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The Rise and False of Confederate Monuments

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The Rise and False of Confederate Monuments

An Abstract of a Thesis in
Museum Studies

by
Julia M. Hamilton

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of:

Master of Arts
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State University of New York
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Department of History and Social Studies Education

Abstract of Thesis

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Removing Confederate monuments in the United States has caused a racist, violent, and deadly backlash. Those who are against removing Confederate monuments make claims that doing so is erasing history and culture. This thesis argues that removing these monuments corrects history because Confederate monuments are not historically accurate. Factual historic evidence is provided as well as literature to support this claim. Case studies are provided that explore different institutional responses to racist Confederate monuments and problematic museum displays. This paper explores the responsibility that historic public spaces must ensure accurate information is available to the American public.

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Introduction

A building without a foundation will crumble, a boat with a hole will sink, a car without gas will not drive, and a monument without truth will be removed. In recent years public monuments, specifically Confederate monuments, have been called into question, and they face the judge and jury of American citizens. Although there are conflicting opinions and responses to removing these statues, the side that supports the removal prevails. The removal of Confederate statues signifies a new social and cultural awareness evolving in the United States that ought to have happened long ago. Confederate monuments are problematic for many reasons. They are visual reminders of the horrors of slavery and a reminder of the people who fought to keep it in place. These statues also represent the systemic racism that continues in the United States. For some, these are not sufficient reasons to remove a statue, rationalizing that removing these statues is erasing history and heritage. As a white woman, I can empathize but not fully imagine the cruel history of enslavement. However, I believe it would be harrowing when people deny your pain and personal experiences. This thesis aims to present the reasoning that removing statues is, in fact, not an erasure of history or heritage; it is a correction that needs to be made. This thesis will inform readers of why removing statues is a correction, a significant step to make public history more accurate. Before these reasons are explained, appropriate context about this topic needs to be given.

First, I selected this topic for my Museum Studies Master's Thesis after reading an excerpt from *Surveying the American Icon* that disturbed me to my core. *Rushmore--Another Look: Surveying the American Icon* by Jim Pomeroy ignited my interest in monuments. Pomeroy explains some of the falsehoods demonstrated at the Mount Rushmore site in his work. This information was alarming to me because I know that Mt. Rushmore is a National Park Service

site which is a service that I hold in very high regard. Throughout this short essay, Pomeroy gives a detailed description of what one might expect or experience during a visit to Mt. Rushmore and highlights the falsehoods and omissions. Pomeroy explains this perfectly: "The mighty program is presented in the amphitheater. A patriotic chat from a ranger, four faces on a mountain, a twenty-minute film, and a mass singing of the star-spangled banner are climaxed by the garish lighting of the carving."[1] Based on this description, Mt. Rushmore, and the programming there appears to be more propaganda than an educational experience. Pomeroy begins to discuss his analysis of Mt. Rushmore and poses the question, "How can one of the most pervasive symbols in our culture function with vast gaps of information regarding intention, authorship, location, and vintage?"[2] Pomeroy discusses that this particular information is available but simply ignored. He explains the function of a myth and its relation to Mt. Rushmore: "Myth's basic function is to naturalize problematic contradictory elements of a culture—to speak ideology which itself is constituted by a large set of shifting relative values drawn from a constantly permuting history. Increased repetition and systemization reinforce this naturalness."[3] The idea of the myth explains how Mt. Rushmore continues to perpetuate a false meaning and importance to people. Pomeroy gives some background about Mt. Rushmore and explains some of the significant issues that shape his interpretation of this site. First, he explains that the artist who designed and carved the monument was Gutzon Borglum, who had connections to the Ku Klux Klan. Borglum corresponded with the Grand Wizard of the KKK and had antisemitic beliefs. Another issue with Mt. Rushmore is its location. The land belongs to the Indigenous Peoples who lived in that area. The people who decided on the site of Mt. Rushmore

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[1] Jim Pomeroy, "Selections from *Rushmore Another Look: Surveying the American Icon* (with an Afterword), in *Critical Issues in Public Art: Content, Context, and Controversy* (Smithsonian Books, 1992),44.
[2]Ibid, 47.
[3] Ibid,48.

broke a land treaty between the United States and the Indigenous Peoples of the Black Hill Mountains.

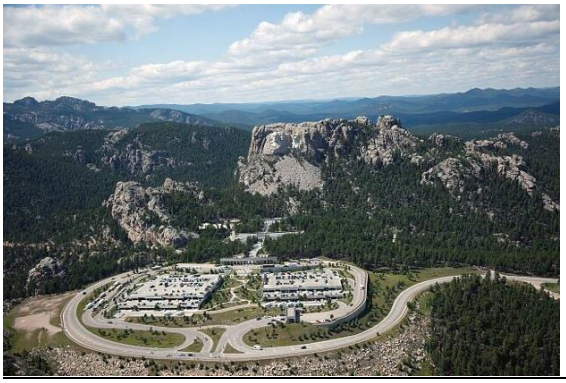

Figure 1. Aerial View of Mt. Rushmore
Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

Figure 2: View of Mt. Rushmore
Source: Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, National Parks Service

This information is not available at the Mt. Rushmore site or on the Mt. Rushmore website. The analysis that Pomeroy offers about Mt. Rushmore also applies to Confederate monuments. Confederate monuments perpetuate falsehoods and myths and omit history and facts. After learning the suppressive history of Mt. Rushmore and being aware of related issues about public monuments and social justice, I decided to focus my investigation for this thesis on Confederate monuments, their history, how they promulgate false narratives, and the issues surrounding their removal.

Understanding the social and political environment of the United States is key to understanding the issues with Confederate monuments. The horrible violent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 present a turning point in the battle of monuments and social justice in the United States. It is not the first time a white nationalist rally has happened in the United States and, indeed, not the first time that people have been upset about removing a statue. A far-right group protested against the removal of a Confederate monument. “The planned rally

was promoted as “Unite the Right,” and its organizers and critics said they expected one of the largest gatherings of white nationalists in recent times, attracting groups like the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazis.”[4] The protest turned violent and deadly. “Turmoil began on Friday night when white nationalists on the campus of the University of Virginia were waving Confederate battle flags and chanting Nazi-era slogans.”[5] Protesters against the removal of Confederate monuments clashed with counter-protesters. A man from the white nationalist protest drove his car into a crowd of peaceful counter-protesters, killing a woman. There are attachments to Confederate monuments that run deep in people opposed to their removal. At its roots is the prejudiced belief in white supremacy. A supposed "attack" on white supremacy is met with fearmongering and threats of violence, such as the "Unite the Right" rally. A Confederate statue is like the part of an iceberg you can see above water. The more significant issue, like most of the iceberg’s mass, is beneath the surface of the water. In the case of public monuments, white supremacy and racism made it possible for these statues to be erected in the first place.

Figure 3. Statue Robert E. Lee, Richmond
Source: Wikimedia Commons

[4] Sheryl Gay Stolberg, “Man Charged after White Nationalist Rally in Charlottesville Ends In Deadly Violence,” *The New York Times* (August 12, 2017), https://www,nytimes.com/2017/08/12/us/charlottesville-protest-white-nationalist.html.

[5] Sheryl Gay Stolberg, “Man Charged After White Nationalist Rally in Charlottesville Ends In Deadly Violence,” *The New York Times* (August 12, 2017). https://www,nytimes.com/2017/08/12/us/charlottesville-protest-white-nationalist.html.

Figure 4. Counter-Protesters Against White Nationalists Source: *Time*	Figure 5. A Man Attending a "Unite the Right Rally" Source: *Time*

The majority of this paper will focus on Confederate monuments and the issues surrounding their removal. Guidelines will provide advice for museums and public history institutions about changing the monument landscape of America and present factual information while doing so. Research reveals the suppressed reasons these statues were created and the rationale for why it is necessary to remove them. The context will examine the importance of public space and how it serves the surrounding community. The sections of this paper include Confederate monument background, monument history, case studies, and suggestions and ideas for museum work that would change the way monuments are presented and interpreted. It is essential to understand that if a community has a monument representing a historical theme or individual, efforts must be made to ensure the accuracy of the message it conveys. They should adopt guidelines about presenting history in a public space based on museums' established procedures and methods. Experts should be consulted when addressing monuments.

Monuments are challenging to address because there are many opinions on how they should be treated. People are passionate about what to do with monuments, especially Confederate monuments, because of the emotional connection that has been inherited from past

generations. People opposed to removing monuments often argue that when they are removed, history is being erased, or they claim it is an attack on their culture. The fact is that monuments have been coming down in the United States since July 9, 1776.[6] Five days after the Declaration of Independence was signed, a statue of King George III was toppled. Since the formation of the United States, activists have been taking down monuments that do not align with the country's current values. Taking down Confederate monuments is not erasing history because they never represented the real history and do not align with national values by propagating false and oppressive principles.

[6] National Monument Audit-Monument Lab, accessed February 28, 2022, https://monumentlab.com/projects/national-monument-audit.

Part I: Monument Background

Monuments are often used as a physical representation of public history and a collective memory held by the community where the monument stands. These two concepts work hand in hand to give the public a general sense of a unanimous common history. It is vital to understand the reasons for the removal of Confederate monuments. Public history and collective memory are at the center of this issue.

Public history is essential to the development of every community. People must understand their past and the past of others and have ownership of their past. It creates a sense of transparency and inclusion in public historical projects. The National Council on Public History (NCPH) describes public history as:

- "the many and diverse ways in which history is put to work in the world."[7]
- "Public history is usually defined as history beyond the traditional classroom walls."[8] In its description, the NCPH states that "all good public history rests on sound scholarship,"[9] a requirement established for public history and public history projects.
- "public historians routinely engage in collaborative work with community members, stakeholders, and professional colleagues, and some contend that collaboration is a fundamental and defining characteristic of what public historians do."[10]
- This website also stressed the importance of shared authority and interdisciplinary work and research in public history.

[7] "About the Field," National Council on Public History, accessed March 21, 2022, https://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/about-the-field/#0.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

The ideas that the NCPH explains are essential to keep in mind because readers will see how the concept of public history impacts the surrounding community, especially when presented in the format of a monument. When public history is executed correctly, it benefits the community in more ways than one. It creates a sense of connectedness and brings together people with different beliefs and backgrounds. It also works to educate the community with accurate and well-researched information. Public history can educate people and create a sense of unity through shared history and histories belonging to others. Readers will experience an instance of public history used to manipulate the community into an incorrect belief of the past. This misuse of incorporating a public history into the Southern community benefitted only one portion of the community. It was used to maintain control and power over another part of the community. This example of public authority leads to the next concept that should be included in the discussion of monuments which is collective memory.

The use and implementation of public history over time creates a collective memory. This is what happened in the case of Confederate monuments. "Collective memory refers to how groups remember their past," according to the article, "The Power of Collective Memory: What do Large Groups of People Remember -- and Forget?" by Henry Roediger III and Andrew Desoto.[11] They explain that "collective memories may occur at more local levels, too. Families may remember their history or a particular salient event (e.g., a vacation in an exotic locale). Each of us has some sort of collective memory for any important social group we belong to."[12] After the Civil War and as a response to Reconstruction, extensive work went into cultivating the

[11] Andrew Desoto, Henry L. Roediger, "The Power of Collective Memory," *Scientific American* (Scientific American, June 28, 2016), https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-power-of-collective-memory/.
[12] Ibid.

public memory of the South. It is clearly the case when looking back at the actions of the groups who were involved in the construction and erection of Confederate monuments. The groups involved deliberately presented their "memory" of the Civil War and life before the war began. The public history presented in the South during these different periods was used to invoke a collective memory that is a highly romanticized and nostalgic view of the past. The purpose of this romantic view of the past becoming the agreed-upon narrative was to maintain the racist and white supremacist society. It is important to note that those who agreed on this narrative were the white majority. This highly emotional recollection of the past strengthened the belief in the false history presented in Confederate monuments. There are people who continue to have the same romanticized collective memory to this day; the people who believe this memory are predominately white Southerners. It is part of the identity of millions of people who embrace claims that Confederate monuments are part of their culture. Many of the people making these claims also argue that removing these monuments erases history. This cannot be the case because these monuments do not represent accurate history. Removing these monuments corrects history. This article explains that "understanding a country's memories is to grasp something essential about their national identity and outlook."[13] There is no accurate unified collective memory in the present-day United States, and it may never be possible to have one. Still, at a base level, the public monuments in the United States that are representative of United States' history should represent an accurate and unified collective memory. The authors of this article explain that "collective memories of a people can change over generations" and that "collective national memories are not fixed but change with the times."[14] The collective memory in the United States

[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.

has begun to evolve, and the issues that these statues represent are being called out. If this evolution continues, the collective memory of the United States will start to change. This article explains that "collective remembering implies that collective forgetting also occurs."[15] Removing Confederate monuments and putting in the work to present an accurate and more inclusive history in public spaces will help the evolution of our collective memory continue. However, monuments are just the tip of the iceberg. The real issues lie beneath the surface and are woven into the social, economic, and political infrastructure of the United States. The white supremacy and racism that these monuments were built to perpetuate exist systemically in these different areas that affect people in the United States.

Statutes are interpreted in many ways. Understanding the significance of these interpretations will help outline the issues with Confederate statues. A typical representation of Confederate monuments is the equestrian statue motif. The use of the equestrian statue imagery dates to antiquity when ancient Roman Emperors were depicted in this way. An article from the *JSTOR Art History* newsletter explains the importance and prevalence of equestrian statues. "City squares and parks around the world are packed with equestrian statues. From emperors and kings to generals and political leaders, a cavalcade of bronze riders' strides through our public space…it's a commanding visual of action and power."[16] The symbol of the equestrian statue represents a triumphant heroic figure. The equestrian statue motif has been repeated so many times that its meaning has become ubiquitous to those who view a statue on horseback. The public sees the figure represented as heroic and victorious despite the reality that they are defeated traitors. Confederate monuments are intended to display the same themes, especially

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[15] Ibid.
[16] "Why Are Cities Filled with Metal Men on Horseback? - JSTOR." Accessed March 22, 2022. https://daily.jstor.org/why-are-cities-filled-with-metal-men-on-horseback/.

when Confederate generals are depicted on horseback. Those involved in creating these statues strategically used equestrian statues to represent their favorite figures. The local groups who took it upon themselves to erect Confederate monuments used the power of this symbol to push their message and ideology forward.

