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Memorializing Men of the Lost Cause: Public Opinion of Confederate Monuments in Virginia 1900-Present

Morgan Brittany Pendleton

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Memorializing Men of the Lost Cause: Public Opinion of Confederate Monuments in

Virginia 1900-Present

Morgan Brittany Pendleton

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

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FACULTY COMMITTEE:

Committee Chair: Dr. Gabrielle Lanier

Committee Members/ Readers:

Dr. Phillip Dillard

Dr. Lamont King

Dedication

To my parents, Kim and Steve, I could not have done any of this without both of you encouraging me to reach for my dreams from an early age. It is through your constant love and reassurance that has led me to be the person that I am today. I owe everything to the both of you, and am forever grateful to have you both as parents. To my brother Bryan, thank you for being such a great brother and friend for the past 25 years, and always being willing to help me when I needed it most. And, finally to my grandpa, Tom who without him college would not have been possible, I'll never be able to thank you enough for everything you have done for me.

To all of my friends including, Katelyn Knight, Molli Goodson, and Julia Winegard, and countless others who have been there to listen to me complain on countless occasions, but always offered words of encouragement. Without their constant help over the past two years I would have never been able to finish this project. To all the friends I have made over the past two years at James Madison University, I will be forever grateful for the time we have spent together and am glad to have you all in my life.

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Without the constant guidance from many individuals this project would still be sitting incomplete waiting to be finished.

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Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iii
Abstract.....	v
Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: Creation of Confederate Monuments	8
Chapter Two: Civil War Centennial.....	25
Chapter Three: Present Day.....	38
Creating and Online Exhibit.....	54
Conclusion.....	55
Bibliography.....	59

Abstract

Prior to the events in Charlottesville, Virginia in August of 2017, there has been debate about what should or should not be done with Confederate monuments that dot the Southern landscape. The debate continues as to what these monuments mean to those in the communities they are located. Many individuals see them as a symbol of heritage and history, while others see them as racist and glorifying men who fought to maintain slavery. Public opinion and memory surrounding these monuments has not always been negative however. During the time of their creation Lost Cause ideology played a large part in their creation which would continue well over 100 years after the end of the war.

This thesis will examine newspaper articles as well as other online forums, in order to gather information about how the public felt about three specific Confederate monuments in Virginia: the Jefferson Davis Monument in Richmond, Virginia, Lee Chapel in Lexington, Virginia, and the Stonewall Jackson statue in Charlottesville, Virginia. The first chapter will discuss the three monuments and opinion during their creation from the late 1890s to the 1920s. The second chapter will focus on these monuments during the 1960s with the height of the Civil Rights Movement as well as the Civil War Centennial celebration. Finally, the last chapter will examine the public opinion gathered from the mid-2010s until current memory.

Introduction

Memory and the way that a historical event is understood and portrayed to the public can change over time. The way the memory of the American Civil War has changed over time provides a clear and compelling example of such shift. Professor Paul A. Shackel states that “traditions, meanings, and memories are invented, and they become legitimate through repetition or a process of formalization and ritualization characterized by reference to the past.”¹ We can see the way in which the Civil War is remembered through the Confederate monuments that are scattered across the South, and how the public’s opinion about the event has changed over time. Many of these Civil War monuments that are located throughout the South, were created long after the end of the Civil War in 1865. Many of the monuments that are still standing today were erected during the end of the 19th and well into the 20th centuries, and many were created by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), an organization that was founded in September of 1894 to memorialize and create monuments for Confederate soldiers, as well as taking care of Confederate Veterans. The UDC became the leading organization that would be responsible for how Americans, specifically those in the South, remembered the Civil War and the memories and meanings that surround it.

Following the end of the Civil War the “the duty of commemoration fell in the South to those whom society considered politically irrelevant – women,” making it interesting that they would be involved in the political aspect of commemoration.² The monuments that

¹ Paul A. Shackel, *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape*, (Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 2003), 11.

² John R. Neff, *Honoring the Civil War Dead: Commemoration and the Problem of Reconciliation*, (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2004), 146. For more information on how the United Daughters of the Confederacy (U.D.C.) influenced Southern memory of the Civil War please check the following, *Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* by Karen Cox. This book provides the best overview of this subject of the U.D.C. and the continuation of the ideas of the Confederacy. It was not just monuments that these women used in order to shape public women. Textbooks and

would be built were done so with politics in mind because many of these monuments were explicit in their support for the cause in which the South was fighting for. Women even prior to this time had been an important part of the preservation of memory, and the way history was presented to others. Before the beginning of the Civil War women had taken an active role in the preservation of American History with the rescue of Mount Vernon by the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association. Southern women took their role very seriously and eventually became the teachers of Civil War history and the Lost Cause. Women were the ones who would teach children about the past, and would be able to preserve history in a way they saw fit for their children by portraying the South's role in the war as noble and just. This justification for the South's role in the Civil War which became known as the notion of the Lost Cause became an important idea to rally behind to preserve the memory of the Confederacy, so that it would continue on long after Confederate soldiers had passed.

The Lost Cause of the Confederacy, or the Lost Cause, is the idea that the Confederacy fought the Civil War for just and heroic reasons. Lost Cause ideology referred to the Civil War as the war of "Northern Aggression," and maintained that the war's primary issue was states' rights and not slavery.³ The Lost Cause became an idea which these women could use in order to justify the actions of their dead fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, and show that what the South had fought for was a just cause. Those who had fought for the

the creation of the Children of the Confederacy auxiliary organization helped to continue to pass the ideas of the Lost Cause down to the younger generation for them to pass on. For other books on the subject of the women and their influence on the Lost Cause see: *Burying the Dead But Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Association and the Lost Cause* by Caroline E. Janney, *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory* by Cynthia Mills and Pamela Hemenway Simpson, *Blood and Irony: Southern White Women's Narratives of the Civil War, 1861-1937* by Sarah Gardner.

³ Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2000), 27-28.

Confederacy and those who had lived in the South during the war “nurtured a public memory of the Confederacy that placed their wartime sacrifice and shattering defeat in the best possible light.”⁴ Lost Cause ideology can still be found throughout the South today in histories and narrative about the war and what it was fought over and about. The Lost Cause narrative is not only found in the monuments that dot the Southern landscape, but can be found in written narratives of the war that were produced by southern historians and the textbooks published in the South for school children. Women involved in the United Daughters of the Confederacy and in the South felt that being able to control the public memory of the war and promoting the Lost Cause narrative would permit the legacy of the war live on.

Confederate monuments to the Lost Cause and what some believe they represent have caused arguments throughout the United States in recent years. Some see the statues as racist, as they glorified Confederate soldiers, many of whom owned slaves and who fought to preserve the institution of slavery. Others see them as a way to portray history and heritage, and believe that taking the statues down would be erasing a portion of American history. Disagreements about the history of the Civil War and what we choose to remember and represent from is have affected problems with the historical memory of the war. These arguments are what helped to lead to the Unite the Right rally that took place in Charlottesville, Virginia on August 11th and 12th of 2017.⁵ At the center of the controversy

⁴ Ibid, 1.

⁵ For more information on the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville see: “The Statue at the Center of Charlottesville’s Storm” by Jacey Fortin, “Here’s what a neo-Nazi rally looks like in 2017 America” by Cleve R. Wootson Jr., “Why white nationalist are drawn to Charlottesville” by Madison Park. You can also watch “Who are the white nationalists and Antifa: Part 1” by ABC News as well as “Charlottesville: Race and Terror” by

was the Robert E. Lee statue in Charlottesville, which had come under fire previously by some in the community who wanted to see the statue taken down. In February of that same year the Charlottesville city council had voted to sell the Lee statue and to rename the park in which it was located from Lee Park to Emancipation Park.⁶ These decisions and the feelings that individuals had about the statue, made the city of Charlottesville a choice spot to hold a rally both for those who wanted to keep the statues, and those who wanted to see them gone.

Pro-Trump, alt-right, white nationalists, and other supporters of the Confederate monuments descended on Charlottesville on August 12 in order to march against the removal of the Robert E. Lee Statue.⁷ Emancipation Park, formerly Lee Park, was to be the site of this protest against the removal of the statue of the former General. Rally members began arriving early to the park, but so did counterprotesters. The Chief of the Charlottesville Police, Al S. Thomas Jr., stated that “the rallygoers went back on a plan that would have kept them separated from the counterprotesters. Instead of coming in at one entrance, he said, they came in from all sides. Headlong into the counterprotesters.”⁸ Violence was sure to happen with the rising tensions between the groups.

VICE News Tonight. All of these sources provide excellent information about why the Unite the Right Rally happened, and what it means for America today.

⁶ Daba Lind, “Unite the Right, the violent white supremacist rally in Charlottesville explained,” *Vox*, August 14, 2017. Accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.vox.com/2017/8/12/16138246/charlottesville-nazi-rally-right-uva>.

⁷ Pro-Trump refers to those who are in support of President Donald Trump. Alt-right is an ideological group that hold extreme conservative views. White nationalist are those who support white supremacist or white separatist ideologies these can include the Ku Klux Klan, neo-confederates, neo-Nazi, and skinheads. These nationalist groups focus on the inferiority of nonwhite individuals.

⁸ Joe Heim, “Recounting a day of rage, hate, violence and death:” *Washington Post*, August 14, 2017. Accessed January 2, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/local/charlottesville-timeline/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b6f2177e9f82.

The rally was scheduled to take place from noon until 5 p.m., but many people began showing up as early as 8 a.m. It did not take long for both those protesting the removal of the monument and the counterprotesters to begin fighting. After this fighting had begun to spread between the two groups, police shut down the rally for being unlawful because it was risking the safety of those involved, and caused a state of emergency to be declared by the Governor. As the crowd began to disperse, tensions were still running high for all involved in the rally. One of the alt-right protesters, James Alex Fields Jr, ran his Dodge Challenger through a crowd of pedestrians injuring 19 people and killing Heather Heyer, a young counterprotester. What had started as a rally among those wishing to stop the removal of Confederate monuments and those opposing the idea turned into a deadly tragedy and brought the topic of Confederate monuments and their meaning to the center of a national debate.⁹

Differing opinions about Confederate monuments and who and what they represent played a major role in the Unite the Right rally. These opinions have changed since monuments to Confederate soldiers began being erected in the years after the end of the Civil War. In the immediate aftermath of the war, many saw them as a way to remember and honor those who had fought in the war, or had given their lives to the cause. Over time, however, some have come to see them as a way to glorify the Confederacy that fought to continue the institution of slavery in the South. This debate about what these statues and monuments mean brings up the question of what to do with these monuments. Some want to see the monuments taken down, others want them moved to museums and/or given contextual panels to explain the history behind them, and others just want them to stay where they are. No

⁹ Jacey Fortin, "The Statue at the Center of Charlottesville's Storm:" *The New York Times*, August 13, 2017, Accessed March 30, 2019

matter what someone feels should be done with Confederate monuments, public opinion of them has not always remained the same over time and still continues to change today. Many of these statues and monuments were created as a way to memorialize Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson despite what they had fought for. These men were heroic and fought for a just cause, and therefore needed to be honored with monuments to them. Opinions about the monuments and what they represent to those in their communities, would change as the public memory of the Civil War continues to change.

