REUNION AND DISILLUSION: CONFEDERATE MEMORIALS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

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ABSTRACT

In the summer of 2017, the city of Charlottesville, Virginia became a bloody battleground between those who wanted to take down a statue of Confederate general Robert E. Lee and those who thought the statue was a sacrosanct piece of history. Some thought that tearing it down would be tearing down history. Over 150 years after the Civil War, the battle over its memory is still fought. This senior thesis examines two Confederate war memorials in Middle Tennessee, one of Sam Davis, the Boy Hero of the Confederacy, and one of Nathan Bedford Forrest, the founder of the Ku Klux Klan, as a way to track the historical memory of the Civil War.

In this investigation of historical memory, I examine why the memorials were built and controversies that surrounded them before. This thesis asks the questions of what groups want to remember what parts of the Civil War? What is chosen to be remembered? Who chooses? I also look at the contemporary protest as I try to elucidate why people want the statues to come down and examine why others want to keep the memorials standing. This thesis argues that memorials are static and frozen in time, but the communities that build them are not.

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INTRODUCTION:

THE WHAT AND WHY OF WAR MEMORIALS IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

When my family first moved from Los Angeles to Nashville, Tennessee, I joked that they were carpetbaggers without giving much thought to what the term "carpetbagger" meant. By then I was already attending college 3,000 miles away from Los Angeles in Washington, D.C. If anything, the move had drastically shortened my flight when I came home for holidays and the summer since my family moved 2,000 miles closer to Washington, D.C. I would live in Tennessee for a month or two at a time, enduring the oppressive summer heat and gloomy winters.

While I was there, I jogged through the hilly landscape, enjoying the verdant greens of summer and the dead foliage of winter. I never thought much about my surroundings, but eventually I noticed how many statues surrounded my running path. An obelisk there, a grizzled looking soldier here, all watching a carpetbagger, a Yankee, run roughshod over their land. Eventually the prevalence of statues, memorials, and monuments piqued my interest enough to investigate them. I saw graveyards for slaves, memorials for the fallen Confederate soldiers, and statues and busts venerating men who died in a war meant to preserve the institution of slavery, as seen in the *Declaration of Causes of Seceding States* such as Georgia, Texas, South Carolina, and Mississippi, where the states state their causes for secession, chief among them being "identified with the institution of slavery."[1]

[1] *A Declaration of the Immediate Causes which Induce and Justify the Secession of the State of Mississippi from the Federal Union*, in the Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library, accessed April 8, 2018, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_missec.asp.

The language on the plaques, the inscriptions, struck me: "No country ever had truer sons," and "We who saw them and knew them are witnesses to the coming age of their valor and fidelity," and "Would not it be a shame for us if their memory part from our land and hearts, and a wrong them to and shame to us," and "O Southland!: bring your laurels, And add your wreath, O North!" particularly stood out to me.

What also struck me was the sheer volume of these statues and memorials. I felt like I could not run a mile without seeing one or two or eight. I thought it was a curiosity, an interesting part of history I had found in my summers in Nashville, that is until national awareness of the monuments seemed to explode across the media following Dylann Roof's massacre of parishioners at a historically black church in Charleston, South Carolina. On June 17, 2015, 21-year-old Dylann Roof massacred parishioners of historically black church in Charleston in hopes of inciting a race war, killing nine African Americans and injuring one more church goer.[2]

Roof's choice in church was deliberate; this church, the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, which is the oldest African Methodist Episcopal church in the Southern United States for the first independent black denomination in the United States.[3] To conduct his massacre on a church founded by Denmark Vesey, the organizer of a failed slave revolt in 1822 for which the state executed him, sent a message of hate and intolerance to the African American community in Charleston. In the twentieth century, Emanuel AME served as a hub for civil

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[2] Rebecca Hersher, "Jury Finds Dylann Roof Guilty In S.C. Church Shooting," National Public Radio, December 15, 2016, accessed February 26, 2018, https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/12/15/505723552/jury-finds-dylann-roof-guilty-in-s-c-church-shooting.

[3] Jonathan Weisman, "Killings Add a Painful Chapter to Storied History of Charleston Church," *The New York Times*, June 18, 2015, accessed February 26, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/us/charleston-killings-evoke-history-of-violence-against-black-churches.html.

rights activists and an important forum for leaders such as Booker T. Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr., who both gave speeches there.[4]

Prior to the shooting, Roof had established a website called *The Last Rhodesian* where he espoused his racist, white supremacist rhetoric and posted pictures of himself alongside Confederate imagery, such as the Confederate battle flag.[5] Roof's crime sparked an outcry against the use of the flag in the state capitols of the former Confederacy, and in subsequent months some state legislatures voted to lower the flag of the Confederacy over state houses in Alabama and South Carolina.[6]

The racial motivation of this mass shooting, combined with Roof's veneration of Confederate iconography, served as the impetus behind a movement to remove Confederate imagery, including but not limited to flying the battle flag over Southern statehouses and the removal of Confederate memorials on public property. This movement was amplified by the intense media coverage and violence surrounding the "Unite the Right Rally" that took place in the August of last year in Charlottesville, Virginia, where promoters of white nationalism and white supremacy protested the decision of the Charlottesville City Council that ordered the removal of Confederate monuments and memorials from public spaces.

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[4] Jonathan Weisman, "Killings Add a Painful Chapter to Storied History of Charleston Church," *The New York Times*, June 18, 2015, accessed February 26, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/19/us/charleston-killings-evoke-history-of-violence-against-black-churches.html.

[5] Rebecca Hersher, "Jury Finds Dylann Roof Guilty In S.C. Church Shooting," National Public Radio, December 15, 2016, accessed February 26, 2018, https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/12/15/505723552/jury-finds-dylann-roof-guilty-in-s-c-church-shooting.

[6] Rebecca Hersher, "Jury Finds Dylann Roof Guilty In S.C. Church Shooting," National Public Radio, December 15, 2016, accessed February 26, 2018, https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/12/15/505723552/jury-finds-dylann-roof-guilty-in-s-c-church-shooting.

However, to understand why people wanted to take the memorials down, one must know why people raised the memorials in the first place. Historians J. Michael Martinez and Robert M. Harris define war memorials as serving one of four purposes:

> "(1) They help to form a community's identity; (2) they commemorate public service; (3) they honor those persons who fought to defend the polity in times of crisis; and (4) they promote humanitarianism by reminding people of the horrors and losses associated with war, often questioning the logic and value of all war as human activity."[7]

But at the same time that these memorials help form a community's identity, they can "create an environment for social and political conflict. . .While war memorials themselves may be preserved, the society around them changes, and so does history."[8] The contemporary protests that call for the removal of Confederate memorials in the South and in Middle Tennessee, such as those surrounding the war memorials celebrating Sam Davis and Nathan Bedford Forrest, demonstrate that historical memory evolved and changed the perception of the war memorials in their communities.

An important aspect of memorials is that they are made of stone and bronze and other immutable materials; society, however, is not immutable. Whatever purpose these memorials serve or have served in the past, whether it be forming a community's identity or honoring those who fought to defend said community, the very community surrounding the memorial changes, whether that be demographically, what values they hold, or how certain events are perceived by the populace. Memorials are a product of the zeitgeist at a specific point in time; the community, the people who form the zeitgeist, do not remain frozen in time, but rather change, creating

[7] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

[8] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

friction between what the memorials originally stood for versus what the communities now want to remember and value.