Monuments adorn big cities and small towns throughout the world. They are meant to memorialize and honor a significant person or event in that location. Monuments take on all shapes and sizes and can represent anything. Monuments can be a tool for remembering and learning, but we know that they are not always representative of the truth. Monuments should be accurate in the ideas they represent, and proper context should be included in the presentation of a monument. Monuments are potent symbols that can bring communities together or tear them apart. The goal of those involved in creating monuments should be to make sure that an accurate and inclusive story is being told.

Monument Lab and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation created the National Monument Audit to examine the existing monuments in the United States. This audit supplies data and analysis based on up-to-date information about the monuments in the United States. The preface of this report explains the function of monuments to "serve as places to harness public memory and acknowledge collective forgetfulness as twin forces holding up this nation."[17] In the case of Confederate monuments, the same monument has different meanings to different people. "The unstable nature of the term monument is a reminder that the power to convey past stories cannot be expressed through any single art form, outlet, or voice."[18] This represents the difficulty of relying on monuments to portray a complete history of a single topic. This report also explains

[17] "Key Findings," National Monument Audit - Monument Lab, accessed March 21, 2022, https://monumentlab.com/audit.
[18] Ibid.

that the definition of a monument and the purpose are different for many people. “The confusion over what a monument is, spurs bureaucratic and social turmoil, as we scramble to remember locally and collectively with disparate tools and objectives.”[19] The efforts to define a monument in this report are significant because this could lead to a more unified and inclusive way to deal with problematic monuments.

Monument Lab defines a monument as “a statement of power and presence in public.”[20] This definition is interesting because monuments can exert this power in a few different ways. First, a monument exerts influence with its content and its message. The physical presence that monuments demonstrate is the second exertion of the power that monuments produce. They are typically tall stone or metal structures that tower over the community. The most crucial effort of power that is worth examining is the power of those who erect the monument. “Generally, however, monuments across locations have been shaped by those with time, money, and officially sanctioned power to craft and elevate the past in their image.” [21] This is the case for Confederate monuments. The groups who put in the effort to display their ideology throughout the United States and call it truth exerted their self-serving financial and societal power. These groups erected monuments to preserve and perpetuate their approved narrative of the Civil War and life in the south. The Monument Audit explains that: “History does not live in statues--history lives between people. Monuments are not end-points for history, but touchstones between generations.”[22] Unfortunately, many generations have passed since the Civil War and the erection of Confederate monuments. It is time to remove and reimagine how monuments serve

[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid, 4.
[22] Ibid, 4.

the public of the United States. Instead of promoting a concrete message like the Confederate monuments of the past, public monuments can exist in new ways that we have not yet imagined.

The Monument Audit is transparent in conducting its research and analyzing its findings. The Audit explains that they learned about the "commemorative landscape" by examining monuments that are standing in the United States.[23] The project goal is clearly stated: "Transform the way our country's histories are told in public spaces and ensure that future generations inherit a commemorative landscape that venerates and reflects the vast, rich complexity of the American story."[24] The Monument Audit explains that the current monuments in the United States do not match the values of the United States and if that is something that we want as a country then we must change our monuments.[25]

The Monument Audit presents its critical findings as the following:

"1.) monuments have permanently changed,

2.) The monument landscape is overwhelmingly white and male,

3.) the most common features of American monuments reflect war and conquest,

4.) The story of the United States as told by our monuments misrepresents our history."[26]

These findings offer support to the reasoning for taking down Confederate monuments. This report makes the vital point that the "national monument audit reminds us that monuments are not timeless, permanent, or untouchable."[27] The American public should accept this pragmatic reality for past, present, and future monuments. They should understand that the meanings of monuments change over time. This audit also is beneficial in analyzing conservation reasons for

[23] Ibid, 5.
[24] Ibid, 5.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

removal, providing a scientific analysis of the materials used in constructing the statues and how they weather over time, and calls to action about how to respond. The audit explains that monuments are used as tools to control the narrative that is presented in public. Essentially those who are erecting monuments decide who and what is represented eliminating the opportunity for an accurate and inclusive public space.[28] This is precisely what Confederate monuments perpetuate. The civic groups who worked to create these monuments erected them to maintain a society where white privilege and racism prevail. Monuments are a physical reminder of their messages and standards for society. The discoveries of the audit offer concrete data and information that support the reasoning for the removal of Confederate monuments. Public history, collective memory, and monuments are entangled in social and political issues in America. These issues have been affecting America for over 200 years and are finally beginning to be undone.

Although these issues seem to justify the removal of Confederate monuments, it is vital to recognize other aspects of the counterargument; for example, many people have a strong emotional connection to the "history" connected to these monuments. The next section of this thesis will unpack the motives behind the erection of these monuments and debunk the "history" that so many claim to be connected to Confederate monuments. These monuments were an effort to restore and maintain the Southern way of life, Southern ideas about society, and the dynamic of the public. This is beneficial to the overall thesis research because it will provide insight into what is being preserved with these monuments.

[28] Ibid, 25.

Part II: History of Confederate Monuments, Roots, and Residue

Those who oppose the removal of Confederate monuments often claim that removing them is erasing history. Many argue that taking away these monuments is an act of omission, but the existence of these statues is an act of strategic amnesia. This is because Confederate monuments are rooted in revisionist history. These monuments are symbols of white supremacy and were erected to recreate and maintain the social hierarchy of the pre-war era. White Southerners could not preserve their exact pre-war lifestyles like owning another human being; so, they did everything to continue their racist hold over their society. The loss of the Civil War brought about a great deal of shame and embarrassment to Southerners. The states that participated in secession and joined the Confederacy to fight to maintain their agrarian economy and continue to enslave people had to deal with the aftermath of the war. Of course, most Southerners living during the post-Civil War era would claim that the war was fought for "State's Rights" and not to maintain slavery.[29] There are two categories of this issue that are essential to understand. The first category is the roots of Lost Cause monuments, and the second is the residue that continues to permeate the United States today.

The efforts put into constructing Confederate monuments were so calculated and intense that their impact has left a lasting emotional residue in the minds of those opposed to removing these monuments. Readers will learn simultaneously about different sources of the roots of the emotional connection to Confederate monuments and why these roots are untrue and must be removed. Confederate monuments must be removed from their hearts like weeds in your garden, so they do not grow back. Addressing the origins of Confederate monuments obviously starts after the conclusion of the Civil War. Confederate monuments are the eyesore of American

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[29] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913*. Cary: Oxford University Press, USA, 2014.

public spaces, and their message permeates the social and political fabric of the United States. Typically, monuments are built to commemorate victorious figures or momentous occasions; however, Confederate monuments were created to maintain white supremacy. This section will outline how Southern “myth makers" used monuments and memorials to control the Confederacy's past, present, and future ideas and the “Lost Cause.” Rather than accept the loss of the war the Lost Cause was invented and implemented into the shared social narrative of the South. This constructed ideology claimed the South did not lose the war and the reasons for the war were justified. The inventors of the Lost Cause wanted to romanticize the prewar South ideas including white supremacy and the agrarian lifestyle being beneficial to everyone including enslaved people. After the Civil War and Reconstruction, the United States underwent a monument boom. Monuments dedicated to the Southern veterans and generals of the Civil War were erected to remind us of a victorious past that did not happen. The efforts that went into the perpetuation of the Lost Cause were quite extreme. The social and emotional connection to the monuments is felt today, especially when the monuments are being taken down.

The advent of the Lost Cause occurred because of a gut punch to an entire social and cultural identity of the Southern United States. That gut punch was the devastating loss of the Civil War. The Southerners lost hundreds of thousands of soldiers as well as the loss of their ability to enslave other human beings. To ensure the population of the South that this war was not fought for no reason at all, the Lost Cause was created to ease the embarrassment and boost pride and morale in the South. Gaines Foster, the author of *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, explains the South's atmosphere post-Civil War. He explains that some Southerners did not consider the result of the war a loss; but they only recognized that they fought against the North. Foster states that between 1865 and 1913, “Their interpretation emerged in what has come to be called the

Lost Cause, the post-war writings, and activities that perpetuated the memory of the Confederacy."[30] Foster also describes a nonchalance about the result of the war and implies that a younger generation is not as attached to the Old South as older generations might have been. "They remembered the battle but had forgotten its pain, cost, and issues."[31] This was why the Lost Cause was infused into Southern society. One of the Lost Cause building blocks was the annual Memorial Day celebrations and the growing participation in groups that made it their mission to erect monuments dedicated to maintaining the ideals of "The Old South" and perpetuating the Lost Cause. This text aligns with other resources that have been utilized by explaining the different social groups that supported and perpetuated the Lost Cause. These groups include the Southern Historical Society, memorial associations, United Confederate Veterans, and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. They promoted the Lost Cause and ensured that the common understanding of the loss of the war put a positive and victorious spin on the Civil War's reason and outcome. [32] What started as what seemed like a coping mechanism became a skewed interpretation of the past. These celebrations and monuments became so prevalent that they were regarded as the truth and how the general Southern population understood history. "More Southerners understood their past through the ceremonial activities or rituals conducted by these groups than through anything else."[33] Foster stresses the importance of understanding who controlled the Lost Cause methods and message. He describes the "keepers of the past" and discusses that people understood they lost, but perhaps found ways to incorporate the course of the Old South into post-war life. Confederate monuments and the

[30] Ibid, 4.
[31] Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913*. Cary: Oxford University Press, USA, 2014. 4.
[32] Ibid, 4.
[33] Ibid, 4.

commemorative celebrations around them were the methods to perpetuate the Lost Cause. Foster outlines these tactics throughout his text and explains the dynamic between the Confederate commemoration groups and the general public of the South. Many Confederate war veterans joined the United Confederate Veterans, and every year, many people would come to a Memorial Day event and reunion. These annual Memorial Day ceremonies were a tool to keep the message of the Lost Cause alive. Foster identifies the Lost Cause as a crutch to ease the growing pains of social change. "Interpreting the significance and meaning of the Lost Cause through the use of the rhetoric of Confederate organizations differs somewhat from the more common attempt to understand Southern culture through its fiction." Foster offers readers a simple response to the Lost Cause that seems to downplay the malice that went into the efforts of this group: "To modern eyes that the Lost Cause appears excessive romanticism and at worst sheer craziness."[34]

On the surface, the Lost Cause appears to be a celebratory historic effort, but once the roots of this cause are understood, the sinister nature of building statues to maintain white supremacy is revealed. These monuments serve white Southerners as beacons of culture and history while simultaneously doing a disservice to any person of color or those who understand that these statues are not rooted in honest history. In his book, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves,* author, and Professor Kirk Savage writes: "Monuments attempt to mold a collective memory landscape, conserve what is worth remembering and discard the rest."[35] This is evident in Confederate monuments because the motive behind the monuments is a strategy to maintain a repressive social and political order.

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[34] Ibid, 4.

[35] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018.

Reeling from the loss of the Civil War, white women in the south took it upon themselves to pick up the pieces of a crumbled society and fabricated a past to bring them pride. These groups sowed seeds of visual and sculptural white supremacy and worked tirelessly to preserve and protect a culture that had already deteriorated after the end of the Civil War. Many texts discuss the Ladies Memorial Associations and their lengths to perpetuate the Lost Cause ideology. Karen Cox, the author of *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture,* paints a clear picture of the parameters of Ladies' Monument Associations. Cox discusses the role of white women during this era of monument building and explains that women were on the frontlines of the movement to control the narrative of the past and create what the present and future will be.[36] Faced with an identity and culture crisis, Ladies Memorial Associations and the different groups that formed later used romantic memories of the past to generate support for what they thought the "new" South should be.

> ...the daughters, as UDC [United Daughters of the Confederacy] members were known, raised the stakes of the Lost Cause by making it a movement about vindication and memorialization. They erected monuments and monitored history for "truthfulness" and sought to educate coming generations of white Southerners about the idyllic old South and just cause -states' rights.[37]

The elements that Ladies Memorial Associations and other groups wanted to display in their monuments were the myth of the Lost Cause, white supremacy, and states' rights.

To understand Confederate monuments and their power, one must understand the Lost Cause. As previously explained, the Lost Cause is a myth perpetuated by white Southerners, especially white women, to maintain social order in the South post-Civil War. The Lost Cause is

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[36] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2019.