The memory of the historical events changes over time, and opinions of Confederate monuments is no different. How people viewed and what they thought about these monuments would not always stay the same, and has continued to change with the times, like many other topics in history. Looking at Confederate monuments and how opinions surrounding them has changed gives us a glimpse into the ways that we choose to understand our past during different periods in American history, and how that understanding has changed over time.

In the first chapter I will look at public opinion of Confederate monuments during the time of their erection and into the early 1900s, and how the Lost Cause narrative surrounding them. The second chapter will focus on opinion during the Civil War Centennial Celebration, which also happened during the same time as the Civil Rights Movement throughout the South. The third chapter will discuss the recent opinion of the monuments, and how communities are trying to come to terms with the history of the monuments and what they represent to the people of these communities. In the fourth and final chapter I will discuss the virtual exhibit I created on Wix.com and what steps were taken to put it together.

Chapter 1- Creation of Confederate Monuments

Jefferson Davis, the one and only president of the Confederate States of America, was a leading figure of the South before the Civil War and continued to be after the war ended in 1865. The South and Davis had suffered for the cause of the Confederacy and in turn “Davis became, in short, a symbol of the South’s righteous cause.”¹⁰ Because Davis was such a leading figure for the Confederacy and its causes, after his death in 1889 the idea of erecting a monument to him began to arise. The monument to Jefferson Davis located on Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia became a symbol not only to honor Davis, but the Confederacy as well. This monument was one of the first to be erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (U.D.C.), an organization that had a lasting impact not only on the creation of Confederate monuments, but on the way in which people of the South knew and understood the Civil War. The U.D.C. was created following the end of the Civil War as an organization for women to come together to serve the veterans of the Civil War, as well as honoring the Confederate dead with cemeteries, monuments, and ceremonies.

In February of 1890 the General Assembly of Virginia created the Jefferson Davis Monument Association, charged with the task of creating a monument for the former President of the Confederacy, as well as convincing his widow Mrs. Davis to have her husband's remains buried in Richmond.¹¹ However, these men who charged with raising funds for the monument were unable to collect all the money that they had promised. They then turned to the United Daughters of the Confederacy in order to complete the task so they

¹⁰ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, The Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South 1865 to 1913* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 122.

¹¹ *The Richmond Dispatch*, May 28, 1893, 2.

could “erect any memorial to President Davis, no matter in what form, that they considered suitable and appropriate.”¹² The U.D.C planned a meeting in Richmond, Virginia in November of 1899 to address the issue. In places as far away as Norfolk, the people of Virginia knew that this particular annual meeting of the U.D.C. was to be an important one because the task of the monument was given to the women. The women of the U.D.C had already shown the men of the South that they were able to raise large amount of funds for projects they had overseen, so the Jefferson Davis Monument Association knew the women would be able to get the job done. In Norfolk, Virginia the *The Virginian-Pilot* reported that the women were going to unveil the monument to Winnie Davis, daughter of Jefferson Davis, and a suggestion was also made “that the daughters assume the work of raising funds for the monument to President Jefferson Davis in Richmond.” This was considered to be one of “the important questions of discussion” for this meeting.¹³ The women of the U.D.C happily took on the responsibility for erecting a monument to the former President as well as the Confederacy.

It was reported in newspapers around the Commonwealth that monuments to former Confederate soldiers were being built in Richmond, on what would later be Monument Avenue. The Robert E. Lee Statue had been completed in 1890, and the Jefferson Davis and J.E.B. Stuart statues were erected during the early part of the 1900s. Monument Avenue was envisioned to be a “story of pure patriotism and heroism” and would “stand out as priceless heritages to all generations.” These monuments were intended to “teach a silent lesson of the

¹² Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, held on 8-11 November 1899 in Richmond, Virginia (Nashville: Press of Foster & Webb, Printers, 1900), 65. Accessed October 22, 2018, <https://archive.org/details/MinutesOfTheSixthAnnualMeeting>.

¹³ “The Lost Cause,” *Virginian-Pilot*, November 7, 1899, 2.

great struggle between the states, when Southern patriotism and gallantry [sic] were so fittingly demonstrated. . . [and] principles that cannot be eased by the hand of time, nor obliterated by conditions, however they may change.”¹⁴ The Lost Cause was an important part of the rhetoric of these monuments during the time they were created not just in Virginia but all over the former Confederate States. These statues were intended to be around long after the Civil War veterans had passed and those who were erecting the monuments were telling a specific story of the war.

Monuments appealed to the people of the South. The Jefferson Davis monument was meant to “be an everlasting memorial not only of the patriot and statesman who purely and bravely led souls, but of the ineffable valor and devotion of the most heroic soldiery which the world ever saw, whom he typified while he commanded.”¹⁵ Only the people of the South could be the ones to handle and erect a monument that would do justice to their former president and the Confederacy, while also being a lasting tribute to Davis. This monument was made to be the “crowning feature of Richmond's great Monument Avenue” and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.¹⁶ The women of the U.D.C saw it as their duty to preserve the history of the Civil War, and to portray Davis and others in a positive light rather than reflecting negatively on the Confederacy.

¹⁴ “Famous Avenue of Monuments,” *The Times-Dispatch*, October 1, 1905, B.

¹⁵ “Tribute of South to Memory of President Davis,” *The Times-Dispatch*, May 30, 1907, 9.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

The task of raising money for the monument to Davis took the U.D.C five years to complete; it took another two to build the monument itself. The Jefferson Davis monument and memorial:

consists of a semi-circular colonnade terminating at each end in a square pier with a large column or shaft rising from the inclosed [sic] space. . .the monument typified the vindication of Mr. Davis and the cause of the Confederacy for which he stood before the world. The leading inscription being 'Deo Vindice' (God will vindicate).¹⁷

The monument was unveiled to the public on June 3, 1907, on what would have been the 99th birthday of Davis, and a reunion for Confederate Veterans. These celebrations helped to swell the crowds to between 80,000 and 200,000 in Richmond.¹⁸ The unveiling of the monument was a momentous occasion not just for the people of Richmond, but also for the people of the South. The event was to "become a part of the history of the South. . . this ceremony was one of the South. The veterans who fought for the 'lost cause' were gathered together to pay their tribute to the man whose memory is revered above all others." to honor Jefferson Davis along with the Confederacy itself. The fact that this statue was erected and unveiled when it was is also significant. It had been over 40 years since the end of the Civil War and many veterans were now elderly, so it was important that the last of the Confederate Veterans could be in attendance for the unveiling of the monument to the former president.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ National Register of Historic Places, Monument Avenue Historic District, Richmond, Virginia, December 3, 1997.

This event in Richmond was “a fitting close to what is universally recognized as probably the last ‘great’ gathering of the Confederate Veterans.”¹⁹

Even after the dedication of the monument in 1907, it continued to provide an important touchstone for the people of the South, and memorial services to the Confederacy and Confederate Veterans, continued to occur at the monument. On Jefferson Davis’ 100th birthday June 3, 1908, there again was a celebration in Richmond for the former president. *The Daily Press* wrote that “there was a memorial service in St. Paul’s church. . . followed by a parade of veterans to the Jefferson Davis monument which was formally turned over to the city. The procession then made its way to Hollywood cemetery where the graves of the Confederate soldiers were decorated.”²⁰ Davis’ body had been moved to Hollywood cemetery in 1893 per the request of his wife. The bodies of all of Davis’ children who had died were also moved to be buried in a family plot there, with his wife and daughter being buried there later after their own deaths. Places that were associated with Jefferson Davis in Richmond became shrines to the former president. The house he occupied during the war there was turned into a museum and became “annually a Mecca for thousands of visitors.”²¹ This monument continued to be a gathering ground for Confederate memorial services and visitors to Richmond well into the 1920s. Richmond contained many Confederate monuments “for the benefit of the huge company of visitors, both veterans and those of the

¹⁹ Associated Press, “Splendid Memorial to South’s Great Leader,” *Daily Press*, June 4, 1907, 1.

²⁰ Associated Press, “Jefferson Davis Day Observed in South,” *Daily Press*, June 4, 1907, 1.

²¹ “Confederate President Vindicated Now,” *The Times-Dispatch*, June 3, 1908, 5.

new generation” and became a way to continue the Lost Cause myth of these men who they saw as heroes.²²

Besides the former President of the Confederacy there were other military members who became an important part of Southern culture and the focus of commemorative monuments. Stonewall Jackson, like other important Civil War figures, had already taken on a legendary quality, and has continued to be revered over 150 years later despite the loss of the Civil War by the Confederacy. These men continued to represent the thoughts and ideas that many in the South were fighting for, and memorializing these men helped to keep those thoughts and ideas of the Confederacy alive. Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson have become two of the leading military figures of the Confederacy whose legacy continues on.

Robert E. Lee took over the position of president of Washington and Lee College, then called Washington College, in 1865 following the end of the Civil War. When he took over the position the college was bankrupt and had less than 100 students attending. After his first year as president Lee decided that a new chapel should be built on campus because the current one was “too small and badly adapted to the purpose.”²³ The chapel along with Lee’s office in the basement of the chapel was completed and dedicated in June of 1868. The chapel eventually took on an important role for the college and became a space to hold

²² “Richmond Abounds in Great Memorials to Heroes of ‘Lost Cause’,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 30, 1915, 9.

