it was destroyed when its shelf life expired 10 weeks later. Much of the blood that was given was done so as an impractical action, and the blood banks (notably the American Red Cross)

¹³A similar observation October 28 in the parking lot of a California resort hotel where a conference of environmental lawyers was taking place: <1 percent flags on cars (319); in contrast the employee parking lot had 10 percent flags (52) (all of these were on pick-up trucks).

Table 6. Religious Attitudes

| | Increasing | Decreasing |
|---|------------|------------|
| Gallup Poll | | |
| The Influence of Religion on Life Is | | |
| Feb. 19–21, 2001 | 39% | 55% |
| Dec. 14–16, 2001 | 71% | 24% |
| Pew Poll | | |
| Agree that Religion Plays a Major Part in American Life | | |
| March 2001 | 37% | |
| Nov.–Dec. 2001 | 78% | |
| March 2002 | 37% | |

Pew Poll released on CNN September 8, 2002.

were aware of it—but it was encouraged nevertheless. Giving blood was a largely ritualistic action, a symbolic donation rather than a useful one. In the same light, we may interpret the huge exaggeration of self-reported giving; answering the poll in this fashion is a gesture, indicating one's willingness to give, a vague intention: it is an expression of the sense of rightness of this action.

There is considerable exaggeration of claims for other gestures of solidarity. In the September 13, 2001 Time/CNN poll, 86 percent claimed to have displayed an American flag.

Another poll released on October 19 found that 80 percent claimed to have displayed an American flag on their house, 29 percent on their car, and 21 percent on their clothing (*USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll*).

These figures are much lower than my own counts: the highest percentages observed in any setting were 42–46 percent of houses (other typical highs are 28–38 percent); 11–15 percent of cars; and 5 percent on personal clothing. These high counts are for particular enclaves (middle-class suburbs, urban highways full of pick-up trucks and commercial vans, and venues for sporting apparel); other settings were notably lower. The poll answers at least have the same ordering: flag display was highest on houses, was intermediate on cars, and was lowest on clothing.

Answers to polls are generalized expressions of what one thinks is appropriate to do—actions that one gives one's assent to rather than what one actually does. Similar patterns are found in studies comparing claims to have attended church with actual church attendance on those same days (Hardaway, Marler, and Chaves 1993, 1998). These show a ratio of reported behavior to actual behavior of about two to one, similar to what is found in the case of flags on houses and cars, although the ratio is more extreme for flag emblems on clothing.¹⁴

I have no data on actual church attendance following 9/11.¹⁵ The available time series on religious attitudes show a rise and fall (see Table 6). The two polls give roughly

¹⁴No doubt an undercount here, insofar as I have no systematic counts of flag lapel emblems. But the latter cannot be on the order of 10 percent or more. At any rate, this kind of flag display must have been very ephemeral.

¹⁵It appears that there was an actual increase in attendance, especially the weekend immediately after 9/11. Several of my correspondents, whom I asked for observations on ritual behavior during that period, indicated that they themselves attended memorial services (these were persons who normally do not attend church). I observed an unusually large number of people reading in the religious section of a popular bookstore in downtown Philadelphia on Saturday, September 15, a section that normally has few persons in it.

the same picture: somewhat more than a third (37–39 percent) of the American population viewed religion as important early in 2001; the 9/11 attacks drove this up to 70 or 80 percent (the September 13 Time/CNN poll found 82 percent claiming to have prayed or attended a religious service immediately after that date), staying on that plateau during October and November, dropping by early December. By March 2002, six months after the attack, religious expression was back to the normal baseline.

THE APPEARANCE OF MASS SOLIDARITY AND THE REALITY OF SOLIDARITY ENCLAVES

The maximal numbers of participants in any kind of symbolic solidarity display are never more than 50 percent, even in the enclaves with the highest levels of display. Across the entire country, solidarity display even at peak times in the first two months after the attacks must have been a weighted average of the different population sectors. I make no attempt to estimate what that figure might be.¹⁶ Statistical averages are misleading in capturing the actual social processes by which a sense of symbolic solidarity is experienced or is imputed. Survey answers represent vague beliefs and sentiments about what is felt to be proper at a particular moment in time; these are always much higher than actual behaviors, as well as relatively ephemeral. But they are not irrelevant; they are publicized and give a sense of imputed solidarity that further enters into people's perceptions. The actual behaviors of manifesting solidarity symbols are never close to universal but are always the work of minorities. And they are not uniform but are concentrated in leading enclaves. As we have seen, the extreme symbol-leaders, or superpatriots, fail because they are isolates; their expressions are too strong for the average and thus are treated as embarrassing.

High levels of solidarity do not mean unanimity, at least in large non-face-to-face groups. Popularity polls for presidents are at their peaks on those few occasions when they exceed 80 percent: 84 percent for Roosevelt and 83 percent for Kennedy at the crisis points of foreign conflict, with 89–90 percent ratings the absolute ceiling. Polls above these levels—such as the 99 + or 100 percent plebiscites for Adolf Hitler, Saddam Hussein, or other dictators—are coerced at least in part by fear and mask considerable actual dissent. Even so, genuine poll figures in the 80 percent range have a social reality of overwhelming enthusiasm; 83 percent means the majority outnumbers the minority by five to one; and figures of 88 percent and 90 percent mean the actual social experience of an individual who does not join in is that of being surrounded by enthusiasts in ratios of eight to one and nine to one. Under these circumstances, nonenthusiasts must feel tremendous pressure to keep their feelings to themselves or to withdraw from most social encounters concerned with public issues.

Those who are in these kinds of minorities either must be insulated in small groups of like-minded dissidents or else they are socially unconnected in the first place—social isolates who are not mobilized normally into public consciousness. Such isolation is something different than the normal level of apolitical detachment. In the United States during the period of the polls cited above, the highest level election turnout (i.e., for presidential elections), ranged from 49 percent to 63 percent (Federal Election Commission, available at www.fed.gov).

This implies that 50–60 percent of the American adult population is conscious politically on normal peak occasions (i.e., in the domestic ritualism of electoral

¹⁶This would involve calculating the numbers of persons who live in single-family dwellings, in apartments, in various racial and class neighborhoods, and who drive various kinds of vehicles.

contests); another 30–40 percent is normally apolitical but is mobilized in the big events, the dramatic moments, of foreign conflicts. Another 10–20 percent of the populace never is mobilized at all; they are not part of the collective consciousness even under maximal conditions of collective effervescence.

National solidarity is generated in moments of dramatic conflict, by building on a core of 50–60 percent of the population who already is conscious politically and by pulling in another 25–30 percent who normally are apolitical but nevertheless have social ties that make them mobile for this kind of symbolic gestures of momentary consensus. This is the effectively socially organized part of the population: those who stand outside the consensus statistically generally are invisible socially. Even a consensus of somewhere around 80 percent gives the impression of being overwhelming, even though all such consensus is a working consensus made up of dispersed elements that are held together only tangentially by temporarily focusing on the same symbolic objects. This is apparent from the high popularity figures of presidents—90 percent for George W. Bush; 89 percent for George Bush; 87 percent for Truman—who otherwise normally did not have anywhere near these high levels of support. The popularity measure is a shared emotion with little cognitive detail, blurring political reality down to a simple gesture of support against an external enemy. Political leaders at these moments are regarded as Durkheimian sacred objects—a status they did not enjoy widely before the crisis and an aura that fades back toward normalcy within about six months.

Popular expressions of national symbols follow a similar time pattern. The active minority is at the plateau for about three months and then slides back toward the baseline, which it reaches around six months after the initiation of conflict solidarity.

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY CEREMONIES AS INTERMITTENT REMINDERS OVER TIME

The most intense expressions of solidarity are the most ephemeral. These occur at gatherings where crowds are assembled, sharing a contagion of emotion from body to body, with a mutual awareness of focus of attention that makes the feeling of belonging to the group palpable and sometimes overpowering. Such ceremonials, focusing on the victims of the World Trade Center (WTC) towers, and especially on the firefighters and police officers who were killed at the towers, visibly brought very strong emotions to spectators; news photos and television pictures enhanced this by focusing on those individuals in the crowds who were crying, were choking back tears, or otherwise were showing themselves as being overwhelmed by emotion. These rituals illustrate the Durkheimian theory in a very strong sense: the ingredients of group assembly, emotional contagion, and mutual focus generate respect for symbolic objects and solidarity with the larger group (for elaboration, see Collins 2004). These mass rituals worked especially well because they were able to draw upon strong emotions, and these emotions were evoked both by focusing on the dead (both innocent and heroic) and on the human reactions of the crowd, which then were magnified by mutual contagion.