Scholars have written a great deal on the topic of Civil War memory. David W. Blight's *Race and Reunion* views Civil War memory through the lens of race which is beneficial to my research in trying to decode why the monument raising groups erected monuments when they did and as to what purpose they served in shaping Civil War memory, in addition to discussing the backgrounds of the Civil War narratives that came to dominate America. Blight's work became a crucial touchstone of my thesis as I attempted to track Civil War memory in America from Appomattox and throughout the twentieth century, giving me insight into the historical events that led the Civil War to be interpreted in a way that favored a reunion of white America. This allowed my work to link the memorials that I focus on, namely the statue of Sam Davis and the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest, as case studies as to how Civil War memory has evolved and developed in Middle Tennessee since Blight gives me much needed context of American society at the time of the construction of the memorials. My work interprets modern Civil War memory in the region.

William Blair's book *Cities of the Dead*, which explores how different groups in America commemorated the fallen soldiers of the Civil War between 1865 and 1914. Blair's work, in combination with Blight's work, gives my own work context as to how different groups memorialized their Civil War dead, and helps me to explore why white Southerners of this time period were so active in their efforts to memorialize the Civil War, which ended in ruinous defeat for the South and decimated the region for decades to come.

The essays found in J. Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su's edited collection, *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, examine the

role monuments and other Confederate symbols play in the 21st-century South and explain how they have affected Southerners' historical memory of the Civil War. Both of these works provide important perspectives on the history of Civil War memory and they bridge the gap between the periods my study focuses on most intently: the early twentieth century -- when the memorials I am focusing on were raised -- and the modern day -- when they have reemerged as subjects of public debate and inspired a sharp backlash from many local Tennesseans.

This collection of essays also helps me contextualize war memorials as a product of war memory, and helps explain the utility of war memorials in their communities, which helps me to interpret the impact of the memorials on the Middle Tennessee that I focus on in my thesis. By knowing the purpose of the war memorials, which *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South* examines, my work interprets the purpose of these specific memorials, assessing both why they were initially built and why there have been calls for their removal.

Though Kristin L. Hoganson's book *Fighting for American Manhood* focuses primarily on gender politics and its relationship to the outbreak of hostilities at the beginning of the Spanish-American War, I found her work useful in examining a culture of battlefield reunion that began to emerge among the white soldiers of the North and South when facing a common enemy in the Spanish. General Joseph Wheeler perhaps best exemplified this phenomenon, who by the end of the Spanish-American War had served as a general for both the Union and the Confederacy.

The dissertation from Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," provided me with much needed background concerning the state of Tennessee immediately before and after the bloodletting of the Civil War, giving me insight into Tennessee's own history of slavery.

I divided my methodology into two distinct parts: my research tracking the history of Civil War memory in the region from the end of the Civil War onwards into the late twentieth century, and my research concerning contemporary protests surrounding Confederate memorials in Middle Tennessee. I found that my research into the history of these memorials and the social climate surrounding when citizens of Middle Tennessee first raised them was most helpful in giving me context as to why the population of the region initially built the memorials and why now some segments of the population argue for their removal. My two most pertinent primary sources were the war memorials themselves: the statue of bronze statue of Sam Davis in front of the Tennessee State Capitol Building and the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest inside that same building.

I first looked at the monuments in person to see their placement, and their inscriptions to try to assess which criteria of a war memorial they fit. I felt that both the statue of Sam Davis and the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest fit the first three criteria neatly, as "(1) They help to form a community's identity; (2) they commemorate public service; (3) they honor those persons who fought to defend the polity in times of crisis."[9] Given that both memorials lionize the military service and battlefield accomplishments of their subjects, namely Davis's courage in the face of execution and his devotion to the Confederate cause, and Forrest's military record as a cavalry general, I thought they did not fit the fourth reason for building a war memorial, that "they promote humanitarianism by reminding people of the horrors and losses associated with war, often questioning the logic and value of all war as human activity."[10] This statue and bust

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[9] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

[10] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

represent the honor and glory, rather than the horror and losses, of war. By looking at their placement, directly in front of the state capitol building, and inside the state capitol building, it was evident that the state accorded these former Confederate honor for their contributions to the Confederacy.

I made the decision to focus on this bust and this statue specifically because they are both in Nashville proper, and both on public property, rather than private property, which allowed me to focus on the debate involving Confederate memorials where the local government is caretaker of the memorials rather than a private individual, as is the case for numerous other Confederate war memorials in the region.

A majority of my historical analysis took place in the archives of local Middle Tennessean newspapers, namely *The Tennessean* and *The Nashville Tennessean*. I pored over their digitized archives in order to assess the local reaction to the statue of Sam Davis and the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest when monument building organizations first announced their construction to when these groups unveiled them. By using local sources, I tracked not only the initial response to these war memorials from the local population of the Middle Tennessee region, I tracked how the local population's attitudes towards the memorials opinions changed or did not change throughout the twentieth century.

With these newspaper archives, in conjunction with the aforementioned secondary sources I used for historical context, I compared how reactions to the memorials and how they differed, or did not differ, from the national mood at the time of their unveiling. I used these local newspaper articles not only for historical analysis, but also to give me cultural context for the time when construction on these memorials started. These newspaper archives proved to be invaluable in my research into who built these war memorials and why they built them, as well as important

secondary questions such as who or what organizations funded the construction of the memorials.

As for modern sources on the contemporary controversies surrounding Confederate memorials, I turned to modern newspapers and their coverage of the protest of the war memorials. Here too I tried to use local newspapers and their coverage whenever I could in order to emphasize the regional scope of my project, especially *The Tennessean*. However, I also turned to national newspaper coverage surrounding the calls for Confederate memorial removal because I felt that similar to the secondary sources I used for the historical context of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these national newspaper sources gave me more context as to whether or not the controversy surrounding the memorials in Middle Tennessee was a unique phenomenon in the region.

Researching the news coverage of the modern memorials proved similar to my methodology in parsing through the newspaper archives I used to find the public's attitudes towards memorials at the time of their unveiling. I looked for facts and interpreted biases the newspapers would have given the time and place of their publication, as well as looking as to how they covered the war memorials. Did the author emphasize the person behind the memorial? Did the author emphasize the memorial's purpose in the community? What was the author's tone in the article? In what historical context does the author place the memorial? What biases might this this author have? I asked all of these questions when reading each article in order to best assess what the author wanted to say about the memorial with their work.

Even in the immediate aftermath of the Civil War, widows and daughters of Confederate soldiers began memorializing the Confederate dead on their terms, and Southern memorial days abounded in the shadow of Reconstruction. By the turn of the century, following the shared

bloodshed of the Spanish-American War, time had passed and many white veterans from both sides of the conflict were ready to allow the wounds of the Civil War to heal. The culture of reunion that resulted from this development allowed the Civil War to go from a source of shame to pride in the South, allowing white Northerners and white Southerners to reconcile on even terms, but did so by ignoring slavery's role in causing the conflict, the role of African American troops in the war, and post-war black rights.

For a variety of reasons, white Northerners wearied exhausted of enforcing Reconstruction in the South, and felt that the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments were sufficient to allow African Americans to protect themselves politically. However, these *de jure* laws could not protect black Southerners from *de facto* racism, discrimination, and segregation. Jim Crow laws dominated the South following Reconstruction, abandoning the new freedmen to a fate similar to the bondage they had just escaped.