[37] Ibid, 1.

a romantic view of the "Old South" and claims that the Civil War was fought to defend the state's rights and that those enslavers were benevolent supporters of those they enslaved. Defenders of the Lost Cause and Confederate monuments refuse to accept the truth of the cause of the war. Ladies Memorial Associations did the most work to perpetuate the myth. Constructing Confederate monuments was a way to illustrate the ideals of the Lost Cause, claiming that instead of honoring the Confederate soldiers, the monuments perpetuated white supremacy and a victory for states' rights. [38] Along with making up for the loss of the war and the rejection of accountability for being slave owners, and participating in an insurrection, white Southerners focused on maintaining the status quo of the social structure. The leaders of the Lost Cause made sure that the imagery represented in monuments reflected ideas of a patriarchal white supremacist society.[39] Once it became illegal to own enslaved people, white Southerners had to find a way to maintain their white supremacist social structure. This was done with the implementation of Jim Crow laws and using Confederate imagery like monuments depicting former generals to perpetuate the ideals of the Lost Cause. The past was presented in a glorified romantic way where the wealthy plantation owners were kind to their "faithful" enslaved workers.[40] The goal of the Lost Cause was a vindication of the Confederates. The women worked to create and maintain their constructed idea of what the Confederacy was and would be going forward. These women were working to maintain this constructed culture and made it their main priority.[41] Cox makes the intention of the Ladies Memorial Associations and the daughters of the Confederacy very clear: "The Daughters' idealization of white supremacy as an old South

[38] Ibid, 1.
[39] Ibid, 1.
[40] Ibid, 2.
[41] Ibid, 6.

custom that should remain intact is critical to understanding the racist implications of the lost cause relations."[42]

Another text that offers excellent insight into the motives of the Southern women's groups in the South is a chapter entitled "*A Strong Force of Ladies: Women, Politics and Confederate Memorial Associations in the 19c."* by Catherine Bishir. She establishes the social and political reasons for the actions of Confederate monument associations. Bishir deepens the roots of the Confederate monuments and elaborates on the work that Ladies' Monument Associations did, explaining that white women's groups in the South were responsible for fundraising and constructing Confederate monuments. Bishir agrees with Cox, but provides more details explaining, "These women and the organizations they led in the decade following the Civil War assumed important new roles in Southern Life."[43] This group was responsible for creating one of the first Confederate cemeteries. The LMA's [Ladies Memorial Association] goal when it came to adorn public spaces with Confederate monuments was intended to change and control the public narrative as positive and a celebratory atmosphere in the South. "Ladies Memorial Associations formed throughout the South in the 1860s played a crucial part in easing white Southerners' adjustment to loss and helping them regain hope for the future."[44] It is clear in the methods of LMAs that their goal was to install a message of white supremacy and romantic views of a time that allowed for the ownership of human beings. "LMAs took an early defining role in shaping public memory of the Lost Cause." [45] These goals in the construction of

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[42] Cox, 6.

[43]Cynthia J. Mills, Pamela H. Simpson, Karen L. Cox, and Catherine Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies: Women, Politics, and Confederate Memorial Associations in the 19th c..." Essay. In *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory / Edited by Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson; Foreword by Karen L. Cox*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2019. (3).

[44] Ibid, 4.

[45] Ibid, 4.

monuments in the South were to honor the Confederate dead and the living veterans. These monuments were a tool to bring together a divided society and create a common public narrative that would ease public tensions. To be clear, rekindling a divided community at this time only meant resolving tensions in the white community. The nation was divided, and these women wanted to bring back a peaceful environment to the community and put the war behind them. This only benefitted the white community. As a result of these ladies' groups and the construction of these monuments to honor that "Lost Cause," the historical narrative was controlled, and unfortunately, the public was controlled and to this day still believes the false narrative. "Through their use of symbols, ceremonies, and feminine appeals, the LMA and the National Confederate Monument Association [NCMA] played key roles in advancing and refining the Confederate tradition and reinforcing the social and political hierarchy."[46] Any African American citizen in the United States during this time could not forget about how the war changed society. First, many of these citizens were formerly enslaved, so this would not be a time to look back on fondly. Second, their societies pre-war and post-war were not built for African American success. Instead, post-war African Americans were forced to endure the Jim Crow era. Bishir also mentions that Confederate monuments were constructed well into the twentieth century, which seems to be more about maintaining control throughout the decades after the war rather than preserving and representing a historic time. This chapter elaborates on the efforts of Southern women's groups to establish a standard narrative or collective memory of the Lost Cause. Commonly, the construction of these monuments was an essential part of public community life. The initial unveiling of these monuments was celebrated with a huge ceremony,

[46] Ibid, 22.

and typically thereafter parades or celebrations would occur annually, "referred to as the most glorious day the old city has ever seen."[47]

These women's groups had a substantial influence on Southern societies. After the Civil War, a surge in the construction of monuments dedicated to the war's efforts resulted from their dedication to these projects. Editor and author Cynthia Mills, explains that the unveiling ceremonies of these monuments were another way to celebrate the ideas of the Lost Cause and made it something the community could participate in solidifying their beliefs in this myth.[48] The text refers to this group of people as "The Cult of the Lost Cause," an accurate description because Confederate monuments are used as indoctrination tools. More and more of these monuments were erected and interpreted as history and people began to believe that they were witnessing history. Dolly Blount Lamar, president of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Georgia Division, explained that memorials expressed in a permanent physical form the historical truth and spiritual and political ideals we would perpetuate.[49] These efforts to create a landscape of Confederate "history" solidify that these monuments are not accurately historical in nature, but rather manipulative tools to control the social structure of the time. "Social Memory throughout Europe and North America accordingly becomes associated with material culture as with intangible and rhetorical images of the past."[50] The issue of basing your view solely on the material sculpture of the United States is conforming to the intentions of those who put up those

[47] Cynthia J. Mills, Pamela H. Simpson, Karen L. Cox, and Catherine Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies: Women, Politics, and Confederate Memorial Associations in the 19th c..." Essay. In *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory / Edited by Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson; Foreword by Karen L. Cox*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2019. (3).
[48] Ibid, 64.
[49] Ibid, 65.
[50] Ibid, 66.

monuments. The foundation of Confederate monuments is built on romantic lies and a strategic view of the past.

Ladies Memorial Associations and other Confederate monument groups were also strategic in the content they were and were not presenting. Aside from depicting Confederate generals, these groups also controlled who put up monuments. "White Southerners created a landscape dense with totemic relics; Southern Blacks could never fix their memory in public spaces in the same manner or extent."[51] There was no room for any idea to be represented in public space other than what fell in line with the Lost Cause myth. If African American people were represented in the general public landscape, they would be described as enslaved people. This was another element of the Lost Cause; representing African American people as faithful enslaved people was a way to soften the harsh reality of what slavery was like.[52]

David Blight, the author of *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American History,* also discusses the notion of representing faithful enslaved people. He explains that "all major spokespersons for The Lost Cause could not develop their story of a heroic victimized South without the images of faithful slaves and benevolent enslavers."[53] Faithful slaves and benevolent masters are myths. They did not exist. There is no such thing as a kind slave owner. Enslaved people were not treated with decency or respect; they were treated as property. Wealthy, elite white Southerners were writing their history, silencing the horrors of the past, and whitewashing it with a romantic and lighthearted nostalgic view. White Southerners worked to maintain cultural control and determine what the past was and how it would be interpreted. The white

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[51] Ibid, 71.
[52] Ibid.

[53] David Blight, "Chapter 8: The Lost Cause and Causes Not," in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003). 260.

Southerners who were in control never went to formerly enslaved communities and descendants of these communities were never consulted or asked to share their memories or experiences of this time. This would go against the myth of the Lost Cause and weaken the cultural white supremacist control that was held over the South.[54] Beyond the public landscape, Ladies Memorial Associations also took it upon themselves to introduce the Lost Cause into classrooms as the last phase of the Civil War. LMAs of the South went to extreme measures to control the curricula that was taught in schools to maintain the Lost Cause narrative. These groups would censor school textbooks and pressure textbook publishers to ensure the longevity of their curated past.[55] Bringing the Lost Cause into schools was strategic on the part of LMAs because this fabricated historic narrative was taught as historic fact strengthening the belief of the Lost Cause at a young age. These children would ultimately grow up with the belief that what they learned in school was true. Since the actual war was lost by the South, this was one last effort to control at least the cultural and social atmosphere. If white Southerners could no longer enslave people, they could make every effort to hold down African American people by maintaining control over society with white supremacist actions such as controlling the historic narrative and erecting monuments to a losing side of the war. Several authors offer an insight into the behavior of different groups after the conclusion of the Civil War. Ladies Memorial Associations went through tremendous efforts to control the public narrative of the South. They presented monuments that symbolized a victorious and celebratory attitude and encouraged rallies and celebrations around their pedestals. They romanticized the glory days of enslavement and made

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[54] Cynthia J. Mills, Pamela H. Simpson, Karen L. Cox, and Catherine Bishir, "A Strong Force of Ladies: Women, Politics, and Confederate Memorial Associations in the 19th c..." Essay. In *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory / Edited by Cynthia Mills and Pamela H. Simpson; Foreword by Karen L. Cox*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2019. (71).
[55] Ibid, 71.

every effort to have the public believe these monuments represented history. They represented enslaved people with "benevolent" slave owners as fact which is false. The pressuring of textbook publishers and educators to present an approved narrative of the Civil War is another way the Lost Cause was used to maintain a social hierarchy in the South and control the historical narrative. These LMA tactics deepened the roots of the Lost Cause ideology, strengthened the racist rationalization for Confederate monuments, and continue to promote the false narrative of the Civil War today.

David Blight's *Race and Reunion* also explains how the Lost Cause was used as a weapon to maintain white supremacy in the South by controlling the narrative that is represented in public monuments. He describes Ladies Memorial Associations and their efforts to restore the Confederate White House into a museum as an example of the beginning of the Lost Cause movement. The restoration and opening of this museum are examples of the seeds of the Lost Cause being planted. This museum was described by Blight as filled with Confederate relics.[56] Blight has a powerful explanation of the Lost Cause as a "holy heritage, the story in which white Southerners would always nourish their fealty to traditions and honor the matchless bravery of their soldiers."[57] Blight's explanation is by far the most impactful because his definition provides the reader with the understanding of the shame and embarrassment that the South was facing as a society that lost a war that they started. Blight also highlights that Southern woman made it their mission to honor the memories of prewar life and Confederate soldiers.[58] One of the tactics that women's groups would utilize was nostalgia. The efforts of The Lost Cause were focused on

[56] David Blight, "Chapter 8: The Lost Cause and Causes Not," in *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003). 255.
[57] Ibid, 243.
[58] Ibid, 256.

romanticizing the past while creating fear and disdain for the future and any social changes that may come with it.

Blight describes the opening ceremony of the White House of the Confederacy and provides some of the speeches and rhetoric delivered to the crowd at the opening of this museum. A comparison to the Revolutionary War was made, defining Confederates as an extension of the revolutionary thinkers and soldiers. George Washington was used as an example of a rebel president because of his actions during the Revolutionary War. "The Revolution of 1861 was merely the continuation of 1776."[59] This connection was made to negate and hide the fact that the secession of the Southern United States was an insurrection rather than a revolution. The Lost Cause allows for falsehoods, racism, and white supremacy to hide in plain sight under the guise of history and culture. Blight includes a quote by Bradley T. Johnson, a Confederate general who was speaking at the opening of the White House of the Confederacy: "the great crime of the century was the emancipation of the Negroes."[60] This statement solidifies that the maintenance and preservation of Confederate sites and the erection of Confederate monuments was not about history, but about racism and maintaining a white supremacist social structure. These monuments were constructed to inform African American people that they would continue to be oppressed and controlled even though white people could no longer own them.

Blight solidifies ideas behind the Lost Cause, strengthening the argument that erecting Confederate monuments is a calculated effort rather than a homage to history. He affirms that the Lost Cause was a way for white Southerners to control the narrative that they wanted to be presented to the public. "For most white Southerners, the Lost Cause evolved into a language of

[59] Ibid, 257.
[60] Ibid, 257.

vindication and renewal, as well as an array of practices and public monuments through which they could solidify their Southerners, Southern pride, and Americanness."[61] Post-Civil War was a time of social and cultural uncertainty in the Southern United States. Monument builders of the South were working on fabricating a memory of the past to maintain control of the present and future. Most white Southerners were afraid of social and cultural change, and they did anything they could to prevent the difference or at least be in control of the evolution of society. As a result of this fear, the Lost Cause was created. The Lost Cause could be used as a social crutch rather than coming to terms with the horrors of pre-war life for enslaved people and the harsh reality of defeat in postwar life white Southerners put their efforts into perpetuating this message in any way they could.[62] The Lost Cause also armed those determined to control, if not destroy, the rise of African American people in the social structure. The ideas of the Lost Cause functioned as a safety net from the future and progression and essentially the truth of how the Civil War played out, in denial that former slaves were emancipated.

According to Blight, three entities took control over the Lost Cause and worked to push its agenda. Other authors previously mentioned specific monument association groups, but Blight takes the time to elaborate on their individual tactics during this monument building era. The first group was the United Confederate Veterans (UCV), founded in 1889. The second was a publication called *The Confederate Veteran,* founded in 1893 and edited in Nashville, Tennessee. The third group was the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) founded in 1894. These groups, among the monument association groups, made it their mission to control the narrative of the South and the history that they were creating. "Appealing to the interests of the ordinary

[61] Ibid, 226.
[62] Ibid, 266.

veteran, especially against the fears and trials of the 1890s economic collapse and political turmoil the UCV became a haven of comradeship and celebration for the full range of Lost Cause attitudes and rituals."[63] Blight explains the efforts that went into the monuments being built. Women's groups did not just pay for these statues and celebrations out of their own pockets; they had to lobby and fundraise to make it happen.

