

Fordham University
Center on Religion and Culture | Center for Ethics Education

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MORAL OUTRAGE AND MORAL REPAIR:
Reflections on 9/11 and its Afterlife

PANEL II:
FORGIVENESS AND MORAL REPAIR:
RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY:
Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Justice, and Hope

Moderator & Discussant

Lisa Cataldo, *Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education, Fordham University*

Panelists

“At the Root, the Need for Hope”

Margaret Walker, Donald J. Schuenke Chair in Philosophy, Marquette University

“Embracing the Sacred Messiness: The Interdependence of Moral Outrage and Forgiveness”

Rabbi Irwin Kula, President of Clal — The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership

ADAM FRIED: Welcome back. I am Dr. Adam Fried. I'm the Assistant Director for the Center for Ethics Education. I am pleased to introduce our second panel, Forgiveness & Moral Repair: Philosophy & Religion. Immediately following this panel there will be a complimentary box lunch outside in the Atrium for those of you who reserved lunches. If you haven't reserved a lunch, we'll have some extra lunches on hand. There are tables outside of the Atrium for the lunch, but there may not be enough room, given the space. Just downstairs here, directly downstairs, there's the Law School Café with extra seating, so people can go there. We'll reconvene promptly at 1:15 for our third panel.

As a reminder, and if you weren't here for the first panel, please write your questions on the note cards that are provided in the folders and hold up your note card. A volunteer will come down. There are two volunteers here who will come down and collect your questions throughout the presentations. The questions will be addressed at the end in a question-and-answer period.

There will be an opportunity to speak more with our first panel — Professors Jones, Appleby, and McCauley — since there wasn't as much time as we would have liked in the first panel. So we'll have some time at the end of this panel to address some of the questions that we didn't have a chance to.

If we also run out of time in the question-and-answer period, we'll save the remaining questions for our final panel, the fourth panel, which is the summing-up panel at 2:30 p.m., which is an opportunity for all of the speakers to interact and engage each other and take audience questions.

The second panel will be moderated by Dr. Lisa Cataldo, who will also serve as a discussant. Dr. Cataldo is an Assistant Professor of Pastoral Counseling at the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education here at Fordham University. Welcome, Dr. Cataldo and the second panel.

LISA CATALDO: Welcome again. The subtitle of this panel is “Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Justice, and Hope.” As President McShane said this morning, these are issues that bring us beyond the easy questions.

They are complex issues that challenge us at the deepest level to confront what we psychoanalysts would call the essential ambivalence of human experience. This ambivalence locates us squarely in the midst of tension — between love and hate, between “an eye for an eye” and the love of mercy, between the impulse to destroy and the impulse to build, and maybe, ultimately, between the need for a sense of personal safety and integrity and the troubling realization of our fundamental vulnerability and fragility as human beings. Amidst these tensions we look for hope, but it often eludes us. So, as we do today, we have to turn to our philosophers and our rabbis to help us think about and address these challenges.

Our first talk today will be given by Dr. Margaret Walker. Dr. Walker is the Donald J. Schuenke Chair in Philosophy at Marquette University. Dr. Walker.

MARGARET WALKER: Good morning. I'd like to start by thanking the Center for Ethics Education and the Center on Religion and Culture, and I especially want to thank my friend and longtime colleague Dr. Celia Fisher, who is always so busy doing wonderful things. [Slide] There is going to be just one slide because these themes — terrorism, trust, home, and justice — thread through this presentation. So here are the touchstone points so you can keep track as we go.

Terrorism shatters trust. That's one of the things it is intended to do. Here's how. Trust is about settled expectations. When we trust people, we rely on those people to do what we expect of them — to do, that is, what they are supposed to do. Those we have trusted who do not do what they are supposed to do are, in turn, supposed to be accountable to us for violating our reasonable expectations.

Now, terrorism, simply defined, consists in deliberately and violently targeting civilians for political purposes. If we assume that the arena for justified mass violence — if there is such a thing — if we assume the arena for justified mass violence is war, and that even under the rules of war civilians are off-limits as intentional direct targets, then terrorism shakes very basic expectations by attacking where and when a society does not expect to be attacked and believes it is entitled not to be attacked.

The terrorist also intends to reverse the terms of accountability. The message of the terrorist is: “See what we can do to you. Now it is you who must take note of us, to account to us concerning our goals and demands.” I am not saying in this talk whether terrorism is ever or never justified. I am only here pointing to a logic of terrorism that explains its effects. Often terrorists do something unexpected, but more basic is the fact that they do something that violates what they know are acceptable boundaries people have counted on, and they intend in doing so to make others respond to their demands. Studies of mass violence and its aftermath reveal important links between trust, hope, and justice in the wake of violence, and these apply to terrorism.

Using these links, I want to bring out two points about where many of us in the U.S. public find ourselves a decade after 9/11. Of course, no one story fits everyone, so you'll see if you find yourself, where I find myself. I especially need to underscore that I am not speaking about — and certainly I'm not speaking for — the most direct victims of the September 11th attacks, those who escaped the Towers, who lost loved ones and friends there, or who are responders who suffered the many consequences of their selfless efforts. I am speaking of what I'm supposing is a part of a larger public that was part of the audience for the terrorism of 9/11 — and, of course, terrorism requires an audience — those who experienced the shock, the outrage, and the continuing sadness and unease of this spectacular attack on U.S. soil.

The first point I'm going to make is that when trust is shattered, hope is needed to reestablish trust. Hope is the deeper root, I am saying, that allows human beings to move beyond situations in which their world of expectations is shattered. The second point I am going to make is that when human worlds are shattered by the actions of other human beings, seeing justice done is one central path to kindling hope. In our post 9/11 world, I believe, many of us have not found a great deal to support our needs for hope and justice.

So the first point, reestablishing trust requires hope. Trust is the most ordinary of attitudes. When we think of trust, we probably think of the trust we consciously place in particular individuals: We trust the babysitter with the children; we trust a friend to keep a confidence; we trust our employer to deliver the paycheck we have worked for. When trust like this is violated, we know whom to complain to or complain

about. We know who is accountable, who needs to explain, apologize, or repair. But not all trust is personal in this way. We also trust when we open a can of food to eat, board an airplane, or walk past a stream of others on the street without fear. I call this second kind of generalized trust default trust. It's something we are often not conscious of unless it has already been threatened nor betrayed.

Default trust is not particularly personal. It allows us to navigate a world in which we are aware that terrible things sometimes happen due to others' actions, but in which we move nonetheless for the most part with relative unconcern in many daily ways, presuming that others — no one generally that we actually know — are not going to be doing something other than what they are supposed to be doing. A reliance is not simply based on an assumption of individual responsibility. Often we assume there are institutions responsible for seeing to it that people behave as they should, especially where others' well-being is at stake.

Trust is actually a mix of expectation and demand. In full-bodied trust, we rely on what we can expect people to do, but we are also prepared to hold them accountable when they do not act as expected. When expectations are disappointed, then this demanding side of trust comes to the fore. We deserve an accounting. We want explanations, apologies, or amends.