The Civil War ended at Appomattox in 1865, but the battle for its memory has raged on ever since, with white Southerners asserting their pride in defeat and the valor of their cause, leaving no room in the memory for the ideological clashes that sparked the conflict in the first place. Though many white Southerners claim that Confederate memorials and monuments represent "heritage and not hate,"[11] there is no way to divorce the fact that the heritage of the former Confederacy, the memory it represents, is one of white supremacy and a society that promoted oligarchical rule by enslavers.

In this thesis, I argue that what once served as symbols of reconciliation for white America after the bloodiest conflict in America's history, Confederate memorials in Middle Tennessee

[11]Ta-Nehisi Coates, "Take Down the Confederate Flag—Now," *The Atlantic,* June 18, 2015, accessed February 24, 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/06/take-down-the-confederate-flag-now/396290/.

have instead become modern symbols of the nation's divisions as remembrance of the war changes in an increasingly diverse America.

CHAPTER 1:

ONWARD FROM APPOMATTOX:

HOW WE REMEMBERED THE CIVIL WAR

Confederate memorials in Middle Tennessee like those of Sam Davis and Nathan Bedford Forrest represent an acceptance of reunion on terms amenable to former Confederates: a battlefield reunion where the South kept its honor while white Americans ignored the causes of the Civil War, namely the debate over slavery. These memorials, however, only represented reunion for a certain segment of the country. A memorial will remain unchanged while the context in which it exists in does, making it maladaptive to the times, and what initially can be seen as a symbol of unity can become a monument to division.[12]

In the aftermath of the Civil War, reconciliation was accomplished through selective memory; white Americans could heal the war's wounds by ignoring the causes of the Civil War and the racial divide that continued to plague the United States in its aftermath. Eventually, under the flag of the United States, Southerners, including Middle Tennesseans, would be able to build monuments to their rebel war heroes as a symbol of the culture of reunion that prevailed amongst white Americans and allowed the South to control its own narrative of Civil War history. By the start of the twentieth century, former Confederate states would have a free hand to build memorials to the Civil War on their terms, whereas before they had face backlash from the Northern politicians that controlled the South during Reconstruction and thus limited

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[12] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

Confederate memorials to cemeteries as areas of grief.[13] Many different Confederate Memorial Days emerged as early as 1866, scarcely a year after the Civil War ended.[14]

Reunion happened slowly at first, as tensions were still high following the aftermath of the Civil War, and Radical Reconstruction, which I will touch upon later, was unpopular in the South. However, with the withdrawal of federal troops following the election of Rutherford B. Hayes, tensions between white northerners and southerners eased. The Spanish-American War helped ease tensions further, northerners and southerners fought together. These memorials venerated their Confederate heroes and dead due to a combination of factors ranging from white supremacy to the Spanish-American War. The Spanish-American War, the first major American conflict following the Civil War, united the sons of veterans who wore blue and gray, and saw prominent former Confederate leaders assume positions of command in the US Army. Federal troops occupying the South during Reconstruction did little to interfere with Southern memorialization of the war. However, at some events, such as the statue unveiling during a Richmond Memorial Day, white southern leaders discouraged the white southern masses from bringing Confederate battle flags so as not to antagonize the North, though Governor Kemper, who was in charge of the event, did so only for political reasons.[15]

The Spanish-American War allowed Northerners and Southerners of the generation following the Civil War to bleed together in battle with a common, foreign foe, and encouraged them to rise above their sectional divisions and emphasize their identities as Americans. In order

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[13] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 77.

[14] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 77.

[15] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 77.

to understand why the Davis and Forrest statues were constructed in the first place, and how Confederate war memorials became palatable to the national public by the twentieth century, one must trace the path of Civil War memory following Appomattox.

Tennessee in the Civil War

The state of Tennessee suffered 122,854 casualties in the Civil War, over 11% of the state's population prior to the outbreak of hostilities in 1861. Tennessee was fairly even in its distribution of Confederate and Union deaths, totaling 64,333 deaths in the service of the Confederacy and 58,521 in the service of the Union.[16] Tennessee was among the most divided of the Confederate states on the question of secession, and it contributed the largest number of troops to the Union of any Confederate state.[17]

Secession bitterly divided the state of Tennessee, as the eastern third of the state was heavily involved in the Northern economy and had fewer slaves than Middle and Western Tennessee, which both were part of the so-called "Cotton Kingdom" and relied heavily on slave labor.[18] Andrew Johnson was the only Senator representing a seceded state who stayed loyal to the Union, and he hailed from Eastern Tennessee, which points to the strongly pro-Union sentiment that dominated that area of the state.[19] White Tennesseans saw themselves as

[16] "Battles and Leaders, 1861-1865," *Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area*, accessed October 18, 2017, http://www.tncivilwar.org/research_resources/battles_leaders.

[17] Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2008) 67.

[18] Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2008) 44.

[19] Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2008) 90.

mediators between the North and South given their state's position in the Upper South and strong economic ties to both regions, and conservatism dominated the state.[20] White Tennesseans from all regions of the state condemned Northern abolitionists and fire-eating secessionists alike, calling for both sides to tone down their rhetoric.[21]

These conciliatory Tennesseans voted in a way that reflected their desire for compromise, as John Bell, the Tennessee native and 1860 candidate for the ephemeral Constitutional Union Party whose platform called for little beyond upholding the Constitution, carried his home state. South Carolina's secession alarmed white Tennesseans more than the election of Abraham Lincoln. During the war, the Confederacy occupied the strongly Unionist Eastern Tennessee throughout the war while the Union conquered the pro-secession Western Tennessee. In Middle Tennessee, divided loyalties led to a civil war within the Civil War, which resulted in a Union victory and the installation of Andrew Johnson as its military governor in Nashville. Though the generation following the war was rife with tension between the two newly reunited halves of the country, with federal troops occupying the South until the end of Reconstruction with the Compromise of 1877, the two halves eventually, reticently, reconciled. [22]

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[20] Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2008) 67.

[21] Junko Isono Kato, "From Slavery to Freedom in Tennessee, 1860-1870," PhD diss., (Columbia University, 2008) 68.

[22] Michael Les Benedict, "Southern Democrats in the Crisis of 1876-1877: A Reconsideration of Reunion and Reaction," *The Journal of Southern History* 46, 4 (November, 1980): 495, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2207200.

Presidential Reconstruction

In the Civil War's immediate aftermath, the battle to define how the war would be remembered began. In 1865-66, Radical Republicans in the US Congress opposed Southern-born President Andrew Johnson's lenient policies toward the defeated South. Johnson wanted to allow the Southern states to return to the Union quickly while requiring few real changes, because as a staunch Democrat he valued states' rights and a federal system in which the national government's authority did not overreach, as some had thought it did under Lincoln, and though he stayed with the Union during the Civil War, he was a racist who had no desire to fight for black political rights.[23] Johnson began giving former Confederates full pardons for little more than an oath of loyalty and, while he required the former Confederate states to accept slavery's end, did little to protect the newly freed men and women of the South from the legal and physical assaults of their formers masters.

