9/11 Readers’ Theatre – Spring 2018

On September 11, 2001, I was 11

A typical day getting ready for school

I felt my mom gasp as we watched the Twin towers fall from the news

She was always so over-dramatic

What I saw didn’t seem real

What I saw seemed liked an action film that Tom Cruise would star in

The CGI is so realistic; this is 2001 we’re talking here

But it wasn’t CGI

It was real

It happened

Kylie

9/11 Perspective

The bell rings.

I walk into class wondering if there is going to be another “crazy dog” on the roof

Just as last Tuesday.

Hoping and wishing for a short school day.

Mrs. Maderos begins with a morning topic to write to.

I write.

I stop.

I think.

I write,

I stop.

I think.

I write and the phone rings.

The TV turns on with the towers engulfed in flames.

A city in Chaos.

A country Devastated.

A sisterless teacher.

(Crazy dog- refers to what we were told when going into lock down barricade, that there was a crazy dog on the roof the week before, when in fact it was a man who was armed and dangerous. Only one clip fired, all up in the air.)

Miggy

I turn on the radio

I hear that a plane crashed into one of the world trade center building

Everyone thinks it’s a mistake

An accident

Then in a moment of sheer terror

A scene from a disgusting movie begins to play

A second plane crashes into the second building

This is no accident

No mistake

The scream of America is heard through everyone’s soul.

That guttural sound of anguish takes hold of us; will we ever be the same?

Boris

Firefighter 911

I was supposed to be the hero

I was supposed to save everyone,

Hearing “help me”

But the smoke and ash began to crash

In my lungs. The feeling of being almost helpless,

To yourself and others is terrible.

I did my job that day but I am not proud.

My heart is full of sorrow for the victims

Their families, friends, and pets

What if I was there that day?

What if I was the one who collapsed with the

Buildings. I am seen as a hero, but on that Tuesday

All I can remember is terrorism and its evil.

I pray every single day for all of those people.

Alec

The cereal in my bowl grew soggy.

The news reporter on the television captivated my attention.

The whispers between my parents filled the background.

Smoke, fire, the look of pure devastation on the faces of the people.

I’d never known this type of evil before.

Now I knew.

Kelsey

When I walked down the street

People scrambled by my feet

It started turning into a storm

The blue started turning into gray

The tears of the people were the rain

The sirens the thunder

It hit the North tower now

And it was all about to cave

Melina

I was just a boy on September eleven

I would say it was around 6 or 7

When I woke up to a great big jolt

From my mom trying to tell me to get up and watch

To show me how the world just stopped

I was scared and didn’t know what to do

My adrenaline rushing, all the way through (my body)

I was sad and didn’t know what to say

Sat back all I knew was to pray

This is a day I’ll never forget

And a day many Americans regret

Chris

Another day of home school.

I wish I didn’t have to be here.

Our lesson should be starting,

but the teachers are in front of the television.

I walk into the living room;

everyone is staring at the screen.

“Terrorists hijacked two planes and crashed them into the twin towers,” they say.

Today will be unlike any other day.

Daniel

I was a child in a distant land

Growing up with my Mongol band

I loved TV, it was a great display

But one day, something wasn’t ok

It was the first thing the morning when I saw the news

Lots of people far away had gotten the blues

There was a couple dozen evil men who came to kill

Their methods were cruel and their intents were ill

One by one the planes were hijacked and stolen

Except for the last one where the passengers were controlling

I couldn’t value the impact of the attack

All I knew was suddenly immigration was wack

People couldn’t fly or travel like they could

Left poor kids like me stuck in the hood

Wondered why this stuff was happening around

Where the nations of the world were making a sound

About attacking this desert country or that Muslim one

As long as they got oil it doesn’t matter son

Suddenly my family was slated to move

To America to find a new groove

Caught right in the middle of the Iraq war

With America trying to even the score

The impact of this world was never clear

I am a child from the times of here

9/11 was a memory that is near

But it is not that easy to see I fear

Whatever the cost, I can see it today

To travel around, we all need to pay

Not in money, or cash, or wealth

But in liberty, freedom and emotional health

Even today we still have troops over there

Where after 16 years, the situation isn't square

We promised a quick end it isn't fair

But that's what we get when we enter the Afghan lair

Sometimes it feels like we entered on dare

Because we spent our resources without care

Other times I look at the toll in our culture

Exploitative video games on our youth like a vulture

Death and violence is now the norm

Where the virtues and values are yet to form

Is the cost really the billions of dollars

Or the stench of death enslaving us like collars

Call of Duty and Metal of Honor

Terminator and Sarah O’Connor

Columbine, Mandalay Bay, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, Parkland

Tsogs

I can see myself that day – distracted,

rushing to prepare for my 10:00 a.m. class

First, Sandra appeared in my office doorway

“Someone flew a plane into the Twin Towers”

As she left, I thought briefly, “The Twin Towers,

where are they?”