²³ Douglas W. Bostick, *Memorializing Robert E. Lee: The Story of Lee Chapel*, (Charleston: The Juggling Board, 2005), 27.

assemblies, commencements and other activities, and after Lee's death in 1870 it became his final resting place in a mausoleum built underneath the chapel.²⁴

After Lee's death in October of 1870, preparations were made for the burial of the Civil War general. When asked where she would like her husband buried, Mary Lee chose the basement of the chapel that Robert had built on the campus two years prior. Lee's body was placed inside the chapel with his coffin "open, allowing mourners to gaze upon the face of their friend, general, and president one last time" until he was buried the next day.²⁵

After the passing and subsequent burial of Lee, the Lee Memorial Association was formed in order to erect a monument to the former General. Richmond sculptor Edward Valentine had been meeting with Lee prior to his death taking measurements to create a bust of him. Valentine was also chosen to create the statue of Lee for Lee Chapel. Valentine intended to create a statue of Lee that would look like he was "lying asleep on his field cot during the campaigns of the war" and gave the memorial association an estimate of \$15,000 for the statue.²⁶ Both Lee's wife and the association were enthusiastic about the creation of the statue that would go in the chapel at Washington College and work was quickly started to raise money to fund the memorial.

However, soon after the decision was made to have Valentine create the statue of Lee, the project ran into problems. Throughout a report on the statue by *The Daily Dispatch* in Richmond, the newspaper noted that work had been postponed "for several months [due] to

²⁴ Ibid, 32.

²⁵ Ibid, 43.

²⁶ Ibid, 51.

the difficulty of obtaining a suitable block of marble.” A suitable piece was finally found in Vermont and soon work began on the statue. The piece of marble that was chosen weighed thirteen tons, and was of the “purest white.”²⁷ Valentine’s studio was located in Richmond, and while he worked on the statue of Lee people were allowed to come and see the artist work.

The *Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser* reported on the progress that Valentine was making on the Lee statue. It was reported that “thousands of people are visiting Valentine’s studio to view the recumbent figure of Lee.”²⁸ The people of Virginia were invested in the statue to the Civil War general with people making journeys to view the statue before it was to be placed in Lee Chapel. Those who visited the studio of Valentine included members of the public and former confederate soldiers. It was stated that “old confederate soldiers also go into extacy [sic] over [the statue].”²⁹ Before the statue even made its way to Lee Chapel, it became an important place for people of the Confederacy to visit and gaze upon the recumbent Lee.

On June 28, 1883 the statue was finally unveiled to the public in Lee Chapel in Lexington. Lexington was already a place for people to visit since Stonewall Jackson had been buried there after his death in 1863. With this new statue Lexington would become “more than ever a mecca to which not only Virginians but the people of the whole South will turn in heart in paying tribute and honor to patriotism.” Lee had been buried in the basement

²⁷ “Valentine's Recumbent Figure of Lee,” *The Daily Dispatch*, August 19, 1874, 1.

²⁸ *Alexandria Gazette and Virginia Advertiser*, March 27, 1875, 1.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

of the Chapel, and all that marked his grave was a marble slab. This statue was created to honor Lee and was seen as “worthy of his great name and fame. . . Valentine’s recumbent figure of the Great Chieftain was unveiled. . . the scene was such as was never witnessed in Lexington before, and will never be witnessed there again; and the gathering was one of the most notable that has ever taken place in the South.”³⁰ The statue was like others around the South that were erected to honor and memorialize these great men of the Confederacy, with the Lee one being no exception.

And again, like other Confederate statues, these became places to visit during Confederate Memorial Day. The Memorial Day was a day that was set aside once a year to memorialize the Confederate war dead, and became an important event in the South. Families and former soldiers gathered to celebrate and honor “the heroes of the ‘lost cause.’”³¹ Confederate Memorial Day was a day in which there was not just memorialization of soldiers who had lost their lives, but to the cause of the Civil War itself. Virginia as well as other southern states wanted to find ways not only to remember the fallen, but to show that what these men had died for was a righteous cause. The *Lexington Gazette* reported on the exercises held in the town in the days following the Memorial Day celebration. It was stated that this event was:

always a significant and hallowed occasion, this turning aside from our busy lives of pelf to pay a holy tribute to a holy cause. To many this day is one tinged with deep and lasting sorrow, but surely, now a sorrow softened by the passing years and consecrated by many blessed hope and memory. Let us never cease to celebrate the day, for in doing so we honor ourselves far more than we do those noble silent sleepers who have passed through the [fadeless] glory of sacrifice to the

³⁰ *The Daily Dispatch*, June 29, 1883

³¹ “Graves Decked with Flowers”, *The Times*, May 27, 1900.

deathless glory of immortality. If the heroes sleeping in our cemetery could have been awakened from their death sleep by the thunderous salutes fired over them Saturday afternoon, they would have seen that though they died for a cause that was lost, they are still revered and cherished in the memory of their people.³²

Monuments and Memorial Day celebrations became a way for the people of the South to come together to honor these great men of the war at the memorials that had been built for them. Many of the people during this time felt very strongly about these monuments and the men that they represented.

When Dr. Henry Louis Smith, President of Washington and Lee, and the Board of Trustees wanted to expand the size of Lee Chapel in the 1920s, it became a strongly contested issue, especially with the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Some people wondered whether Lee, if he was still alive, would want the chapel expanded or not. James P. Nelson, a student at Washington and Lee when the Chapel was built, believed that the chapel was erected as a place of meeting for students and a place of worship Nelson maintained that “it was General Lee’s idea to enlarge the chapel if the emergency demanded” and because of the influx of new students to the university it needed to be expanded.³³ The expansion of the chapel continued to be a topic of debate between the U.D.C and the President and Trustees of Washington and Lee. The U.D.C. continued to maintain that they wanted to keep the chapel in the same condition it had been in when Lee had it built.

³² “Memorial Day Exercises, *Lexington Gazette*, May 30, 1900. Pelf means wealth or riches.

³³ “Says Lee, If Alive would Approve Enlarging Chapel,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, September 30, 1922.

Mr. Nelson also noted that with this improvement and expansion of the chapel they would not be disturbing the tomb of Lee and would instead be making it safer for those who used and visited the space by fire proofing it and placing modern equipment inside.³⁴ The majority of the states represented in the U.D.C. approved the plans for the expansion and improvements to the chapel, but it was the Virginia division that was proving reluctant to support the decision. At the national meeting of the U.D.C. in Alabama, the delegates from Virginia took the time to circulate pamphlets that protested the remodeling of the building and tried to convince others that it should be left as it was when General Lee had it built.³⁵ The women of the U.D.C. did not believe that Lee would want the chapel expanded and were adamant about keeping it the way it had been when he was alive. They continued to fight Dr. Smith, Nelson, and the Board of Trustees on the issue.

Dr. Smith was quoted in the *Rockbridge County News* saying that “any U.D.C. member who calls the changing of this chapel a desecration is condemning not only the present Trustees, but all the leaders of Confederate Virginia after General Lee’s death.”³⁶ This statement by the president however did not stop the women of the Virginia and Lexington U.D.C. from trying to sway public opinion throughout the state about it. The entire organization of the U.D.C. in America had voted to give \$100,000 to the cause of updating the chapel despite the protests from Virginia. The U.D.C. protestors said that “they had just begun to fight” for the cause of keeping the chapel as it was.³⁷ Their protest letter campaigns

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ “Lee Chapel Changes Precipitate Warm Fight at Convention,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, November 16, 1922.

³⁶ Bostick, 82.

³⁷ Ibid, 83.

were effective in swaying public opinion about the updates to the chapel. This prompted to citizens around the entire United States to offer their opinion about what should and should not be done with the chapel. Eventually former President Woodrow Wilson even weighed in about the ongoing fight in Lexington. He stated that “changes in the chapel . . . would be an outrageous desecration and bring serious discredit upon the University and the State.” This remark by Wilson resonated with President Smith, who was a supporter of the former President.³⁸

Dr. Smith and the Board of Trustees made the decision not to make any of their suggested changes to the chapel. Smith and the Trustees could not continue to fight the women of the Virginia U.D.C., the former president of the United States, and other members of the community who were so adamant about keeping the chapel as it had been when Lee had it built on campus. Smith and the board, however, did get their wish to fireproof the chapel which was done in 1924 for \$6,000.³⁹ Lee, like Davis was one of the figures of the Civil War who continued to hold a special place for the people of the South, and they did not want to see his legacy changed.

Robert E. Lee was one of the leading figures of the Civil War, with strong ties to the state of Virginia. The U.D.C. division from Virginia did not want to see the image that had surrounded Lee to be changed by trying to renovate and update the chapel where he rests. Lee and other Confederate soldiers continued to be held in high regard throughout the South, and the idea of changing Lee Chapel created much controversy between the school and the

³⁸ Ibid, 87.

³⁹ Ibid, 88.

U.D.C. The leading men of the Civil War had a godlike status around the South which is why so many felt so strongly about the renovations of Lee Chapel.

Thomas Jonathan Jackson is seen as one of the leading generals of the Civil War in addition to Robert E. Lee and his battle tactics are still studied even today. He earned the nickname Stonewall Jackson at the first battle of Manassas where he was said to have faced down Union troops like a stone wall. After he was shot at the battle of Chancellorsville in May of 1863, his arm was amputated but he later died from complications of pneumonia. His death in 1863 left a lasting impact on the Confederacy and dealt a strong blow to the morale of the army as well as the civilians across the South. A young girl from Virginia is quoted as saying that it “dawned on us that God would let us be defeated” after the death of Stonewall Jackson.⁴⁰

Over 50 years after the death of Jackson, the Stonewall Jackson statue in Charlottesville, Virginia was a gift of city native Paul Goodloe McIntire. McIntire had gone to school at the University of Virginia, but dropped out and made a name for himself in Chicago and New York as a stockbroker. After making a fortune for himself he returned to Charlottesville where he gave significant donations to his former school and the city itself. He saw the gifts that he gave as ways to enrich the university, as well as the city where it was located. In total it is estimated that McIntire gave \$750,000 to the university and almost \$270,000 to the city alone during his lifetime.⁴¹ The Jackson statue is located on land that

⁴⁰ James I. Robertson, *Stonewall Jackson: The Man, the Soldier, the Legend* (New York: Macmillan, 1997), 755.