Southern states returning to the Union under Johnson's plan left freedmen enslaved in all but name. The newly reincorporated states, which saw much of the former Confederate leadership in political control, quickly implemented what became known as Black Codes. The Black Codes included restrictions on black property rights, vagrancy laws meant to bind black laborers to their former plantations, and poll taxes to prevent freedmen from voting.[24] White Southerners sought to use the Black Codes to ensure that nominally free black men and women remained agricultural laborers. White planters essentially wanted to turn the freedman into a

[23] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[24] Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1978) 4.

medieval serf.[25] Many white Northerners, especially Union veterans such as the Missourian Samuel Holmes, lamented "The attempts of the reactionary elements in this country to write history backwards must be stopped."[26]

Andrew Johnson was a classic Jacksonian Democrat: he distrusted federal power and was a strong advocate of states' rights.[27] Though Johnson vehemently scorned secession, he broadly sympathized with white Southerners, and wanted to allow former Confederate states to rejoin the Union as quickly and painlessly as possible.[28] Under Johnson, most ex-Confederates needed only to take an oath of loyalty to the Union and swear to abide by the Emancipation Proclamation in order receive a pardon.[29] Wealthy planters or high-ranking Confederate officials had to apply for a presidential pardon, and states would be readmitted to the Union following their passage of a constitution ratifying the 13th Amendment.[30] Many Democrats in Congress and President Andrew Johnson sought to reintegrate white Southerners as quickly and painlessly as possible under Johnson's presidential reconstruction in 1866, so Republicans needed to use fiery rhetoric like that of the bloody shirt to help them establish rights for the newly freed slaves.[31]

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[25] Daniel A. Novak, *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor After Slavery* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1978) 8.

[26] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 50.

[27] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[28] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[29] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[30] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[31] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 100.

Johnson did not desire to enfranchise the newly freed slaves, and eagerly wanted to restore the antebellum status quo in former-Confederate states. He wanted leave questions about the status of newly-freed slaves up to the individual states.[32] This laissez-faire attitude allowed the former Confederate states to pass their Black Codes, as the federal government under Johnson would not lift a finger to either protect the fragile rights of the freedmen or to punish the returning rebels.[33]

Congressional Reconstruction

Many Congressional Republicans were appalled by Johnson's policies, and general Northern outrage at Johnson's leniency handed Republicans an overwhelming victory in the midterm elections of 1866, allowing them to take control of Reconstruction policy. Under Congressional Republicans' Reconstruction Acts, the new state constitutions of the former Confederate states had to include African American suffrage, ratify the 13th Amendment and be compatible with the 14th Amendment.[34] President Johnson believed the Reconstruction Acts unconstitutional, and many white Southerners saw Congressional Reconstruction as illegitimate, refusing cooperate with what they saw as an alien regime imposed on them by outsiders.[35]

The attitude of the defeated Southerners toward the North, especially of those among the formerly dominant white planter class, was acrimonious. Many white Southerners resented the

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[32] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[33] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 229, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[34] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 233, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

[35] Michael Les Benedict, "Andrew Johnson," *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*, (NYU Press: 2016) 233, accessed January 15, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1803zfw.20.

fact that they felt they had not only been beaten, but also subjugated. In 1866, a Southern planter only known as Mr. K, when asked if friendliness would quickly resume between the North and South replied: “No sir, never. The people of the South feel that they have been. . .most tyrannically oppressed by the North. All our rights have been trampled upon. We knew that we had a perfect right to go and leave you. We were only carrying out the principles of the Revolution.”[36] Kate Stone, a planter’s wife and later a leader of the United Daughters of the Confederacy – about which more later -- lamented Lee’s surrender at Appomattox in 1866, howling that the South would never submit to black equality.[37]

In the North, many members of the dominant Republican Party viewed Southerners with skepticism and antagonism, doubting the loyalty of their newly returned countrymen, particularly the planter class. The Union Brigadier General James S. Brisbin, a year after the war, along with many others Northern leaders, expressed doubts concerning the loyalty of white Southerners – their rebellion had been crushed, but their views and ideologies remained unchanged.[38] As such, Reconstruction became a second war, a war of ideas and memory.

An early way of remembering the Civil War during Reconstruction focused on Decoration Days, a practice of decorating graves common to the North and South; Decoration Day would eventually evolve into Memorial Day.[39] The federal reinternment of Union dead on

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[36] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 37.

[37] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 37.

[38] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 46.

[39] "DECORATION DAY," *The Journal of Education* 37, no. 17 (1893): 263, accessed January 25, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44036981.

Southern battlefields was a priority during the Reconstruction years. [40] However, the reinternment of Confederate dead in federal military cemeteries occurred much later, under the administration of President McKinley.[41] This common mourning for the dead soldier, whether he wore blue or gray, allowed the country to unite and begin to mend its wounds as early as the first formally celebrated Memorial Day in 1868.[42] These early Memorial Days emphasized looking forward to the future rather than the bloodshed of the past, and those who did look to the past focused on honoring the dead of the war on both sides. Many white orators in the North and the South delivering speeches that called for letting the past be the past while looking forward to an American future.

By 1869, only four years after the end of the war, many Northern orators took to the stump and looked to the future, extolling the values of reconciliation, while at the same time honoring the past by valuing the sacrifices of both (especially white) Union and Confederate soldiers.[43] Civil War historian William A. Blair notes that, "Northern white people in general wanted reunification with the white South. . .Reaching across the bloody chasm to white ex-soldiers had been a continuous part of the northern psyche from 1861 on."[44] In the 1870s, it was common for Northerners and Southerners to celebrate Memorial Day together and, as such,

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[40] Michelle A. Krowl, "'In the Spirit of Fraternity,'" *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* Vol. 111, Issue 2 (2003): 151-187, accessed November 20, 2017, https://www.jstor.org/stable/4250101?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents.

[41] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 68.

[42] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 72.

[43] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 73.

[44] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 109.

speakers focused on what united the sections: their dead, valiant soldiers. Discussion of the causes of the Civil War fell by the wayside in favor of emphasizing their commonality, "between kindred—between brothers speaking the same tongue, worshipping the same God," in the words of Albion Tourgée, a Republican judge in North Carolina.[45] Even Gerrit Smith, a staunch abolitionist who had helped to fund John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, pleaded with Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase for leniency towards the former president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis.[46]

Many Northerners, particularly those of the radical wing of the Republican Party, stoked sectional divisions by engaging in "bloody shirt rhetoric," especially in the immediate years following the war, as a way to incite their voter base and lay blame for the war at the feet of the former rebels. [47] The imagery of a rebel Southerner in a shirt soaked in Yankee blood galvanized Northern voters, making reunion with their newly conquered countrymen difficult, and the white southerners would vote the way they shot. President Johnson, Northern Democrats who sympathized with Southern whites, and Southern whites themselves wished to return to the prewar status quo of the antebellum South. Some of the most radical Republicans saw black suffrage as the only path to peace between the warring factions, as it would appeal to Americans' civic high-mindedness over their baser, more tribal instincts, and Republicans felt they needed to

[45] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 85.

[46] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 111.