In personal cases, trust between individuals, whether or not we get the satisfaction of explanations, apologies, or amends, we can often decide to alter or terminate relationships with those upon whom we no longer feel we can rely. Default trust is different from personal trust in a number of important ways. We do not always know where to place our demands when the food is spoiled or the plane is not safe. We know there are individuals who failed in their responsibilities, but it may not be clear to us who they are. We may have no way to reach them. We may find we are dealing with institutions and do not know how to make those institutions accountable.

It's also true that we cannot just decide to alter or terminate many of our everyday activities. Terrorism attacks default trust and the basic safety of engaging in everyday activities — flying on airplanes, walking down the street, showing up at one's workplace, answering the telephone, opening the mail, going shopping, having dinner at a restaurant. That is why the terrorist attack on trust can be so devastating. It can call into question whether anything is really safe, and it can call into question whether our institutions can really protect us. When trust is shaken or shattered, reestablishing trust involves giving someone or something another chance, precisely a chance to demonstrate that it will be reliable in the future.

But there is an obvious chicken/egg problem here. When your reliance on someone or something is disappointed, it seems you would have to rely on them again to reestablish that they are, experience to the contrary, again reliable.

Second point: That is why the reestablishment of trust, I believe, requires hope. Hope is precisely the attitude, as common in human beings as trust is, that allows us to act on the possibility, even a very slight possibility, that something we desire, such as renewed trust when someone or something has failed us, might be achieved and to act as if it is worth expecting or pursuing.

Hope is crucial when what we desire, and perhaps what we most deeply need, remains for now out of reach. For hope is precisely the attitude that allows human beings to act as if what they desire is still possible to achieve and that the actions and appeals that invite it are meaningful and not hopeless. Hope is at once very powerful and very fragile. It can be powerful in motivating patience and action against the odds. Yet the sense of actual possibility of what we hope for must be kept alive. If we hope for a world in which we are no longer reminded constantly in airports and the entrances to public buildings that we cannot reasonably assume we are ever really safe, if we hope for that, then we must keep alive our sense that it is possible that we might again be, and that is the job of hope.

Now, to what appears as the third point up there: How does justice feed hope? Hope sounds very improbable — and in fact it is. It is literally the ability to remain attentive to and energized positively by a possibility whose probability is very small. Yet, for all of its improbability, all of human life is threaded through with hopes great and small. Hope allows us to persevere against slight or downright poor odds. But here is another link that seems even more improbable, yet it appears to be a fact in what we now have

as many studies of mass violence. Against the odds, and sometimes against all odds, survivors of injustice and violence hope, in particular, for some kind of justice, for that accountability that comes to the fore when trust is broken.

In the aftermath of violence, justice means those responsible being compelled to answer to those harmed and to society, to stand before those affected and face them in their suffering, to confront the fact that they have outraged fellow human beings, and that they are called upon to take responsibility. Formal justice in a court of law is for many people the paradigm, or a paradigm, of accountability. But others want vengeance, or the truth to be told, or amends that acknowledge the suffering and loss of victims, or personal acknowledgement and apology from perpetrators, or some other measures that would restore some of the normality and peace of mind that were snatched away.

What all these things have in common, whether in particular cases these things are just or would bring about justice, what they have in common is the demand for an accounting. People affected by violence demand accountability, even when the possibility that they will get it is slight. In all politically motivated violence — terrorism, war, repression by authoritarian and violent states, the structural violence of poverty and disempowerment — the prospects that those responsible, which is typically very many people, will be brought to account is very improbable.

Yet, we live in a world at the beginning of the 21st century in which accountability mechanisms for mass violence have proliferated — international war crimes tribunals, the International Criminal Court, truth commissions in over forty countries, movements for reparations and memory around the world. It is remarkable in itself how hopeful all of these reactions to mass violence are. They all say: It is not utterly hopeless. Something can be done. And since what can still be done is justice, it must be done.

But these attempts at justice are not only hopeful attempts, they are also attempts to ignite and foster hope. People hope for justice, but they need justice to build hope for their future. Now, how can justice nourish hope?

At the bottom of trust, I think, for human beings there is always the realization that our trust may be disappointed. Yet, even in the face of crushed expectations, there is still something else that we like to think we can trust in, that the standards violated will be reasserted and the demand for accountability — that is, these rules that someone has violated and the expectations that we rested on them, they still count; so you, those responsible, at least must answer to those rules and to us after the damage is done.

Accountability isn't everything, and it certainly cannot for the direct victims of violence magically erase grief, repair lives, or bring anybody back. What it can bring back to a community or a society is some sense of reliable order — the rules count — that we can count on. For human beings, this is no small thing, since we spend most of our lives counting on at least some forms of order in which at least some, or hopefully many, people are doing what they should.

Now, very briefly, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, have the needs of the U.S. public — not, I repeat again, the very different needs of direct victims of the attack — have the needs of the public for hope and justice been met? I feel that they have not. Now, it is true that acts of terrorism may be difficult to attribute when terrorists do not act alone. This is one insidious feature of organized terrorism, it is part of its terror, who's doing this. And of course, the known direct perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks did not survive. Some people have questioned whether we actually do know who the perpetrators were, but I am not going in that direction. For all we know they did not survive, for all most of us know.

So there are real questions about what would look like justice in this kind of case, of a terrorist attack. But public support for war, the idea of a just war in response to a kind of aggression, was fed by the claim that we could pursue Osama bin Laden and some identifiable portion of the al Qaeda network. Yet that mission was rapidly abandoned. Just a couple weeks ago, Jim Dwyer wrote in *The New York Times* that even something seemingly as elementary as revising the New York Building Code for tall buildings so that there would be more exits, something which would have saved, he thinks, many lives on 9/11, was rejected as too expensive. So that's a question at the other end about institutional accountability. So it's an interesting question: What would have been justice of any type or accountability of any type?

But what I want to say is that something worse than an absence of justice has — in the view of I hope many of us, I think many of us — ensued and we have endured an inversion of justice, and with it the compromise of our own moral position as a nation. Here's what I mean. We, the nation, in the aftermath of 9/11 were represented by our own country's reckless mass violence and the violation of our principles of fairness and rule of law by the unlawful treatment of people who might or might not have been related to the 9/11 catastrophe — for example, illegal detention, and in some cases torture — that we suffered.

The litany is familiar. I'll just telegraph it:

- One, retributive war, quickly neglected, without foreseeable resolution, also going on.
- Another purely opportunistic war, costly in lives but bearing no relation to the 9/11 attacks.
- Abu Ghraib.
- Indefinite secret detention of a variety of people. Most of us do not clearly understand whether these people have a direct relation to the 9/11 attacks, and under suspension of what would be their minimal legal rights.
- Extraordinary rendition and our highest officials publicly putting into question whether torture is wrong.