Along with fundraising, the women of the UDC also pressured textbook publishers and educators to teach their approved version of history. Other sources have previously explained this, but it is essential to remember that the Lost Cause permeated more than just the public landscape. For their cause to come to fruition and be everlasting, they had to be consistent with their work. These women effectively controlled the narrative and mythmaking because people are still attached to this "history" to this day. The women of the UDC took a grassroots approach to promote the Lost Cause. These women would raise money, lobby local and state politicians, and force their version of history into textbooks for school children.[64] The practices of these women, men, and publications are fear at their best. It is fear of growth, change, social development, and equality. Blight provides excellent examples of how the women of the UDC worked to create their approved narrative. He again mentions their efforts to lobby and work with state and local politicians and to deliver speeches and write in newspaper publications about their cause. It was like a rally for racism, except the racism was disguised as history. These women also took on the North and the presentation of the Civil War. They claimed that the narrative presented by the North was a conspiracy theory that they must protect. "When UDC women took up the cause of history, they did so as cultural guardians of their tribe, defenders of

[63] Ibid, 272.
[64] Ibid, 273.

a sacred past against Yankee-imposed ignorance and the forces of modernism."[65] Blight offers a powerful description of what the UDC accomplished that perfectly explains their motive. The UDC felt that it had to protect society from the truth of what happened before, during, and after the Civil War. These women worked to maintain the narrative of the Lost Cause and for generations people believed that the South was a victim of the North, and the war was fought because of an infringement on the constitution and not because of the emancipation of formerly enslaved people. The UDC maintained that the owners of African American people were providing a good life and the enslaved people were happy with their position in society.[66] The women of the UDC were successful in promoting the Lost Cause. People believe their lies and feel a deep connection to them.

People have incited violent, deadly rallies over removing the monuments that the UDC worked so hard to construct. They ran a successful marketing campaign that lasted over a century; there is an emotional connection to the narrative that the UDC presented throughout time. This emotional connection exists because of the celebrations they promoted around these monuments and causes. They included people of all ages to build a relationship between generations to last for future generations. These celebrations acted as an element of indoctrination for the cult of the Lost Cause; they lied to the crowd at commemorations. The UDC was unafraid to display falsehoods and use these celebrations to their advantage to control the social-historical narrative. The result of their actions is both one-sided and untrue history. The only representation of people of color in public statues was of faithful slaves, a made-up concept.

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[65] Ibid, 278.
[66] Ibid, 278.

An essential element in Blight's text is identifying specific women who participated in the UDC. One of these women was Mildred Lewis Rutherford, described as a diehard, historian general of the UDC. "She assembled dozens of scrapbooks, documenting every conceivable aspect of The Lost Cause and white supremacy."[67] Rutherford would travel giving speeches claiming that emancipation was not a benefit to African American people, but a disservice. Rutherford collected objects that were racist depictions of African American people and held essay contests among Ku Klux Klan members describing their "glories" and personal tributes to their former "faithful slaves." Rutherford was also a "champion" of education and did her best to ensure that educators were teaching the proscribed version of history. "She [Rutherford] lectured teachers to display and teach about the Confederate battle flag and urged that pictures of Confederate heroes be hung in every school."[68] Rutherford calculated children in her intended audience. She made sure they were surrounded by the Lost Cause in school and in public spaces to deepen the belief and emotional connection to these ideas. Mildred Rutherford claimed that northern book publishers were not to be trusted because they were publishing an incorrect version of Southern history. Rutherford was concerned that these books were making the South look bad or weak in Southern schools which goes against the principles of the Lost Cause.[69] This explains why people have such a deep connection to monuments and the Lost Cause because it is something that people were raised with and had these ideas passed down to them through generations. This is how people claim that the Lost Cause and the Confederacy are a heritage, and that removing Confederate Monuments is removing legacy. Promoters of the Lost Cause had to create something to celebrate and honor to maintain a white supremacist social structure. The

[67] Ibid, 278.
[68] Ibid, 278.
[69] Ibid, 282.

Lost Cause taught the public that the war was not fought because of the emancipation of enslaved people.[70] The work that went into the development of the Lost Cause made it possible to persist and still have believers to this day. The Ladies Memorial Associations, Daughters of the Confederacy, and other Confederate groups were responsible for constructing Confederate monuments. They made sure that the roots of the Lost Cause were planted firmly in the ground and would last for generations. Their methods effectively manipulated history and took up public space with their message. They planned celebrations and created an education curriculum based on the myth of the Lost Cause to maintain and preserve Southern identity. Southern communities rallied around this cause and raised their children believing that the Lost Cause was factual.

Kirk Savage, the author of *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument* focuses his writing on Confederate monuments in a more general sense. He outlines the groups involved in the volunteer efforts to build the monuments, but his research focuses on the content and subject matter depicted in these monuments. Examining monuments in this way is beneficial to understanding that Confederate monuments are not truly rooted in history and serve no purpose to the community because of their quantity and subject quality. Savage outlines a monument boom after the Civil War that helped solidify the familiar historic narrative people believe in the South. He explains that the work that went into the monuments created an enduring landscape of public monuments that continues to shape our general experience and expectations today[71]. Savage provides a similar explanation for monuments built in this era to the other previously referenced texts. He elaborates on the dynamic between the public and monuments and explains that these Confederate symbols were built to evoke the viewer's

[70] Ibid, 291.
[71] Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018, 6.

emotive response. The groups who erected the statues included ideas that would trigger an emotional response or a romantic view of the past instead of factual information. The use of nostalgia and emotions strengthens the connection that people have with the sculptures, thus causing a deep emotional response against the removal of these monuments rationalized. Savage also discusses how the monuments were constructed with the help of local groups and sponsors. The fundraising groups were primarily white women and, occasionally, white veterans.[72] They had complete control over the monument projects and could decide exactly what was depicted and what message would be shared. The goal of unification spurred the construction of monuments. The more attention from the public that the memorial had from conception to competition, the more united people were in memory.[73] It should be noted that the people whom the monuments were supposed to unite were the white citizens in the community. There was no room in this narrative for African American points of view because that would directly challenge the ideology of the Lost Cause.

Savage discusses the power and importance of public space and how these monuments fit within that realm. Savage describes public space as an important element of the Lost Cause because this is where monuments would be erected, and elaborate ceremonies were held to celebrate these monuments. These spaces allowed white Southerners to affirm their public history and identity in a communal space.[74] The created monuments were intended to "etch people's voices in stone."[75] Savage urges us to investigate the people who were represented in monuments as well as the creators and promoters. The information presented in this introduction clarifies that the monument and the public space have separate functions that complement each

[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid, 7.
[75] Ibid, 8.

other to spread the white message. Race was depicted in sculpture in the 18th and 19th centuries, but "the concept of race emerged in the late 18th and early 19th century supposedly using natural science to explain visible differences between bodies."[76] It is discussed that racial differences would be depicted in sculpture, and value would be placed on what was expressed by artists and viewers. Statues depicting white people used motifs from antiquity and representing godlike features and heroic poses. Figures with dark skin were depicted with racist animal-like features and exaggerated features. Savage cites a racial treatise called *Types of Mankind* that asserted that mankind was separated in a racial hierarchy and this hierarchy was represented in sculpture.[77] An example of how racial hierarchy is depicted in sculpture can be observed in the ancient Roman figure Apollo Belvedere. "The Apollo, in particular, was a widely recognized standard of male beauty and by implication a lesson in the relationship of physical beauty to intellect and culture."[78] Other races were depicted differently to suggest appalling meanings, and this was done intentionally to strengthen the narrative of the Lost Cause. This information makes it clear that messages of racial superiority were being spread and were meant to be understood through Confederate sculpture. It is very important that Kirk Savage discusses how racial differences appear in sculpture because this will be helpful later throughout the text when the discussion turns to the common soldier monument.

Savage makes the goal of his writing explicitly clear. "It is my hope that having gone through this process of historical and visual analysis the reader will look with new eyes at the commemorative landscape that surrounds us and embodies our collective landscape."[79] Savage's

[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid, 9.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid, 161.

goal aligns with the goal of this thesis. Throughout his writing he demonstrates that Confederate monuments were erected in two different periods after the Civil War. The first phase of monument building was the memorializing of the common soldier. The number of fatalities caused by the Civil War was one of the direct causes for the amount of commemoration that occurred after the war. Many times, after a battle, soldiers would be buried in a mass grave. Monuments and cemeteries were built to honor known and unknown fallen soldiers and living veterans. These commemorative actions led to the creation of the common soldier.[80] These monuments intended to honor both the dead and living veterans. These monuments were supposed to be universal. They would not depict a side (either Union or Confederate); however, they only represented white men as the "general American" and common soldier. Union and Confederate monuments each followed the same formula or representation. Still, there would be a difference in uniform inscription and emblem.[81] The popularity and frequency of these monuments set a standard for how common soldiers should be presented to the public. Savage explains that these monuments were constructed about 30 to 50 years after the initial shock and grief of the war, and none represented African American soldiers. Savage makes it clear that although these monuments were representative of a common soldier, they were not meant to represent the African American soldiers who fought for their freedom.[82] Savage explains that the common soldier was depicted as a white soldier to create a default American imagery, the standard idea of the American soldier. The monument industry boomed.

> A monument industry developed to meet the demand of packaging the services of granite companies, marble quarries, and metal foundries directly to the monument consumers, the local associations of men and women who volunteered to organize campaigns with dealers and catalogs of ready-made soldier figures so

[80] Ibid, 162.
[81] Kirk Savage, "Chapter 6: Common Soldiers," in *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America, New Edition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 167.
[82] Ibid, 167.

> the industry could supply soldier monuments cheaply and quickly to local communities without them having to approach a sculptor.[83]

This is important because it points out a few things about the monument industry and the monuments being erected. First, in terms of sculpture, there is no aesthetic achievement because of the lack of artists used for the design and construction of these monuments. Common soldier Confederate monuments were mass-produced objects; there was nothing special or artistically original about these statues. Second, it is difficult to deem something historically significant when it is known that it was selected from a catalog. The fact that these monuments were selected from a catalog makes the statue deeply impersonal and normalizes the ideas that the monuments represent. These statues became so common that they faded into the background of the public space and their symbols became the visual history of the South. The ideas of the Lost Cause became so normalized and frequent that they became synonymous with history.

All in all, the wholesale nature of these common soldier monuments weakens their importance and what they were intended to commemorate. The popularity and proliferation of these monuments set a standard of how common soldiers should be presented to the public. A white male soldier as the epitome of the American soldier seriously excludes African American troops who fought for their own freedom joining and serving in the Union Army. The lack of representation was intentional and promoted white supremacy. It was oppression by omission.

Savage argues "that lapse of memory is the key to understanding the distinctiveness of the American war memorial tradition and the peculiar racial formation it constructed and enforced."[84] The intentional amnesia of the true narrative of the Civil War strengthened the

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[83] Ibid. 164.
[84] Ibid, 168.

development of the Lost Cause and created a society of white supremacy. Applying the ideas of the common soldier from the American Revolution to validate the Civil War distorts the differences in their purpose. Confederates liked the idea of a volunteer army, to fight for their cause, to maintain slavery. Citizen soldiers were more favored because of their disdain of federal entities. The Southern public liked the idea that armed citizens would jump to action if they needed to defend their country instead of having a trained and militarized army. Savage believes that the military monuments erected were depicting similar practices to slavery.[85] He likens slavery and military life because there is no sense of identity in both situations, and you are under someone else's control. Savage explains that some enslavers would physically discipline enslaved people in the same way they would have been disciplined in the military like flogging or more violent punishments.[86]

Savage describes the prominence of the Common Soldier as a paradox:

> The Civil War represented the culmination of long-standing historical developments that served to strip the common soldier of his individual initiative and his sense of personal agency, while at this very moment, the soldier monument emerged and began to lend a new honor and presence to the figure of the ordinary soldier we had never known in the civic realm.[87]

He explains that this paradox does not tell the whole story and that it does not mean the same thing for African American soldiers. Savage explains that the act of African American men fighting for their freedom as soldiers was a path to becoming recognized as men in society.[88] For African American soldiers, it was a way to be free, use agency, and emancipate other enslaved African Americans. By contrast white men lost their identity, lost their agency, and were

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[85] Ibid, 169.
[86] Ibid, 169.
[87] ibid, 174.
[88] Ibid, 174.

removed from society. Savage restates the paradox that he previously explained: "while the loss of agency for white men translated itself into commemorative gain, the gain of agency for Black men translated itself into commemorative loss."[89] The construction of the Common Soldier Confederate Monument was used to take away the agency that African American citizens gained by fighting for their freedom in the Civil War. There is a blatant double standard represented by the Common Soldier statues. During the war, Savage explains, that soldiers were looked down upon; however, after the war the same white soldiers were honored and memorialized for the same cause. This should highlight the obvious white supremacy that was celebrated in the construction of Common Soldier statues.

Savage references scholars who argued that veterans and local communities wanted to put the trauma of the war behind them and in the 1880s memberships in veteran's groups grew. Focusing their attention on building monuments allowed white people in the South to come together for a common cause that bridged the gap between polarized white people. These groups drew more attention to the role of the common soldier in civic space. The common soldier was used to create an environment of civic participation and patriotism.[90] Inscriptions were added on monuments to give more context. Union Monuments had inscriptions that referred to liberty and freedom and sometimes the abolition of slavery while Confederate monuments would have themes of constitutional government or state sovereignty. White Southerners and northerners could accept each other's monuments because

> the soldier's duty then, is not to an idea, but to a collective than transcends the idea of any particular moment or era, which is one reason why white northerners and southerners could accept each other's monuments and why monuments could be erected so long after the event.[91]

[89] Ibid, 174.
[90] Ibid, 178.
[91] Ibid, 179.

For Savage, the common soldier monument's ability "to erase the stigma of slavery from soldiering made it all too easy to erase the memory of slavery as well."[92] This is another example of the double standard that common soldier monuments present because they honor and memorialize white soldiers who were looked down upon during the war; but after the war, they are honored by their former critics. The double standard comes into play because Confederate soldiers were compared to enslaved people during their time in combat; but after the war, they were strategically honored to mend the social rift that the Civil War caused. Soldier monuments illustrated the racial hierarchy that white Southerners wanted to maintain. The erection of these monuments also limited any other story or account of the war from being represented.[93] Savage makes an interesting observation about common soldier monuments. "The repetition of the white soldier monument in hundreds of communities across the country thus worked to solidify the association between the white body and the moral duty of citizenship."[94] This was a way to keep white people on top of the social hierarchy that the Lost Cause was trying to build and maintain.