⁴¹ Magdalen Poff, “Gifts of Paul Goodloe McIntire Still Serve Community,” *The Daily Progress* December 30, 1966, 5.

was purchased by McIntire to create a public park that he named Jackson Park (now called Court Square Park) in 1919. He deeded the property to the city under the condition that this piece of property could never be used for anything other than a park, and that the Jackson statue would be the only monument or statue placed on the entire property. The Jackson monument was sculpted by Charles Keck, and is often regarded as one of the three best equestrian statues in the world.⁴²

Much like the Jefferson Davis Monument unveiling in Richmond that happened two years later, the unveiling of this monument also occurred during a Confederate Veterans reunion that was taking place in Charlottesville. Most of the Confederate monument unveilings, and reunions during this time were becoming of utmost importance to the former citizens and soldiers of the Confederacy. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported a few weeks before the unveiling that this event would be of major importance “due to the fact that the reunion at that time of the Grand Camp, Confederate Veterans of Virginia and the Virginia Division United Confederate Veterans will perhaps be the last assembly of these organizations. Their numbers are passing away. . .and their achievements must be preserved.”⁴³

The parade for the Confederate veterans and the unveiling of the Stonewall Jackson statue were seen as the two greatest events to take place during this weekend. The parade itself had over 5,000 people and included not only veterans but members of the U.D.C and

⁴² “History and Gardens of Court Square Park,” Charlottesville.org, <http://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/parks-recreation/parks-trails/city-parks/justice-park-formerly-known-as-jackson-park/history-and-gardens-of-justice-park> (Accessed November 4, 2018).

⁴³ “To Unveil Bronze Statues of ‘Stonewall Jackson’,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch* October 2, 1921, 9.

the Virginia Military Institute Stonewall Brigade Band, and the most celebrated part, the children of the Charlottesville city public schools. The children from the high school even formed “into a living representation of the Confederate banner, the Bonnie Blue Flag.”⁴⁴ It took the parade over an hour to make its way from where it began to Jackson Park. Those who had marched joined the thousands of other members of the community at the park to watch the unveiling of Keck’s statue to the former general.⁴⁵

The statue was unveiled by the great-great-granddaughter of Stonewall Jackson, Anna Jackson Preston, and the daughter of Julia Jackson Preston who was from Charlottesville. Some of those present in the crowd, including Charles Keck himself, were moved strongly by seeing the statue finally unveiled to the public. He is quoted as saying with tears in his eyes “I never knew until now how beautiful it [the sculpture of Jackson] is, nor how great a sculptor I am.”⁴⁶ After the statue was given to the city, the president of the University of Virginia spoke on behalf of Paul Goodloe McIntire:

we are gathered here. . .within the State which gave him birth, to see in place and equestrian statue of Thomas Jonathan Jackson, one of the greatest of these high statured men. . .It is the presentment in ‘bronze of a great Christian warrior. . .There is something of so great force in the mingling of his fiery energy, his iron will and stern silence, his childlike simplicity, his fearless self control and self dependence, his utter self sacrifice that somehow his fame in the short space allotted to him for great deeds, rose like a star in the heavens, and he passed without dispute, in the glory of unconquerable youth, into the inner circle of the soldier-saints and heroes of the English race.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ “Jackson Statue is Unveiled,” *The Daily Progress* October 19, 1921, 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ National Register for Historic Places, Thomas Jonathan Jackson Sculpture, Charlottesville, Virginia, April 13, 1996.

⁴⁷ “Jackson Statue is Unveiled,” 3.

The community saw Jackson and many other Confederate veterans in a positive light. When the statue was presented to the city it was given in a “high spiritual sense, to the valiant souls now living who fought beneath the Stars and Bars, this statue of Stonewall Jackson in the belief that it will stand here forever a symbol of victorious might in war, of single heartedness in conduct, and an inspiration to those who love their country well but freedom more.”⁴⁸ The cause that they had fought and died for was not for the right to maintain slavery in the South, but instead for the right of local self-government. This theme of the heroic soldier is apparent in the vast majority of Confederate monuments.

The whole weekend was seen as a success, from the parade, and unveiling of the statue, to the balls and other activities throughout the weekend. The reunion for the Confederate veterans was seen as “one of the most elaborate and successful as well as creditable [sic] public events that have been staged in the city in a generation, and showed both what can be accomplished by the co-operative spirit recently aroused and the genuine loyalty and love of the people for the Cause the old Vets represent.”⁴⁹ To the town of Charlottesville and the state of Virginia, the Stonewall Jackson statue represented that although the war was over it was still an important part of the history of the state. Democratic nominee Elbert Lee Trinkle gave a speech in which he stated that “Virginia has recovered from the blow of the Civil War – though that war is truly part of the State. . .and [must be] careful that the evil days of reconstruction shall not return. . . [Virginia] reflects HER OWN

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ T. J. Randolph, “Aftermath of Big Reunion,” *The Daily Progress* October 21, 1921, 1.

PAST and contemplates HER OWN FUTURE.”⁵⁰ The future of the state and the history they wanted to portray to the public is evident in the statues that were erected during the latter part of the 19th century and into the 20th.

The statues and their unveilings were major events within the communities in which these statues were erected. The statues each became places where people came to celebrate Memorial Day as well as places to visit with families. With the number of Civil War Veterans slowly decreasing it became important to preserve their memories and a particular memory of the war with these monuments. To the people of the South, the Lost Cause and the legacy of the war and what these veterans had fought for would never die because the legacy would be able to continue for years to come. However, over time the interest in these statues no longer wavered, and they did not hold as much significance as they had prior to the death of the last of the Civil War soldiers. They would again become a place for people and families to visit and celebrate with the start of the Civil War Centennial celebrations from 1961-1965.

⁵⁰ “Fine Address by Trinkle,” *The Daily Progress* October 19, 1921, 4.

Chapter 2 - Civil War Centennial

By 1965, it had been one hundred years since the end of the Civil War, but the memory and ideas of the war still lived on in the South. Writing in the *Richmond News-Leader*, James J. Kilpatrick believed that with the upcoming Civil War Centennial, Richmond must be prepared for the occasion, and that “the South has something to say to these visitors from elsewhere in the Union. There are deep and meaningful lessons to be drawn from the terrible conflict waged for Southern independence - lessons in history, in law, in the meaning of defeat. The important thing is for Richmond to get started now. . . to draw visitors from throughout the country.”⁵¹ For the South this Civil War Centennial celebration would be a way to continue the Lost Cause narrative that had been around since the turn of the century. This would also allow them an opportunity to tell the war from the Southern point of view, and that the war was fought for states’ rights, not slavery. Kilpatrick’s remarks occurred in the midst of significant turmoil throughout the South. The Civil Rights Movement was in full swing, and the 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* that required school desegregation, threatened great change throughout the South. The Centennial celebrations that were to take place were a way for white Southern segregationists, to attempt to defend their Southern way of life through these celebrations and the idea of the Lost Cause, as well as a way to try to take control of the many changes that were happening.

⁵¹ “The Opportunity of 61-65,” *Richmond News-Leader*, April 30, 1959.

Since the end of the war, Civil War memory in the South had been shaped by “family and community lore, history textbooks, and numerous forms of popular culture [that] taught white southerners that slavery was a benign institution, that secession had been a last resort occasioned by fanatical abolitionist attacks on southern constitutional rights, and that Confederates has struggled for four years to sustain those rights.”⁵² Southerners and Northerners had both shaped the ways in which they talked about and taught the history of the Civil War, but the one point they could agree on was that Reconstruction had prompted significant change, and not all of that change was for the better. Reconstruction allowed African Americans more rights than they had previously been given and the result was that corruption spread across the U.S. North and Southern whites could agree that this time in American history caused problems. “Reconstruction was the work of vindictive Radical Republicans,” one historian wrote, “whose only aim was to punish a brave people for striving to maintain their liberties.”⁵³ Reconstruction created a lasting divide in the nation over the memory of the Civil War.

This memory was shaped not only for white individuals though. African Americans had their own perspectives about the war and the meanings behind it. For them it was about slavery, emancipation, and black troops who supported the Union army against the Confederates, but his narrative was not widely known or taught.⁵⁴ Whites were able to exclude this African American narrative from the history of the Civil War and thus from the

⁵² Robert Cook, “(Un)Furl That Banner: The Response of White Southerners to the Civil War Centennial of 1961-1965,” *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 4. (November 2002): 881. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3069777>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 882.

Civil War Centennial. The centennial would be about the brave white men and women who fought for their perspective nations, and the sacrifices that were made both on the battlefield as well as the home front. This narrative of heroism and sacrifice however, did not include African Americans and their experiences own during the war. What would be taught and discussed during the centennial celebrations would focus on white experiences during the war, rather than painting a much more complete picture.

Congress created the U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission in 1957 to help centennial commissions in each state with its celebrations. The U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission was created so that these celebrations would not “reawaken memories of old sectional antagonism and political rancors, but instead strengthen both the unity of the Nation and popular devotion to the highest purpose of the Republic - a republic that, between Sumpter and Appomattox, had watched hundreds if not thousands of young men lay down their lives in devotion to a cause.”⁵⁵ The theme of unity was central and important to the Commission. As the U.S. government was “fighting communism abroad and cognizant of growing racial friction at home, the centennial appeared to present an ideal opportunity to finally remind Americans that the internecine carnage of the nineteenth century had finally brought them together.”⁵⁶ The centennial therefore became more about Union coming back together, and the sacrifices of the men who had fought and died during the war to make this

⁵⁵ The Civil War Centennial Commission, *The Civil War Centennial: A Report to the Congress* (Washington, 1968), 3.

⁵⁶ Robert Cook, “From Shiloh to Selma: The Impact of the Civil War Centennial on the Black Freedom Struggle in the United States, 1961-1965,” in *The Making of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement*, Brian Ward and Tony Badger, eds. (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 134.

reunion happen. This also meant however, that slavery, one of the major causes of the war was not a major topic of the centennial.

The states that participated in the centennial all wanted to do so not just to bring in visitors to the state, but to show the history of their state during the Civil War. Of all the states that participated in the Civil War Centennial, Virginia was by far the largest. Virginia state delegation established the Virginia Civil War Commission, and had “one of the largest budgets of any agency. . . [and] became a model for many State and local agencies.” The Commission created a Centennial Center in Richmond that contained “artifacts, photographs, electronic maps, and dioramas,” and over 631,000 people visited the center during the Centennial celebrations. Over the course of these celebrations Virginia held a mock inauguration of Jefferson Davis, battle reenactments, and tours of the Shenandoah Valley. The state erected highway markers, and worked with over 130 local Centennial Committees in statewide meetings about the celebrations. Because Virginia had played such a prominent role in the Civil War, especially the Shenandoah Valley, it was expected that Virginia would hold one of the best centennials. Over the course of the four years during which the Centennial took place, Virginia was able to plan major events thanks to “superb leadership, a generous legislature, and a dedicated staff.”⁵⁷

The Virginia Civil War Commission was created by the Act of the 1958 General Assembly of Virginia. The General Assembly did not want the centennial to be a celebration or “commercial venture,” and there was no need to “fight the war all over again or to engage in partisan controversy” therefore the Commission set aims that included:

⁵⁷ *The Civil War Centennial: A Report to the Congress*, 55-56.