Now, these are things I have mentioned done by — or that were not done by in some cases — the U.S. government. But there is also something the speaker mentioned earlier, which is the disturbing phenomenon within the public at some point of scapegoating, hostility, violence, or stigmatization of Muslims or Muslim-Americans indiscriminately, as if somehow they were responsible, they were accountable, for something that they didn't do.

And so we went from those who deserve an accounting to those who now owe one, and from those who hopes for a restoration of peace of mind to those who persist in fear and discouragement, taking off our shoes at airports, and knowing that we are not safe. Thank you.

LISA CATALDO: It is now my pleasure to introduce to you Rabbi Irwin Kula. Rabbi Kula is the President of Clal, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, in New York City. Rabbi Kula.

IRWIN KULA: Good morning. I'm actually trying to digest that last point of moving from wanting an accounting to being accountable. I think that's a very unnerving point. I have to digest that for a second.

Thank you, first of all, for the invitation to be here. I know I'm a replacement, but I like that movie and I like the show anyhow, *Replacement*, and because I'm basically a religious person, every other day or so I actually think that there is some providential reason for my being the replacement. So I will try to live up to that.

Let me start with a personal point. My career changed because my life changed after 9/11. I had two friends, one of whom I had actually officiated at his marriage just a year or so earlier, who died in the World Trade Center. My kids wound up — they are older now, but they were thirteen or twelve and nine, and they go to school in Riverdale. They were separated from us for the day because the subway shut down and you couldn't drive across the bridges, and for about three or four hours the phone contact was complicated. We really knew they were safe, but we hadn't spoken with them. Then we got permission from the police to meet them in the subway, the one train going all the way up to Riverdale, to meet them. We weren't allowed to come out of the subway. They were brought to the subway and we were able to bring them in.

That twenty-four-hour period, forty-eight-hour period learning about the deaths, I actually shut down my teaching for three months — I had a very good board that allowed me to do that — because I knew — and here I don't want to take a side exactly in that debate — but I experienced that it was religion that did it. Coming from my own tradition, in which there is our own terrorist faction, because all religions have that because all systems have that, I couldn't teach Judaism the same way. I knew I couldn't do it, but I didn't know what to do.

Over a three-month period of doing soul searching, I was walking along the Hudson River — every day I

would walk along the Hudson River for about two and a half hours. One day I was looking at the river and I had this experience of “Wow!” — or “Oh, my God!” but I try not to use that, as an eighth-generation rabbi. It was I guess what one would call revelatory skepticism, if there is such a thing, that never again, and that means something very serious also — my father came here in 1938 from Poland — that never again would I teach Judaism as a mechanism for tribal solidarity, group identity, in any conscious way — I’m sure I’m doing it unconsciously — to strengthen the group, to strengthen the Jewish identity, but that I would only teach Judaism as a wisdom and practice to actually help human beings flourish as best I could.

One of the checks would be it meant human beings flourishing. If I taught in a way that wasn’t accessible and usable to people across my boundaries, then it wasn’t good teaching; it was a demonic kind of teaching and religion. Everything in my résumé is from post-9/11. It’s almost as if there is nothing before that. So that’s the context.

One other story, because I think one of the things that happened post-9/11 is it’s not that we — the problem with moral outrage and moral repair is that we have a lot of moral outrage, but the moral outrage at whom is the problem; and we have a lot of moral repair, but moral repair about what and for whom? About a month into this experience of this kind of spiritual breakdown after 9/11 — and, you know, if you were in New York City, ashes — we were in a tenth-floor apartment — there were ashes on our windowsill that were different kinds of ashes. That’s just the way it was if you were in New York City. When you cleaned those ashes, you were cleaning up people. It was weird. It was a very weird thing to do. Cleaning became a sacred kind of activity, and I mean “sacred” in a — it either had to be life-affirming or incredible bitterness and resentment. I was experiencing the anger and the bitterness and the resentment and the fear.

I was reading *The New York Times*. There was a collection of final cell phone conversations. I don’t know if you remember those final cell phone conversations. It’s a very interesting moment in history because usually when people die like that, you don’t get their last words. Here we had a lot of last words of people. So you actually get to know what people were thinking and feeling, in the nearness of the vanishing moment. That’s very, very rare when it’s a sudden kind of tragedy.

I began reading these. Something struck me unbelievably about them, and that was that not one, at least not one that I read — and I really looked and tried to download them and really search for them — not one was about retribution. It was weird. I mean you would think one. So I am assuming either I didn’t find it or — but I found a lot of them. Not one was the seeking of justice. Not one said — you would expect somebody — and they were all ages; there were men, there were women; there was a twenty-eight-year-old woman, there was a seventy-five-year-old guy; those married, not married — there was every kind, so many different kinds, of people — American citizens, non-American citizens.

You would think that somebody would have said something like — and I’m saying this specifically in this context because the anger needed to come out, and somehow came out in such distorted forms in America in the last ten years, which is why we have a lot of moral outrage with almost no moral repair — no one said “get the motherfuckers.” One should have.

I began reading them, and I recognized: “Oh my, these are contemporary liturgies.” They are these last statements of a kind of hope. They’re just a shred, they’re shreds and fragments of hope, as if it was never anything more than that ever, the illusion that got broken on 9/11. These final cell phone conversations became for me a practice of reciting ever single morning, specifically as a way to not allow bitterness and resentment and anger and fear to completely overwhelm my experience. And I do it still every morning.

So here is from a thirty-five-year-old guy. The melody is the melody that’s used to chant the Book of Lamentations in the Jewish tradition, which is the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, which is a very horrible destruction. If you watched the images over and over again of the World Trade Center, which is not healthy to watch, its different words and images, really different, and you watch those images. If there’s no context to understand those images, it really can destroy the inner life, the depth dimension gets destroyed; and if the depth dimension gets destroyed, it easily can be replaced by the demonic.

So this is a thirty-five-year-old. This melody is used once. It's an ancient melody specifically to read a book of destruction that finishes with one verse of hope, that's it — five chapters, only one verse of hope. [Singing: "Honey, something terrible is happening. I don't think I'm going to make it. I love you. Take care of the children."]

Another thirty-something: [Singing: "Hey, Jules, it's Brian. I'm on the plane and it's hijacked and it doesn't look good. I just wanted to let you know that I love you and I hope to see you again. If I don't, please have fun in life and live life the best you can. Know that I love you, and no matter what I'll see you again."]

Last one, Daphne, Brooklyn, twenty-eight-year-old: [Singing: "Mommy, the building's on fire. There's smoke coming through the walls. I can't breathe. I love you, Mommy. Good-bye."]

I'm not a philosopher, though I have a degree in philosophy. I don't consider myself a theologian because I'm interested in experience far more than I'm interested in the description of that experience that more often distances than not. I'm a rabbi who tries to make some meaning. So I want to offer this in light of this question today.

