frame for my emotions, that of fighting back, which I had in me and didn't know I had. What followed were trips to the convent where I had been in hiding and finding relatives in Israel.

Memory is meaningless without feelings, though these are often hidden from consciousness. The first time I was asked to speak to a high school class about my experience was in the early 1990s. I thought the students would be interested in hearing about a 1943 incident in Nice, France, after the Germans had just entered the town. As best I recollect, I was in first grade. The Germans asked the class, "Who is Jewish?" I hesitated and did not raise my hand -- conflicted between the feeling I should tell the truth before a teacher and vaguely feeling a sense of danger. My Jewish friend had raised her hand, and she and her family were deported a few days later. This was an incident I had hardly ever thought about and had never told before. I thought I had no feelings about it, but speaking to the class, it became alive again and I started to cry uncontrollably. My psychic defenses against the emotions I had faced as a young child were breaking down. Perhaps I was finally facing my history. I had started mourning. The class listened quietly.

In a very different vein, some years later I was addressing another class, with a young German man who chose to work with Holocaust survivors in lieu of army service in his homeland, when a student asked, "Do you hate Germans?" "Yes," I unhesitatingly answered, only to look at the young German and realize the absurdity of my answer. Of course I didn't hate him. I was simply totally stuck in time by my old emotion of hate. This meeting was part of the program, Facing History and Ourselves (www.facinghistory.org), which works with teachers to help raise awareness about prejudice and intolerance in their students. It worked for me as well.

Not wanting to impose my old hatred on the young German freed me and gave me a burst of energy: I was ready to deal not just with my own history and sufferings, but with the history and evolution of the "other." I was ready to go beyond myself and the history of the Jews. My pressing question became, "How did the Germans deal with the war?" This started an ongoing inquiry into the human face of Germany -- its post war history and struggles. Without being totally aware of it, I was on a path to a sense of reconciliation that would take me beyond hatred.

Suddenly I wanted to understand it all. It was such a liberating, even triumphant, feeling. I felt that repression of emotion and memory, as well as hatred, had had a crushing effect on me and I wanted to leave them behind. I was now free to go on to other issues in exploring the Second World War and its impact, including: the struggles of different countries and their peoples, the role of the Catholic Church, and issues of obedience, empathy, responsibility, and, finally, hatred and reconciliation. From my own vantage point, I could tell the story of the war. Survivors' struggles with memory can give others a historical context for looking at how people, institutions, and nations struggle with their strong emotions and their evolving memory of the war. In a way we all had something in common.

In "The Holocaust, an Evolving Memory," I re-create history in the context of my feelings about "telling the story." Telling the story has facilitated integrating strong emotions into remembering, understanding, and recounting my past and that of those who have shared the experience of Nazi genocide. Remembering and re-creating history personally is important, with the ability to tell and be heard an essential part of it.

Flora Hogman, PhD, *a psychologist in private practice in Manhattan, is a Research Associate of the Psychohistory Forum and an adjunct faculty member at New School University. She has done extensive research on trauma and identity in cross-generational studies of Holocaust survivors, and their children and grandchildren, and has organized an ongoing support group for hidden children of the Holocaust. In 1998 she edited the Psychoanalytic Review's special issue, "Resilience in Ethnic Experiences with Massive Trauma and Violence." Dr. Hogman may be reached at <HogmanF@newschool.edu>.* ❑

A Fireman's Wife: How 9/11 Changed My Feelings

Cristina Stearns
Ramapo College of New Jersey

It's three a.m. and I am sleeping well in my bed when, all of a sudden, a loud, squelching noise starts pulsating through my bedroom. "Fire department announcing a rehire for one truck company, a rehire for one truck company, zero three hundred hours." I squeeze my eyes shut and hope he has

not heard it. Then his voice, "Stearns here, yeah I'm in. ETA ten minutes." After a few minutes of scrambling sounds, a familiar cheek is on mine. "Gotta go to work, hon. I'll be back."

That's how it has always been in our home. That is, every time that something is burning in the towns that my husband, Dan, serves as a fireman. God, I have hated that perturbing noise, and the way it beckons him like one of those sirens you read about in Greek mythology. I guess my word would be *resent.* I resented that noise and its outcome: I would be left alone in our bed in the middle of the night so that the man I married -- the one who promised to be there for me -- could go and risk his life for strangers.

I resented that I had to go to endless social events without him and the number of times I had to say, "He's at work." I could not stand the thought that my husband shared a bond with other human beings, one that always competed with ours, one that I could never be a part of. The fact that others could see Dan as this amazing, selfless human being, while I felt betrayed every time he picked "them" over me, ate my heart out all the time. Most of all, I resented myself for not being able to see those things.

Then I lost something of my husband on September 11, 2001. I lost the man who was spirited, bouncing out of bed at night to answer recalls, talking incessantly about his job. His love for it was still there, but he was different about it: serious, somber. He went to Ground Zero that day, and for the two days that followed, experiencing something that for three months he kept bottled inside. September 11 and its aftermath brought intense suffering for Dan and his crew. Aside from what they experienced, they lost friends, men like brothers -- over 300 of them. Dan went to an endless number of funerals, even those of firefighters he did not know. I guess it was his way (and the way of all firefighters) of making it up to those lost friends, co-workers, brothers. A "Thanks" for answering the call on September 11 and taking the fall.

I saw my husband begin to question his mortality, to accept all of the negative possibilities of his job, instead of just focusing on the glory. I saw a lot of sadness and anxiety in him, and I felt a lot of his sleepless nights from my side of the bed. The worst was the silence. He would not talk about anything that happened that day with anyone. He refused and got angry at suggestions of counseling. Yet the whole time he tried desperately to make me believe that he was okay; he never wanted me to worry.

Then one day, I was prompted to stop feeling so negatively about his job, lifestyle, and choices, because of something I believe to this day is quite remarkable. On the day Dan decided to talk about what happened to him on September 11, he didn't go to counseling, or to his very trusted firefighter brothers at work; he came to me. He picked *me.*

September 11 changed our marriage. Actually, it changed me -- our marriage has always been good. I just did not want to see myself in the role of "second," sometimes, and took his job to heart every time he tried to do it. Through witnessing Dan's actions during that week and his reactions afterwards, I understand why his dedication and involvement in his job is necessary and crucial to his success in it. The nature of firefighting is to live each day as if it is the last, and to take each job with full responsibility. For the people in his profession, if they miss a job that turns bad and their brothers die, they have to survive, not knowing if their presence would have been the difference that saved their brothers' lives. For Dan, that is much worse than surviving at all. I respect him fully for that. I needed to ask myself what mattered more: my resentments or his peace of mind in knowing he is doing what feels right to him. His peace won out over my resentment.

Nowadays, we talk about other things instead of the firehouse: having a child, buying a home -- things that normal couples talk about. I still resent the loud noise of the pager at night, and I still worry about him all the time, but I remind myself that his intentions are always the best and that he is careful. I still have to say the one thing I have always said to him before he starts a shift or answers a recall: "Remember, Dan, you have a wife waiting for you at home." And I have finally realized that he does.

Cristina Stearns *is an honor student of nursing at Ramapo College of New Jersey, who will graduate with a BSN in May. In 2002 she was inspired to write this article while taking Professor Elovitz' senior seminar, September 11 and the Psychology of Mourning. She may be reached at <camps09@aol.com>.* ❑

CFP: "Classics of Psychohistory and Psychobiography," June 2003, see page 209