There were two main types of national solidarity ceremonies after the 9/11 attack. In the immediate aftermath, regularly scheduled entertainment gatherings (concerts, awards ceremonies, sports events) were reconfigured into commemoratives; special commemorative ceremonies were held by the relevant constituencies (e.g., at the WTC site for firefighters, police officers), and at calendrical intervals (one month, two months, and so on).

Conversion of regularly scheduled gatherings into 9/11 commemoratives was ubiquitous in the first month after the attack. The Philadelphia Orchestra, on tour in September 2001, featured the “Star Spangled Banner” and found its concerts turned into moving emotional experiences. Popular rock concerts were scheduled to raise money for the victims; this took more advance planning, and the biggest ones occurred the weekend of October 20–21, 2001, in New York City and in Washington D.C. and in Nashville, Tennessee for country music. The Country Music Association annual awards on November 8, 2001, were converted into a patriotic display with flag-designed shirts and hats. At all of these events, performers surrounded themselves with flags and with token firefighters and police, often incongruously contrasting with their usual cultivation of an outlaw image.

At sporting events, a commemorative ceremony was held for each type of sport at its first game or race after the suspension of sports was ended following the early period of emotional shock. As in the case of popular display of flags, the dynamics of the solidarity display were local, although the symbolic focus was national. There was not one national ceremony but instead were dozens of local ceremonies for the first home game of each team. Most of these events took place during the two weeks from September 17, 2001, onward with the resumption of major league baseball and professional football, college football games, NASCAR races, and yacht races. But the scheduling of ceremonies was not tied to a specific period of time: if a team did not play at home for several weeks, there was a highly emotional ceremony carried out when it finally did play there. Patriotic ceremonies also were repeated as the importance of the game increased; thus, the baseball playoffs carried out the same type of ceremony at the beginning of each round of the elimination tournament, culminating in the World Series in early November 2001. Each level of importance of the game in the sporting world was matched by a corresponding level of elaboration of the patriotic ceremony. Repetition in different venues did not appear to reduce the emotional level, and audiences went through yet further experiences of public reliving of sorrow for the honored victims, with the same photos and videos of players and fans wiping away tears. Perhaps this susceptibility to intense emotion was because a new set of fans at each location had not taken part in the emotional expression previously. But the players also repeatedly were emotionally worked up, suggesting that the intensity of ceremonial participation was conveying the importance of the game itself. The league championship series was more important than the regular season games (which already had had the commemoratives)—and the World Series more important still. This importance could not be conveyed appropriately without a repetition of the national solidarity ceremony. These rituals were not merely enacting national solidarity but also were indicating claims to the importance of the sporting event and thus of its participants. Similarly, the culmination of the professional football season in the Superbowl revived the same ceremonies five months later.

All of the events had the same structure: massive display of flags, usually a huge flag on the field, unfurled or carried by team players from both sides together with a contingent of firefighters and police. The players associated themselves with these symbolic heroes; since the players already were symbolic heroes in their own realm, some Durkheimian sacredness was conveyed in the other direction. These ceremonies could not have been carried out without an audience. Crowds provided emotional amplification and participation by observing respectful moments of silence; by fervently cheering firefighters and police; by singing the national anthem at venues where it was not sung ordinarily, and additional patriotic songs at games where the anthem already was standard ritual; and, at appropriate moments, by chanting “USA!”

The strongest departure from ordinary definitions of social reality was the precedence that the national ritual took over the ritualistic character of the sporting event. Players explicitly and repeatedly told the media that they were merely in the entertainment business, in contrast to the seriousness of the 9/11 events and the heroism of the firefighters—a type of statement almost never heard in American sports where successful athletes are normally among the most adulated and egotistical figures. Team partisanship temporarily declined, another departure from normal practice; this was displayed most strikingly in the way that New York teams were greeted at away-stadiums by fans who, normally raucous and at least jokingly hostile, would sing “New York, New York” and would cheer their rivals. New York Mayor Guiliani received “thunderous applause” when he attended these games. More generally, the joint flag-unfurling ceremonies by members of both teams displayed the decline in partisanship. At college games, school bands combined to play patriotic songs.¹⁷

This decline in partisanship and elevation of the national ritual over the game ritual was transient. After the appropriate ceremonial events were carried out, subsequent games went back to normal. At a football game at Philadelphia on December 9, 2001, I noted no extra flags in the stadium and little wearing of American flag colors in the crowd. The escalation of conflict, with the attack on Afghanistan, brought relatively little symbolic activity. This was announced on Sunday, October 7, 2001, just before National Football League (NFL) games: some stadiums announced it over loudspeakers, but others did not; some stadiums showed a tape of President Bush’s speech, but players appeared to ignore it during their warm-ups. The first round of ceremonials did their ritual work in marking the transition from the period of national mourning and crisis back toward normalcy. Additional ceremonies marked the importance of championship games thereafter; otherwise, the ceremonial was quickly forgotten, and normal sports partisanship resumed the center of attention.

Ceremonials quickly converged on a standard formula: a restricted focus on the victims of the WTC attacks and especially on the firefighters who died. This was a form of symbolic concentration; there were also deaths at the crash site of the airliner in western Pennsylvania (which might have been construed as especially heroic, insofar as the passengers successfully fought the hijackers and prevented a possible attack on the national capitol) and at the Pentagon crash site. The focus, however, was on the firefighters at the WTC, totaling 343 dead (compared to 77 police officers, and an eventual count of 2,800 persons in the towers and 224 elsewhere). The WTC/New York City imagery crowded out the other possible foci, and the firefighter image crowded out the other dead.¹⁸ This is the process of symbolic simplification and concentration: only a portion of the victims were evoked concretely in the ceremonies,

¹⁷At one of the earliest games to resume, on September 20, Philadelphia hockey fans watching President Bush’s address on the sports arena television screen during intermission protested angrily against cutting off the transmission in order to resume the third period of the game and eventually forced the cancellation of the rest of the game. At this period, still in the early peak of national solidarity, the political ceremonial took rare precedence over the game.

¹⁸The event became regarded solely as an attack on America, even though only 70–75 percent of the WTC dead were Americans. The largest contingent of noncitizens was British, originally estimated at 300—a number of victims exceeding the worst terrorist bombings in British history. Other large contingents were 250 from Chile; 200 from Colombia; and 100 or more from Turkey, the Philippines, Israel, Germany, and Russia (*Washington Post* September 20, 2001). In none of these places were there reported prominent ceremonies for their national dead. The American character of the symbolism dominated, even in England; ceremonial observances in the days after 9/11, such as at English soccer matches, played the American national anthem, not the British one (Tony King, personal communication September 24, 2001). The total dead at the WTC was revised downward from 5,400 as of September 20, 2001, to a final figure of 2,800 one year later. Numbers of noncitizens should be reduced by about one-half, but the percentages remain approximately the same.

and the imagery concentrated on the heroic firefighters—who became Durkheimian sacred objects, and as we shall see momentarily, became quite aware of their role as such.

Memorial rituals operated similarly to these entertainment gatherings converted into national solidarity rituals, insofar as both kinds of rituals kept attention focused on the 9/11 attacks. These are explicitly intermittent rituals; they generate and regenerate solidarity on each occasion they are performed, which in between these times declines as people's focus of attention returns to their ordinary concerns. Rituals at sporting and other entertainment events are especially episodic, as we have seen, since the intense rituals usually are performed only once in each location or for each new round of athletic importance (as in the repetition of national rituals for each level of playoff and championship games). But these rituals also are self-liquidating; having carried them out at the appropriate time, the athletes and fans now are free to go back to their normal engrossment in the sport; the national ritual had to be performed to get over the sense that a less-important ritual (the game itself) was taking precedence over a more important one.

