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presents
the Benjamin Botkin Folklife Lecture Series
AN ACQUISITIONS & PRESENTATION PROJECT

“WE’RE NOT LEAVING”: RESPONDERS’ ORAL HISTORIES REDEFINE 9/11



DR. BENJAMIN LUFT
PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE
AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
AT STONY BROOK

Thursday
November 10, 2011
12 NOON - 1:00 PM
Mary Pickford Theater
Third Floor, James Madison Building
Library of Congress
101 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, DC

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TO THE PUBLIC**

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“WE’RE NOT LEAVING”: RESPONDERS’ ORAL HISTORIES REDEFINE 9/11

In this talk, Dr. Benjamin Luft, Professor of Medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and founder of the Long Island World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Center, which follows approximately 6,000 responders to the 9/11 disaster, will discuss the oral histories he has collected as part of his Center’s mission. These oral histories, told from the vantage point of World Trade Center disaster workers - police officers, firefighters, construction workers, and other volunteers at the site - form the basis of Luft’s powerful new book, *We’re Not Leaving: 9/11 Responders Tell Their Stories of Courage, Sacrifice, and Renewal*. Dr. Luft’s oral histories form part of a larger World Trade Center History Project at the Long Island World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Center. They have served as a basis for a documentary created in collaboration with public television stations WLIW21 and WNET13, as well as the independent documentary film, *9/11: An American Requiem*, which debuted at the 2011 Stony Brook Film Festival. In addition, Dr. Luft has established a website, www.911respondersremember.org, where people can view excerpts from the interviews and learn more about the project. Due to the quality and historical importance of these first-person narratives, the American Folklife Center has expressed an interest in serving as the repository for Dr. Luft’s oral histories upon completion of his project in September 2012, and has worked with Dr. Luft on archiving and interviewing methodologies for the project.

Dr. Benjamin J. Luft is the Edmund D. Pellegrino Professor of Medicine at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and an internationally recognized expert in the treatment of Lyme disease and AIDS-related conditions. He has been at the forefront of

developing new diagnostic tests and therapeutics based on a fundamental understanding of the patient and the disease process, and the formation of multidisciplinary teams of physicians, molecular biologists, chemists, evolutionists, and physicists. His work has contributed to the development of many of the modalities that are used in the treatment of both toxoplasmosis and Lyme disease.

Shortly after the 9/11 disaster, Luft and colleagues established the Long Island World Trade Center Medical Monitoring and Treatment Center at SUNY Stony Brook, which has been an incubator of inventive and empathetic “team care” programs for responders that have benefited not only its patients, but medical students, the local community, and society at large. Since 2008, Luft has offered at the Center a successful seminar for medical students called “9/11: The Anatomy of a Health Care Disaster,” which features experts from a variety of disciplines, including lawyers, ministers, philosophers, social workers, psychiatrists, economists, industrial hygienists, and others who present and mentor the medical students in a kaleidoscope of viewpoints on the disaster.

The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 and placed at the Library of Congress to “preserve and present American Folklife” through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, public programs, and training. The Center includes the American Folklife Center Archive of folk culture, which was established in 1928 and is now one of the largest collections of ethnographic material from the United States and around the world. Please visit our web site: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>.