- (1) To honor the courage and devotion of the unnumbered thousands of men and women who fought so valiantly and endured so bravely during the Civil War;
- (2) To stimulate interest in this period and to encourage further study of the Civil War, believing that honest research will heal old wounds rather than reopen them;
- (3) To educate the public concerning the campaigns, the shrines, the personalities and the human story of the War in Virginia in the faith that knowledge of truth will lead to understanding and no resentment;
- (4) To preserve the monuments, the graves, the relics and the ruins of the wartime past to remind this and future generations of their link with history;
- (5) To proclaim Virginia's true role in the historic struggle. . .
- (6) To encourage the American people to rededicate themselves to the observance of the highest moral standards and to the service of their country to no less an extent than our fathers dedicated themselves to their causes; . . .
- (7) To point out the common heritage and to emphasize the unity of this nation which has developed since the dreadful conflict.⁵⁸

While the purpose of the Commission throughout the United States and within the state of Virginia was to show and maintain a unified front regardless of current worldwide issues and the massive resistance happening in Virginia, and throughout the South. But the majority of the events that were held in Virginia were intended to emphasize its Southern cultural heritage, and had less to do with unity. There was also little to no mention of the struggle that African Americans had faced during the Civil War, nor the Emancipation Proclamation, meaning that almost all of these events would be for the benefit of remembering and celebrating white American history.

The Southern states and other states throughout the United States had different aims when it came to the centennial celebrations. Most of this conflict could be seen during the Spring of 1961, the beginning of the centennial celebration. Many in the South who were “die-hard segregationists strove to draw parallels between the past and present struggles”

⁵⁸ Virginia Civil War Commission, *Preliminary Plans of the Virginia Civil War Commission*, (Richmond, December 28, 1959), 2.

when it came to the centennial celebrations.⁵⁹ Racism was still alive and well throughout the South and would continue during the centennial. To make matters worse when the U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission wanted to hold a meeting in Charleston, South Carolina the African American members of the delegation were unable to book rooms in the hotel where the meeting was being held because of their race.⁶⁰ This caused tensions between Northern and Southern states participating in these events, and the commission almost fell apart because of this incident. This crisis hurt the centennial, and continued to show the struggles that African Americans were facing not just with the Civil War Centennial Celebrations, but around the South

The proper beginning of the Civil War Centennial for the nation occurred on January 8, 1961 with joint ceremonies in New York and Lexington, Virginia. General Ulysses S. Grant III laid a wreath on his grandfather's grave, while one was also laid at the tomb of Robert E. Lee. This continued to convey the themes of unity and reconciliation that were a major part of the centennial. *The Petersburg Progress* reported on the event in Lexington and the "tributes to the famed Confederate general," but the newspaper also made note of them also paying tribute to Grant as "the man who conquered [Lee]."⁶¹ The ceremonies ended with the ringing of bells all across the United States. This centennial was important to white southerners who would 'take the centennial to their hearts in the early months of 1961.'⁶² If

⁵⁹ "(Un)Furl That Banner: The Response of White Southerners to the Civil War Centennial of 1961-1965," 893.

⁶⁰ Shackel, 44.

⁶¹ "W&L Rite Pays Tribute to Gen. Lee," *The Petersburg Progress*, January 9, 1961

⁶² Robert Cook, *Troubled Commemoration: the American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007), 50.

their point was to unify the nation, it would be hard to do given the political climate throughout the South

Virginia hosted many events all over the state over the course of the four years of the Civil War Centennial. People all over the country made journeys to visit Civil War sites, see reenactments, and participate in events held mainly throughout the South. Many of the Virginia United Daughters of the Confederacy chapters made trips to Richmond during this time in order to visit the headquarters located there, as well as pay tribute to the men who had been memorialized in these monuments. The local chapter in Harrisonburg made the journey to Richmond in order to pay homage to Jefferson Davis, as well as attend the centennial commemoration of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederate States of America. Many of the trips to visit Civil War sites, and especially the monuments were often called pilgrimages when reported in newspapers. The *Daily News Record* reported that the Turner Ashby Chapter of the U.D.C. began their time in Richmond by joining in a “pilgrimage” to the Davis monument where they laid a wreath on the monument. Another “pilgrimage” was then made to Hollywood Cemetery where the former president is buried, again laying another wreath.⁶³ As newspaper reports previously noted during the construction of these monuments, these pilgrimages took on a religious quality. Reports referred to the Jefferson Davis monument, as a mecca for people to visit and continue to visit years later. Monuments and the men they were memorializing continued to be highly regarded by individuals in Virginia and throughout the South.

⁶³ “Pilgrimages to Mark Centennial Commemoration of UDC at Richmond,” *Daily News Record*, February 16, 1962.

It was not just the members of the U.D.C. who participated in these kinds of activities. The Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Children of the Confederacy all joined in celebrating Jefferson Davis. All three groups also invited participation from the community. They stated that “families and friends are invited to join in this tribute of love and respect to Jefferson Davis, great American patriot, hero of War with Mexico and only president of the Confederate States of America.”⁶⁴ People would come and visit Richmond and the monument to Davis in order to pay tribute to him and continue to see him in a heroic light. Memorialization of Jefferson Davis and other important figures of the Confederacy continued to play an important role not just for these organizations, but for the public as well.

February of 1962 saw the biggest event that brought people to Richmond in order to honor Jefferson Davis. The reenactment of Davis taking the oath of office to assume the presidency occurred on the exact spot that it had happened in 1862 under the George Washington statue in Capital Square. Although Davis had been given the presidency in 1861 in Alabama, this inauguration in 1862 was more significant, as he was “elected President of the ‘permanent government’” by all the states that had seceded from the U.S.⁶⁵ Many people watched the swearing-in take place in the former capital of the Confederacy, making it an important event for the Virginia Civil War Commission. The executive chairman of the commission stated that the inauguration of Davis was “a highly significant milestone in the history of the Confederacy,” which is why it was important to recreate this event during the centennial and have the public be able to see the event.⁶⁶ Davis as well as Robert E. Lee and

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ “Confederate Event Set at Richmond,” *Daily News Record*, February 21, 1962, 3.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Stonewall Jackson continued to hold a special place in the Southern memory of the Civil War.

Lee Chapel was a place of importance for Virginia during the centennial. In 1960 the chapel had been approved for a grant from the Ford Motor Company Fund to restore the chapel. The chapel had not been changed since Lee had built it during his presidency in 1868, and it was in desperate need of restoration. The wooden trusses were beginning to sag and could no longer support the weight of the roof. The walls were bowing on the sides, and the chapel needed fireproofing.⁶⁷ If Washington and Lee wanted to continue to use the chapel for events for the school, and as a pull for visitors to come to Lexington not just for the centennial but for after the future, they needed to maintain the structure for years to come. Lee Chapel was also a place that many would visit during the four years of the centennial. Those who were invested in the centennial wanted to visit the chapel that Lee built, see where he was buried, and see the office that he worked from.

The restoration project hit a snag when a small fire broke out in the chapel. The Harrisonburg *Daily News Record* said that it was believed that the fire started from a workman's cutting torch when sparks encountered paint remover. This caused a fire and large black clouds of smoke to come out of the chapel. No one was hurt, but the chapel was slightly damaged because of the smoke. However, the newspaper stated that "the restoration project would not be slowed by the mishap."⁶⁸ The university only had to wait until October for the chapel would be finished, and a rededication ceremony would then take place. The

⁶⁷ Clark Nexsen & Owen, *Restoration of Lee Chapel Washington and Lee University*, January 1958, 6.

⁶⁸ "Fire Damages W & L Chapel," *Daily News Record*, January 11, 1963, 11.

chapel could then be opened to the public and it would continue to draw people to the small town of Lexington in order to honor Lee and his family who were buried beneath the chapel, much like they were doing for Davis in Richmond.

Robert E. Lee's great grandson, and many Washington and Lee alumni were there during the rededication and stated that the chapel was "the most honorable monument of all to the memory of his illustrious great grandfather."⁶⁹ The president of the Ford Motor Company Fund who gave the money to have the chapel restored also had words to say about Robert E. Lee. Lee was "the man of God. . . the molder of young minds. . .the healer of raw wounds. History already has enshrined the man and the rededication of this shrine reflects the lengthening shadow cast by a great man across almost a century."⁷⁰ Although Lee had been dead for almost 100 years, he was still highly regarded by many Americans, not just those in the South.

Stonewall Jackson also continued to be held in high regard around the time of the Civil War Centennial. The statue that sits in what was formerly Jackson Park in Charlottesville, was held in the same esteem as it was when it was erected in 1921 with the people of the city. When it was suggested that the statue be moved to a different part of the park as part of a beautification project, the notion sparked outrage within the community. Charlottesville's *The Daily Progress* reported that "few, if any, people would oppose the idea of beautifying the park, but moving the statue is another matter entirely. The major difficulty encountered in considering such a relocation is in envisioning how the statue and the park

⁶⁹ "Restored Lee Chapel Dedicated," *The Daily News Record*, October 12, 1963, 9.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

would look after the changes were made.”⁷¹ Those in the city could not agree to move the statue to any other location in the park, even if it was seen as a way to beautify the park for others.

It was also argued that moving the statue would cause “the surroundings in the new location would detract from rather than enhance the beauty of the statue. . . to be shown at its best advantage, the Jackson statue should remain in the relatively open and elevated position it now enjoys.”⁷² Letters to the editors continued to show the opinions that many in the city had about moving the statue. One correspondent named Nancy Leitch wrote to the editor of *The Daily Progress* that she did not agree with moving the statue, because it was not what Charles Keck, the statue’s creator, would have wanted to happen to it. She believed that Keck envisioned that the statue should be “strongly silhouetted UP against the sky as both the height of the base and the elevation of the park area clearly show.”⁷³ Many did not want to see the statue moved as it would detract from its original purpose, it was created to be seen by all those who visited the park and moving it would hinder that. Leitch also went onto say that moving the statue would give it a feeling of restriction and create a limiting effect with the planting of trees around it and that “this is not Louis XIV executing a dressage movement at Versailles, but Stonewall Jackson leading a battle charge in Virginia!”⁷⁴ Forty years later, Stonewall Jackson and the statue of him continued to be an important fixture in the city.