Memorial rituals carried the burden of keeping up national consciousness on the conflict-generated solidarity. These included a series of memorial services for the victims collectively and then more distinctively for police officers and firefighters. Here again, the New York City attacks and the firefighters—and to a lesser degree police officers—monopolized the focus of the attention. The one-month memorial (inaccurately called “anniversary”) was carried out on October 11 by a moment of silence at the WTC site of clean-up operations and by police in other cities setting off sirens simultaneously. These services were most frequent in the first two months, with well-publicized large services for the WTC dead on October 28 and on November 5 for dead firefighters. National and international political dignitaries attended the two-month commemorative in New York. Further commemoratives were held at three months and six months, although with declining public attention since these were falling into the period when solidarity indicators generally were returning to normal. The last major ceremony was held May 30, 2002, eight and a half months after the attacks, marking the ending of cleanup at the WTC site. (Notably, all the ritualism surrounding clean-up activity was at this site, not at the Pentagon.) The ceremony focused on the firefighters rather than on the mass of victims in the WTC; firefighters in their full-action outfits and helmets carried a flag-draped empty coffin, accompanied by a smaller number of uniformed police. On this occasion, newspapers carried photos of firefighters in churches wearing their helmets—a symbolic reminder of their identity and of its display to the public.

CEREMONIALS PROMOTING REVIVAL OF HYSTERIA

A declining sense of conflict solidarity went along with declining significance of memorial ceremonies. However, on special occasions on which great attention again was given to ceremonies, the sense of fear or even of hysteria about enemy attack revived. This was illustrated during the one-year anniversary, September 11, 2002: on this date commemorative ceremonies in New York City, Washington D.C., and the western Pennsylvania crash sites were held, as well as marches and rallies in major cities, drawing sizable crowds with a sudden (if temporary) efflorescence of patriotic symbols, especially wearing red, white, and blue colors. As is generally the case, a high degree of mass participation and attention also was associated with a rise in fear and in hysterical actions. The U.S. government put national security on a condition of “high alert,” with war planes patrolling over American cities. At the same time, the

government attempted to keep up an atmosphere of normalcy, advising travelers not to cancel travel plans. Nevertheless, air travel fell 30 percent from the expected level. In this condition of heightened tension, two planes were diverted by false alarms—one because two passengers changed seats after takeoff (no doubt because of availability of empty seats) and another because a man shaving was regarded as suspicious for staying in the lavatory too long. These were the same types of overreaction in a collective mood of enhanced attentiveness that characterized the security rituals at the height of solidarity immediately after 9/11.

CONFLICTS OVER SOLIDARITY RITUALS AND SYMBOLS

If rituals generate and sustain solidarity, they also promote conflict. This occurs not simply in the sense that rituals and symbols draw a group together to engage in conflict against its enemy but also in the sense that the ritual itself is a good that becomes an object of contention among those who ostensibly are members of the same side. These internecine conflicts occur chiefly during the height of symbolic mobilization, although some versions occur after the three-month plateau as solidarity is winding down.

When flags proliferated in the week after 9/11, a library director at a university in Florida ordered staff to remove “Proud to be an American” stickers in order not to offend foreign students. An insurance company in Boca Raton (in the heavily Spanish-speaking area of south Florida) prohibited workers from displaying American flags on their desks. These prohibitions were normal manifestations of so-called political correctness, self-suppression of American majoritarian symbols; however, in this early period of intense national solidarity, these actions were criticized hotly by the public and were reversed by higher authorities—the university librarian was reprimanded and was suspended for 30 days without pay (*USA Today* October 4, 2001).

A similar type of conflict is illustrated by the first month commemorative (October 11, 2001). A small group of youths in San Diego, California, put up banners with slogans such as “love” and “peace” on freeway overpasses and across prominent streets. They stated that their motive was to show solidarity with the New York City victims. These banners were removed by other persons (not by the city authorities) and were replaced by American flags. Some critics stated that the love and peace banners were antimilitary and unpatriotic. However one reads this dispute, it shows the operation of social pressure to keep symbolic display in a standard format and the dominance of feelings of moral hostility to symbols that do not take a national form.

A second type of conflict occurred over privileged access to the ritual center. At the WTC site, firefighters not only from New York City but also from elsewhere took part in the search through the ruins; after the first few days this had merely ritualistic significance, as no further victims could be found alive. After an October 28, 2001, memorial service at the site, New York City authorities attempted to convert the cleanup into a more utilitarian process, speeding up by mechanized equipment operated by professionals and reducing the number of firefighters on the site to a token 25 (the number typically had been 100–150 daily). The firefighters reacted angrily, holding mass meetings; their dispute culminated in a violent confrontation on November 2 (seven weeks after the attacks) between firefighters and police over access to the site. News photos showed firefighters wearing their helmets and active duty coats, clearly for symbolic display, since they generally did their cleanup in casual clothing. The city administrators reacted by arresting a dozen firefighters; this in turn led to further demonstrations and angry name-calling, including attacks on Mayor Guiliani,

who hitherto had been a sacrosanct figure. It was a precedence struggle between symbolic leaders. The dispute went on for 10 days, finally dying down with a series of compromises, leading to dropped charges but to eventual exclusion of firefighters from the clean-up site.

The so-called Ground Zero site had become the central sacred place for the commemorative cult. It was closed to outsiders, even hidden from view for several months (again, unlike the Pentagon). It was both an object of intense curiosity by ordinary citizens, who filled the streets near the site and a place of privileged access, toured by politicians and important international guests. The firefighters thus had unique access to a sacred place; their presence there was almost totally ritualistic, since professional salvage workers could have done the job more efficiently. The firefighters as a symbolic elite were unwilling to give up their access to what must be regarded as a quasi-religious connection; they had been in the center of action and the center of the symbolic generator of public attention and solidarity. It is doubtful that they consciously regarded themselves as making a claim for status but instead felt a magnetic attraction to what they regarded as a moral calling. This magnetic, emotional impulsion toward getting in the center of attention is operative as well in the process of hysterical attacks and alarms.

A third type of conflict over symbols developed by January and February 2002, as relatives of the WTC victims began to complain publicly about their compensation. In the first flush of solidarity in late September 2001, Congress established a victim compensation fund, and a number of charities vigorously collected voluntary contributions, providing an enthusiastically welcomed opportunity for ordinary citizens to make a gesture of support. As the solidarity plateau began to recede, associations of relatives of victims began to dispute the amounts and terms of compensation; these included rules over degrees of family relationships entitled to compensation (not only spouses and children but also parents, siblings, and other relatives held themselves entitled to compensation, especially where there were no close relatives). These disputes may have involved to a degree merely monetary self-interest, and critics began to charge publicly—as the aura of sacredness around the victims' relatives had begun to dissipate—that they were merely grasping and selfish. Victims' relatives and their lawyers responded with moralistic and sometimes highly emotional statements—often in the vein that the amounts offered (typically \$1.5 million) were an insult compared to the actual human worth of the person killed.

Here again, it is appropriate sociologically to view the claims as ritualistic. Relatively distant relatives put in their claims, not generally because they were unable to support themselves without the dead person (this also was the case with many spouses) but instead as a means of establishing connection. Being a relative of a WTC victim is a special status within the national catastrophe, and the denial of compensation is a denial that the connection is a legitimate one. The argument that no amount of money is an adequate measure of the value of a human life of course is a valid one; by the same token, it could be recognized that since there is no monetary equivalent, no money should be offered or taken.¹⁹ Donors and political actors operated both with an image of the relatives as victims undergoing economic hardships and incapable of supporting themselves and with their own ritualized motive to

¹⁹Compare Zelizer's (1994) analysis of how between 1870 and 1930, American children came to be regarded as sacred objects to be valued sentimentally rather than for their contributions as workers, yet a mark of their new social status was the high value put upon them in wrongful death suits and in a new kind of life insurance policies. In the "sentimental economy" of these institutions, the monetary value set on children increased just as their utilitarian market value decreased.

express solidarity by making a contribution to the disaster. These idealized stances gave victims' relatives a wide symbolic field on which to make claims, depicting themselves in the light of helpless orphans while acting aggressively as militants charged up with moral outrage.

A number of organized "survivors" groups (as they came to be known) angrily denounced the government awards for requiring them to relinquish their rights to sue the airlines whose planes had crashed. Again, a tone of moralism clashed with utilitarian considerations: the airlines by this time were in serious financial straits, and some of those who lost planes in the 9/11 crashes went into bankruptcy within the following year. Lawsuits hardly would have helped the public in general and might well be described as a form of blaming the victim. A lawyer countered these charges by arguing on January 10, 2002, that the suits were motivated not by private greed but out of a desire "to know the truth, improve security, and accord accountability."