Soldier monuments had to fit within the established standard, which set up a dynamic of exclusion of African American commemorative monuments. The soldier monument was interpreted as a monument to white veterans and purposely excluding African American soldiers.[95] This was the motive for constructing common soldier monuments and monuments dedicated to Confederate War "heroes". It was imperative to the Lost Cause that its focus was the uplifting and unification of white people because this is what they thought would benefit society.

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[92] Ibid, 180.
[93] Ibid, 181.
[94] Ibid, 181.
[95] Ibid, 188.

Attempts to insert the figure of the Black soldier grew, starting in the late 1880s. Savage provides an example of an individual who took it upon himself to push and create monuments that represent African American veterans. George Washington Williams, the author of *History of the Negro Troops in the War of the Rebellion,* successfully got a bill passed in 1887, and this monument was to be at Howard University. From the information presented in this text thus far, I think it is essential to recognize that the most important and accurate monument related to the Civil War should be African American soldiers who fought on both sides.

On one side, African Americans were fighting for national recognition, and on the other, they were forced to fight for a cause that went directly against their freedom. Savage explains that William's rationale for this project was that he wanted to demonstrate that two groups of people resulted from the exclusion of African American soldiers from monuments. Savage quotes Williams, who alluded to the two ignorant populations in this passage "whites who did not learn the history of Black martial glory because it was considered marginal, and Blacks who could not learn it because they were unschooled."[96] The former of these groups had a choice not to be ignorant. "The monument would supplement the folk memory of Black combat engagements -- which he recognized obliquely did exist -- with systematically documented public knowledge."[97] It should be noted that issues with Confederate monuments were not a new phenomenon. People during the time these monuments were erected saw that this was wrong and that these monuments were another way to solidify white supremacy in the "standard white framework of commemoration" in stone as well as history books and public history. These monuments put a false social memory into stone. The bill for this project never made it to the

[96] Ibid, 189.
[97] Ibid, 189.

House floor, and the project died. “One of the objectives Williams faced was that there should be no “separate” monuments for Black soldiers.”[98] Savage claims that this implies that the existing monuments represent African American veterans already--which is not the case. He emphasizes that creating monuments for Black veterans should be designed the same way as the familiar soldier monuments. “Even a separate monument to Black soldiers segregated from the mainstream white monuments presented a serious problem because it threatened to expose and undermine the racial formation implicit in those monuments.”[99] There is no way to create a unified community with this way of creating monuments. The over-saturation of the common white soldier and the exclusion of African American people in public spaces was the motive and mission of the Lost Cause. White Southerners had no intention to include or uplift African American people or even acknowledge the atrocities of slavery. The construction of these amendments was to excuse white people from being accountable for enslaving other human beings and reuniting with other white people to maintain the social status quo. White people had the luxury and privilege to forget what they put African American people through and move forward with shaping their political and social society in a way that benefited white people the most. This is what the roots of the Lost Cause were meant to do.

[98] Ibid, 190.
[99] Ibid, 191.

Residue

As previously mentioned, people claim that removing monuments is erasing history and heritage. This is not the case because of the evident racist efforts made to keep this narrative and myth alive. These efforts have proven to be successful because they have lasted the test of time. However, the public upset over these monuments is increasing, and many sculptures have been removed. Those in opposition have strong feelings about this issue. Ladies Memorial Associations and other Confederate memorial organizations worked very hard to sow the seeds and strengthen the roots of the Lost Cause. The Lost Cause shows up today as the rebuttal for the removal of monuments as well as the belief that what they represent is historic in nature. Yes, Robert E. Lee is a historic figure, but removing a statue of him does not erase history; it simply rearranges the importance of him in our social narrative. Many people argue that he is a great military general, and even if that is the case why does that matter more than what he fought for? Some say he fought for states' rights, and others say that the explicit cause of the Civil War was slavery. People entrenched in cult-like beliefs resist the truth about the Civil War. There are multiple accounts of how this myth carries on. A few have been selected to demonstrate the longevity and the strength of the connection between some of the public and this myth.

An example of this deep connection in the present day took place at a Texas resort in the article *Removed Robert E. Lee Statue Now on Display at Texas Resort* reported by the Associated Press (AP) in October of 2021. A Confederate statue, constructed in 1935 was removed from Dallas, Texas, and sold in an online auction. The figure was purchased and was put on display at the Terlingua Resort. The resort manager told AP that only one or two people had a negative response to the monument and said that the "statue serves no purpose but to

preserve a 'fabulous piece of art.'"[100] A Black Lives Matter Activist from the Houston area "wondered if it would be the same for other offensive symbols or if that's reserved for the iconography solely glorifying the oppression of Blacks." Pointing out, "we don't glorify swastika; we don't have monuments of Hitler." This article demonstrates the differing views of both sides of this issue. How is it that one symbol can mean different things to different people? Or do they mean the same thing, and one side openly glorifies the suppression, oppression, and blatant racism these monuments embody? The lack of empathy and respect is evident when one person calls a statue a "fabulous piece of art" and the other equates it to a symbol of hatred like a swastika or an image of Adolf Hitler. Clearly, this illustrates the prevalence of the Lost Cause myth, whose bonds are deep and maintain a racist worldview and attempt to control African American individuals through social and political means.

Figure 6. Robert E. Lee Statue at Texas Resort
Source: Dallas Magazine

Margaret Renkl, a guest writer for the *New York Times,* discussed two Nathan Bedford Forrest statues that have become problematic in the state of Tennessee. Nathan Bedford Forrest was a Confederate general, a slave trader, and the Grand Wizard of the KKK. In this article entitled "America's Ugliest Confederate Statue is Gone. Racism Isn't" she discusses a statue of

[100] The Associated Press. "Robert E. Lee Statue Now on Display at Texas Resort." *ABC News*, n.d. https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/removed-robert-lee-statue-now-display-texas-resort-80633042.

Nathan Bedford Forrest (NBF) that was erected on privately owned land that was very visible to the public. Renkl describes this statue as "ugly, the worst Confederate Statue and having an ax murder vibe."[101] Surprisingly recent, "The malformed Confederate figure seated atop a malformed rearing horse was erected on private land in 1998 and surrounded by Confederate flags."[102] The statue owner recently passed away and left 5 million dollars to his dog and left the statue to the Battle of Nashville Trust. The Trust ultimately decided to remove the statue. Many Nashville citizens were happy the statue was removed because it was displayed on the side of the main expressway in Nashville. The other statue of Forrest that Renkl discusses was in the Tennessee State building. This statue bust and his remains from Memphis were moved to a new burial site at the National Confederate Museum in Columbia. The remains were moved because Memphis, Tennessee is a largely Black community and the location of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The Forrest bust was moved to the Tennessee State Museum in a small gallery next to a permanent exhibition about Tennessee's role in the Civil War and Reconstruction. Renkl explained that the statue's new home explains the proper context of this figure. "Visitors to the Tennessee State Museum learn exactly who Nathan Bedford Forrest really was and exactly which evil he fought to preserve."[103] Johnny Diaz also wrote about this bust in his article entitled "Bust of Klan Leader Removed from Tennessee State Capitol". Published in July of 2021, Diaz explains that it took many protests to get this statue removed and sent to the museum. The Nathan Bedford Forrest bust was not the only statue that was moved to the new location. The reason for removing three statues rather than just one is that state officials

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[101] Margaret Renkl, "America's Ugliest Confederate Statue Is Gone. Racism Isn't." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, January 17, 2022. https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/opinion/confederate-monuments-tennessee-nathan-forrest.html#:~:text=New%20York%20magazine%20called%20 it, surrounded%20by%20Confederate%20battle%20 flags.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

did not want to single out the Confederate monument. These actions imply sympathy for Confederate monuments because the other statues that were moved did not gain more context in their new location; however, Diaz explained that the Tennessee state government says more context will be added given the new museum location. A museum professional stated: "Museums preserve historical objects to connect to the past and offer public spaces for reflection."[104] In some instances, it is essential for a Confederate monument or any controversial monument to be moved to a museum for more context. Museums can offer more background or explanation of different points of view than a statue in a public space alone. Museums also can include the community in how figures like this can be presented and interpreted in this space. This can stimulate dialogue, growth, and acceptance of prosocial issues, especially issues of race. Diaz also quotes Speaker Cameron Sexton, a representative of Tennessee: "Trying to judge past generations' actions based on today's values and the evolution of societies is not an exercise I am willing to do because I think it counterproductive."[105] He also wrongly states, "The woke mob means to uproot and discard not just Southern symbols ultimately, but also American heroes and history." It is unconscionable that an elected state official describes Nathan Bedford Forrest as a hero, knowing that he was a Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan. Frustratingly, this is the common attitude of the "cult of the Lost Cause."[106]

[104] Johnny Diaz, "Bust of Klan Leader Removed from Tennessee State Capitol." The New York Times. The New York Times, July 23, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/us/nathan-bedford-forrest-bust.html.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.

Figure 7. Nathan Bedford Forrest Statue I-65 in Nashville Source: Wikimedia Commons	Figure 8. Nathan Bedford Forrest Bust Source: Wikimedia Commons

This response to the relocation demonstrates that these monuments' racist roots and intentions have lasted more than a century, and many Americans have inherited the ideas. However, gentleman one who inherited the name and genetics did not inherit these racist ideas. In the article entitled "Robert E. Lee's Descendant Proves His Lineage and Pushes for 'Honest' History of Racism", Maya Brown paints a picture of the conflicting views about the removal of Confederate monuments and the response to the presentation and acknowledgment of the actual history of the Civil War. Reverend Robert E. Lee is a distant relative of General Robert E. Lee. This article explains that Confederate defenders did not believe he was related to the general; however, Lee produced a 400-page genealogy report. The defenders did not believe him because Reverend Lee is a pastor and a social justice advocate. Rev. Lee said, "I believe it was an attempt to discredit the hard work I put into removing statues and monuments to my ancestors."[107]

[107] Maya Brown, "Robert E. Lee's Descendant Proves His Lineage and Pushes for 'Honest' History of Racism." CNN. Cable News Network, February 1, 2022. https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/01/us/robert-e-lee-anti-racism-descendant/index.html.

Brown explains that: “In 2018, rumors began to spread online that the pastor was lying about his lineage because his beliefs were in contrast to what some say the general represented.”[108] Brown brought up the decision to melt down the Robert E. Lee statue from Monument Avenue to create art for the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center. Rev. Lee asserted that “They’re idols of white supremacy and symbols of racism and hate.” Brown contextualizes the Lost Cause as “the ideology that the cause for the Civil War wasn’t centered on slavery.”[109] The article's inclusion demonstrates that people who have inherited these ideas can also re-examine their beliefs. The inclusion of African American points of view in general help people realize that their thoughts about the Civil War, its causes, and how it was memorialized are not historically accurate. Removing Confederate monuments does not mean that people want to forget this history or that it should be censored or covered up; removing Confederate monuments implies that the entire community can have input and representation when it comes to presenting this in American public spaces. There are better ways to remember the atrocities of the Civil War than the white supremacist method.

Throughout America, there are hundreds of Confederate monuments adorning the public landscape; however, Monument Avenue, located in Richmond, Virginia, has a concentration of Confederate monuments like no other place in the United States. “Contesting the Sacred: Preservation and Meaning on Richmond’s Monument Avenue” by Brian Black and Bryn Varley is an article that paints a clear picture of the connection to this street and Confederate monument made by the supporters of these monuments. Racist motives and roots constructed this street. “We try to explain ourselves through stories or places which often become myths. They grow out

[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.

of humans' desire to resolve psychic dilemmas of some kind to come with morality or loss."[110] This article describes a new addition to Monument Avenue that was controversial in many ways and from many perspectives. "Meaning of place is created subjectively and is rarely universal; it may be difficult for people of diverse experiences to share."[111] The monument that was going to be introduced and ultimately constructed was a statue honoring Arthur Ashe, an American tennis legend. "By the 1990s, Monument Avenue summoned up ideas about racial oppression and exclusion for some residents of Richmond, while for others, it evoked a proud Confederate heritage."[112] The controversy began when the KKK handed out fliers full of hateful and racist statements about the monument. *The Planet*, an important public voice for the Black population in Richmond at this time, published several articles arguing that the South's progress in the nation as a whole was restarted by this new commemoration of the Lost Cause and display of extreme views."[113] One article touches on the idea of proud Confederate heritage which is confusing to someone not from the South. Henry L. Marsh III of the NAACP stated: "We have no objection to honoring true heroes and founding fathers, but we object to continuing the Confederate theme."[114] When someone fights to keep Confederate statues in America, knowing what we know about how they came to be, they are fighting for something more profound than keeping up a statue. They are fighting for what the groups who erected these statues wanted them to embody and represent, which is white supremacy and falsehoods that were used to maintain a racist narrative of what occurred in the South.

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[110] Mills, et al, 2019
[111] Ibid, 236.
[112] Ibid, 235.
[113] Ibid, 237.
[114] Ibid, 237.

Sanford Levinson, the author of *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies*, wrote about monuments from all over the world, including some in the United States, and how these monuments interact with society. This text emphasizes how essential it is to look outside the United States to see how other countries deal with the wrong doings of the past. Governments worldwide are now acknowledging their role in colonialism, slavery, and multiple genocides. "In all these places, one finds politics roiled in controversies attached to deciding who within a particular society should be counted as a hero worth honoring with the erection of a monument or the naming of a public space."[115] There are issues with monuments in all societies. It is essential to investigate how other cultures treat monuments that no longer fit within the public narrative or ideas about history or what is happening in the present time. The fact that monuments worldwide are coming down shows that removing Confederate monuments is the right thing to do.