[47] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 51.

firmly entrench African American voters in the South who would otherwise be victimized by the ex-Confederates.[48]

Former Confederates wanted to "redeem" the South by regaining Democratic control of state legislatures, and they were aware of the damage that bloody shirt rhetoric inflicted on their cause. Then Virginia Governor Kemper in 1875 discouraged the display of Confederate battle flags at a Richmond Memorial Day event, as he feared that it would provide another bloody shirt to the Northern Republicans to justify the continued presence of federal troops in the South.[49] Northern Republicans were on the defensive in justifying the continuation of Reconstruction, and as such Kemper tempered the Memorial Day event out of political expediency.[50] During the same Memorial Day event, Governor Kemper did not allow for the participation of African-Americans in the parade, marginalizing the African-American role in the Civil War, while emphasizing that the war was a "common heritage of glory" for both the North and South.[51]

The center of this reconciliation was mutual mourning for and veneration of the soldier, and in the late 1860s and early 1870s, former Confederates seized the initiative to control how the country remembered the Civil War by deemphasizing the ideological issue of slavery that caused the war; they also marginalized the role African-Americans played in the war, preferring to focus on the valor and bravery of the sacrifice of the Confederate soldier and his lost cause.[52]

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[48] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 55.

[49] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 81.

[50] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 81.

[51] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 83.

[52] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 130.

In 1873, members of the Southern Historical Society espoused such rhetoric by lionizing the honorable yet doomed Confederate soldier, delivering speeches that justified secession and glorified Confederates soldiers' performance on the battlefield and willingness to sacrifice themselves for their cause.[53] As Memorial Day commemorations increasingly focused on battlefield memory and the mutual veneration of blue and gray troops, African Americans became marginalized in Civil War memory.

End of Reconstruction

Reconstruction, while near universally unpopular with white Southerners, became less popular in the North, even among staunch Republicans, following the Panic of 1873. [54] The Panic, which led to economic depression, made white Northerners question what all the blood and treasure expended in the South was accomplishing, depleting Northern resolve to continue Reconstruction.[55] Even some Radical Republicans lost energy for and interest in Reconstruction, as many Northern whites began to feel that they had given freedmen and women all the tools they needed to protect themselves with the 14th and 15th Amendments.[56]

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[53] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 79.

[54] Scott Reynolds Nelson, "A Storm of Cheap Goods: New American Commodities and the Panic of 1873," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 10, no. 4 (2011): 447, accessed January 24, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23045123.

[55] Scott Reynolds Nelson, "A Storm of Cheap Goods: New American Commodities and the Panic of 1873," *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 10, no. 4 (2011): 447, accessed January 24, 2018 http://www.jstor.org/stable/23045123.

[56] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 131.

In 1876, Republican presidential candidate Rutherford B. Hayes of Ohio campaigned on local self-government for the South and an end to federal enforcement of Reconstruction, and when he was declared the winner in 1877 after the contentious election of 1876 and controversial Compromise of 1877 where Democrats essentially agreed to allow Hayes to have contested electoral votes in exchange for removing all federal troops from the South.[57] Following Hayes's inauguration, he kept his side of the bargain and the North abandoned Reconstruction in full.

By this point, Union and Confederate troops were similarly venerated in the North and South, and participants in Memorial Day ceremonies that year emphasized decorating the graves of both the Union and Confederate dead. The former Union general John Cochrane described all veterans on both sides, alive or dead, as brothers.[58] As Reconstruction ended and white Northerners and Southerners venerated the mutual Civil War dead, the idea of the Southern Lost Cause blossomed. Speakers such as the former Confederate general Roger A. Pryor linking the valor of Confederate troops, the nobleness of their hopeless cause, sectional reconciliation, and white supremacy in a speech in New York in 1877.[59] This focus on white supremacy simultaneously helped to reconcile white Northerners and Southerners while marginalizing African Americans in Civil War memory.

A minority of Northerners resisted this trend of marginalizing slavery's role in the Civil War that came with the tide of battlefield-based reconciliation, but many veterans from both sides began to forget the bloodshed and focus on the honor earned on the battlefield, looking

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[57] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 136.

[58] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 87.

[59] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard university Press, 2001) 90.

back on the war with a kind of nostalgia. Journals and magazines such as *The Confederate Veteran* and *The Century*, which published written accounts from Union and Confederate veterans, enjoyed national readership and propelled a Civil War nostalgia industry which further assisted the sections in mending their wounds.[60] These magazines, however, only focused on the rousing adventure of war on the battlefield, glossing over the horrors and misery of the war, as well as the ideological disputes over slavery and freedom that had caused the war. Pieces like those published in *Century* tended to ignore African Americans' place in Civil War memory, and instead emphasized mutual admiration for both Confederate and Union veterans to facilitate a sectional reconciliation of white Americans. Even veterans' organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic remained segregated, and so too would memory become segregated. [61]

Following Reconstruction, white Southerners became less concerned with stoking the flames of sectional differences with their construction of their war memorials venerating Confederate officials and honoring their Civil War dead. During Reconstruction, ex-Confederates were careful of how Northerners perceived their Memorial Day celebrations, as seen in the aforementioned Memorial Day unveiling of the statue of Stonewall Jackson in Richmond in 1875; they did not want to stoke partisan flames that would lead to a longer Reconstruction.[62]

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[60]Reda C. Goff, "The Confederate Veteran Magazine," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1972): 45-60, accessed January 28, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42623281.

[61] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) 194.

[62] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 144.

However, by 1890, during the unveiling of a statue of Robert E. Lee also in Richmond, white Southerners marched under the Confederate battle flag with impunity.[63] The event drew the ire of Union veterans, African Americans, and Republicans, who felt that this public display of Confederate symbols disrespected the Union dead.[64] White Southerners replied that those who wanted to keep the memory of the war alive in a way that held the South responsible for the war only served to further divide the country and prevent a true national reunion.[65]

By 1890, many white Southerners had come to celebrate their Lost Cause rather than mourn their defeat. The Lost Cause is the idea that the Confederate struggle was a heroic one to uphold Southern values, but ultimately doomed due to the odds against the South. The Lost Cause heavily deemphasizes the role of slavery in the Civil War, and former Confederates saw the Lost Cause's general acceptance among the Northern populace as "signs of respect from former foes. . . which made acceptance of reunion easier," as the North "acknowledged the heroism and nobility of the Confederate effort, the honor of the South."[66]

Many white Southerners now viewed reconciliation with the North as a positive thing, as many white Northerners saw the Southern lens of viewing the war through the Lost Cause as less and less problematic.[67] Time seemed to have done its part in mending the wounds between the white North and their white counterparts to the South, as a new generation, one that had not bled

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[63] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 144.

[64] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 158.

[65] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 158.

[66] Gary W. Gallagher and Alan T. Nolan, *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 28.

[67] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 155.

and experienced loss in Gettysburg or Antietam or Vicksburg came to replace those that had -- and this new generation would bleed together against a common foe in America's first major military excursion since the Civil War.

The Spanish-American War

White Americans were well on their way to a sectional reconciliation based on the mutual respect between Union and Confederate veterans and for their respective causes when the Spanish-American War firmly cemented a nationalist, united, white America by helping to remove any remaining barriers to white reconciliation through battlefield glory against a mutual foe. For many white Americans, the wounds left over from the Civil War healed when the sons of Union and Confederate veterans bled together as Americans in Cuba and the Philippines and the other theatres of the war.

By fighting an alien "other" in the Spanish, the speeches of reconciliation of that reinforced American commonality could now be directed towards a foreign other that threatened American values. Congressmen such as Texas Democrat Reese C. De Graffenreid saw the war as an opportunity to mend the wounds of the Civil War, arguing that by fighting side by side, Northerners and Southerners would shed common blood and come to think of themselves as Americans, overcoming their sectional identities.[68] The Spanish-American War helped to heal the wounds between white Northerners and Southerners by giving the United States an alien foe to conquer.