The collective utilitarian side is dubious, since security already was the subject of intense activity, and many kinds of public and political investigations were under way. What was being aimed at was the special ritualism of a court of law, which turns ordinary events into an authoritative statement of purported final interpretation of facts and of culpability. Suing the airlines follows a standard lawyers' tactic of seeking "deep pockets," the richest targets to sue; in this case, the airlines also were the most easily attackable target, since the terrorists themselves were inaccessible and since airport security companies had too low of a status to bear the brunt of such suits.

Sociologically, lawsuits calling for damages have a ritualistic component, which increases in proportion to the amount of public focus of attention on the case. The more collective solidarity around a destructive event, the more the feeling of legitimacy among those mounting a legal claim to compensation for damages. These suits are presented as if they are in the interest of the public at large (although in fact they may have a practical effect to the contrary, such as by bankrupting or by curtailing services to the public). Here again, the emotional mobilization of collective solidarity creates a zone of public attention, with privileged positions for those nearer the center of it. There are a number of ways of attempting to get oneself closer to the center and to improve one's position in the symbolic hierarchy. Lawsuits based on connections with victims are one form of such striving; the monetary amounts desired are always high, set at levels that are symbolic of the social importance claimed for these proceedings rather than of actual practical damages.

THE REVIVAL OF PARTISANSHIP

The period of intense national solidarity temporarily suppresses or supplants normal partisan conflicts, as in the case of athletic rivalries, which pointedly were set aside in the rituals beginning the revival of sports contests in the second and third weeks after 9/11. Partisanship abruptly dropped in regard to a few political officials, notably the U.S. president and the mayor of New York, who enjoyed great rises to near-universal popularity for several months and a halo thereafter.²⁰ By November 11, 2001, the period of shows of unanimity by politicians had passed, and openly partisan disputes were occurring in Congress. By November 15, parties were accusing each other of

²⁰During this period, political commentators noted that attacks of President Bush for his malapropisms and awkward speaking style now were considered bad form. A liberal satirical magazine suspended publication for a week after 9/11, and for two weeks television comedy shows eliminated political jokes (*Los Angeles Times* October 14, 2001).

being soft on national security, and Democrats were accusing Republicans of using the national emergency to push their political agenda. The honeymoon of ostensible political harmony thus lasted two months. By May 15, 2002 (eight months after the attacks), an acrimonious political debate took place over the use of photos showing President George W. Bush during the 9/11 crisis as part of Republican fundraising. Public approval ratings of Bush remained elevated for the first four months, however, and even a year later continued above his pre-9/11 ratings; the symbolic appeal of a leader thus continues longer than the suppression of lower-level partisanship.

As politics swung through a phase of consensus and returned to normal dissensus, public attitudes toward the news media swung accordingly. In November 2001, slightly below 50 percent viewed the media as biased, a figure that rose to 60 percent by July 2002. In November 2001, 70 percent regarded the media as pro-American, compared to 50 percent the following July (Pew Research Center for People and Press; reported in *San Diego Union* August 5, 2002).

Public trust in government and media never come close to unanimity. During the plateau period in national solidarity, overt dissensus tends to be invisible—or at least receives little publicity. But only a minority is active in expressing solidarity; they have the center of attention, and the first disputes to arise typically are around control of the solidarity symbols themselves. This is the route by which normal partisan disagreement returns to the public arena.

SECURITY RITUALS AND COLLECTIVE HYSTERIA

Security procedures can be regarded as ritualistic in many respects. There was an objective danger being guarded against, but the methods of guarding often clearly were nonutilitarian, a show of security rather than actual security against real threats. In this sense, they were displays of ritual security, perhaps even to some extent consciously designed as such by authorities in order to give emotional reassurance. But they also were taken seriously as a front-stage reality, and questioning of them, especially in the early periods, either was absent or was attacked angrily.

One sign of security ritualism is nonuseful procedures that later were rescinded. Airlines security at first prohibited and confiscated all small objects that could be construed in any way as a weapon, similar to the box cutters used in the 9/11 attacks.²¹ These included nail files, fingernail clippers, tiny sewing scissors, and safety razor cartridges: the ineffectiveness of most of these as weapons was so apparent that their confiscation must be interpreted as a form of magical contagion by symbolic resemblance. Over time, these prohibitions were largely relaxed, corroborating the nondangerous character of the formerly prohibited items.

I have summarized heretofore the commemorative rituals that took place at sporting events following the return to normal routines in the weeks after 9/11. Among the ritual features of these games were the security procedures surrounding them. Major league baseball, at the resumption of play the seventh day, prominently publicized their new procedures: increased numbers of police and security guards; inspection of

²¹Security rituals generally have an irrational “closing-the-barn-door-after-the-horse-is-gone” quality. The success of the 9/11 attackers using box cutters came from the unexpectedness of this type of weapon, which caused some nasty but not life-threatening slashes. As was widely recognized, the tactics were effective because airlines crews followed standard procedures at the time and interpreted the attacks as a hijacking, in which they would cooperate in bringing the planes safely to a landing and then would negotiate demands. After 9/11, these procedures could no longer be taken advantage of by terrorists; thus, a similar tactic of using marginal weapons would not have been successful and indeed has not been attempted.

all bags at entrances; investigation of stadiums for bombs; and prohibition of parking within 100 feet of the stadium. Some stadiums banned backpacks or bags of all kinds. Thus, the first experience of spectators entering these events was to be surrounded by emblems of authority, imposing delays and intrusions into personal space. During the early period of rule implementation, there were virtually no reported complaints; news interviews depicted a uniform response that audiences were happy to have the security procedures or were not bothered by them. This is in keeping with the ritualistic character of the security checks. The objective chance of a terrorist attack on a sporting event undoubtedly was slight, especially at stadiums with no particular national—let alone international—prominence. And it is unlikely that foreign terrorists even are aware of American sporting events.²² The massive display of security at these games has little effect on actual reduction of danger, but it gives a sense of importance to the event. This is corroborated by the fact that security measures were most extensive in just those games that also featured commemorative rituals for 9/11. After these special commemorations were passed, subsequent games returned gradually within following weeks toward a reduction in security procedures and a lax and perfunctory performance of those that remained.²³

The security procedures were a form of ritualistic participation in which all members of the crowd took part. Being physically touched by security guards checking bags and coats was a form of symbolic contagion, making people part of the authoritative social collective. It also made entry into a stadium a feeling of passing a barrier into a realm of exclusivity—heightened participation in a Durkheimian sacred space. It temporarily gave people the sense of moving into a zone of importance “where the action is.” The security rituals evoked a sense of danger as much as they calmed it; it was this reminder and evocation of collectively shared danger that made the combination of rituals effective on these occasions.

A similar pattern of overreaction later rescinded is found in other spheres: September 25, 2001, AMTRAK announced that all passengers would be required to show photo identification to purchase tickets and before bags could be checked onto trains. These procedures were dropped, however, and the railroads’ efforts to emulate airlines disappeared. October 3, 2001, Greyhound stopped bus service nationwide after a passenger in Tennessee attacked a driver, causing a crash in which six persons died—service was resumed within a day. At the Federal Building in Philadelphia, immediately after 9/11 guards checked identification on the sidewalk outside the building, but this practice was discontinued three weeks later. After the United States began bombing Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, checking identification was resumed but then people were allowed into the foyer of the building for checking. National Guard troops were posted in airlines terminals (and in the main New York train station) on October 6, 2001, a move orchestrated by the federal government in anticipation of the beginning of war the following day; the troops conveyed the sense of a militarized situation to passengers, who now waited in lines hundreds of yards long waiting to get

²²The foreign press almost never reports American baseball or football scores or even mentions the World Series; record-breaking American athletes like Mark McGwire and Barry Bonds are unknown outside the North American continent. The 9/11 terrorist attacks, and all other terrorist attacks, have been directed against internationally known symbols: the WTC on the New York skyline (repeatedly threatened), the Pentagon, foreign embassies, and international airlines flights. The only attacks on sporting events, the 1972 Munich and 1996 Atlanta Olympic games, occurred at events in the world focus of attention.