Fear and the reaction to fear is part of our evolutionary heritage. If we didn't have a negative bias regarding fear, we'd be dead. It turns out that a terrorist attack — and what we mean by terrorism, as Margaret suggested, is that terrorism creates a different kind of fear, doesn't seem to play by the rules of violence that we make believe should create order in the midst of our use of violence. So when you have a terror about death, it's actually abnormal not to have very heavy doses of fear.

But it turns out that fear crowded out all other kinds of conversations and analysis regarding 9/11. In fact, the very use of the term "9/11," as if that is a reified name, as if "September 11th" we know what it means, is such a distortion. September 11th means a lot of things, and the very use of that term so quickly was a way to solidify and reify a specific kind of meaning that has made it impossible to move from moral outrage to moral repair.

First, it confused who are the real victims. People who lost family are different than people who didn't. To put everyone in the same boat, to put a person — I went to Chicago five days after because it was Rosh Hashanah and I had to lead a Rosh Hashanah service. Let me tell you, when we got off the plane in Chicago, it was a lot more normal than when you got on the plane at LaGuardia. To imagine that there wasn't very significant nuance and parsing that was necessary between all the people who experienced fear, distorted any possibility of both healing, repair, and decent public policy. And then it confused the capacity to ask cause questions with the issue of blame and justification.

So the second we began to try to ask what Maimonides said — Maimonides said in the 1200s— Whether it's famine or a conquering people, either way, whether it's natural or not natural, people doing it, the first thing the collective needs to do is ask "Is there any" — they fast, they're supposed to fast. I assume you can't fast and go shopping, so we're not allowed to fast — instead of fasting, and fasting is simply a spiritual practice to say, "Whoa, hold it. You're going to be completely overwhelmed by whatever is your reaction now. Take a break and ask very simply: Is there anything that the collective possibly did that in any way, shape, or form contributes to what happened?" — not because it justifies that which occurred.

But we confuse those categories of cause/effect and justification. That created terrible distortion of public policy. It's so easy because that reptilian part of our brain responds so quickly. Ron Silver, the actor — I don't know if you remember — at the 2004 Republican Convention, he strode to the podium and he delivered this statement, and people were cheering and yeah-ing: "We will never forgive. We will never forget. We will never excuse." And the crowd was rabidly cheering. That was 2004 — and I don't mean it politically, because I'm going to say one more thing about the split between liberals and conservatives.

When George Bush got up on September 14th, if you watch that clip — it's an amazing two-minute-and-eleven-second clip on YouTube — he starts by saying: "America is on it bent knees." It's a beautiful, beautiful opening. You can see he was prepared at some level to raise the discourse. The thing got out of control on the ground there because of the emotions. He stopped and he turned and he said: "Don't

worry. They'll hear you. The world will hear you." And then he said: "And the enemy will hear us all." But we never asked the question, "Hear what? Hear what?"

One more point and then we will answer questions. Something else this fear did. The first level of accountability is one's own, that's what Maimonides is saying. It seems to me what happened in the country, and it's still happening in the country — and that's one of the reasons we feel so unsafe — is there was a split consciousness between the Right and the Left, and a very, very nice agreement, unconscious, between conservatives and liberals, in which conservatives got to deal with aggression — you know, liberals don't believe in aggression; they're very nice, we believe you can talk out aggression — by the way, that goes with sacrifice too. That's what Scott [Appleby] was saying— conservatives are much better on sacrifice than liberals. Liberals are scared of sacrifice.

So it turns out if each side becomes the container of what the other side fears, you have a very damaged public culture. What we have is an "Axis of Evil" side and a "social construction of evil" side. That's part of the split, the religious/secular split, but it splits very often conservatives/liberals. The Axis of Evil is a complete externalization of evil — there really is evil, it's satanic, it drops in from the outside, and the only thing to do is to wipe it out. Then of course you have to wipe it out once it's externalized. You know it's a percentage inside of you, but that's just too heavy to deal with.

And of course we couldn't ask accountability questions, because accountability questions would have made every single one of us who puts gas in our tank somehow, even if it's a billionth of a percent, we're responsible because in an interdependent world, in a spiritual world, in a world in which a depth dimension of life is real, everything is interconnected.

I don't mean in a secret New Age way. It could be a billionth of a percent. But think about a country in which every single person who puts gas in his tank has at some level unconscious guilt about having produced 9/11. That's a metaphor.

What happens then to the culture? One side turned out to make it the Axis of Evil to avoid any questions of guilt because they had a lot of guilt. And the other side, it was so convenient — and I know I'm on that other side — it's so convenient for us. We let them do all the dirty work. They can do all the violence. They can do all the torturing. It's perfect — and then we get to critique them too. It's great. So we don't have to feel any of that aggression. We can make believe in a kind of postmodern, weird, secular, nihilist view that everything really is — if we just understood them a little better, if we just have some better contextual interfaith work. [Laughter]

No, it's very serious, because that's the problem with the Left. So it immediately became "blame America." So you had "blame America" and no blame. You had evil as a social construction and evil as an Axis of Evil, as a being metaphysically unique. That is a terrible split for a culture. One became the container of all the fear and the other side became the container of all the hope. One became the container of all the rage and the other became the container of "let's have just nice conversations."

This political correctness on the Left is only a hidden form of aggression anyway. No one knows that better than academics. What happened, and what is still happening, is the inability — and with this I'll conclude — the inability to take in these four fundamental spiritual insights that all sides know but are scary for everybody.

- The first is that security is the illusion, that's the illusion. Vulnerability and security and the fragility of life is the way life is. That's why the Book of Numbers is the longest book in Scripture, because it's the wandering that's really what it's about, and that's why the key character doesn't get into the Promised Land. We better rise to the occasion to understand that.

The justice and injustice, yes, I get it, very important categories. But from a religious/spiritual perspective, that must begin to have some policy implication. We don't know how to do it yet because of these splits. There is also a category of non-justice. That's different than justice and injustice. And that's not Catholic Mystery either, which I'm sure needs to be unpacked here.

- Second, religious/spiritual truth of interdependence and interconnection. Again, I don't mean it in a slippery way. But there is a non-dualist experience of the world, and all we keep doing is dualizing. With the level of weapons that are happening, ten people are going to be able to take out hundreds of thousands. So all of a sudden, dualisms are very nice. I get them. They're absolutely necessary. They're one of the noble things we do.

But it turns out from a religious perspective God creates good and evil — and I don't care what God you believe in — which means the real drama is to try to discover how the projected evil that comes out of our collective somehow gets reified so much that we have to kill it — and we do have to kill it before it kills us, but then we have to remember that when we kill it, it's only giving space for us to address the real causes.

The Left understands their causes and the Right understands we have to kill it. We have to integrate those two intuitions. Yes, evil is a social construction, but sometimes it reifies so much that if you don't slay the dragon it kills you. So you have to remember you have to slay the dragon, you have to do it as best you can, you have to cry when you're doing it, and then you have to spend as much money trying to figure out the cause/effect, because it's only giving you space, because you're going to close the door and it will come through the window, you close the window and it's coming through the door.