⁷¹ *Charlottesville Daily Progress*, November 4, 1966.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ “Keck’s Statue of Jackson,” *The Daily Progress*, October 27, 1966.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

In another article in *The Daily Progress*, author Sandy Lambert offered a different perspective on the idea of moving the Jackson statue. She believed that people who were complaining about moving the statue only saw it when they passed Jackson Park “probably because there is little else to be seen.”⁷⁵ Although she too had her reservations about the movement of the statue, she felt that it was necessary if people in the city wanted to get any use out of the park. People visited the park for music and to walk in the summer, but “there is little, if any, pleasant refuge there from a hot day or a busy work day. There is very little in the park upon which the eye can gaze in a relaxing or contemplative mood.”⁷⁶ She like others, wanted to keep the statue in the park, but she believed that the additions that had been suggested would be worthwhile to the park in the long run. Others who agreed with her argued that if Charlottesville wanted to continue to have people visit the park then changes would have to be made in order to benefit those visiting.

During the course of the Civil War Centennial Davis, Lee, and Jackson all continued to be important figures for those in the South to remember and memorialize. People made trips from all over the country to visit the monuments and “shrines” that had been erected to these men. The Southern white male dominated history of the Civil War continued to be presented to the public, with little regard to the African Americans who were enslaved during the war, and who had fought for freedom for their families. Although the Emancipation Proclamation was commemorated with some ceremonies it was not as significant an event as the opening of the centennial celebrations or the reenactment of the inauguration of Jefferson Davis. Just as there was during the time when these monuments to honor these “heroic” men

⁷⁵ “Another View of Jackson Park,” *The Daily Progress*, November 12, 1966.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

were created a one-sided view of the reasons for fighting the Civil War still prevailed. That would continue until well into the 2010s when major backlash against these statues occurred.

Chapter 3 - Present Day

Over the years historians have worked to provide a broader interpretation of American history, and to incorporate African Americans as well as women into the master narrative to provide a better perspective. This means that there needs to be a greater understanding of America's racial history. Confederate statues mark a time in our racial history that needs to be addressed, and commissions in Richmond, Lexington, and Charlottesville about Confederate statues that were created are trying to do that. Many in the communities where these statues were erected were trying to come to terms with what these statues represented. Some felt they glorified men who owned African Americans as slaves and fought to continue to be able to do so. Others feel that they are representing the heritage of the South, and honor their family members who fought in the war.

Richmond, Washington and Lee, and Charlottesville all created commissions between 2014 and 2018 in order to gather public opinion and to try to figure out what could and should be done with the Confederate statues and monuments within their communities. The commissions allowed their respective communities to voice their opinions about keeping or removing the statues and monuments. This allowed for an attempted agreement between the community and the commission about what should be done, rather than allowing the commission to make the decision alone which could cause more problems.

Even prior to the events in Charlottesville in August of 2017, there had been talk of removing Confederate statues across the South, including the ones in Richmond. In July 2017 Mayor Levar Stoney had formed the Monument Avenue Commission in order to come

to a consensus on what to do with the Richmond monuments. Stoney stated in a tweet on August 16th, 2017, 4 days after the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, that the “Monument Avenue Commission will include examination of removal and/or relocation of some or all confederate statues.”⁷⁷ Many people saw these statues as oppressive, and a reminder of the history of the white supremacy in the United States that obviously had not gone away. The rally that had occurred in Charlottesville caused many around the state including the mayor of Richmond to consider anew what to do with Confederate monuments.

Citizens and historians have debated about what to do with the statues. In 2017 James Grossman the executive director of the American Historical Association stated that the removal of these statues is “not changing history. [Its] changing how we remember history.”⁷⁸ Some people argued against the removal of the statues because they believed it erased history, but these individuals fail to see the difference between history and memory. Taking down the statues and monuments does not erase the history of the Civil War; the history of the war will not change. What does change is how we choose to remember the war. Many of the present statues to Confederates soldiers were erected during the Jim Crow era, or during the 1950s and 1960s when there was strong Southern resistance to the Civil Rights Movement. Grossman also states that “we would not want to whitewash our history by

⁷⁷ Levar Stoney, Twitter Post, August 2017, 4:09 p.m., https://twitter.com/LevarStoney/status/897928382918348802?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetemb&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.salon.com%2F2017%2F08%2F18%2Fsome-black-politicians-want-to-keep-the-civil-war-memorials-standing%2F

⁷⁸ Jennifer Schuessler, “Historians Question Trump’s Comments on Confederate Monuments,” *New York Times*, August 15, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/15/arts/design/trump-robert-e-lee-george-washington-thomas-jefferson.html> (accessed February 23, 2019).

pretending that Jim Crow and disenfranchisement or massive resistance to the civil rights movement never happened. That's the part of our history that these monuments testify to."⁷⁹

Grossman and other historians are not the only ones who are arguing for the removal of Confederate monuments, but the American President has chimed on the debate too. After the Unite the Right rally, President Trump asked that because people wanted the statues of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson to come down, "I wonder, is it George Washington next week? And is it Thomas Jefferson the week after?"⁸⁰ The problem with this statement by the President, is that there has not been an outcry to remove any statues of Washington or Jefferson as there has been for the monuments to former Confederate soldiers. The other issues is that Washington and Jefferson were founding fathers of the United States; Lee, Jackson, Davis, and others took up arms against the United States, and were thereby called traitors. President Trump's statement also ignored the large moral problem that surrounds the Confederacy, slavery. The Civil War was fought to protect the institution of slavery which was the backbone of the Southern economy at the time. However, it is not just the President or historians who are giving their opinion on the monuments, but members of the community as well.

The Monument Avenue Commission received "almost 2000 letters via email and traditional mail" giving opinions on Confederate monuments and what should or should not be done with them. The Commission also opened a public forum for individuals to voice

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

their opinions about what they felt should be done.⁸¹ From October 2017 until May 2018 citizens of Richmond were invited to submit opinions, and some were later included in the report by the Monument Avenue Commission. One commenter argued for keeping the statues on Monument Avenue because “Richmond is unique in that this is part of its history. Richmond was the capital of the confederacy. The civil war was part of our history and should be represented.”⁸² The majority of those who left comments asking for the statues to be left where they stand all voiced similar opinions. Many wanted to keep the statues because removing them would be erasing the history of the Civil War and these men who are memorialized. Commenter Carlisle Branch stated that he felt the politically correct crowd were “displaying their hatred for a large segment of the population. . .the monuments are not monuments to slavery they are monuments to the people who gave their all for their fellow countrymen.”⁸³ There were some who argued that if the statues were to be kept on the avenue, then historical context should be provided for those seeing the statues.

Alison Kent, another commentator, gave her opinion that the monuments should remain, but context should be provided to help people understand them and the time in which they were created. “Please do not remove the monuments,” she wrote. “They are part of our history. I think it is acceptable to add context. The history is the history and even if it is sad,

⁸¹ City of Richmond, Office of the Mayor and City Council, Monument Avenue Commission, *Monument Avenue Commission Report*, 2018, 69.

⁸² “October 2017,” Monument Avenue Commission, accessed on February 27, 2019, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/594bdfc3ff7c502289dd13b3/t/5af465ef758d4609774c88ef/1525966319598/October+2017+-+Sheet1.pdf>.

⁸³ “March 2018,” Monument Avenue Commission, accessed on February 27, 2019, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/594bdfc3ff7c502289dd13b3/t/5af468bbf950b72ba0da05e7/1525967035763/March+2018+-+Sheet1.pdf>.

it doesn't go away by removing the physical evidence."⁸⁴ Other agreed with Kent in that context needed to be given to the monuments rather than tearing them down. A letter writer named Paul Hatfield believed that "the people they depict, however wrong their cause, played an important role in shaping the future of the nation into one that became united. The war, itself, was the price we paid for our failure to settle the slavery issue when the Constitution was written."⁸⁵ The majority of people that wanted to keep the statues and provide context argued that these monuments bring people and money to Richmond, and taking them down would hinder tourism to the city.

However, there were those who argued for the removal of the statues from Monument Avenue. They did not agree with those who had put up the monuments, and argued that they were a way in which to support white supremacy. Richmond resident Leslie Waters stated that:

the monuments should be removed immediately because they are offensive to many Virginians, including many members of marginalized communities and all those who objects to commemorating men who instigated and led a war to preserve slavery. . . furthermore, these are not war memorials and they should not be treated as such. They were constructed decades after the conflict by white supremacists to legitimize segregation and justify the violence inflicted on the Black community in the era of Jim Crow.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ "December 2017," Monument Avenue Commission, accessed on February 27, 2019, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/594bdfc3ff7c502289dd13b3/t/5af4660d2b6a28f2da6e78e1/1525966349892/December+2017+-+Sheet1.pdf>.

⁸⁵ "January 2018," Monument Avenue Commission, accessed on February 27, 2019, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/594bdfc3ff7c502289dd13b3/t/5af468d21ae6cf04a980a1af/1525967058316/January+2018+-+Sheet1.pdf>.

⁸⁶ "December 2017".

There were others who agreed that the problem with the statues is that they glorified men who tried to maintain slavery in the South. Alyssa Murray wrote that she “would like to see the monument removed from Monument Avenue. Their removal would not erase history but rather would send a message that their ideas, values, and practices around race are not what we ascribe to today. As we continue to work toward equality, how can we do it in the shadow of these men?”⁸⁷ The Civil War continues to create a divide in the Richmond Community, and no one in the community can agree about what should be done with the monuments.

After months of gathering public opinion through public meetings and online forums, the commission came to a decision about what to do with the statues on Monument Avenue. They decided to add prominent and permanent signage to the all of the monuments that were to Confederate individuals on Monument Avenue. Because the Robert E. Lee monument is owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia, it was controlled by different rules stipulating what could be done to it, but the commission recommended that this statue should receive signage as well. Commission members also suggested creating a new video for the city website that would show the entire landscape of monuments, including those planned for the future. The only monument that they suggested should potentially be completely removed was the Jefferson Davis monument. The commission believed that “of all the statues, this one is the most unabashedly Lost Cause in its design and sentiment. Davis was not from Richmond or Virginia.”⁸⁸ The recommendation made by the commission to possibly remove

⁸⁷ “April 2018,” Monument Avenue Commission, accessed February 27, 2019, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/594bdfc3ff7c502289dd13b3/t/5af468ae70a6ad3849e3b877/1525967022463/April+2018+-+Sheet1.pdf>.