²³Thus, for a baseball game at Philadelphia, which I attended on September 20 and at which I arrived a few minutes late at the stadium after the game had started, the security guards already had left their posts and no longer were checking entrants to the stadium. Security procedures, heavily publicized four days earlier, now were relaxed. Security checks also were perfunctory for an NFL game I observed in early December 2001.

to security checkpoints while being patrolled by soldiers in combat fatigues carrying automatic rifles. There was no realistic expectation that terrorists would make an armed attack on airports, and troops were hardly useful against the covert threat of smuggled weapons or bombs—so this ritualistic show of force was discontinued in spring 2002 after public attention on the Afghanistan war generally had disappeared. The presence of the troops was purely a symbolic reminder that a war was going on.

Security rituals are not only a gesture of assurance and a magical defense against vague threats; they are also a claim to importance for what is being guarded. An event or a location without ostentatiously heightened security confessed its lack of importance. International terrorists were unlikely to share the same status system and may not even be aware of these local prestige claims. Security, including metal detectors and prohibition of nearby traffic, was established not only at such monuments as the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall in Philadelphia and the national monuments in Washington D.C., but also heightened security was announced by the second week following the attack at major shopping malls (especially those claiming to be the largest in the country or region, such as the Mall of America and the King of Prussia shopping mall in Pennsylvania). Hollywood studios cancelled tours or set up metal detectors. The Miss America pageant cancelled its parade through Atlantic City for September 21, 2001, citing the “security nightmare” of guarding the parade route from attacks. As late as February 2002, Groundhog Day ceremonies at Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, announced security measures such as banning backpacks and using bomb-sniffing dogs, a blatant statement of self-importance.²⁴

Security rituals were especially extensive and were taken especially seriously the nearer to the symbolic center of the attacks. New York City maintained a condition of highest alert status through November 2001, long after the rest of the country had returned to lower security levels. When a plane accidentally crashed taking off from John F. Kennedy Airport on November 12, 2001, the federal government decided not to close down national airspace (judging this not to be a security issue) but closed New York City airspace. New York officials closed all bridges and tunnels, locked down the United Nations (UN) building, and evacuated the Empire State building (which now had resumed the status of highest building in the city). New York’s position as chief victim was also a claim to especial security importance. After Mayor Guiliani left office at the end of December 2001, he received not only the normal police guard for himself but also a greatly expanded police guard that extended to his teenage children, his ex-wife, mother, and current girlfriend (a total of 12 or more full-time police officers). When criticism emerged by May 2002 of the unusual expense, the police commissioner (who had served with Guiliani) declared, “Common sense says that, particularly in the light of September 11, that you would need security for the mayor and people close to him” (*San Diego Union* May 7, 2002).

Guiliani had become, in the eyes of New Yorkers especially, the most sacred of sacred objects: like royalty, the magical aura extended to all those near him. The size of a security entourage is a public enactment of status; like successful southern football coaches surrounded by state troopers wearing bandoliers, pistols, and military-style hats, the important person makes an especially impressive appearance when cordoned by armed guards.

²⁴The only previous occasion on which this humorously superstitious ceremony was curtailed was in February 1942, during the three-month hysteria peak after the Pearl Harbor attack, when the groundhog’s “prediction” of the length of winter was kept secret in order not to aid the Japanese (*Philadelphia Inquirer* January 16, 2002).

CRITICISMS OF SECURITY: PRAGMATISTS AND SECURITY ZEALOTS

In the initial period of solidarity, security rituals are unquestioned, and only their official front-stage interpretation is allowed in the public attention space. As time goes on, two conflicting social processes occur. On one side, pragmatic attitudes develop, especially among those who most often are exposed to security rituals. Their impractical, if not ritualistic, character becomes apparent to those who must administer them or who are subjected to them frequently, sometimes many times a day. A practical accommodation develops between a show of keeping up the procedures, especially for the inexperienced or more distant public, as well as by higher officials posturing to the political public, and getting on with ordinary activities as effectively as possible. On the other side, both the inadequacy of security procedures even at their best,²⁵ and the fact of growing pragmatic adjustment among experienced locals, creates a niche for security zealots. These are individuals who ride upon the previous high levels of hysteria and attempt to prolong it and to reinstate it. They sometimes are referred to as “whistle-blowers,” a favorable analogy to individuals who expose corporate and governmental improprieties; we also might call them “hysteria leaders.” Thus, there is a tug of war between those who reduce the level of emotion and turn rituals into perfunctory routines and those who attempt to keep the rituals operating at a fervid level of emotional engagement. The former reduce the amount of reality attributed to the ritual evocation of danger and move back toward normalcy; the latter attempt to maximize ritualistic effects of collective solidarity and social status for those involved in orchestrating them.

The three-month solidarity plateau, and especially the rush of mobilization at its outset, is also a hysteria zone. It is the apex of Durkheimian collective consciousness, the most widely shared feelings of emotion and most intensely focused attention. The solidarity plateau is a hysteria zone for two reasons. The emotions that most powerfully draw people into a society-wide peak of focused attention are the emotions of conflict—especially fear and its transformation into righteous anger. Thus, the ritualized procedures that enact the peaks of solidarity and that give prestige and emotional energy to those at their center also tend to reinvolve and to recycle fear and its derivatives in the wider audience. A second reason is that any dissipation from focusing attention on the public emergency gives rise to hysterical reactions (i.e., individuals manifesting the full sense of fear that defines the emergency, combined with righteous aggression). They are in effect Durkheimian agents of social control, punishing those who let down the intensity of the ritual. It is an unexplored theoretical question as to why there are a relatively small number of individuals coming from particular social locations who take on various roles in attempting to sustain hysteria.

The most determined, or hysterical, security zealots appeared within the first few weeks. A well-publicized case occurred on September 24, 2001, when a man carrying

²⁵The airport security system never did reach a high level of efficiency. Tests made by federal agents during November 2001 through January 2002 found that 30 percent of attempts to smuggle guns through checkpoints were successful, as were 70 percent of knives concealed on the body and 60 percent of simulated explosives (*USA Today* March 25, 2002). Perpetrators, however, were highly skilled security professionals who would be expected to have the highest success rates. During this period of October 30, 2001, through February 16, 2002, a total of 636 flights were deplaned and 40 terminals were evacuated because of security alarms; in none of these instances were terrorists arrested. Security lapses and false alarms were both high, yet the airlines system pragmatically functioned without disaster. There was one terrorist attempt: the attempted detonation of a bomb concealed in a shoe by an al-Qaeda member on December 22, 2001, on an international flight. The terrorist was overwhelmed by passengers and flight attendants, now in an alert mode since 9/11. On pragmatic grounds, one can conclude that the level of security was extremely high, despite its pragmatic laxness and ritualistic quality.

box cutters went through security repeatedly at checkpoints on several airline routes; when his calls to the Federal Aviation Association (FAA) were not acknowledged, he called news stations and ostentatiously made a scene on an airplane in order to be arrested. Similar security “whistle-blowers” were publicized as late as January 23, 2002, when a man bragged to a radio talk show that he had gotten his knife-honed belt buckle through security; he subsequently was arrested and was charged—not because he was a hijacker but as a move by security officials to keep up the seriousness of their standards. By the latter date (more than four months after the attacks), the emotional tone had shifted; the man who had breached security successfully was not only drawing attention to himself in the public media but also was proud of himself and was expressing contemptuous superiority to the inept security system. By this time, the issue of overreaction as well as laxness or underreaction was well into the public sphere; the contemptuousness expressed in such cases now was playing into both sides.

Already by November 2, 2001 (end of the second month), political disputes had surfaced over the issue of overreaction. The governor of California, a prominent political figure, publicly announced security briefings he had received from federal agencies and called out the National Guard to patrol the Golden Gate bridge and other well-known suspension bridges for several days. The action was criticized locally for the irrationality of prohibiting pedestrian and bicycle crossings while allowing cars and for closing nonsuspension bridges mistakenly identified and also was criticized nationally by the Republican administration for overreacting and for breaching confidentiality over security procedures. The latter charge underlines the way in which security was being regarded as a matter of privileged access; it also showed growing recognition that public hysteria was a problem as well as alleged security threats. The dilemmas, if not the overtly ritual character of security procedures, now were coming into public attention. These were among the first breaks in the front of political nonpartisanship during the national emergency. In the following week after the attack, as noted, full-scale partisan disputes reemerged.