[68] Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 74.

Perhaps the best symbol of this sectional reunion was General Joseph Wheeler, who had served as a Confederate cavalry general but commanded American troops in Cuba.[69] Wheeler was in his sixties, and his appointment was a largely symbolic gesture by President William McKinley; nevertheless, he became the only man to serve as a general in both the Confederate and United States armies.[70] By fighting the Spanish, Americans of the North and South put aside their tribalism and come together and bond over the bloodshed of the Spanish-American War, even if Wheeler, falling back on old habits during the Battle of Las Guasimas, reportedly encouraged his troops by shouting: "Let's go, boys! We've got the damn Yankees on the run again!"[71] Men from the North and South united to face their common foe, and in so doing remembered their American commonality.[72]

After the War

Following the war, American politicians such as Theodore Roosevelt felt that the fighting had finally erased the differences between Northerners and Southerners, leaving only Americans.[73] A combination of mutual bloodletting against the Spanish and broad acceptance of the Lost Cause narrative throughout the white North and white South demonstrated that the

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[69] A. James Fuller, "Joseph Wheeler," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2140.

[70] A. James Fuller, "Joseph Wheeler," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2140.

[71] A. James Fuller, "Joseph Wheeler," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2140.

[72] A. James Fuller, "Joseph Wheeler," *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, accessed November 20, 2017, http://www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/article/h-2140.

[73] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) 356.

North could trust that the (white) South bought into the Union and would once again fight for the United States. In the words of historian David W. Blight, "The lifeblood of reunion was the mutuality of soldiers' sacrifice in a land where the rhetoric and reality of emancipation and racial equality occupied only the margins of history."[74] By ignoring the causes of the Civil War and the role of race and slavery in the Civil War, white Americans in the North and South moved towards reconciliation.

President McKinley visited Southerners, white and black, in the hopes of achieving sectional reunion and gaining southern support for the 1898 Treaty of Paris, which ended the Spanish-American War and give the United States possession of many former Spanish colonies, most notably the Philippines.[75] Though McKinley courted both white and black voters, visiting Booker T. Washington at Tuskagee, President McKinley especially needed to sell skeptical Southern they did not want, as most Southern whites had no desire to annex Spanish possessions.[76]

White southerners did not want to annex these Spanish possessions because they feared bringing non-whites that lived on these islands into the United States as part of its polity.[77] Southern whites also were almost universally Democrats, and thus wary of what they perceived

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[74] David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in the American Memory* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001) 192.

[75] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 179.

[76] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 180.

[77] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 181.

would be an expansion of federal power if the islands came under the control of the federal government.[78]

The president delivered a speech in Atlanta on December 14, 1898 in which he asserted that all soldiers, whether they fought for the Union or the Confederacy, were Americans, and thus all soldiers' graves should be tended by the federal government.[79] This statement took sectional reunion based on the shared veneration of fallen soldiers to its logical extreme, forgetting the causes of the war for the sake of white unity by extolling all of the dead, blue or gray, as Americans, which could be interpreted as absolving the Confederacy of blame from the war. McKinley said in his speech that:

> "Every soldier's grave made during our unfortunate civil war is a tribute to American valor...the time has now come in the evolution of sentiment and feeling under the providence of God, when in the spirit of fraternity we should share with you in the care of the graves of Confederate soldiers."[80]

McKinley's emphasis that all soldiers' deaths contribute to American valor without mentioning either side of the war displayed how far the battlefield reconciliation of the war had come for white Americans. In addition, his reference to the Civil War as "unfortunate" places the blame on neither side.

The federal government took responsibility for all of the Civil War dead, and many white Northerners and Southerners alike approved of this action.[81] Following the American

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[78] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 181.

[79] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 182.

[80] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 182.

[81] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 183.

triumph in Cuba and the Philippines, President McKinley used bisectional feelings of unity as an impetus to reinter Confederate dead in federal graveyards, symbolically mending the rift between Union and Confederate veterans and completing the process of battlefield reconciliation that started in the post Reconstruction America.[82] Northern whites accepted Southern whites' lack of regret over the war as long as they supported the United States in the war like they had in the Spanish-American War. This came much to the chagrin of African Americans who were completely left out of this sectional recovery for the sake of uniting Southern and Northern whites by ignoring the causes of the Civil War.[83]

Another group that heavily opposed the reinternment of Confederate dead were Southern women's memorial groups such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, who hated the idea of the federal government keeping the Southern bodies on Northern soil instead of returning them home.[84]

Though the United Daughters of the Confederacy opposed the reinternment of Confederate bodies to federal graveyards in the North, the move ultimately proved to be popular with a large segment of the white southern population that felt that this was the Union acquiescing Confederate battlefield prowess. By interring the Confederate bodies in federal graveyards, the government in a way legitimized the Lost Cause narrative that the South's cause

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[82] Michelle A. Krowl, "'In the Spirit of Fraternity,'" *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* Vol. 111, Issue 2 (2003): 151-187, accessed November 20, 2017, http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?vid=3&sid=5c12d658-c531-498d-bfa2-ca1d98d1f9f8%40sessionmgr4010&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBlPWlwLHVpZCZzaXRlPWVob3N0LWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=11597475&db=ahl.

[83] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 185.

[84] William A. Blair, *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) 189.

was just and their deaths were just a tragic as those who died to preserve the Union. In the wake of the Spanish-American War, the Daughters of the Confederacy funded the construction of a war memorial to Tennessee's Sam Davis.

CHAPTER II

OF MEMORIALS AND MEN:

DAVIS AND FORREST IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Sam Davis, a Confederate scout executed at age 21 for espionage, and Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Confederate cavalry general famous for his aggressive battlefield tactics, massacre at Fort Pillow, and early role in the leadership of the Ku Klux Klan, do not appear similar at first glance. However, both men served the Confederate the cause -- the cause of defending slavery -- during the Civil War, and Middle Tennesseans subsequently memorialized both in the twentieth century. Sophisticated national memorialization groups funded and built these memorials, most prominently the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The United Daughters of the Confederacy

The United Daughters of the Confederacy emerged in the aftermath of the Civil War as an organization dedicated to preserving historical memory of the Confederate cause. Its membership primarily consisted of women descended from Confederate soldiers or otherwise affiliated with the Confederacy, and these women founded the organization to preserve the memory of the South and its military achievements during the Civil War.[85] Caroline Meriwether Goodlett and Lucian H. Raines formally established the United Daughters of the Confederacy in Nashville, Tennessee on September 10, 1894, though this event simply consolidated and formalized the loose network of Southern women's memorial groups that had existed for decades

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[85] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

by this point.[86] The new organization's stated purpose was to commemorate the "'lost cause' in the civil war." [87] The UDC's constitution pledged its members ""to instruct and instill into the descendants of the people of the South a proper respect for and pride in their glorious war history, with a veneration and love for the deeds of their forefathers which have created such a monument of military renown."[88] The UDC's founders hoped that by "unit[ing] in the federation all bodies of Southern women now organized or that may hereafter be formed," they might better commemorate fallen Confederate soldiers.[89] The United Daughters of the Confederacy funded the construction of many war memorials honoring Confederate dead and lionizing Confederate heroes.[90]

UDC chapters formed across the South and spread to the rest of the country as well: UDC chapters sprang up in the former border states of Kentucky, Missouri, and Maryland,[91] and chapters formed in California, Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia, and the Oklahoma territory as well. The UDC's remarkable geographic reach demonstrated the widespread

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[86] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[87] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[88] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[89] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[90] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean,* (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[91] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

dispersion of Southern women, or at least women with Southern sympathies, throughout the United States in the aftermath of the Civil War.[92]

This mission statement displays why people build war memorials, as these war memorials helps form their community's identity, commemorates public service, and honors those who fought to defend the South during the Civil War, all in accordance to Martinez and Harris's aforementioned social purposes for memorials. This displayed the historical whitewashing of the Confederate war record by reducing the entirety of the war effort to a glorious doomed cause, and also demonstrated that organized groups worked to distort southern Civil War memory hardly thirty years from Appomattox.