Levinson explains that "All monuments are efforts, in their way, to stop time in their way."[116] This is evident in Confederate monuments because the ideas presented were frozen in a distorted fictional time. Monuments stop time, take up space, and ultimately stop progression into a more historically accurate public narrative. Levinson compares different states and regimes and makes the point that it is the privileged narrative that pushes to become the common social and political narrative.[117] Levinson provides the rationale used by the South during the monument building craze during Reconstruction. The privileged population of the South had control over the narrative they presented, which was of course, not inclusive, and only beneficial to the white people. When any regime is overthrown, the first thing to go are its public symbols.

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[115] Sanford Levinson, *Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018, 4.
[116] Ibid, 7.
[117] Ibid, 10.

When the statues are taken down today, it amounts to overthrowing the Confederate regime that still attempts to retain power. The Confederate roots have been a challenge to dismantle. Levinson describes this accurately as a "Southern cultural death" with the removal of flags and statues. Their removal is difficult for some people to accept.

Clint Smith, the author of "How the Word is Passed" is part of the second chapter called "Inheritance" which offers vital insight into how these monuments affect African American people today and how people are still clinging to them for truth. This article begins with a visit to Blandford Cemetery in Petersburg, Virginia. This is a vital source because the author, makes readers aware of his African American perspective right at the beginning of the article, written in 2021 from a modern point of view.

Smith discusses the history of this site and Confederate cemeteries in general, organized by white women's groups. These groups gathered donations from other states and managed to get a discount on the Tiffany stained-glass windows inside the church at the site. During his historic tour, he observed, "outside lawn mowers buzzed as Black men steered them between tombstones draped with Confederate flags."[118] As in other cases, women's monuments groups took the same steps to create this public environment of white supremacy. "Local women tracked down and exhumed bodies from local battlegrounds[119]... they [women] felt that the Southern soldier had not been treated with the same dignity and honor that the northern soldiers had."[120] The tour guide at the Blandford Cemetery focused on the aesthetic values of the windows rather than their content. This is frustrating because people who are unaffected by this content can look right past or through the window, and those affected cannot ignore their existence. The guide at the site

[118] Clint Smith, "The War on Nostalgia." *The Atlantic*, June 2021.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid.

"said almost nothing about windows that were there--that the soldiers memorialized in the stained glass had fought a war to keep my ancestors in chains," A war about "states' rights" he asks: states' rights to do what? To maintain slavery. "In most cases, we try to fall back on the beauty of the windows, the Tiffany glass kind of thing,"[121] replied the tour guide, leaving holes in the evasive story because it makes people uncomfortable. Clint Smith also explained that the guide described the notion of Confederate empathy by saying, "People will tell you, my great-great-grandmother, and my great-great-grandfather are buried here."[122] Based on the guide's response, Smith emphasized the idea of Southern roots established between Southern individuals and these types of sites, predicated on the Lost Cause. The emotional connections made synonymous with Confederate monuments created the lasting relationship or what this guide would call "Confederate empathy."

In the article, Smith switches gears and explains some of his methodology and research for this article and his book. He personally traveled around America to places coming to terms with the history of slavery in America which has been difficult and sometimes violent.[123] Smith also interacted with "Confederate empathizers" or those who believe that these monuments are rooted in history, which gives first-hand insight into what people think and say about these monuments. Throughout his research, he explained that he was "struck by many people I met who believe a version of history that rests on well-documented falsehoods."[124] Throughout his travels Smith experienced first-hand the lasting effects of the Lost Cause ideology that has been perpetuated throughout the South.

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.

It was clearly apparent that there was a considerable effort to control the narrative of what is presented at this or other historical sites and monuments when the goal is to support a fake, incomplete narrative. “It is not a public story we all share, but an intimate one passed down like an heirloom that shapes the sense of who they are.”[125] Smith shares a conversation he had with a woman in a managerial position at the cemetery. Martha explains that “this is how they helped to get through their grief”[126]...and “the result was that beautiful chapel[127]... I think you could take the Civil War aspect totally out of it and enjoy the beauty.”[128] This is spoken by someone who is genuinely unaffected by the Civil War and the Confederacy imagery. The fact that some people can separate the idols of the Civil War from the atrocities foisted upon formerly enslaved people demonstrates the success of the Lost Cause. The partial history that was represented in these monuments allow people to consider only a partial, whitewashed, and romanticized story.

Smith includes his discussion with the Sons of the Confederate Veterans group which was founded in 1896. In the mission statement, the group extols “this history of these heroes, so future generations can understand the motives that animated the ‘Southern cause’.” After attending a Sons of Confederate Veterans Memorial Day event, he reported what people think and feel about Confederate monuments and how they interact with the ideas of the Lost Cause in the 21st century. The event started with a speech by one of the members of the group, meant to explain the origin of Memorial Day, but it began like this: “I don’t know if this is true or not, but I like it.”[129] This illustrates how ignorance is accepted as reliable history in the absence in

[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.

evidence and fact. Smith likens the speech to how monuments and cemeteries were made, "when orators stressed reconciliation paying tribute to the sacrifices on both sides of the Civil War without accounting for what the war had been fought over. The speakers at this event and the mythology of the Lost Cause worked to cover up the true reasons for the Civil War and the atrocities that millions of people endured during this time. Instead of confronting the truth of the Civil War, the false assured that no one would have to be accountable for the damage rendered upon so many people. If people could ignore the truth and cherry-pick what they want to acknowledge about the Civil War, then they could continue to look back at this time fondly. The speaker complained about the removal of statues by, "people [who] are trying to take away our symbols," comparing them as "no better than ISIS in the Middle East. They are trying to destroy history they didn't like."[130] As the author asserts, this is so blatantly false. They are removing monuments that perpetuate a false narrative in a positive way. The atmosphere and attitude of the Sons of Confederate Veterans mirror the attitude that many other Southerners have had from the late 1800s. The men and women who worked so hard to deepen the roots of the Lost Cause were successful in their efforts because of the Confederate residue still exists today. "The myth was an attempt to recast the Confederacy as something predicated on family heritage rather than what it was: a traitorous effort to extend the bondage of millions of Black people."[131] Smith provides many examples of Confederate officials explaining the cause of the Civil War. He includes a quote from a Mississippi lawmaker at the 1861 secession convention: "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery the greatest material interest in the world."[132] Smith provides some disturbing quotes made by the vice president of the Confederacy,

[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.

Alexander Stephens: “Slavery was the immediate cause of the late rupture and present revolution.”[133] And “the great truth [is] that the negro is not equal to the white man.”[134] From these two quotations alone it is clear to see that the leaders of the Confederate succession by Southern states believe that slavery was racially justified. Confederate sympathizers also claim that slavery was not that bad by creating of the myth of faithful slaves and benevolent masters. The Lost Cause requires people deny slaves’ experiences in bondage and after emancipation.

Smith proves that Confederate monuments perpetuate the Lost Cause, and they were used to maintain white supremacy. “The Black community was being terrorized as well as political and social mobility impeded.”[135] Justified in annual events. Smith also addresses Americans claims that African Americans willingly fought on the Confederate side of the war. For example, Richard Poplar was a Black slave who fought on the Confederate side. History does not report if he was coerced. Smith asserts that Black men could not serve in the Confederate army and that “an 1886 obituary suggests that Poplar was a cook for the soldiers, not someone who engaged in combat.”[136] Smith debunks hearsay claims that up to 100,000 Black soldiers fought in racially integrated regiments. No evidence supports this.

At the Memorial Day event, shares another man’s distorted beliefs, as well as the newspaper media's complicity in publishing stories to create fear about how the end of slavery would affect people and life in the South. One final historic site explained in this article, the Whitney Plantation, focuses on child enslavement. It is difficult to read about this historic site. Smith concludes that “so much of the story we tell about history is the story we want to tell about

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[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

ourselves."[137] People believe this myth. In his closing statement, along with all the evidence in this article, Smith shows the lengths people go to avoid the truth when it comes to the history of the Civil War history and its connection to Confederate monuments. People have attached their identity and personal values to the idea of the Lost Cause and will use false information to support their beliefs.

All the authors in this literature review demonstrate the remaining Confederate residue that the Lost Cause has left behind. Women's and men's Confederate memorial groups went to extreme lengths to create and maintain this myth. To protect the damaged white identity of Southern Americans, monuments, memorials, and Confederate events have been utilized to perpetuate this myth. Textbook publishers and educators were pressured to teach a preselected and approved version of history aligned with what these groups felt was true. These examples of Lost Cause roots and the residue that is left behind demonstrate that removing Confederate monuments is not an erasure of history; it is a step in the right direction to becoming more accurate and equitable.

Figure 9. Blandford Church Memorial Window
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Figure 10. Statue of Enslaved Children at Whitney Plantation
Source: Wikimedia Commons

[137] Ibid.

Part III: Case Studies

The following case studies examples will outline different monuments in the United States and examine the reasons for their significance and what ultimately happened to each. They will also aid museums and historic institutions charged with deciding what to do with a contested monument. The case studies addressed in this section are: Monument Avenue, the Fuller Story Project, the Tennessee Heritage Protection Act, and the Louisville Confederate Monument. Each of these monuments is problematic, but the responses to these monuments differ from each other. Based on my research, I have determined four different ways a controversial monument can be addressed. These categories are Removal, Counter Monuments, Relocation, and Reevaluation. Exploring these responses to controversial monuments will aid in future evaluation of monuments that have not been addressed or constructed yet.

Removal

Monument Avenue, located in Richmond, Virginia, is an example of the removal response to a controversial monument. Historic events in 2020 brought immense stress to the entire world and highlighted the extreme disparities people have been facing in the United States for centuries. In 2020, more actions were taken to ensure that underrepresented people are heard and acknowledged, and some changes were made. In the first six months of 2020, three murders were highly publicized and protested. Ahmad Arbury, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd were three African American people who were either lynched or killed at the hands of the police, a tragically common occurrence in the United States. Although these three murders were highly publicized and protested, many more racially motivated murders occurred in 2020. These crimes acted as catalysts for the removal of Confederate monuments throughout the United States, specifically on Monument Avenue. Recently, monument removals happened when police

officers kill African American people. Protests often start or end at the Confederate monument site. For years activists have been demanding the removal of Confederate monuments because of their overt oppressive and racist presence and message. Addressing Confederate monuments is the tip of the iceberg; deeper issues in the United States regarding racism and white supremacy must be addressed.

The act of removing a monument seems to be the most "controversial" to those opposed to addressing Confederate monuments. As previously explained, some against the removal of the monuments claim that their removal is an act of erasing history. Based on the research in this text, removing monuments has been proven not to erase history, but to correct it. This is the case for Monument Avenue. An article titled "The Origin Story of Monument Avenue: America's Most Controversial Street" author Andrew Lawler explains how Monument Avenue's origins and how its location impacted the residents of Richmond and the United States. This article explains that:

> The cornerstone was laid, and the May 1890 location was timed to coincide with a massive Confederate Veterans reunion that drew 50 former generals, 15,000 uniformed veterans, and more than 100,000 onlookers. By then, an ominous new era of white supremacy had dawned that would last seven decades.[138]

Monument Avenue was built in what would eventually become a wealthy, exclusively white neighborhood. From 1890 to the 1930s, Monument Avenue sprouted Confederate monuments under the guise of commemoration.[139] Historian Charles Reagan Wilson describes Monument Avenue as "the sacred road of Southern religion."[140] Lawler quotes the Virginia State Attorney

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[138] Andrew Lawler, "The Origin Story of Monument Avenue, America's Most Controversial Street." *National Geographic* May 3, 2021. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/origin-story-monument-avenue-america-most-controversial-street.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.

General sharing his opinion of Monument Avenue as "a grandiose monument to a racist insurrection that was designed to demean Black Virginians and should be taken down."[141] The imagery represented and historic assessment of this historic strategic city planning provided of the main reasons for the monument's removal.

Robert Draper, the author of the article titled "Toppling Statues is a First Step Towards Ending Confederate Myths," states that "these statues rewrote history, reflecting the values of those who elected them. Removing them won't erase history."[142] This article was written on July 2, 2020, which happened to be right when the monuments on the Avenue were removed. Draper describes the Robert E. Lee monument that had already been removed. "The base of the statue is now technicolor with graffiti, around it is a photo of placards depicting Black men killed in police custody."[143] Draper quotes Tommye Finley: "Why build a street for losers? Psychologically, it's perpetuating a system. It's saying, 'We still have the upper hand.'"[144] It's clear that the public and reporters were aware of the reasons for the construction of Monument Avenue. They acknowledge that they were constructed to maintain white supremacy's social and political attitude that the Confederacy fought to preserve.

Finally, Monument Avenue has been dismantled. Beginning in June 2020 and concluding in September 2021, Confederate monuments were plucked from the street. It took so long from the beginning of the removals because citizens of the surrounding area filed a lawsuit against the removal of the Robert E. Lee equestrian statue. According to the article, "Virginia's Massive Robert E. Lee Statue has been Removed" 130 years after it was erected, that "Decades following

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[141] Ibid.

[142] Robert Draper, "Toppling Statues Is a First Step toward Ending Confederate Myths." History. *National Geographic*, January 25, 2022. https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/toppling-statues-is-first-step-toward-ending-confederate-myths.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

its construction in 1890, the statue became a focal point for a wealthy, all-white neighborhood; statues to other Confederate leaders later joined Lee."[145] The pedestal covered in graffiti will stay in place until a decision is made about what will happen to the rest of Monument Avenue.[146] After the horse and figure of Robert E. Lee were removed, an interesting item was found in the pedestal of the monument.