Around the same time, security procedures at airports began to be challenged. The challenge came from persons who had the highest status among those who were subjected to security procedures: the airline pilots. The blow-ups occurred at having to undergo trivial humiliations at the hands of low-status security guards. The pilots were also those who most frequently went through security and thus adopted a pragmatic attitude toward security rituals. On November 3, 2001, a pilot’s nail clippers were confiscated by security at the Philadelphia airport; he made a sarcastic remark about it not being a gun. After the pilot had left, the security guard mentioned the incident to a supervisor, who relayed it to high officials; escalating the significance at each chain of command, the officials ordered the airport evacuated while an attempt was made to arrest the pilot (*Philadelphia Inquirer* January 14, 2001). A similar incident occurred January 13, 2001, when a pilot who was annoyed at being told to disrobe after repeatedly setting off the metal detector remarked, “I don’t need a gun to bring a plane down.”

The intent of the remark was clear to anyone who regarded the security procedures as ritualistic: the pilot was pointing out (as other pilots had stated in letters to newspapers around this time) that searches of pilots for weapons were irrational and that the pilot’s chief weapon in crashing a plane simply was his ability to fly the plane. The inference was that pilots needed to be trusted, not treated as potential terrorists. Nevertheless, the remark was construed as a terrorist threat, and the pilot was arrested. He was defended by the pilots’ association, among whom his point of view was shared widely.

By November 30, 2001, news media began to carry stories critical of security procedures, not merely as ineffective—the theme of previously sympathetic coverage of security zealots—but as corrupt. Airport guards were accused of stealing passenger baggage items during searches, and the association of flight attendants accused guards of sexually groping female attendants. By December 2001, there were numerous letters in newspapers from business travelers, and especially from airline pilots, criticizing the irrationality of search procedures; some newspapers editorialized in favor of the critics.²⁶

By the fourth month after the attack, conflicts over security overreaction had broken out into the open. However, many procedures were not rescinded, and conflicts continued for the rest of the year and longer.²⁷ The confiscation of small quasi-dangerous items largely was discontinued early in 2002, and the extremely long lines and waits at security counters decreased. Nevertheless, intermittent charges of lax security procedures continued to be made. Searches continued of persons clearly posing no threat: random security checks of small children, old ladies, and crippled persons or the detainment of an 86-year-old retired general for refusing to give up his star-shaped Medal of Honor, which was construed as a possible weapon (*Los Angeles Times* March 11, 2002).

No doubt some of these searches were carried out in a mood of ironic humor or hazing; U.S. military personnel traveling in uniform (according to my observations and occasional questioning) were stopped frequently for additional searches. Many of these objectively irrational searches were a matter of implementing bureaucratic policy; in the context of political controversy over “profiling” likely terrorists (i.e., young Middle Eastern men), the “fair” solution was to treat everyone alike, thus randomly searching irrational targets such as small children and elderly women.²⁸ Here the operative causes reinforce ritualistic impression management with politically motivated administrative procedures: security procedures remained irrational when judged by a practical criterion of efficient effort to uncover realistic threats.

In some respects, institutionalized security procedures grew over time, because it took time to mobilize funds, equipment, and specialized manpower for more elaborate procedures. Air marshals—armed federal agents traveling incognito on flights—were not deployed widely until spring 2002. By this time the plateau of high solidarity and hysteria had passed, and normal domestic contention had resumed. This put the air marshals in a socially difficult situation: within the political arena, lauded as elite forces who would solve all difficulties of lax security in boarding procedures; in everyday reality, flying planes where security threats virtually were nonexistent. Air marshals reacted both by withdrawing psychologically and by demonstrating occasional outbursts of overreaction. During August 2002, one-fifth

²⁶A testable hypothesis is that airport security rituals are most popular among persons who do not fly, less popular among relatively frequent flyers, and least popular among airline personnel. This ordering parallels the popularity of wars (or expressions of standard war rhetoric); highest among civilians at home, moderate among rear-area troops, and is lowest among combat troops (Holmes 1985:75–78; Stouffer 1949:158–65).

²⁷By January 2003, newspapers and local politicians were taking openly critical stands against security precautions still in place; in Philadelphia, there was extensive criticism of the street closing and barriers around Independence Hall, which now were regarded as sending the wrong symbolic message for a symbol of liberty (*Philadelphia Inquirer* January 12 and 14, 2003).

²⁸Nevertheless, there are some suggestions of class and social status bias in the procedures. I never was stopped for secondary search in 50 flight boardings in the United States during the 15 months after 9/11, and I rarely have seen other well-dressed, upper-middle class, middle-aged men undergoing such searches, while frequently observing such searches of women of all ages and of young men, especially those casually dressed. This is congruent with Black’s (1998) theory, if we construe airport searches as a quantity of law (analogous to police stops and searches): downward law is greater than upward law.

of air marshals refused to fly by calling in sick (a tactic also used in airlines strikes) and leaked reports of disgruntlement with working conditions (*USA Today* October 24, 2002).

In this same period, August 31, 2002, air marshals on a domestic flight arrested a passenger who failed to obey orders to stay in his seat. They tied him up in a vacant first-class seat, next to an Indian-American medical doctor. The marshals, apparently in a state of high emotional arousal, then spotted another passenger moving in the coach section—a woman who changed seats to be next to her child—and the marshals pointed their guns down the aisle and angrily ordered all passengers to stay where they were and not to look at them. When the flight landed, the Indian-American doctor also was arrested and was treated roughly by federal agents. He was not told what he had been charged with, although marshals remarked that they did not like him staring at them.²⁹ By this date, the sacrosanct aura of security rituals had fallen; passengers accused the marshals of acting like terrorists; press coverage was sympathetic to the passengers; and the doctor filed a lawsuit (*Philadelphia Inquirer* September 19, 2002).

After the solidarity/hysteria period had passed and after normalcy had resumed in about six months, amateur security zealots disappeared. The only zealous advocates of security were its own administrators, and these were under pressure of being out of tune with an increasingly critical travel constituency.

ATTRactions OF THE HYSTERIA ZONE: ANCILLARY ATTACKS, ALARMS, AND HOAXES

The heightened collective consciousness of the period of national solidarity and hysteria operates like a huge emotional magnet. It is an attention space in which the collectivity, or at least its most mobilized segments, draws itself together for protection; at the same time, the center of this space provides emotional energy and prestige for those who inhabit it. As we have seen, individuals and organizations make efforts to get themselves nearer to the center, to touch the sacred aura, to share in the emotional energy. This was one of the attractions of attending concerts, sporting events, and other ritualistic gatherings after the attacks: it creates the prestige of the politicians most prominently associated with reaction to the attacks; it is the magnetism that draw people toward visiting “Ground Zero,” the site that came to monopolize status of symbolizing all the attacks; it generates struggles over the exclusivity of being inside the ring of security providers. There is another aspect in which this emotional “magnetism” attracts people during the time of heightened solidarity and hysteria: people may attempt to participate in emulating the attackers rather than the defenders. We already have seen a version of this in the security zealots, who mimic attackers in order to display breaches in security. Whatever they may disclaim about personal motives, their actions are aimed at getting publicity for their cause, and their measure of success is the amount of public emotion that they succeed in evoking. In this respect they aim to be hysteria leaders; their actions are made possible because they are hysteria exploiters.

A similar process underlies other individuals who intrude into public consciousness by expanding upon and attempting to extend mass hysteria. These include persons

²⁹In hold-ups, eye contact is often a trigger for shooting; it typically is taken as a challenge to the dominance of the person holding a gun (Anderson 1999:227).

who carry out real attacks as well as those who anxiously propagate false alarms or those who perpetrate deliberate hoaxes. I argue this interpretation based on the timing of such attacks and pseudo-attacks and on the particular kind of attack emulated at particular times.

These attacks and gestures occur within the most intense periods of collective attention. Immediately after the 9/11 attacks, there was a rash of bomb threats and scares. In Philadelphia, there were 87 bomb threats or alarms in the first seven days (compared to a normal level of 10 per week). These began within an hour after the WTC and Pentagon explosions (*Philadelphia Inquirer* September 13 and September 18, 2001).