As an Egypt point regarding Passover Seder, the story we don't tell at our Seders as Jews — and I'm sure Christians don't tell the story either and Muslims don't tell the story either — the first time “slaves to Pharaoh” was ever used is not about the Egyptians. The first time it's used is Scripture saying about Joseph that he made the Egyptians slaves to Pharaoh. And then the book ends and you turn, and it says, “These are the names.”

The great commentator Rashi asks: “Why ‘and’? No book starts with ‘and,’ even back then.” He says, because actually if you look carefully, you'll see the cause of slavery. Things don't happen. They just don't happen out of Poof! Egypt was enslaved by Joseph, the Patriarch son — and you know what? What goes around comes around. It may take a long time, but what goes around comes around. So there is accountability.

- The last point, and I think saying this at Fordham — and I learned this from my Catholic friends — that there is a wisdom in suffering. That is not to say that suffering ought to be prescribed. That is not to say we ought not have a strong military. It's not to say that we ought not try to eliminate the insecurities and the vulnerabilities and evil. But when what is a part of human experience does erupt, the chaos and the suffering, there is wisdom in that suffering. That was the wisdom of those final cell phone conversations. Thank you very much.

LISA CATALDO: Wow! I'm never attempting to preach again, let me tell you right now. I've been humbled. And I am humbled to have the role of actually responding to these two very rich and very powerful presentations that I think challenge us to think about, as I said earlier, very complex issues and being in those tensions that just are not easy to resolve, and perhaps are not resolvable at all.

So I stand here, not as a philosopher, not as a clergy person, but as a therapist. That's what I have been asked to do today, to think about how some of these issues that have been spoken about in this panel work in life and in healing of actual human beings who have suffered trauma, because that's what we are talking about, is trauma. I think that when we talk about trauma and we talk about God in the same paragraph, it can really shed maybe some more light or a different kind of light on the ideas of trust, hope, repair, and outrage. So I just want to say a couple of things about that.

First of all, in contemporary psychoanalysis in the circles I move in, we tend to think of the human person not as one person but as a multiplicity of persons. We feel like a self, but we also have lots of parts of ourselves. I think you all know that experience. There may be a part of yourself that comes out when you are visiting your family that is a very different self than when you are with your spouse or your colleagues, for example, right?

In my own work, I would say that all of your selves have different gods, or at least different images of God. Remember I'm not a theologian, so I'm not making a theological statement. But in trauma things look different. In a healthy sense, we can move around all these different experiences of self and these different experiences of God pretty fluidly and still feel like ourselves, like a person.

We have a basic trust, a default trust — I like that term — that the world is negotiable, that I am going to be myself this afternoon, I'm going to be myself tomorrow, and I was myself yesterday. In trauma something happens to that. Trauma is defined by the quality of psychic overwhelm. What makes something a trauma is the fact that your psyche cannot process it. That's what makes it a trauma. That's why two people who experience exactly the same thing will not always have the same response. It can be traumatic to one person and not traumatic to another person. That's important to remember.

The other thing that's important to remember is this psychic overwhelm threatens our sense of being. It's an existential crisis. One of my mentors, Phil Bromberg, says: "Traumatic events are taken in as unbearable assaults on the felt core of what it means to say who I am to myself." He also says that "This experience is an erasure of our subjectivity, and therefore is perhaps the definition of evil." So the moral outrage and trauma is against being erased as a person.

I wanted to think about for a minute, in response to my colleagues and a little bit of what came up in the first panel, how religion actually plays out in the life of someone who has suffered a trauma and a disruption of in terms of personal faith and in negotiating the meaning of the world after your default trust has been shattered.

There has been lots of writing on the trauma of spirituality. A lot of it says positive views of God are coping mechanisms that help us to restore trust. And some say trauma itself is a spiritual growth mechanism, so that we in fact gain meaning because we have survived a trauma. But both of those can gloss over some of the complexities of this idea of multiplicity and the multiplicity in the religious experiences of those of us who have survived collective trauma and individual trauma.

So one of the things I think we have danced around here today, or been thinking about, is: What does repair mean? Does repair mean justice? What does justice mean? Does justice mean finding someone accountable and having that person, persons, or institutions be accountable to us? Does justice mean revenge? These are all the kinds of things that are going to come up also in the religious life of trauma survival.

I want us to think about just for a moment who God becomes in the aftermath of trauma. If we think about us being normally in a healthy sense multiple and we can move around and we can have the God who's the God of our child-self and the God of our mature-self, in trauma everything gets blown apart, all the connections are destroyed. So, instead of multiplicity, we have fragmentation. Now, that's a completely different experience.

In fragmentation, the parts of self cannot talk to one another. We often have a mechanism, called dissociation, which means we don't even know that we know about those parts of our self. They are just "someplace else." I would suggest that God shatters along with the self, and the parts of God that are associated with the traumatized parts of self are in fact shattered and dissociated and cannot communicate with one another.

Here are some ways that might look in our lives, in our collective lives and our individual lives. We might need to maintain in one part of our self that God is good, there is a good God. But then what happens? "If God is good and this happened to me, I am bad. I deserved it. I did something to make it happen." This is what I call chaos management strategy — at least God is good.

A very famous psychoanalyst once said, "I'd rather be a sinner in a world ruled by God than an innocent in a world ruled by the Devil." That's chaos management. Another option is: "God is good, I am good, and the perpetrator is bad. The perpetrator contains projections of all evil, all aggression, all violence, and I am surely innocent." And yet, it still doesn't seem to really satisfy.

“I am good, God is weak. I’m okay, but God has no power because God was a passive bystander in this trauma, did not intervene to help me, or made it happen, allowed it to happen.” “God is the perpetrator. God is bad. I am good. God did this to me for no reason.” Or finally: “God is just passive. God doesn’t care about me.”

As a sort of a side note, you also can have a situation where the trauma becomes God. We have seen this in the aftermath of violence a lot, that people internalize the trauma as a kind of icon because it is transcendent — it’s bigger than your brain, it’s bigger than your subjectivity, it’s bigger than your self — and therefore the trauma itself takes on a kind of sacred or transcendent quality and is worshipped internally.

All of this stuff I see in real life every day in my office. Sometimes, for better or worse, I as the therapist get to play God. That’s what happens in therapy. It’s called transference. The therapist will take on all of those roles and have to be able to contain all of those experiences of the other person. But guess what? We also have to contain them in ourselves. When we’ve all shared in that trauma, that’s a real challenge. That is the situation for all of us theologians and philosophers and rabbis and therapists who are trying to talk about the aftermath of collective violence, because we are in it too. We experienced it too in all our different ways.

So it becomes the task of people in a helping position, if you will, or an authority position, to become somehow strong enough containers to hold all of these disparate experiences. So what does repair look like? It has to allow all of that in there. In my experience at least, hope is an achievement, maybe underlying there somewhere.