The UDC's constitution stated that the organization's goal was "to perpetuate a truthful record of the noble and chivalric achievements of their ancestors—all with the view to furnish authentic information from which a conscientious historian will be enabled to write a correct and impartial history of the confederate side during the struggle for Southern independence."[93] This dedication to historical accuracy and impartiality rang hollow given the areas of Confederates' wartime conduct that they glossed over, such as the Massacre at Fort Pillow, Tennessee. This massacre took place scarcely two hundred miles away from a memorial praising fallen Confederate soldiers as "No people [ever had] bolder defenders, than the brave soldiers to whose

[92] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[93] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

memory this stone is erected," on a monument that was raised that very year in Franklin, an adjacent city to Nashville.[94]

Harper's Bazaar, a New York-based publication, praised the UDC for their publication of *Life of General Forrest* in 1899, saying: "Its lucid, forcible style impresses the reader of any section of the country, while its calmness as well as its unquestionable accuracy, make it invaluable data for the future historian."[95] This was the same Nathanial Bedford Forrest who had perpetuated the Massacre at Fort Pillow; according to his own troops, "Gen. Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs and the carnage continued."[96] The publication's use of "in any section of the country" showed a desire for reunion, and its lauding of the book's historical accuracy gave legitimacy to the Daughters of the Confederacy.

Other New York publications were less kind to the United Daughters of the Confederacy. *The Independent*, another New York periodical, had this to say about the UDC: "We cannot expect those who fought for a lost cause easily to recognize that it was a wrong cause," attacking

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[94] Amy Heyse, "Women's Rhetorical Authority and Collective Memory: The United Daughters of the Confederacy Remember the South," *Women and Language* 33, no. 2 (March 1995): 32, accessed November 5, 2017. http://gt.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMwhV09T8NADM3QgbbiLyCLgpgiJblL7sLKh1hYIphP96kOpR2aDv33-F3SASTEHMuJIuf5nmP7rYpri97s_ZhnuMIi19faEtOzVxeIRJJeFvss0vhwpGEb540YhMLQAbJtxESaMnnO3z29o_H0_Ej89mg6jtGzPTF_5VMSHRLxLSkPyWFhpT_TEL8iJDXyhSxHty4-X18-nt7KWWWg9Ng8U6ZUSWfb1jUpJMtY3dqu0srXvXNJ-SrWOtZBCQbxzjqpZQPdpojI9zEEjPvcTn4vWG7mMDga3WlOkL3AktGbyQi4bxA8Iz-maSSDEZMUeNn88mIdih1-hBulBBLxP1ZMZTQa8tbF3Z9WterYl2bawWb3k9nPH-5sHHc7M1QSY669EN-Rqo-U.

[95] "The Daughters of the Confederacy," *Harper's Bazaar* Volume 32, Issue 15 (April 15, 1899): 319, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/125042280?accountid=11091.

[96] Lonnie E Maness, "The Fort Pillow Massacre: Fact or Fiction," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 288, accessed February 20, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42626626.

the pervasive Lost Cause narrative and the claimed moral high ground the United Daughters of the Confederacy purported to stand on in their constitution. [97]

The article goes on to say that, "It is too much to ask the veterans of the Confederacy to accept the sentiment of a young white Southerner that their war and cause was 'a blamed good fight in a blamed bad cause;' but it is unfortunate when the teaching is carried on to the next generation of the Daughters of the Confederacy."[98] Not only did *The Independent* deny the justice of the Lost Cause, it also denied the importance of the UDC's attempt to present a positive historical narrative about the Confederacy. *The Independent* saw this narrative as damaging to the country, condemning Southerners for likening the secession of Panama to Southern secession: "We only regret that they know so little of history as to parallel the right of Panama to secede with that of the Confederate States."[99] One such memorial that the UDC helped fund was a statue of Sam Davis in front of the Tennessee state capitol building.

Sam Davis: The Man

In 1901, S.A. Cunningham, a Confederate veteran, commissioned a statue of the Confederate martyr Sam Davis that was completed eight years later.[100] Davis was a Confederate spy and Nashville native who was posthumously dubbed the "Boy Hero of the Confederacy" by

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[97] "Daughters of the Confederacy, "*The Independent* Volume 55, Issue 2872 (December 17, 1903): 3012-3013, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/90575444?accountid=11091.

[98] "Daughters of the Confederacy, "*The Independent* Volume 55, Issue 2872 (December 17, 1903): 3012-3013, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/90575444?accountid=11091.

[99] "Daughters of the Confederacy, "*The Independent* Volume 55, Issue 2872 (December 17, 1903): 3012-3013, accessed November 2, 2017, http://proxy.library.georgetown.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/90575444?accountid=11091.

[100] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

Lost Causers looking to make a martyr of him. Davis was hanged by Union authorities on November 19, 1863, after he refused to give up the name of his local informant, famously saying, "I would rather die a thousand deaths than betray a friend or be false to duty."[101] This refusal to comply elevated him to martyrdom.

Sam Davis: The Memorial

On April 30, 1909, Davis was immortalized in bronze, as his statue was unveiled in front of the Tennessee capitol building in Nashville.[102] The statue cost $8,000,[103] which would equate to more than $200,000 today. The Daughters of the Confederacy funded roughly half of the cost of the statue.[104] *The Nashville Tennessean* reported that the remaining funding for the Sam Davis statue had come "from every state in the Union,"[105] which demonstrated the American unity that resulted from the rabid nationalism of the Spanish-American War era, as well as the success of white ex-Confederates' efforts to venerate the Confederate soldier and have Southern valor dominate the narrative of Civil War memory.[106] I could not find any information in my research that contradicted *The Nashville Tennessean*'s claim, and by including this tidbit the author of the article led his readers to believe that there was national support for the memorial and that the

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[101] Edward John Harcourt, "'The Boys Will have to Fight the Battles without Me': The Making of Sam Davis, 'Boy Hero of the Confederacy,'" *Southern Cultures* Vol. 12, Issue 3 (2006): 30, accessed November 20, 2017. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/201382

[102] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[103] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[104] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean,* (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[105] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[106] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

monument gained national acceptance. The plaque accompanying the statue addresses the South's former foes, the full text of the inscription reading:

> When the Lord calls up earth's heroes,
> to stand before His face,
> O, many a name, unknown to fame
> Shall ring from that high place;
> Then out of a grave in the Southland
> At the just God's call and beck,
> Shall one man rise with fearless eyes
> With a rope about his neck;
> O Southland!: bring your laurels,
> And add your wreath, O North!
> Let glory claim the hero's name
> And tell the world his worth."[107]

This memorial and its inscription fulfilled the social purposes of forming the community's identity in its veneration of a local hero, commemorating Davis's wartime service. The plaque did not, however, fulfill the fourth social purpose of war memorials in promoting humanity and discouraging war, instead opting to honor and glorify his death for the cause. The plaque displayed the pervasiveness of the Lost Cause narrative of the Civil War in the early twentieth century, and showed how completely the culture of reunion through battlefield reconciliation had permeated the South. Southerners felt comfortable not only honoring war heroes like Davis, but also demanding that Northerners likewise give honor to the Southern war effort. The article's author identified Davis as "a son of the Old South," the slave South.[108] The further emphasis that he "died for a cause, though lost, still just."[109] It is evident in this language

[107] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[108] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

[109] "Tennessee's Hero-Martyr," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), April 30, 1909.

that Lost Causers took control of the narrative of Civil War memory in Middle Tennessee by the time of the statue's unveiling.