Some were phoned threats, such as that the Federal Courthouse would be blown up. Others were hysterical alarms, such as a deserted paper bag that turned out to be pretzels, or another that ended up being a child's homework. This type of threat emulation and alarm is characteristic of the aftermath of well-publicized attacks. When the Oklahoma City Federal Building and courthouse was bombed April 19, 1995, there was a rash of bomb threats at similar installations around the country, starting within hours after the news announcement.³⁰ These threats involved the same kinds of weapons and the same kinds of targets as the attacks they were emulating—in this case, large explosions in big public buildings. There were no reports of bomb threats, for example, in the sports events, concerts, and memorial gatherings that were publicized prominently soon after this time.

What I am calling the “hysteria zone” is a period in time during which emotions are focused collectively and during which attacks are expected. A Gallup Poll on September 24, 2001, found that two-thirds of Americans expected more attacks within two weeks.³¹

The massive expectation draws some individuals into action to fulfill the expectation. Although the cognitive definition of the situation is that of an attack by politically motivated enemies, the individuals who are attracted toward the center of the hysteria zone largely are apolitical; some of them are mentally ill. Nevertheless, these individual characteristics are not crucial explanations of what they do; they emulate a particular kind of attack at a particular time when collective attention is concentrated upon it. We have detailed information in the case of some attacks where individuals actually were caught in the act: on October 9, 2001, a mentally unstable 31-year-old man on an American Airlines flight (one of the airlines on which the 9/11 attacks took place) attempted to break into the cockpit, shouting, “The pilots are terrorists! Kill the pilots!” (*Philadelphia Inquirer* October 10, 2001).

This man had no political connections. In the mood of hysteria, he compounded the high security surrounding flights with a memory of the 9/11 attacks. A similar attack occurred February 7, 2002, on a United Airlines flight (the other carrier involved in the attacks) from Miami to Argentina (Miami was the destination of the December 22, 2001, flight carrying the shoe bomber), a 28-year-old Uruguayan banker attempted to break into the cockpit and was subdued violently.

³⁰The San Diego courthouse received approximately 12 threats in the first two days; normally threats are received on the average of a few times a month (information provided by Presiding Judge).

³¹About the same date, two-thirds of Americans reported that they had some trouble concentrating or sleeping after the attacks, and one-half were depressed (University of Michigan survey directed by Michael Traugott; reported in *Philadelphia Inquirer* October 10, 2001). A small proportion of the population takes extreme precautions. In the three days after 9/11, sales of guns and ammunition in Pennsylvania and New Jersey were up 37–50 percent; however, the numerical total was about 2,000 persons per day—a tiny fraction of the population. (*Philadelphia Inquirer* September 2001)

The attack-emulation process was most intense during the anthrax scare, which was at its height in mid-October 2001.³² In fact, the initial letters containing anthrax were mailed September 18, 2001, one week after the 9/11 attacks; these, however, led to little public attention until around October 7–10, after one person had died (October 5) and after the illness of several co-workers were announced. Forensic evidence later indicated that the same individual sent an additional letter October 9. This may have occurred because he or she was disappointed in the lack of public attention to the first letters, which may have been due to the fact that U.S. bombardment of Afghanistan beginning October 6 and preparations for it in the previous days dominated the news during this period. A rush of announcements of anthrax cases came between October 10 and 13. Whereas the first cases happened at a low-status tabloid publisher in Florida known for its sensationalism and inaccuracy (*The National Enquirer*), these were centered on the media establishment in New York City: NBC News October 10; ABC News October 15; CBS News October 18; and the *New York Post* October 19. These targets were socially and physically at the center of attention in the entire 9/11 phenomenon: from the point of view of a tangentially involved individual (the sender of the anthrax), the news media would have been the most direct channel into the national events.³³ Other targets were political: the New York City Office of the Governor (not his main office in Albany—which may have felt too remote from the center of attraction) and the Senate Majority Leader in Washington D.C., both on October 17. The House of Representatives voted to evacuate (resuming four days later)—a retreat that brought some charges of over-reaction, especially since the Senate remained open, perhaps out of a sense of superior status. Anthrax spores and infected persons were found among employees in these offices, in the mailrooms, in some police and hospital sites, and in post offices that had handled the infected letters. Thus, a small number of letters aimed at nationally prominent targets infected a total of 17 persons through the beginning of November 2001, four of whom died. Another anthrax letter, with the same handwriting as that mailed October 9, addressed to a U.S. senator from Vermont, came to light November 16 in a batch of unopened mail. This drew relatively little attention, since the period of anthrax hysteria was over at that point.³⁴

By November 11, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced that the three principal anthrax-containing letters were sent by the same individual and concluded that it was an American—not an Arab or Muslim. Although the letters drew a direct connection to the initial attacks, bearing the marking “9–11–01. Death to American. Death to Israel. Allah is Great,” nevertheless this aspect of the attacks was apparently a hoax. Like other follow-up attacks and hoaxes, there is an imitation of the style of the initial attack.

³²A poll on October 19–21 found that 8 percent of the population had bought or seriously had considered buying gas masks or protective clothing, and 17 percent answered the same regarding vaccination for anthrax or smallpox. 34 percent were worried about their family being exposed to anthrax (USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll).

³³Since the anthrax-containing letters all were mailed from Trenton, New Jersey, an hour's drive from New York City, and since one of the media targeted was a newspaper read only in the New York City metropolitan area, it seems likely that the perpetrator was an individual living in the geographical zone of the attacks but not in Manhattan itself. The anthrax sender's low-culture orientation is suggested by his or her initial choice of a sensationalistic national tabloid paper as a target.

³⁴A further anthrax death occurred November 21, 2001, when a 94-year-old widow in a small town in Connecticut died; no traces of anthrax were found in her house or at nearby post offices. This case suggests that some medical diagnoses of anthrax were made during this period because of the alert that otherwise would have been unnoticed.

The anthrax scare, real enough in its own right (although killing only a small proportion of those coming into contact with the letters), was surrounded by yet further attacks emulating it. A small number of letters containing anthrax were found, not apparently connected to those sent by the initiator, by late October 2001 in the mailrooms at the State Department, Justice Department, and Voice of America. A much larger number of apparent attacks either were false alarms or hoaxes. In the period between October 1 and October 18, there were 2,300 anthrax reports in the United States, almost all of them false alarms. During the height of the hysteria, the period around October 10–20, an airliner was grounded when a passenger opened a greeting card that scattered confetti; the *Los Angeles Times* closed their building when powder was discovered on a book in the book review section; and the Denver post office closed when a worker stamping an envelope made a loud popping sound. Not all of these instances closely resembled the anthrax threat, but in the context—the postal employees were demanding greater protection from infection—any disruption of normalcy tended to set off a hysterical reaction.

For a few days around October 16, 2001, the hysteria spread to England, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Israel, and Australia. In these places, reports of white powders led to evacuations and to putting people through decontamination units. The geographical pattern indicates social identification or international solidarity alliances at work: all of these international anthrax scares (none of them proved actual) were in the white and most frequently were among the Anglophone allies of the United States—no instances were reported in the Muslim world or in non white regions.³⁵

The hysteria zone has an end as well as a beginning. The same October 19–21 poll (see footnote 35) found that 67 percent agreed that the media were overreacting to the anthrax threats, and 47 percent said that the public was overreacting (the tendency to blame the media more than persons like oneself). By the end of October 2001, anthrax stories no longer figured prominently in the news; anthrax alarms and hoaxes also disappeared. In the same way, concentrated waves of bomb threats, once they have gone through a collective outburst in response to a heavily publicized event, fall out of the center of attention; bomb threats were not prominent during the anthrax scare. Having gone through one massive wave, it seems unlikely that another anthrax hysteria, including both perpetrators and emulators, will take place for a considerable period of time, until the dramatic configuration of disastrous events in the public attention space has wiped out any vivid sense of the last scare. The passing of the plateau of solidarity also meant the passing of the hysteria zone. Superimposed upon a longer process, the plateau of solidarity and security hysteria following 9/11, the anthrax scare, and similar events were a temporary blip that did not much retard the decline toward normalcy after the plateau had passed.