⁸⁸ *Monument Avenue Commission*, 33.

the statue of Davis continues to cause debates in the city about the legacy of the Confederate monuments there, and what is to be done with them.

A similar situation took place at Washington and Lee University (W&L) in Lexington with the university president forming a commission on Institutional History and Community following the events in Charlottesville in August 2017. The final part of the commission report focused on the built environment around the campus. The report stated that the “built environment - and the paintings, sculptures and photographs that enhance it, and the nomenclature used to name it - has the potential to inform one’s experience and contour memory.”⁸⁹ The campus of Washington and Lee presents history in a specific light to the students, the university, and other visitors. The campus has portraits of Lee and Washington, as well as buildings named after prominent white men, some of who were slaveholders. Important ceremonies in the school year are held in the chapel including “first-year orientation, the Honor Book signing, Founders Day Convocation, and the induction ceremonies for the Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa. On those occasions, the university recalls and celebrates its values.”⁹⁰ Lee Chapel plays a significant role in the community of Washington and Lee and helps portray the history of the institution to those who attend and visit the university.

Lee Chapel not only plays a significant role in the community of Washington and Lee but also in the surrounding community and the South. The chapel became a shrine over time and the commission argued that “by continuing to hold rituals and events in Lee Chapel, the

⁸⁹ Washington and Lee University, Office of the President, Commission on Institutional History and Community, *Report of the Commission on Institutional History and Community*, 2018, 28.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 29.

university, wittingly or not, sustains the Shrine of the South and the memory of Lee as a commander of the Confederate Army.”⁹¹ The chapel had previously been engrained with even more Confederate imagery prior to 2014, when the decision was made to have the reproduction Confederate battle flags that had been in the chapel around the recumbent Lee statue removed. Although Confederate flags, which are on loan from the American Civil War Museum in Richmond continue to be displayed in the chapel, the president of the university at the time, said that:

the purpose of historic flags in a university setting is to educate. They are not to be displayed for decoration, which would diminish their significance, or for glorification, or to make a statement about past conflicts. The reproductions are not genuinely historic; nor are they displayed with any information or background about what they are. The absence of such explanation allows those who either ‘oppose’ or ‘support’ them to assert their own subjective and frequently incorrect interpretations.⁹²

The way in which Lee is memorialized in the chapel conflict with the way the university wants to present Lee’s legacy. The university argues that it wants to honor Lee as a civilian, but based on the ways in which he is portrayed throughout the chapel, it is apparent that they honor him more as a military hero.

The commission also came up with ideas on how to change the chapel in order to maintain historical integrity, but also to try not to offend those who enter the space. The commission’s overall decision was to turn the chapel into a museum “in order to take pedagogical advantage of one of the most powerful examples in the nation of architecture

⁹¹ Ibid, 30.

⁹² Luanne Rife, “W&L will remove Confederate battle flags from Lee Chapel,” *The Roanoke Times*, July 8, 2014, accessed March 1, 2019, https://www.roanoke.com/news/virginia/w-l-will-remove-confederate-battle-flags-from-lee-chapel/article_a13cae23-4367-56c5-9861-8ffd90e673e1.html.

reflecting the Lost Cause narrative.”⁹³ Changing the space into a museum would allow the university to take this space and use it as a learning opportunity for the students as well as the community. Those on the commission felt that the chapel would be able to “teach about the specific historical moment of the creation of the sculpture and the aspse. . .the chapel could be used to teach about visual literacy, the power of sight lines, the haptic experience of space, and iconography, among other topics for those in disciplines that analyze material culture.”⁹⁴ The commission agreed that the university should only use the chapel as a museum, they should rename the building, and they should stop holding events inside of it. The president of the university however, did not exactly follow the recommendations.

President Dudley issued a statement notifying the students, faculty, and community that the university would continue to use the Chapel for events, and would not turn it into a museum as recommended by the commission. In his announcement he stated that:

we can and will continue to use Lee Chapel, as our community has done for a century and a half, in the service of the life of the university. We can and will continue to welcome visitors to Lee’s tomb and memorial statue, while ensuring that university events do not feel as though they take place in a Confederate shrine. And we can and will continue to teach the history of W&L, including the history of Lee’s presidency and the chapel he built, without converting the building to a museum that would be unavailable for any other purpose.⁹⁵

⁹³ *Report of the Commission on Institutional History and Community*, 32

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ Will Dudley, “President's Response to the Report of the Commission on Institutional History and Community,” Washington & Lee, accessed March 1, 2019, <https://www.wlu.edu/presidents-office/issues-and-initiatives/commission-on-institutional-history-and-community/presidents-response-to-the-report-of-the-commission-on-institutional-history-and-community>.

Dudley felt that if the university would not continue to use the space for events the building would not be able to be used for anything else. This is similar to when the U.D.C. fought against changes to the chapel in the 1920s. They felt that this would take away from how Lee had envisioned the chapel, Dudley felt as though the chapel would be unused should it just be turned into a museum. Although he did not follow the recommendations of the commission fully, the university searched for a historian to work with other experts on how to bring together the different purposes and visions that people had about Lee Chapel. This new historian would help with a new museum that had already been decided by the university, as well as focusing on researching the institutional history of Washington and Lee. The Washington and Lee community still continues to try to come to terms with one of the namesakes of the university as well as how to face its past.

It is not just Lee Chapel that the university has to come to terms with. There were enslaved African Americans who were left to the school after a founder of the university, John Robinson, passed away in 1826. One of the buildings on the campus is named after the man who gave these slaves to the university, and slaves were sold in order to pay for the funds for the building. As a way to combat previous wrongs, the university located the descendants of the enslaved individuals and created a fund to support secondary education for them.⁹⁶ They also chose to rename Robinson Hall to Chavis Hall, to honor John Chavis the first African American to receive a college education in the United States from what would later become Washington and Lee. It is not just the chapel and the statue to Lee that

⁹⁶ Alison Graham, "W&L president responds to commission recommendations on Lee Chapel, Confederate history," *The Roanoke Times*, accessed March 1, 2019, https://www.roanoke.com/news/education/higher_education/w-l-president-responds-to-commission-recommendations-on-lee-chapel/article_bed1b91f-d7af-5752-b014-f126e8bc6941.html.

has caused controversy for the students of Washington and Lee and the community of Lexington. Questions continue to emerge about what to do with these Confederate shrines and what they mean for the people of the community, and these kinds of questions would lead to the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville.

The people of Charlottesville also voiced their opinions about the statues prior to the Unite the Right Rally. Charlottesville Vice Mayor Wes Bellamy at a press conference in March of 2016 asked the city council to remove the statue of Robert E. Lee. The fate of the Confederate symbols in the city had long been a problem in the community. Bellamy stated that removing the statue would provide an “opportunity for [the] community to stand together and affect meaningful change.”⁹⁷ Bellamy noted that the symbolism behind the statue has changed in the almost 100 years since it had been erected, and will continue to change over time. If the statue makes those in the community uncomfortable or feel disrespected, then it should be taken down.⁹⁸ Opinions about what to do with Confederate statues within Charlottesville have created many problems in the community. There is no clear solution, and some have even taken the city to court over the resolution to remove the Robert E. Lee statue in the city.

Following the rally in Charlottesville the Stonewall Jackson statue and the Robert E. Lee statue were covered with tarps. There had already been a lawsuit against the city for attempting to remove the Lee Statue, but the Sons of Confederate Veterans filed to add the

⁹⁷ Christie Lombardi, “Supporters and Protesters Rally, Voice Opinions on Charlottesville’s Robert E. Lee Statue,” *WUVA News*, March 22, 2016, accessed March 2, 2019, <http://wuvanews.com/2016/03/22/archives/supporters-and-protesters-rally-voice-opinions-on-charlottesvilles-robert-e-lee-statue/>

⁹⁸ Ibid

Stonewall Jackson statue to the lawsuit. Judge Richard E. Moore of the Charlottesville Circuit Court decided that the city's decision to keep the statues shrouded could not continue. Moore also blocked the tearing down of the Stonewall Jackson statue after the rally because of pending litigation aimed at preserving the monuments.⁹⁹ The problem of what the statues represent to certain people who encounter them has become a major issue in Charlottesville, and across the South. Like other cities trying to deal with the problem of Confederate monuments, Charlottesville also created a commission to find a possible solution. The Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials, and Public Spaces was created in May of 2016 by the city council. The purpose of the commission was "to provide Council with options for telling the full story of Charlottesville's history of race and for changing the City's narrative through our public spaces."¹⁰⁰

One of the members of the commission in Charlottesville, Frank Dukes, stated that "we need more opportunities to learn and understand the impact and import of racism, discrimination, and home-grown terrorism against African Americans."¹⁰¹ The main point of this commission and all the others mentioned was that there needs to be a greater understanding of history. Some recommend removing the statues, others want context, and

⁹⁹ Paul Duggan, "Charlottesville judge orders shrouds removed from Confederate statues," *The Washington Post* February 27, 2018, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/charlottesville-judge-orders-shrouds-removed-from-confederate-statues/2018/02/27/3592ae10-1bf6-11e8-9de1-147dd2df3829_story.html?utm_term=.a7ad103e68e5

¹⁰⁰ City of Charlottesville City Council, Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials, and Public Spaces, *Report to City Council December 19, 2016*, December 19, 2016, 4..

¹⁰¹ Chris Suarez, "Just how do you reinterpret history?," *The Daily Progress*, November 26, 2016, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/just-how-do-you-reinterpret-history/article_70ab4f3e-b43c-11e6-98d3-0bfc9d1787a9.html#utm_source=dailyprogress.com&utm_campaign=%2Fnewsletter%2Fdailynew%2F&utm_medium=email&utm_content=headline

some want to leave the statues just as they are. Louis Nelson, a University of Virginia professor of architectural history believed that today's movement to revise and challenge the historical narrative that has surrounded these monuments is not surprising. The reality is that "art is a product of culture, [and] because culture is unstable, art is always unstable. Therefore, the meaning of art is constantly changing."¹⁰² The meaning behind these monuments and statues will continue to change over time with the changing interpretation and understanding of history. The monuments and statues reflect the time and culture in which they are built. The opinions about the statues continue to change as the city tries to figure out a way to accommodate all involved and tell a better story of the city's racial history.