Moral outrage is an achievement. Often people are only numb, they can’t be outraged. We’re glad when they get to rage. Rage is good — but only if it can be contained and not overwhelming and traumatic in itself. And also, it requires lamentation, as Rabbi Kula said, mourning. That’s another thing we haven’t talked about too much today. But recovery from trauma and repair requires mourning the losses and the wounds that have hurt.

It also requires a witness. I really appreciated the idea that terrorism requires an audience. Healing requires an audience always. You cannot heal by yourself. There has to be a reliable witness who responds and says, “Your words or your cries can move me. I’m not a passive God in the sky who does not respond to you. I’m not a passive political leader who doesn’t hear your pain, doesn’t share in your pain.” So there is something important about that reliable witness.

The last question I have, and I’d love us to discuss this now going forward — we will have a discussion among ourselves and then welcome your questions — is this issue of forgiveness, because I notice we didn’t really talk about forgiveness, even though it was in the title. I often ask myself, as all trauma therapists do, what forgiveness means in the context of healing from trauma, and does forgiveness need to happen, and is forgiveness only contingent on accountability? That is one position. Until the perpetrator is accountable, held accountable, there can be no forgiveness.

But the fact is in this work often there is no accountability. Often the perpetrator is dead. Sometimes we can’t remember who the perpetrator was. We don’t know who it was. It is generations of people that imposed trauma on our ancestors. Who is to be held accountable? Maybe no one. Often there is no accountability, and therefore can there be forgiveness? I have my own thoughts about that. But as a sort of segue into a discussion, maybe we can talk about that. Thank you.

CELIA FISHER: Thank you for that third presentation. I think Lisa has raised some wonderful questions and, given that she is both respondent and speaker, I thought that she should also be answering these questions. I’m sure a lot of you feel like I do. I’m emotionally drained from these presentations, all of them, but I’m also intellectually and spiritually nourished by the three presentations.

What I wanted to do, and the reason I came up here, and I hope I can do it without crying — but we did get one question I thought really taps and introduces some of the things that Lisa was asking and also this. This came from somebody in our audience.

“I came here today to have an intellectual experience of post-9/11. Here I am reduced to tears, tears which I thought had all but dried up because I had healed and could now focus on how I could prevent such a thing. I was one of the escapees from one of the Towers, and my song or chant was to my parents was: ‘Tell my mother and father that you saw me and I want them to know that I am not coming home because something terrible has happened and I am going to die today. Tell them I am okay. Here is their phone number.’ I never saw the person again that I gave my number to. My travail was terrible on that day, but I was spared death. I have come full circle and still try to understand terrorism or who is accountable. Therefore, whom do I forgive? Is forgiveness a value in a vacuum?”

Thank you to that person, whoever you are. Maybe we can respond.

LISA CATALDO: I’d like to respond to that. First of all, thank you for sharing that story. It’s incredibly powerful and the question is very important: Is forgiveness possible in a vacuum or without an answering other? It’s a really tough question. It’s a spiritual question, a theological question, and also a psychological question.

In my thinking about this and in my working with people who have a lot to forgive of other people, I think of it this way — and my own experience as well, I would say. Because of the interconnectedness of all things, as Rabbi Kula was talking about, and the ways in which we are all implicated in our own trauma in some maybe infinitesimal way, just by being a human being who is connected in a web of relationship to other human beings, at the most profound level trauma work will bring a person to a place where they will take responsibility for that participation — not blame, not responsibility, very important — but just for being a human being with desires, how we participate in the trauma in some way. So there has to be a forgiveness of the self for being a human being and being frail and vulnerable, number one.

CELIA FISHER: Let’s go to the others too for their number one and then we’ll come back. Margaret?

MARGARET WALKER: Yes. I was hoping Lisa was going to answer that question for all of us. I just want to comment. I thank the person who offered us that witness. You [to Rabbi Kula] talked about the essential role of witness in healing, and I think people who offer us this witness, as you did with your singing of cell phone messages, contributes something for all of us. But I want to say that I think forgiveness can’t depend — there are views that say that forgiveness has to be interactive, you must engage. There are views that say that forgiveness must not only be interactive but should be contingent on the remorsefulness or accountability of the person who has offended you.

One of the reasons I reject those views of forgiveness is because it leaves the victim of wrong at the mercy of the availability, the knowledge, the accessibility, the repentance, of the person who has wronged. But also you gave us one interesting vocabulary for thinking about why forgiveness in the absence of or without or not directed to a particular offender or perpetrator is important, because part of what is going on in forgiveness, I think, is that shattering of parts of the self has to involve retrieving some parts that are attached, that are bonded to the sense of outrage, the sense of wrong.

I think at the core of forgiveness there is something that goes on — it’s not the only thing that goes on — which is the retrieving of that part, saying that part is no longer captive to or bonded to that terrible thing that someone did, someone I may not know, someone I cannot reach, someone who may not care, someone who isn’t sorry.

I also think it’s true that there is a reason forgiveness is thought of as a gift, because even when there is a person available, you have had to do the work of unsticking that part of yourself from that. So you then give someone something to which in some sense they can’t be entitled.

LISA CATALDO: That’s beautiful.

IRWIN KULA: Yes. I’ll just add one — yes, thank you, whoever wrote that [question]. I would say that it just shows we have barely grieved, and that’s because the tears got collectivized into a national experience. In the end, nationalism is an idolatry. It’s a necessary idolatry at this stage in human

development. But it turns out it's an idolatry, like all human constructs. So individual human beings' tears for their own significant losses got completely dried out and desiccated in the national experience. That's very, very, very unhealthy for the culture.

Second is, regarding forgiveness, there's a lot of different types of forgiveness is what we are saying. There is a conditional forgiveness that is a contingent forgiveness that we can work on really, really hard, and we can do all the necessary work in the psychological and the spiritual dimensions, which we should try to do. But then there is this other. I say it as a religious person who also carries my own traumatic memories in family and the collective history of my people. And again, speaking at Fordham, it's kind of funny, because Jews are not big on this, we don't like this one so much, which is one of the reasons we have issues with Catholics, because we're jealous of it. That is that there is an element of forgiveness that is simply grace, and it erupts. You can do all the work in the world for it, but it's unearned. That's the paradox of that type of forgiveness.

Part of the many, many things that Scott [Appleby] said is that we've lost all of that enchantment, depth dimension in the larger public culture, because religious people tend to take it so literally that it's not accessible to other people, and secular people don't think it's real. It's not only that we wind up not being able to do hell, but we don't wind up being able to do forgiveness. Those things are actually connected.

Finally, the only claim from my own tradition is that — you know, here's the truth — and again, when I say “the truth,” I'm talking about my own tradition — is that the broken tablets get put into the ark, they don't get discarded in the Book of Exodus. Those broken tablets mean that it turns out that forgiveness isn't wholeness; forgiveness is the ongoing brokenness. We understand that brokenness is on the inside, not the outside. That's why we shatter a glass at the end of a wedding, because it's not after the wedding, it's inside the wedding, and after the glass is shattered we say, “Mazel Tov!” That's kind of odd unless you understand that if it's broken and this is on the inside it will tear you apart.

