

The Story of **ALWAYS LOST: A Meditation on War** Nationally Touring Arts & Humanities Exhibition



www.wnc.edu/always_lost/

In fall 2008, Western Nevada College sociology professor Don Carlson was stopped in his tracks by The New York Times' Roster of the Dead: "Four thousand faces of American military who perished in Iraq stared at me. I realized that this war has been one of the most impersonal was the U.S. ever fought." With that in mind, Carlson and English professor Marilee Swirczek envisioned a photography and poetry exhibition to personalize Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. What began as a classroom project at a small college in a small American town has become a sacred space in which to contemplate the personal collective costs of war.

FROM THE ALWAYS LOST LITERARY COLLECTION

Listen

These soldiers were all children once:
smooth faces, fat thighs, sleep
so complete, anxious mothers listened crib-side
to ensure they still breathed.

First smiles—intentional, accurate—
bled spring into winter's grasp. Eyes and fits,
they wrestled tomorrow from now, rolling crawling
knowing, like light precedes sound,
the nature of things, the decency.

They stood in that first pair of shoes, released
supports, leaned into the wind of unknowing,
wobble that first step toward war—
toward sleep so complete, mothers
still leaning,
listening.

—Teresa Breeden

Always Lost: A Meditation on War
An Ongoing Exhibit at VFW Post 2313
890 A St, Hawthorne, NV 89415

HOURS:

Saturday	5–7PM
Sunday	5–7PM
Monday	5–7PM
Tuesday	5–7PM
Wednesday	5–7PM
Thursday	5–7PM
Friday	5–7PM



FROM THE MEDITATIONS

The dead of the battlefield come to us
very rarely, even in dreams. We see the
list in the morning paper at breakfast,
but dismiss its recollection with coffee...
It is like a funeral next door...It attracts
your attention but does not enlist your
sympathy. But it is very different when
the hearse stops at your own door, and
the corpse is carried out over your own
threshold.

**"Brady's Photographs:
Pictures of the Dead of Antietam"**
The New York Times, October 20, 1862

War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest
of things; the decayed and degraded state
of moral and patriotic feeling which
thinks nothing worth a war is worse...
A man who has nothing for which he is
willing to fight, nothing for which he
cares more than his personal safety, is a
miserable creature who has no chance of
being free, unless made and kept so by the
exertions of better men than himself.

John Stuart Mill
Fraser's Magazine, February 1862

The most complex and dangerous conflicts,
the most harrowing operations, and the
most deadly wars, occur in the head.

Anthony Swofford, Corporal, USMC
The Persian Gulf War
Jarhead, 2003

ALWAYS LOST: A Meditation on War
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