The anthrax scare included participants of several kinds: the initial sender of deadly anthrax; apparently a number of others who also sent anthrax, but without deadly results or at least without penetrating major targets at the center of the news media and political attention space; callers who made threats; persons who raised alarms at danger signals that often were quite innocuous except in the context of general hysteria; and hoaxers, or persons who deliberately pretended to send false anthrax or who deliberately raised false alarms. This range of participants is involved in most

³⁵At the height of the anthrax hysteria, October 19–21, 60 percent of Americans believed that Osama bin Laden was responsible for at least some of the anthrax attacks, and 24 percent believed he was responsible for all the attacks; only 11 percent believed he was not responsible (USA Today/ CNN/ Gallup poll). For a brief period, the anthrax attacks were magnified and were assimilated to a generalized political battle with Muslim terrorists.

types of attraction into hysteria zones. Details are known, from the anthrax scare, about some of the hoaxers. They generally regarded their actions as jokes, a version of the simple type of humor that is practiced on normal occasions as well and consists of temporarily alarming some other person who is “taken in.”

Joking hoaxers are socially involved enough to be aware of the condition of public arousal, but they are emotionally detached to the degree that they do not treat it seriously. Structurally, this is parallel to the position of others who become attracted to the hysteria zone—individuals who are on the borders of the region of intense involvement; all of them, in different ways, are putting themselves closer to the center of action while making a claim for superiority in their mode of relating to the collective mood. Theoretically, they are not on the periphery, in areas of little attention to the national arena, or in profound alienation from the core of solidarity, but rather in its immediate outskirts (like the anthrax sender in the region of New York City). The hoaxer, the caller of bomb threats, the security zealot, and the few individuals who actually emulate previous attacks all are being attracted toward the center of action. None of them share in the inner zone of solidarity; at least this is what appears to be theoretically the case; it is a testable proposition that persons who take part in high-solidarity activities (displaying flag emblems or attending highly emotional commemorative rituals) do not take part in these other kinds of activities for forcing their way into the center of the attention zone.

ATROCITIES IN THE SOLIDARITY AND HYSTERIA ZONE

A hysteria zone as a region in space and time magnifies dangers, both real and imaginary. When a high degree of national solidarity is mobilized, as in September–November 2001, the hysteria zone may attract isolated individuals who attempt to share the center of the attention space in disruptive ways. A brief comparison to other hysteria zones suggests some of the alternatives. During the three months following the Pearl Harbor attack, the United States was in a hysteria zone, largely focused on Japanese enemies. An attack on the West Coast was expected widely. Excited crowds gathered in streets of Los Angeles and other West Coast cities; rumors spread wildly. It was during this period—on February 20, 1942, 10 weeks after Pearl Harbor—that Japanese Americans were rounded up, deprived of their property, and sent to internment camps. In the days immediately after 9/11, there were some outbursts of hostility against Arab Americans. In contrast to 1942, political officials, the news media, and upper-middle class citizens condemned such attacks. One reason for the bureaucratic irrationalities of the airport security procedures, as we have seen, was an attempt to avoid ethnic targeting. Thus, the balance of political forces—after the ascendancy of the civil rights movement in the 1960s and successor movements for rights of oppressed groups and after the institutionalization of “politically correct” discourse in the media and among the educated classes—prohibited the shaping of national solidarity and security rituals in a direction that could concentrate on a particular enemy. The result has been that the hysteria zone after 9/11 was diffused rather than concentrated. It has given more annoyances for ordinary citizens, such as those subjected to irrational procedures at airports and, after the first few months passed, has given more questioning and internal conflict over security rituals.

In the absence of a specifically targetable group of terrorists, the “war on terrorism” has largely been a war of suspicion directed internally. Security rituals of this sort drift toward pragmatic accommodation and become perfunctory. This is likely one

reason why national officials attempted to find external enemies who could be attacked in conventional wars; at least at the outset, the drama of violent conflict restores the higher level of emotional involvement. In this respect, the Afghanistan war proved to be too short—as a dramatic event. The war culminated in ostensible victory between November 13, 2001, when Kabul was captured, and December 17, 2001, when the last big publicized battle took place in capturing the Tora Bora caves and a U.S.-sponsored government was set up. In fact, the largest battles involving American troops took place in March 2002, involving the largest number of battle casualties. But these received little attention in the media: with the fall of the Taliban in December, the war, in dramatic terms, essentially was finished. The war gave little boost to national solidarity, although there was some small increase in ritualism just after bombing started October 7, 2001, and George W. Bush's popularity went back up a few percentage points to 88 percent, near its September 22 peak. But the three-month solidarity/hysteria zone has a dynamic of its own; it apparently cannot be ratcheted up much higher,³⁶ and it cannot be sustained for a longer period. There appears to be a kind of “refractory period” after one of these plateaus during which national mobilization subsides; even though a war may be going on, it never reaches the same peak of collective attention and hysteria. War participants become war-hardened; if there is no overt, dramatic war occurring (unlike the largely unacknowledged prolongation of fighting in Afghanistan), people return to normal partisanship and to near-normal criticism of government and authorities. It remains to be studied how long this refractory period lasts and when a new hysteria zone can be entered.

Another comparison shows an even more destructive type of participation in a hysteria zone. The Spanish Civil War broke out into open combat on July 18, 1936, and continued until March 1939. Starting with an attempted coup by Nationalist officials and an uprising of the army, within 10 days Nationalists took control of about half of the country. The civil war became famous for atrocities committed against civilians; in Nationalist areas, prominent Republicans and socialists were tortured or killed, typically by political gangs or by town mobs. (About 7–10 percent of the victims were women.) In Republican areas, prominent Nationalists (usually from the wealthy upper classes) were attacked; churches and monasteries were ransacked; and about 12–13 percent of the priests and monks in Spain were killed, along with about 0.5 percent of the nuns. The killings were referred to as *limpieza* (“cleansing”) (Thomas 1986:258–80).

Most of the killing of civilians took place in the first six months of the war; the biggest concentration was in August and September 1936. This was the most intense period of conflict solidarity, the height of the hysteria zone: from about two weeks after the outbreak of war to about 8 or 10 weeks. This corresponds to the period after 9/11, from about September 25 until late November. The onset of the mass atrocities in Spain was during a period corresponding to the anthrax hysteria in the United States. Many features of the two cases are different. The United States was not involved in a civil war; its enemy targets were vague and far away; and rituals of solidarity and security encompassed the entire population (with varying degrees of enthusiasm or passivity). In Spain, the targets were highly visible, easily identified, and nearby; rituals of solidarity marked the dividing lines among the groups very sharply.³⁷

³⁶As indicated by the peak popularity polls for political leaders, which is the most encompassing of all forms of national solidarity, the ceiling for solidarity seems to be about 90 percent.

³⁷Nationalists and Republicans even had different modes of address: *adios* among the former, *salud* among the latter—using the wrong form could get one killed (Thomas 1986:273). Nationalist decorum decreed that men should wear their sleeves to the wrist; Republicans pushed theirs informally up their arms.

Thus, the wave of relatively spontaneous civilian participation in perpetuating the organized military events that marked the outset of the war took a much more deadly form.

The collective emotions and focus of attention that are the result of an external attack motivates different kinds of actions: local solidarity rituals in the 2001, 1942, and 1936 cases alike, but security hysteria and ancillary pseudo-terrorist imitations, targeted sequestering of ethnic aliens, and class/religious massacres in the three different cases. I have indicated some of the factors that determine how targets are selected, including whether hysterical suspicion, at peak moments, is aimed diffusely at almost everyone. Underlying these divergent processes of target seeking is a common social dynamic: a process of collective focus of attention, which builds up to a peak within a week or two after a dramatic crisis and that keeps people entrained from two or three months before beginning to decline toward normalcy, a condition reached around six to nine months. The two- to three-month plateau is the dangerous period for enemies and group members alike. An extremely high level of collective solidarity is also collective hysteria: what people do during that period is not judged by themselves as falling into normal standards of behavior; they are both more heroic, more altruistic, and more fearful and vicious than at other times. Given that an intense collective state of this sort is not uniform but is sustained by pockets and hierarchies of minorities who are more mobilized than other people, there is a gradient of attraction among those who attempt to move closer to the center. It is in these dynamics and these social locations that the various features of conflict solidarity are enacted—for good and for evil.

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