In a letter to the editor of *The Daily Progress*, Author Gene Harding stated that he felt that both groups were at odds about the statues. Both assumed that they had won the battle, the Stonewall Jackson statue was still in place, but it was covered in tarps. Harding believed that it was a hollow victory and "the big loser here is the city of Charlottesville. Businesses are declining, tourism is falling, people are afraid to go downtown, and many people are so upset that they refused to enter Charlottesville again."¹⁰³ He, like others who have voiced their opinion about what they believe should be done, believes that the Robert E. Lee statue should be left in place as it is, and the Stonewall Jackson statue should be moved to the same place as the statue of Lee. This would leave Justice Park open and free for those who opposed the Confederate statues to be able erect whatever statues and monuments they would

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Gene Harding, "Opinion/Letter: Let both sides have their statues," *The Daily Progress*, January 21, 2018, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-letter-let-both-sides-have-their-statues/article_d642f326-fe21-11e7-9885-e3ec5f07a55a.html

like. However, moving the statue would cost the city a significant amount of money, and erecting new statues again would add to the cost. Harding attempted to create a solution that would make both sides happy, but there are those who did not agree with his idea.

Jock Yellott, one of the plaintiffs suing to stop the city of Charlottesville from removing the Confederate status, also voiced his opinion to *The Daily Progress*.¹⁰⁴ He believed that because the judge ruled that Virginia law protects monuments to war veterans, including Confederate veterans, the monument will stay. During the 1960s and early 1970s renovations were made to the landscaping around the Stonewall Jackson statue, including a brick terrace. Yellott said that the city council has allowed the bricks that were placed in the park to disintegrate.¹⁰⁵ He argues that the city council has rejected its responsibility to maintain the historic statues in Charlottesville, and that people do not use the statues to teach history. Instead those who are offended or angered by the statues just want to see them gone. “The purpose is to recognize our history and to cherish it,” Yellott wrote,” hoping to improve everybody’s understanding and to learn something ourselves in the process - to expand our opportunities to edify.”¹⁰⁶ Yet Yellott in his opinion piece, does not say if the city should keep the statues if they provide signage with additional historical context. If he believes that they should stay as a way to teach history, more contextual information on the statues must be provided so that the public can read and understand them.

¹⁰⁴ Jock Yellott, “Opinion/Commentary: Saving history without demonizing others,” *The Daily Progress*, June 4, 2017, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-commentary-saving-history-without-domonizing-others/article_d8d0c9be-47d4-11r7-8d95-b30e5a749a2a.html

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

Joe Shaffner writing for *The Washington Post* believes that the state of Virginia needs to stop honoring Stonewall Jackson, who was his great-great-grandfather, “not only out of respect for. . . the state and country. Whether we like it or not, the Confederate flag, statues, and symbols of a past long gone - but nowhere near forgotten - have become associated with hate, racism, and violence.”¹⁰⁷ These monuments have come to represent a hard part of American history that many do not want to try to understand or remember. Problems arise when people do not understand or remember the past. One of the major problems is that people of different races and backgrounds have experienced and learned about history differently. While these statues may represent heritage for some, for others they can be reminders that their ancestors were enslaved by the men who are being honored. This makes the decision about what to do with these monuments and statues a difficult one, since not every person has the same feelings about them.

No decision has been made about what exactly to do with the statues, but the lawsuit against the city to stop their removal continues. A trial between the two opposing groups happened at the end of January 2019, with the decision to head to settlement talks. “It’s probably in all of the parties’ interest to settle the case. This case is becoming very expensive for all the parties, ultimately someone is going to [be] paying for all these expenses,” said plaintiffs’ attorney Charles L. Weber, Jr.¹⁰⁸. Those who filed suit against the Charlottesville

¹⁰⁷ Joe Shaffner, “Stonewall Jackson was my great-great-great grandfather. Virginia should stop ‘honoring’ him,” *The Washington Post*, February 2, 2018, accessed March 2, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/all-opinions-are-local/wp/2018/02/02/stonewall-jackson-was-my-great-great-great-grandfather-virginia-should-stop-honoring-him/?utm_term=.43ee6afd4f4c

¹⁰⁸ “Settlement Talks Set for Lawsuit Over 2 Charlottesville Statues,” *NBC29*, January, 31, 2019, accessed March 2, 2019, www.nbc29.com/story39885076/statues-court-1-31-2019

City Council and specific council members who voted to remove the statues felt that they had overstepped their authority, and that there were laws in place to protect the monuments. If a settlement can be negotiated, the lawsuit will then head to trial. With the amount of effort, time, and money that is being used to stop the removal of these statues, other things could have been done to the parks and statues. The statues could have had signage with historical context and information placed in order to help the community better understand the reasoning and the historical time period in which these statues were erected. As Harding previously suggested in his opinion piece, both statues could be placed in the same park, and the other park could be made available for more statues to other individuals. Because the two sides have such strong opinions about what should and should not be done with the statues, it becomes a problem to try to find a solution that everyone can agree on.

Creating an Online Exhibit

Along with this thesis paper, there is included an online exhibit portion that can be found at: <https://pendlemb.wixsite.com/monumentsthesis>. This website is designed for the visitor to look at newspapers and other forms of media to see how the public memory surrounding these monuments has changed over time. This visitor will be able interact with a timeline of events, and different time periods for each monument to further understand what was presented in this thesis. It offers access to images of newspaper articles, online articles, and videos that involve each of the monuments.

The online exhibit portion is hosted on wix.com, which allows the visitor access to information on these monuments that has been digitized already in one spot. Because much

of my final chapter deals with an extensive number of online articles and information, by providing online access to the older information that was used, those who are curious about the history of these Confederate monuments are able to find further information and do further research. The digital history component of this project allows us to view the past and compare it to other time periods, as well as the present. This can help to give a better understanding of what was presented in this thesis. The debate about Confederate monuments will continue, and this website will be available to those who want more information about the topic to get a better understanding of the history of these monuments in order to create a more informed opinion about them.

Conclusion

Since the creation of Confederate monuments following the end of the Civil War, the South has continued to hold the Confederacy and the leading figures of it in high regard. From the end of the Civil War until the centennial celebration, the South continued to remember the war with a significant Lost Cause narrative focus. With this focus it meant that the full story of the war, specifically of the role of enslaved African Americans was not told. However, the stories of the white and black men and women of America cannot be told as separate stories. These people and their stories are intertwined and should be told together.¹⁰⁹

It has only been within the last few years that many people in the South have come to change their ideas of the Civil War and move away from this narrow interpretation of events of the war and the people involved. With a focus on a more inclusive and broader understanding of history, this brings these men who are memorialized in these monuments and statues and their actions into question. This shows the changing political and social circumstances that influence our historical memory. Had the Civil War Centennial Celebration not happened at the same time as the Civil Rights Movement in America, there may not have been any inclusion of African American delegates, nor any event for the Emancipation Proclamation. The changing political environment of the U.S. during this time allowed for some change in the historical memory, but not enough to help give a better understanding of the war.

It has become difficult for many to justify continuing to honor these men who fought against the United States in order to maintain slavery in the South. The monuments and the

¹⁰⁹ Dell Upton, *What Can and Can't Be Said: Race, Uplift, and Monument Building in the Contemporary South*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2015), 15.

men they are representing have become a reminder for some of the dark history that the U.S. has with the oppression of African Americans. However, there are individuals, many of whom had family who fought for the South in the Civil War, who argued that these statues represent the men who fought and gave their lives for a cause they believed in. They do not believe that removing the statues would be beneficial to the public, but instead would be trying to erase the history of the war. Debates will continue between those who want the statues to be taken down, and those who want them to remain. Reaching a consensus between the two will be a hard process to deal with for years to come.

By looking at newspaper coverage and public opinion polls that were created it is not hard to see the changing ideas that many had when it came to the Civil War and how we as American try to remember it. From the turn of the century until the mid-1960's, the primary focus of many was to tell the story of the war from a white dominated narrative, one that did not include slavery as the major cause of the war and continued to push Lost Cause ideology on those who visit statues and monuments dedicated to men like Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson. The United Daughters of the Confederacy played a major role in making sure that those in the South learned and understood the war in such a way that it painted the men who fought in it in as heroic a light as possible. The preservation of Confederate culture and the Lost Cause is apparent throughout news coverage and other publications about the monuments and the men these monuments are memorializing that were created during this time. The Lost Cause narrative and what it aims to teach is “a

caricature of the truth. This caricature wholly misrepresents and distorts the facts of the matter” and will continue to do so unless we stop using it.¹¹⁰

The start of the Civil War Centennial and the celebrations that happened over the course of 4 years, would again solidify that what was being taught and understood about the Civil War and why it was fought was still largely influenced by the same narrative as it has 40 years prior. Despite growing racial tensions throughout the South, the lack of inclusion of African Americans in many of the celebrations and ceremonies continued to show that the racial problems that helped to push the country to war a century prior were still largely present in the 1960’s. Any attempts to show a unified nation could not hide the major problems that were facing the United States and the telling of the nation’s historical narrative. Although the situation has improved somewhat, attempting to create an inclusive history still continues to create problems throughout the U.S. today when it comes to the history of the Civil War and the monuments to the men who fought for the Confederacy.

Looking forward it will be hard for there to be consensus over what should or should not be done with Confederate monuments. Richmond, Charlottesville, Lexington, and many other Southern cities with monuments have created commission in order to garner public opinion on what to do with monuments to former Confederate soldiers. No one group is going to be happy with whatever choice is made in the end however. This conversation about history, who writes it, how it is present, and who it includes and excludes will be one that will continue throughout the United States as we move towards coming to terms with our past and how we learn from it and present it to the public.

¹¹⁰ Gallagher, 29.

The statues that are discussed in this thesis help to shed light on how historical memory and how we choose to remember events changes over time. Memories about the people and events will continue to be in continuous flux because of the narratives and opinions surrounding these monuments due to the differing groups involved. Those who have control over the collective memory are able to control how we understand our past, thus they have an influence on the future. African Americans and other minority groups want to try and portray their memory of events, in order to create a better understanding of American history and to have their own stories told. The men and women who created these monuments did so to tell the story of the Civil War in a positive light, but time and changing social and political ideas and opinions has created an environment that allows us to change these stories and provide us with a more accurate story of our history.

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