So then you have to live, as our tradition says, “as if” — make believe. It's hard to make believe. It's hard to make believe that you can still love and it's hard to make believe that you can still care and it's hard to make believe that other people still care and it's hard to make believe that you can still trust. But it turns out you live “as if.” In the living “as if,” there is a forgiveness that's not a noun but an ongoing verb. We don't have that. Forgiveness isn't a noun; it's a verb hiding out in a noun, your “forgivenessing.” And “forgivenessing” is an ongoing process till the very day we die.

CELIA FISHER: I have two questions here. It's interesting because I think they really reflect a lot of the other questions, and also the kind of dual feelings that Rabbi Kula was talking about in terms of conservatives versus liberals. But I think all of us, those of us not politicians, kind of feel all of them. So here are the two questions, which I think are wonderfully juxtaposed:

“How can you heal when you still hear speakers now praising the 9/11 killing and violence and asking for more killing of Americans, etc.? It's fine if I forgive, but what about others? What if others still want to kill us and call tomorrow's terrorists heroes?”

The other side of that is: “Is there any hope for justice and mercy? As a superpower, the United States has failed to comprehend the essential elements that fuel the ongoing success of terrorists. Is it too late for the United States to repair its own wrongs in escalating violence and ask for forgiveness?”

LISA CATALDO: I'll just say it's never too late.

IRWIN KULA: Yes, right.

LISA CATALDO: It's never too late. Start now.

CELIA FISHER: Thank you. Margaret?

MARGARET WALKER: I'll just also say that I'm a little uncomfortable. I didn't talk about forgiveness, and wouldn't want to in this context, because to me that is to the direct or immediate victims and those

who immediately shared their lives.

I was very struck by some things that Rabbi Kula said about the kind of blurring and appropriation of the experience, as if there weren't differences between individuals immediately and directly affected, also those of us directly affected by living in New York and inhaling the ash and sweeping the dust off the windows, and then those in other parts of the country.

By coincidence, I happened to move out of New York City in June of 2002, so I had been here in 2001. One of the things that I found very jarring when I got to Arizona, as it happens, was that people seemed to want to be entitled to make their own grievance and in the mode of anger and vengeance. I thought: *Something has gone wrong there.*

So I would want to not — I don't think most of us are in a forgiving position, partly because of the nature of what happened, but partly because most of us — I don't speak for others of you who are in that more direct position — do not stand in that.

LISA CATALDO: I would just respond to that a little bit to say I agree. I think, obviously, people are affected in very different ways, depending on their proximity to the events and how directly it affects them. But also I think that as a culture we have a collective identity called America and being an American, and that identity was shattered, the collective identity. So there was also a collective trauma that's different, but I think it's there.

IRWIN KULA: I want to say something about the collective. I've actually thought about it. I travel 125,000 miles a year in America and I'm in so many different kinds of communities. There's a part of me, and I've never said this publicly — actually, now thinking about it a little, maybe I shouldn't say it — but I actually think that 9/11 came at an incredibly convenient time for this country. The collective identity that we call America had been unraveling for quite a while, and 9/11 became this very, very — because anger and fear and revenge are so primal and they're so unbelievably damn sweet — that 9/11 became the place where we could avoid the hard conversations of what it means that this social contract has unraveled.

9/11 — and I say this with deep respect to the families, and that's what I'm so concerned about, the families — I'm on the 9/11 National Memorial Museum Commission — those meetings are — somebody ought to be studying those meetings, because the families that are there, there's so much displacement of what they needed as witness to what this museum, whether it should be built or not, is attempting to do. There's so much confusion here — you know, as Dylan says, "There's so much confusion here, I got to get some relief."

But there's something about the unraveling America that 9/11 could make-believe has healed. We are going to pay a price, and we are paying a price for that right now. I want to say one more thing about "never too late" and that piece. This is not going to work from politicians down. This is not going to work from leadership down. The leadership is not capable of being the containers of the kinds of rage that we are talking about here. This is going to be from the people up. It's like Wisconsin. It's got to be from the people up.

The question is: For any of us as we feel these incredible pulls of two things that are true — "I want to kill them," and, "I know I'm also partially responsible" — those two feelings, which are part of any healthy human being — you've got to have both those feelings, right? It turns out, whichever one you are predisposed to, which means whichever is the other one that makes you angry when you hear it, that's the one you've got to wrestle with. So if I find that I'm really angry at the people stoking the fear and the people who are saying, "We've got to kill them" — and I was very, very involved in Park 51. I lost a quarter of a million, 8 percent, of my institution's budget, I lost because I got involved in Park 51 and that mosque at Ground Zero by other people.

What we have to begin to do, and we're going to have to start it on the ground — it took a long time to unravel to this point; it's going to take a long time to re-ravel — is that when we feel that anger and say, "Oh my gosh, how can we ever get better because America is such a bad place and we're attacking people" — "Okay, I got it, got it" — take a deep breath and understand that the reason we're so fierce about that is

because 5 percent of that truth is part of what we're repressing.

Until we own that, it's going to be shadowed out and projected at that level, because these are karmic — and I don't mean it in a Buddhist way — but you can see it in the culture, you can see it ratcheting, more and more polarized, because each side can't deal with a partial truth. That is just too hard to deal with. So we have to be on the lookout for that.

One last thing. We have to be on the lookout for our nightmares of powerlessness and our fantasies of power. It turns out that we are predisposed in different ways. Some of us, for a variety of reasons, will be very, very, very concerned about conserving our power because people are out to get us. And there are people out to get us. That is part of the human experience. So it turns out we have nightmares of powerlessness.

Others of us have fantasies of power—that we actually can be in control. It turns out our powerlessness is never as bad as our nightmares and our power is never as triumphant as our fantasies. We have to be on the lookout for that or we can't get to the healthy moral outrage and moral repair.

CELIA FISHER: I'm going to have one more question. I'm going to also involve, as I promised, Panel 1 in this. Maybe I'll start with the three of them and then we'll end up with the three of you. Here is also another one of these that can juxtapose two different points of view but I think get at the same point.

One question was: "Would we be better off in today's world without religious states like Iran or Israel? Is it not true that the separation of church and state has allowed the U.S. to get along and therefore to prosper more effectively than others?" The second question is: "What role can religion play in defeating both sacred and secular terrorism?" We'll start with if anyone from Panel 1 wants to respond to that. I think that first one was addressed at you, Scott.

SCOTT APPLEBY: Could you repeat the last part of the first question?

CELIA FISHER: Okay. "Is it not true that the separation of church and state has allowed the U.S. to get along and therefore to prosper more effectively than others?"

SCOTT APPLEBY: And the other part of the question? There was another part of the question.