Figure 11. Defaced Lee Statue
2020
Source: Wikimedia Commons

A time capsule found inside the former monument was dated 1887 and contained a British coin, an 1875 almanac, three books, a cloth envelope, and a letter and photograph of James Netherwood, a stonemason who worked on the pedestal of the statue.[147] Interestingly, this suggests some foresight that the monument might not be standing forever. It has been reported that Virginian state officials plan to replace the nineteenth century capsule with items representative of 2021. These items include face masks, vaccination cards, and Black Lives

[145] Whitney Evans, and David Streever. "Virginia's Massive Robert E. Lee Statue Has Been Removed." NPR. NPR, September 8, 2021. https://www.npr.org/2021/09/08/1035004639/virginia-ready-to-remove-massive-robert-e-lee-statue-following-a-year-of-lawsuit.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Brigit Katz, *Smithsonian Magazine*, "A Time Capsule Found beneath Richmond's Robert E. Lee Monument Confounds Historians." Smithsonian.com. Smithsonian Institution, December 23, 2021. https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/time-capsule-found-beneath-richmond-robert-lee-monument-confound-historians-180979295/.

Matter stickers.[148] This would be a great addition to the site of the former monument, and it is something creative that the community could engage in together.

Figure 12. Virginia Conservators Unpack a Box Left in the Pedestal at the Former Site of a Statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee
Source: NPR

Removing the monuments along Monument Avenue has inspired more community activist work at this site and online which has been beneficial for the community surrounding Richmond. For example, a website has been created about Monument Avenue called onmonumentavenue.com; shares the history of Monument Avenue along with a blog series and online exhibits. The American Civil War Museum presents this website, which also shares an extensive reading list with texts presenting a more accurate history of the Civil War and how people behaved. This website has excellent resources for those interested in learning more about these monuments, why they are problematic, and why they are removed. A disadvantage of this website is that it relies on people having access to the internet to utilize its information. The benefit of a monument is that it is public, and everyone in public can engage with it.

In an article entitled "Richmond's Confederate Monuments Were Used to Sell a Segregated Neighborhood," Kevin Levin presents the same historic findings about Monument Avenue being a street that was for white residents only. He also reports that the monuments served as reminders of white supremacy.[149] As monuments started coming down in 2020, the

[148] Ibid.
[149] Kevin Levin, "Richmond's Confederate Monuments Were Used to Sell a Segregated Neighborhood", *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, June 11, 2020.

dynamic of the avenue has transformed from a street that was built to maintain white supremacy to a site that is a community meeting place to learn about issues of race in America and other issues. Levin explains that these former monuments have transitioned into dynamic public spaces. “Young African American activists now speak passionately on a range of issues from the Lee monument’s base to the crowd, while others register to vote, all previously under the watchful gaze of a man who was willing to give his life to a cause that sought to prevent this very outcome.”[150]

Removing Confederate monuments can change how the community understands the space where the monument once stood, and it also changes how the community interacts with the area. Removing monuments corrects history and allows for a re-imagination of the space. This process is happening in real time. For example, decisions about what happens to the monuments and where they occupied Monument Avenue are still being made. Matthew Delaney, a reporter for a local news station in the Richmond area, wrote an article about this issue. Delaney’s article entitled “Richmond Confederate Monuments to be given to the City's Black History Museum” explains that “Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney and Governor Ralph Northam revealed plans to transfer ownership of the monuments to the Black History Museum and The Valentine Museum.”[151] Mayor Stoney states, “Two museums will oversee a community-driven process to determine the best way to present these statues.”[152] The entire community must be involved this time around. “They will take the time that is necessary to engage the public properly and ensure the thoughtful future uses of these artifacts while we reimagine Monument Avenue, focus on

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[150] Ibid.

[151] Matthew Delaney, “Richmond's Confederate Monuments to Be Given to City's Black History Museum,” WTOP News, December 30, 2021. https://wtop.com/virginia/2021/12/richmonds-confederate-monuments-to-be-given-to-citys-Black-history-museum/.

[152] Ibid.

telling our history fully and accurately in places like Shockoe Bottom and lift residents throughout the city."[153] It is essential to have the support of local governments and form as many community partnerships as possible. Mayor Stoney's office supports relocation, giving authority to museums with community relationships work to decide how the monument might be reinterpreted or its final resting place.[154] Community allows involvement for a variety of perspectives to be considered. This inclusive practice will open doors for voices and stories that may be unknown. All are involved in interpreting and reimagining these objects and spaces for the present and future. The interim director of the Black History Museum says:

> Our institution takes very seriously the responsibility to manage these objects in ways that ensure their origins and purpose are never forgotten: that is the glorification of those who led the fight to enslave African Americans and destroy the Union, but we believe with this responsibility also comes opportunity--opportunities to deepen our understanding of an essential element of the American Story: The expansion of freedom.[155]

This case study demonstrates that removing these monuments along Richmond's Monument Avenue corrected the history falsely presented on the street. Removing the monuments will not right any past wrongs, but the institution's work to make these objects and this space more accurate and representative will ensure that the cause for the construction of these monuments is not repeated. Community input creates ownership of the public space resulting in an inclusive environment. Removing Confederate monuments changes the public landscape from a racist and hurtful place to a civic space built by the community for the community.

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[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.

Counter Monument

Counter monuments are another type of response to a controversial monument. A counter monument complements the existing monument with more information, differing information, or alternative perspectives. In the case of Confederate monuments, a counter monument is usually presented by community historians and activist groups. The counter monument represents the community and gives accurate information about the site it is in or the monument it is next to.

In 2013 the State of Tennessee enacted the Heritage Protection Act. This act was created to " prohibit the removal, relocation, or renaming of a memorial that is, or is located on, public property."[156] Along with the Heritage Protection Act, an assembly of 29 individuals was formed with 24 appointed by the Governor of Tennessee. The remaining individuals include historians, environmental experts, librarians and archivists, and archeologists. The mission of this commission is "to protect, preserve, maintain, and administer the historic places, and to encourage the inclusive, diverse study of Tennessee's history for the benefit of future generations."[157] It is clear to see how passing this act would disturb and anger those who support the removal of monuments. The mission statement contradicts what this commission and the Heritage Protection Act are doing. They are limiting the community's input regarding public monuments and public spaces to maintain the messages perpetuated in Confederate monuments. How can a group of 29 people selected by one person determine the heritage of each resident of Tennessee? The fact is they can't; heritage and culture are decided by a community, the group of people who live in this area. By answering this dilemma, the counter-monument concept steps into action.

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[156] "Tennessee Heritage Protection Act." Tennessee State Government - TN.gov. Accessed April 24, 2022. https://www.tn.gov/historicalcommission/tennessee-heritage-protection-act.html.
[157] Ibid.

As a rebuttal to the Tennessee Heritage Act, a community group from Franklin, Tennessee, started The Fuller Story Project. The horrific and violent events in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 inspired the creation of the Fuller Story Project. Many citizens wanted to remove a local Confederate statue known as "Chip." An article entitled "Tennessee City Adds Statue to Honor U.S. Colored Troops" discusses how a community added context to combat falsehoods perpetuated by Confederate monuments to include and uplift all the voices in the community. Author Jamie McGee explains that the desire to pull this statue happened after the violent and hateful events that took place with the support of the acting US president in 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the Unite the Right protest. These events also became the catalyst for many communities to protest their Confederate monuments. Local pastors and community leaders came together and discussed how the public square in Franklin, Tennessee is not representative of its entire history.[158] Before the work of the Fuller Story Project, the town square in Franklin, Tennessee, was exclusively representative of the Civil War battle that occurred there. After community input and the implementation of the Fuller Story Project, the square transformed into an inclusive and educational space. Adding a new statue and five historical markers, the courtyard in Franklin, Tennessee, became home to a counter monument.

McGee focused on Hewitt Sawyers, a local Franklin citizen who wanted "Chip" removed. Although the Confederate statue was not removed, the article describes "a new provocative"[159] response to the monument, imagined as "a new bronze statue in Franklin's public square depicting a life-size soldier from the U.S. Colored Troops--largely Black regiments that

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[158] Randy Hicks, "Fuller Story Project." VisitFranklin.com. Franklin, Tennessee, January 5, 2022. https://visitfranklin.com/fuller-story-project.

[159] Jamie McGee, and Sarah Beth Maney. "Tennessee City Adds Statue to Honor U.S. Colored Troops." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, October 24, 2021. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/24/us/confederate-statue-tennessee-Black-troops.html.

were recruited during the Civil War."[160] The success of this response brought the new statue and five markers that explain the story of the market-house where enslaved people were auctioned and the role of local Black men who fought for their freedom and the freedom of other enslaved people, a result of "The Fuller Story." Their goal was to expand the narrative and give the facts about how and why the war was fought. Significantly, Confederate monuments do not depict the realities of the war; they only represent a romanticized, white supremacist version of history.

McGee revealed that Franklin, Tennessee is home to many historical Confederate sites. It would be interesting to learn what first-time visitors to Franklin take away from monuments that describe two different histories. The response to this new monument was mostly positive. Hewitt Sawyers is quoted as saying, "Here is a Black man who was enslaved who gave his life to go out to help free other people…to be standing here now in the face of a statue that represents enslaving those people and knowing that because he was willing to do that, we won--what a powerful message."[161] McGee states, "Franklin's, elected leaders united on the Fuller Story's approval but remain divided on whether the Confederate Statue should be removed." This is precisely why counter monuments seem to be problematic. They present two histories simultaneously, but only one is accurate, and the other is not. Counter monuments allow people to decide what is real to them, not what is fully truthful. The Daughters of the Confederacy objected to The Fuller Story project and tried to claim ownership of the land that the monument was to go on; however, this is not the case, and they only own the ground directly under "Chip." Some citizens wish that The Fuller Story project did more in this public space. This monument would be even more effective if the Confederate monument were removed from public view.

[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.

In summary, two monuments in the same public space that present conflicting histories are problematic. The fact that “Chip” is still standing enables people to ignore the oppression and white supremacy that existed before, during, and after the Civil War. The continued racism of the Daughters of the Confederacy and other groups perpetuates under the guise of “historical preservation.” This case study helps uncover issues with counter monuments and how they impact public history. McGee’s article is a great starting place for examining counter monuments and how they can be both beneficial and detrimental to the general account.

Figure 13. 1899 Confederate Monument
Source: Wikimedia Commons

Figure 14. March to Freedom Honoring U.S. Colored Troops
Source: March to Freedom Honoring U.S. Colored Troops

Relocation

The Louisville Confederate Monument is an interesting example of a controversial monument. The statue was erected in 1895. The Kentucky Women's Confederate Monument Association was responsible for its fundraising. It is important to note that Kentucky was a Union state, and it never seceded from the Union. Kentucky was a border state, so its citizens had supporters from both sides: however, Louisville was a Union city. The story of the

construction of this statue is a perfect example of how and why these monuments were created.[162] When the Civil War was over, the dominant white society was still divided. Strangely enough, a Confederate statue was chosen to honor veterans in a white upper and middle-class area of Louisville. (This would eventually be at the border of the University of Louisville campus). This statute purportedly intended to reconcile the divided white citizens of Louisville. Supporters believed it served as a symbol of a community that had come back together after the war, to put the past behind them and move on. However, it only benefited the white majority and not the entire population of Louisville.

The community was also involved in raising funds for this statue. Anecdotally, a Union veteran alleged is to have donated five dollars to the monument fund because "he saw the Confederate men on the battlefield, and they were brave soldiers."[163] The actions of this Union veteran have been used to justify the construction of this statue as an effort to smooth societal tensions instead of addressing the issues that brought about the war or helping African Americans who had just been freed from slavery to begin their new emancipated lives. Joy M. McGuire's article "The (Im)Movable Monument: Identity, Space, and The Louisville Confederate Monument," discusses post-war Reconstruction as white denial. "The success of fundraising in Louisville thus underscores one of the key components of white reconciliation in the late 19c.-- that is the strategic amnesia surrounding the major issue that ultimately led to Southern secession and war: slavery"[164] McGuire also states that the "statue location made explicitly clear the message that the monument itself was to be an object of pride and

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[162] Joy M. McGuire, "The (Im)Movable Monument: Identity, Space, and The Louisville Confederate Monument." *The Public historian* 41, no. 4 (2019): 56.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid, 64.

representative of the shared identity of Louisville's elite white residents."[165] This monument encouraged people to honor the common white soldier, purposely ignoring and forgetting what the majority of Louisville stood for during the war. They ignored the Union dead and honored the rebel dead in creating a narrative that shifted the focus from post-war divisions to a falsely unified society. This is a blatant omission of why the war was fought against slavery. The Confederate monument was meant to symbolize "the Glory of self-sacrifice."[166] Erected in an affluent white area of the city, it favored white unity among all white socioeconomic classes.

The city of Louisville aged around the monument and eventually a diverse liberal college campus was situated near the statue's base. Throughout the monument's history, some Louisville citizens have taken issue with it. While it had become a traffic obstacle causing congestion and accidents, some people still did not want to remove the statue because of its perceived importance to the city. The first public call to remove the monument was made in 1989. The university made this call through the Louisville Black Student Alliance. Mixed reactions included the archaic rationale that symbols of the Confederacy are representative of their heritage. Those who defend the monument perpetuate a dichotomy that is heritage versus hate.[167] McGuire discusses how a counter monument was built across from the Confederate monument to "counteract" its negativity. Called Freedom Park, it was intended to counterbalance the conveyed Confederate message with a complete presentation of Louisville's history, creating a dual heritage. Nevertheless, counter monuments should not have to be made. Monuments should

[165] Ibid, 65.
[166] Ibid, 67.
[167] Ibid.

originally be built with the correct context so that the entire public is represented, not just a select community.[168]

As momentum to remove the Louisville Confederate statue increased, public figures were challenged and it would be ultimately decided that the Louisville Confederate statue would be moved to Brandenburg, Kentucky, where it was rededicated to Brandenburg's community. Located inside the monument's base was a time capsule initially put in the memorial in 1895. This time capsule was moved to a historical center where proper context is provided for the stored objects inside. The Louisville website now provides this quote: "The monument was gifted to the city by the Kentucky Women's Confederate Monument Association in 1895 to commemorate the Kentuckians who fought and died for the Confederacy during the Civil War."[169] Brandenburg, Kentucky wanted the statue because of its historical significance to that area. When the monument was relocated, it was rededicated with a ceremony and hundreds of people came to celebrate. A *New York Times* article titled "Confederate Monument, Shunned by One Kentucky City, Is Welcomed by Another" by Jonah Engel Bromwich discusses the relocation of this monument and its dedication. Bromwich explains that small groups of people were there to protest the statue. These protestors said, "celebrate freedom, not slavery."[170] Some people who were at the rededication were dressed in replica Confederate uniforms. Ronnie Joyner, the mayor of Brandenburg, was quoted in an article as saying that he was "unconcerned about any controversy the work might attract and defended its historical value saying that the monument would be placed in its proper context in Brandenburg." The mayor also said, "I never

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[168] Ibid.