Then Gayle came – briefly share more news

Again, I was focusing on my small, but

immediate world – I had to be ready to

teach…

My freshman writing class met in a computer classroom…

the previous instructor had left the

projector on/CNN was reporting

My students and I watched as a second plane

hit

as the buildings crumbled, as people jumped

from the flames to their deaths

One student left in tears, her father worked

at the Pentagon

Dr. Warner

“Mijos, come here” our old grandma said as she stared at the black and white T.V. functioning with two large batteries. “Something is happening en El Norte.”

There it was, a building engulfed in smoke and fire.

“Change, we are going to the pueblo to call your mother in the U.S.”

“She’s fine, Ma” Javi said, the wise older brother. “This is happening on the east side of the country.”

“I said you two change clothes now!” tears came down her cheeks and we knew she meant it.

Something kept our eyes plugged to the T.V. the images just couldn’t be real. Was it a horror movie? Were people dying? A nine-year-old couldn’t comprehend. What must it be like to be there, trapped in those buildings when a plane accidentally crashed into it? What would one’s thoughts be? Then there, people seemed to take the leap. From far away, Javi and I changed our farm clothes as quick as we could while Grandma stood two feet away from the television, now sobbing, now drying her tears.

“What is happening?” I asked Javito, in hopes of getting an answer.

“Some pendejo crashed the plane into that giant tower.”

Then there it was, another plane approached and boom! Then my brother couldn’t justify his previous answer, for even a kid his age couldn’t comprehend whether these were bad pilots, or this was intentionally done.

Jose

9/11 point of view through a fireman on the scene just after the 2nd building collapse.

It is a particularly windy at the ground watching the twin towers a blaze.

Suddenly a cloud of smoke comes rushing. Everything goes dark. I can’t see anything. I stand still not knowing what else to do. I hear screaming and yelling but it’s barely audible. The debris and smoke muffle all sound. My knees give out and I fall on my knees. It occurs to me that while I cannot see and I am on my knees I should begin to pray. I cover my mouth and close my eyes. I pray so hard with all my heart, so hard I can feel it through my body from toes to my chest. I press my face into the ground with my eyes still shut and my mouth still covered. Upon amen I jump back to my feet as quickly as I can ... I still cannot see.

Marie

Looking back at the tragic event that struck Americans with terror from nearly seventeen years ago, I barely have any huge recollection on what I did exactly as a seven-year-old during that fateful day. To be honest, the only vivid memory I have for that horrifying event was being completely uninterested on seeing the constant news coverage of the event and wanting only to watch something else on TV. It was only later that once I got a little older that I knew the true implications of what this terrorist attack meant for America’s future to come.

Michael

I’ve never seen a plane in real life before

Only the toys at the grocery store

Or pictures in books dad reads to me

And the time it was on TV

Crashing into tall building blocks

Or Lincoln Logs

And dust falling and falling

Like fluffy black clouds that

Had come down from the skies

To say hello Ashley

watching skyscrapers tumble to the ground over and over on every channel

recordings of loved ones on the planes that were crashing into these skyscrapers being heard

piles and piles of buildings, people being rescued after being alive for days

Patty

I do not remember the morning of September 11, 2001.

At 6 years-old my time was most preoccupied with what structure I’d play on during recess.

If I remembered that day, I would probably remember being excited that I didn’t have to go to school.

What I do remember is every year on that day, the flag raising high and every student gathering on the lawn to pledge allegiance to our country, our lost men.

I remember my friend Sophie moved to the East Coast to be closer to her uncle’s grave.

I remember the fear of terror that was planted in my brain from that time on.

The knowledge of war, but what war?

Who were we fighting?

I remember when my bubble popped and I learned that the people in the planes, in the buildings, were not the only ones hurt.

When I learned that an entire culture had been blamed for the attacks of radicals, that my friends and my neighbors would carry this stigma on their backs for the rest of their lives.

Danielle

My sister and I are starting the day off bickering again, big shocker.

Mom’s stressed trying to manage two drop offs before starting her work day

The school day was awaiting

As I grip my backpack with anticipation to see my best friend and jump rope at recess.

To stack number cubes during math

And finally master the twirly language called cursive.

Little did I know

That as my journey was starting,

Many were ending.

Natalie

they were crying, finally after only a gasp

and what felt like an eternity of silence,

staring at the television, with the phone

on her ear, and the slinky swirly cord connected to the house,

the home, my home, our home,

but where is dad, why is he always gone

he should be here protecting us from the bad men on the TV,

he should be here to make mommy stop crying.

more arrive to cry and watch the TV,

my little sister and I play in our room,

listening to the shouts of despair,

waiting for the end of the tears.

Claire