CELIA FISHER: "Would we be better off in a world that did not have religious states?" The other one is: "How can religion help fight terrorism?"

SCOTT APPLEBY: I understand the premise of the question. I'll get off the hook by challenging the premise. We live in a religious nation. The United States, as is well known — it's kind of a commonplace almost among people who study religion — the United States is the most religious country certainly in the Western world of the industrialized, developed societies. That's a conundrum for people—that we remain a very deeply religious nation.

We do have church-state separation, and James Madison said we have that so that "the sects may flourish" — and flourish they have. So I want to just push back a little bit, since I don't have a good answer that you would like about the question, to reconsider a sharp dichotomy between religious nations and nations such as ours that are described as non-religious. It's true that we are disestablished, but it's not true that we are not a religious nation.

JAMES JONES: Three very, very quick points. The first question I'm not going to speak about. The second one I think I've already indicated my answer, which is that I think a religious response is required to religiously motivated terrorism.

I want to make one comment about this last panel, which is that I think the point about the audience and who is the audience is so crucial. I don't think it's a coincidence, and I speak as someone — well, I won't speak personally for you — I don't think it's a coincidence that the lowest levels of support for the Iraqi war were in New York, where the trauma was most suffered. I don't think we can ignore that the rest of the country saw this on television.

And even those of us who were enough removed that we didn't see it directly but we saw it on television, but we smelled the smell, we knew people who died, we were in contact with friends and relatives who were maybe killed or certainly were in danger — even if we saw it on television, we also experienced it directly. The rest of the country saw it on television. Television has a very, very pernicious effect in terms of how trauma gets replayed from a detached perspective. I think some of the way in which people were being able to be manipulated in the rest of the country around 9/11 was because they saw it on television. I don't think we can ignore that.

CELIA FISHER: That's a good point.

CLARK McCAULEY: Just a couple of thoughts. One is back and forth on this panel is the distinction between an individual identity and a group identity, and what happens at one level is not the same as what happens at the other. That's something social psychology is supposed to know about, though I would say we do a bad job communicating it to most people taking introductory psychology.

My one other thought is I think I'm going to try to write a paper now. It is going to be about those messages, those last messages from the cell phones, because I think it's quite like Atta's Manual. Do you maybe remember, some of you? Not really anybody believes Atta wrote it, but it was a kind of a procedural, devotional text that was found in the baggage of several of the 9/11 attackers. What's interesting is what's not there. There is no litany of victimization, anger, hate. I'm going to try to make something of that parallel, which I never thought about until today. So I'm very grateful for this panel.

IRWIN KULA: I'll do the music. I agree with everybody there. We are not going to be able to separate this religion thing. It's part of what the country is. Whether we use it as rationalization, whether we use it as a depth dimension, it's all part of it. I would say what we are going to have to do is try to figure out greater integration in how we work with religion. It turns out religion has, at least in this way that I'm going to talk about, two roles: one is translated and one is transformative.

Translated means it roots and anchors you exactly where your psycho-spiritual development is. So if you're egocentric, if you're ethnocentric, if you're socio-centric, world-centric, cosmic-centric — whatever level of psycho-spiritual development you are on, religion roots you to that because it actually supports your identity, both personal and collective.

There is another role for religion, which is transformative. It blows up the categories in the hope that you will leap to a new level. So all the founder religion stories are all stories in which people who are at one level of psycho-spiritual development have some sort of experience and the experience jettisons in a quantum leap — because you can't just do A, B, C, D, E, F equals G — it's some kind of quantum leap into some next level.

That's one of the reasons these final cell phone conversations are so important to me, because the juxtaposition of what you would expect — retribution, all that — right at the moment of death, these are people who are having some kind of quantum move. We haven't done the study, but we don't know what they were like the day before. But chances are they weren't all at that psycho-spiritual development to be able to love at that moment. It's just not possible. So something happens in these moments where we move.

If you teach religion in an ethnocentric way, you will wind up with unbelievable ethnocentric combustibility. If you teach religion in a socio-centric way, if you teach religion in a cosmic-centric way, if you teach religion to a three-year-old that never gets past a three-year-old's egocentricity, you're going to have a very egocentric, narcissistic religion.

That has to do with the kinds of gods that you wind up creating, which is what we're doing anyhow. So we have to do much better in our rabbinical schools. Maybe the ministers are doing better and the seminaries are doing better in the Catholic tradition. But in the rabbinical school we don't deal with any of that psycho-spiritual development relative to the religion they are being taught.

CELIA FISHER: Thank you. Margaret?

MARGARET WALKER: I'd just like to say that I wouldn't at all have expected to hear retributive outcries and demands in these cell phone conversations. I mean that's not the position from which one says, "I want to get back at them." These people are saying good-bye to their loved ones.

But it's a broader point which I'd just like to clarify. The demand for accountability is not instantaneous. I think, as Lisa pointed out, the people most directly harmed are apt to be numb, apt to deal with despair, apt to deal with guilt and shame — paradoxically but invariably — and so on. It can take, not just time, but it can take inter-generational time, for people to be safe enough in a sense to start saying, "We really do have to hold someone responsible and we really do have to stand up for and stand on those standards."

CELIA FISHER: Lisa?

LISA CATALDO: I just wanted to comment back to Jim's comment about the non-New Yorkers or the rest of the country sort of co-opting the pain and suffering and then being the ones who were seeking payback or revenge. I think we can elaborate the idea of witness in a lot of different ways.

One thing that the trauma survivor needs is someone who can be a witness and intervenes to stop or prevent the trauma from happening. But I also think that, in sort of a healing mode, this idea of a container that Irwin was talking about — you know, it has to be a really big container and it has to be a witness that in the end just holds the desire for revenge and destruction and doesn't go out and perpetrate it. I think that's one way to think about what happened, because it was such a reactive response. I just want to also echo what Margaret says. It takes a really long time to process, individually or collectively, trauma, and often generations.

IRWIN KULA: I'm not a political scientist. We shouldn't, though, make believe that there weren't very significant interests in not having certain accountability questions from a political perspective.

LISA CATALDO: Oh, absolutely.

IRWIN KULA: Those do damage because the witness that people need, the witness of accountability that people need, they need it from the public culture. If no one from the CIA gets fired, no one from — and again I'm not looking for the scapegoat, but I'm looking for the questions. We're not capable of asking any of those questions culturally for a lot of good reasons, because we would have found the unraveling that I'm talking about of the social contract happened well before 9/11. And it's not a cause/effect, but it's an accountability issue.

CELIA FISHER: Let me say that in the service of people being hungry, this is a great topic, I think, to take up on our final panel when we're all here and talking about perhaps getting more into politics, if that is what people are interested in, in terms of responsibility. This was amazing. Thank you.

Just a few things. Lunch is outside. We were supposed to be back at 1:15. I'll give you until 1:20, very generous. If there aren't enough tables, you can go downstairs. There's a cafeteria that you can take your food to. [Break: 12:33 p.m.]