[169] "Confederate Monument Moving to Brandenburg." LouisvilleKY.gov. Accessed May 5, 2021. https://louisvilleky.gov/government/confederate-monument-moving-brandenburg.

[170] Jonah Engel Bromwich, "Confederate Monument, Shunned by One Kentucky City, Is Welcomed in Another." The New York Times. The New York Times, May 30, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/30/us/kentucky-confederate-statue-brandenburg.html.

looked at this statue as a Black vs. white thing or that it had a link to slavery or anything like that -- it's actually a monument to the Confederate veterans who fought in the Civil War."[171] The mayor also promised that informational plaques would be added to the site elaborating on the issues that motivated each side in the war--including slavery.

After a deep search online, I found that plaques have not been mounted at the new site. The new monument in Brandenburg joins two others near the town's waterfront, including one commemorating the city's place as a significant stop on the underground railroad and another dedicated to the Native American tribes living there.[172] The mayor's comments about the Confederate monument are problematic because he ignores the history behind the statue's construction and what started the war in the first place--slavery. The statue's relocation to Brandenburg adds only minimal context in its new location, but more of an effort by the mayor of Brandenburg should have produced proper informational plaques. These additions would make this a more historically accurate monument that applies to the community. This should become an opportunity for communities to work together to address the issues that these monuments represent. This is an opportunity for the district to be properly educated and better understand full communal history.

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[171] "Confederate Monument Moving to Brandenburg." LouisvilleKY.gov. Accessed May 5, 2021. https://louisvilleky.gov/government/confederate-monument-moving-brandenburg.

[172] Sara Sidery, "Hundreds Gather in Brandenburg, Kentucky, to Protect Confederate Monuments from Potential Vandalism." WDRB, June 12, 2020. https://www.wdrb.com/news/hundreds-gather-in-brandenburg-kentucky-to-protect-confederate-monument-from-potential-vandalism/article_66f0a248-ad15-11ea-b82f-33b35a7a6dde.html.

Figure 15. Louisville Confederate Monument (South)
Source: Wikimedia

Figure 16. Confederate Monument in Brandenburg
Source: Wikimedia

Reevaluation / Transparency

Sometimes a monument is called into question, and it cannot be removed from its current site. When this is the case, an opportunity for reevaluation and transparency opens. An exemplar case study is the equestrian Theodore Roosevelt statue by James Earle Foster in front of the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York City. Many people have protested it throughout the years, because of its composition which represents racial discrimination and colonial expansion. Theodore Roosevelt, riding a horse, makes him the tallest and the most prominent figure of the group. Two other figures walk on either side of the horse. One is of an Indigenous person, and the other represents an African American person. Their lower position creates a hierarchical composition favoring the white Anglo-Saxon male. This composition disturbs people because racial equality has still not been met in our society.

The museum has requested the removal of the statue.[173] Before the museum decided to remove the statue altogether, they chose to face the controversy head-on by creating an exhibit about the statue, addressing the controversy attached to it, and explaining how it is racist. The exhibit discusses that originally in 1939 the statue was meant to honor Theodore Roosevelt because he was a naturalist, and his father was one of the museum's founders. In today's museum, the perspective focuses on parts of the statue that are problematic and explain and acknowledge why they are inappropriate. The exhibit also asks important questions of its visitors, like, "What is the meaning of this statue?" and "How do we view this historic sculpture today?"[174] These questions promote a dialogue that could happen between visitors or create an internal personal dialogue. After the exhibit was presented to the public, the decision was made to remove the statue.

The museum's work in acknowledging the racist statue and creating a dialogue about it is vital. When an institution faces its own controversies, it makes for a more trustworthy institution and works as an anti-racist museum. The exhibit offers a full context about the monument, which helps people understand why the sculpture is problematic. The American Museum of Natural History is an excellent example of how to address problematic monuments and public art. Context and dialogue are essential components of successful monument evaluation. When monuments are outdated or racist, they should be taken down because they do not serve the entire public. A museum exhibit or public discussion before removing a statue is beneficial to the process. The controversy over the Theodore Roosevelt statue also inspired some reflection by the

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[173] Robin Pogrebin, "Roosevelt Statue to Be Removed from Museum of Natural History." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, June 21, 2020. https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/21/arts/design/roosevelt-statue-to-be-removed-from-museum-of-natural-history.html.

[174] "Addressing the Statue: Special Exhibit: AMNH." American Museum of Natural History. Accessed May 5, 2021. https://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/addressing-the-theodore-roosevelt-statue.

AMNH on its exhibitions and museum practices. In 2020, Lauri Halderman, Vice President for Exhibition at AMNH gave a presentation to an audience at the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site in Buffalo regarding their efforts specifically about this particular case, as well as ongoing best practices within the museum. Halderman explained in this presentation that the museum focused on cultural reassessments that would essentially decolonize the museum. An example of their internal work is their reevaluation of their "Old New York" diorama. The staff at AMNH worked alongside experts of the Indigenous Lenape community to present their culture accurately and respectfully.

The museum also included labels and signs explaining what was wrong with the exhibit and made these changes clear by displaying these signs next to the new exhibit. This process allows visitors to see what is essentially wrong with the former exhibit and the work and facts included in the new exhibition. The museum added signage on the Theodore Roosevelt statue, to elaborate on its complex composition, and acknowledge that the museum sits on Lenape territory.[175] Halderman emphasized that the AMNH focuses on transparency and telling truths, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant.[176] This could help people better understand the importance of correcting problematic exhibits and public spaces and encourage the community to be involved in creating new monuments that are for everyone, not just some. It is a powerful statement for a museum to acknowledge some of their wrongdoings and missteps in their past and present work. It is an even more powerful statement to correct these wrongs and invite the public to see these corrections. Although the AMNH does not have any Confederate themes, the work done regarding the statue and its exhibits is an excellent example of reevaluating

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[175] *Addressing the TR Statue*. Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site & American Museum of Natural History, n.d. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fZQ5q3Way8&list=PLhuduY8iMIUpNlqwsHb2dC6r0fWf54aaD&index=3.

[176] Ibid.

iconography and is symbolic to provide transparency. This reevaluation shows that the institution cares about how the public receives and is impacted by its content. This transparency overtly displays that the museum's goal is to be inclusive and relevant keeping its audience aware of how and why changes must be made.

Figure 17. Roosevelt Statue
Source: Caitlin Ochs

Figure 18. New interpretation on the glass of the 1939 Old New York diorama, which depicts a scene between the colonial Dutch and the Lenape, includes context and highlights clichés and inaccuracies.
Source: American Museum of Natural History

Part IV: Current Work

Aside from working with individual monuments, independent entities are currently working to identify and combat monuments that perpetuate false information. One resource is the National Monument Audit led by Monument Lab. This source is a report on the monuments that exist in America and has been previously introduced in this thesis. It covers monuments of all subject matter and provides data about these monuments. This report begins with a Frederick Douglass quote that poses an interesting idea about monuments: "...perhaps no monument could be made to tell the whole truth of any subject it might be designed to illustrate."[177] Based on the monuments in the United States today, this quote is accurate. Many monuments represent only one perception of history.

The preface of this report explains the function of monuments to signal a collective historic memory as well as deciding what is left out of the memory, thus dictating the subjective narrative that people generally believe.[178] In many cases, a monument can have different meanings to different people. How can this central issue be resolved? In general, "The unstable nature of the term monument is a reminder that the power to convey past stories cannot be expressed through any single art form, outlet, or voice."[179] Efforts to define a monument in this report are important, it determines what should happen with a problematic and controversial monument. Monument Lab defines a monument as "a statement of power and presence in public."[180] This definition is interesting because monuments can exert this power in a few

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[177] National Monument Audit - Monument Lab. Accessed February 28, 2022. https://monumentlab.com/projects/national-monument-audit.
[178] National Monument Audit - Monument Lab. Accessed February 28, 2022. https://monumentlab.com/projects/national-monument-audit.
[179] National Monument Audit - Monument Lab. Accessed February 28, 2022. https://monumentlab.com/projects/national-monument-audit.
[180] Ibid.

different ways. First, a monument exerts power with its content and the message that it conveys. Additionally, monuments are typically tall and sometimes overwhelming structures so the power they exert is felt by their physical presence. “Generally, however, monuments across locations have been shaped by those with time, money, and officially sanctioned power to craft and elevate the past in their image.”[181] This report explains that monuments visibly represent our nation's values. “History does not live in statues--history lives between people; monuments are not end-points for history, but touchstones between generations.[182] This audit uncovers the inaccurate monument landscape that exists in America.

Under the same entity is another project that involves archival work. In the article “Archiving Toward Liberation: The Toppled Monuments Archive Collective,” they explain monuments being removed as being positive. Removing monuments has become a widespread practice across America signaling that people agree that these monuments need to come down and the majority of the public is accepting of these changes. This archival project entails:

> A radical international collective that has come together to create the most comprehensive accessible open-source online platform of recorded toppled, defaced, contested, and removed monuments, encompassing incidents from the present day all of the way back to the third millennium BCE.[183]

The Archive Collective is a valuable resource for people to learn about the full history of a monument rather than a convoluted curated narrative that was approved by an elite powerful few. A record of protests, defacement, and removal of Confederate monuments reflects the public’s overall feeling about these statues.[184] Just as museums keep records on deaccessioned art and artifacts, a record of the history of monuments, and their removal should be preserved.

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[181] Ibid, 4.
[182] Ibid, 4.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.

The Monument Audit asserts that keeping monuments in situ does not serve history; a report on their highly publicized removal creates an accurate history in real time.[185] "Hundreds of activists have toppled or removed many monuments--we want to archive these expansive stories in collaborative ways with the communities involved."[186] Programs like the Monument Audit and the Archive Collective are fantastic ways to demonstrate how monuments in the United States and worldwide are evolving. The Monument Audit stresses throughout its report that moving forward to create new monuments and historic public spaces is imperative as a collaborative effort between museum and public history professionals, and the surrounding community. This creates an accurate and inclusive public account of history.

These types of programs are great ways to involve the community and educate people on the dichotomy of issues that monuments represent. This type of work should also occur in societies on a smaller scale, using the Monument Audit as a model. A monument audit of a smaller town in America could be instrumental as educational and motivational for local community members. People are more likely to participate in something that gives them ownership, and contributes to community identity, and documents their history beneficially. The same can be said for a project like the Toppled Monuments Collective, which could also be adapted on a smaller scale. A community could work together to add their city or town's monument to their archive of monuments that have been contested and possibly defaced or removed. This could create opportunities to open a dialogue within the community, to be preserved by a local archive. Using tools such as an archive and an audit provide new ways for the public to interact with monuments and their history. These tools can change how people think

[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.

about monuments, suggest who should build them, identify their subject matter, and determine how long they should last. Using tools such as these, studying other monuments, and including the community will build a stronger and more inclusive public history.

As of October 2022, authorities can remove the last Confederate monument from the city of Richmond, Virginia. Christine Hauser reports in her article, "Richmond can Remove Last Confederate Statue, Judge Rules" that the once Confederate capital will now be void of symbols of an unfactual racist political and social identity. A judge ruled that "the city [Richmond] has right to dismantle the statue and donate it to the Black History Museum and Cultural Center of Virginia."[187] This major milestone in the Monument in America evaluation and removal of Confederate monuments in America signals a new era for public history that includes all perspectives and presents an accurate story based in fact.

[187] Christine Hauser, "Richmond can Remove Last Confederate Statue, Judge Rules", *The New York Times*. October 29, 2022.

Conclusion

Confederate monuments were built to intimidate and suppress African American people in the United States. These monuments perpetuated the Lost Cause ideology, ultimately a myth of Southern Civil War victory and a white supremacist social structure. When present-day Americans call these monuments into question and request their removal, the response can be violent and deadly. This reaction shows the unfortunate success of the myth and the cult of the Lost Cause by people who still claim that these monuments represent their heritage. People who oppose the removal of monuments argue that removing monuments erases history. It has been proven that these monuments were built to symbolize a victory which is not true. The South lost the war and built monuments to make it look as if they had won. There are also falsehoods embedded in the monuments that became synonymous with them.

The South claims that the reason for the Civil War was to protect and maintain states' rights, while the actual cause was the abolition of slavery. Their lie is perpetuated in the Lost Cause myth, still believed by some people in support of their denial of history. Confederate monuments are the physical form of white supremacy. Fortunately, the American public is rising from suppression to recognize there are tangible ways to correct the historic record. Public spaces should serve all people, and the public should control of what is represented in public areas. Controversial monuments that do not serve the public should be removed, relocated, counter monuments created, or reevaluated for the public good. Professional historian tools like an archive or audit can adapt the way people interact with past and present monuments and inspire the way future monuments are created. The result supports history in a truthful, inclusive, and respectful manner.

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