Sam Davis continued to live on as a martyr in Southern historical memory, as two decades later, in 1925, *The Nashville Tennessean* ran an article entitled "State to Honor Hero's Memory."[110] This article discussed a re-commemoration of the Davis statue in front of the Tennessee state capitol building for the anniversary of Sam Davis's execution. The word that appeared in both the 1909 article and 1925 article titles, "Hero," shows that Southern historical memory changed little in the intervening time. Sam Davis was still the "Boy Hero of the Confederacy," forever young and bronze. Once again, the statue and its inscription did not condemn the northerners present in Sam Davis's near mythic origin story as bad people deserving the hatred of the South. The article's author claimed that, "The northern soldiers, deeply touched by the brave lad, waited until the horseman arrived," which implied that the Union soldiers were wrong for executing the honorable Davis.[111] The author's relative restraint in not portraying the Union soldiers as villainous suggested some level of an acceptance of a culture of reunion and reconciliation between the North and South in Middle Tennessee's Civil War memory.

The author took care to note that the soldier who executed Sam Davis, Van Pelt, felt remorse for his actions and visited Sam Davis's mother to apologize following the war. Mrs. Davis explained that, although the incident had happened "32 years ago. . .I shall never forget the look of grief on the face of Mr. Van Pelt. . .Indeed, the great sympathy of the North who traveled

[110] "State to Honor Hero's Memory," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), August 16, 1925.

[111] "State to Honor Hero's Memory," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), August 16, 1925.

by the home on the Dixie highway has always been very noticeable."[112] The fact that the newspaper humanized Northern soldiers in this way shows that, for many white Americans, Civil War memory had evolved into mutual admiration and sympathy between the North and South. The author's choice to portray Sam Davis's death not by some callous Union executioner, but by a contrite soldier with a name, demonstrated that *The Nashville Tennessean* sought reconciliation and reunion in its remembrance of the Civil War.

The article stated that, "Federal soldiers who participated in the execution were among the first to subscribe to the fund for the monument."[113] This fact further supported the initial article's claim that the Sam Davis statue had received funds from all states in the Union, showing national support for a seemingly regional figure. For so many men who participated in his execution to have funded a statue to the man they executed demonstrates the impact of reunionism sentiment. There are, however, no other sources that corroborate the claim that Davis' executioners funded the memorial, making this author's assertion somewhat suspect – indeed, the claim may have been a lie constructed to purvey a pro-reconciliation narrative to his audience.

Four decades later, in 1963, *The Tennessean* honored the one-hundred-year anniversary of Sam Davis's death with an article entitled "Centennial for State's 'Boy Hero of Confederacy.'"[114] This article reads much the same as the previous two articles, despite the numerous decades that separated them, as it once again proclaims Sam Davis's martyrdom. It was also accompanied by photographs of modern 1960s Nashvillians posing proudly with the

[112] "State to Honor Hero's Memory," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), August 16, 1925.

[113] "State to Honor Hero's Memory," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), August 16, 1925.

[114] Hugh Walker, "Centennial for State's 'Boy Hero of Confederacy,'" *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 24, 1963.

statue. This article demonstrates that Southern historical memory of Sam Davis and the Civil War in Middle Tennessee had changed little over the course of those six decades.

By comparison, a war memorial built seven decades after Davis' statue was unveiled, and located nearly adjacent to the statue of Davis, has had a more controversial existence.

Nathan Bedford Forrest: The Man

Nathan Bedford Forrest was a Tennessee slave trader who rose to the rank of general in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. He won many victories, but also committed war crimes, and after the war he founded the Ku Klux Klan. The Battle of Fort Pillow, referred to by many as the Fort Pillow Massacre, took place in 1864 in Lauderdale County in Western Tennessee. Approximately 2,000 Confederate troops under General Nathan Bedford Forrest defeated 600 white and black Union troops and subsequently massacred their (predominantly African American) prisoners of war.[115] Although disagreements persist, most historians have concluded that Forrest ordered his men to start executing surrendering POWs en masse. Confederate Sergeant Achilles V. Clark described this order's result: "The slaughter was awful. Words cannot describe the scene. The poor deluded negroes would run up to our men fall upon their knees and with uplifted arms scream for mercy but they were ordered to their feet and then shot down."[116] Confederate newspapers reported similar accounts, saying that, "Thus the whites

[115] Lonnie E Maness, "The Fort Pillow Massacre: Fact or Fiction," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 288, accessed February 20, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42626626.

[116] John Cimprich and Robert C. Mainfort, Jr., "The Fort Pillow Massacre: A Statistical Note," *The Journal of American History* 76, no.3 (December 1989): 831, accessed February 20, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2936423.

received quarter, but the negroes received no mercy."[117] The actions of the Confederate troops so horrified the aforementioned Confederate Sergeant Clark that "[he], with several others, tried to stop the butchery and at one time had partially succeeded but Gen. Forrest ordered them shot down like dogs and the carnage continued."[118] Given that Clark's letter was a personal correspondence to his sisters in the immediate aftermath of the incident, he would seem to have had little reason to lie or exaggerate.

Nathan Bedford Forrest: The Memorial

The memorial, a bust of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, currently sits in the state's capitol building in Nashville; state officials unveiled the bust in November 1978.[119] Initially, local journalists in Middle Tennessee covered the unveiling of the bust, and the personal history of Nathan Bedford Forrest, positively, reflecting mainly on his military record and hailing him as "one of the South's great heroes."[120] This memorial was funded mostly by the Sons of Confederate Veterans, a Southern heritage group that traces its lineage to 1896, and the sale of a portrait of Bedford Forrest in order to represent the man they saw as Tennessee's biggest contribution to the Civil War in the capitol building.[121] Beyond lauding Forrest's military record, the author of this article, Hugh Walker, goes into detail about the literature surrounding the late

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[117] John Cimprich and Robert C. Mainfort, Jr., "The Fort Pillow Massacre: A Statistical Note," *The Journal of American History* 76, no.3 (December 1989): 831, accessed February 20, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/2936423.

[118] Lonnie E Maness, "The Fort Pillow Massacre: Fact or Fiction," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (Winter 1986): 289, accessed February 20, 2018, http://www.jstor.org/stable/42626626.

[119] "Bigger than Life," *The Nashville Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 3, 1978.

[120] Hugh Walker, "Bookman Examines Forrest Studies," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 5, 1978.

[121] Hugh Walker, "Bookman Examines Forrest Studies," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 5, 1978.

cavalry general. Some of the authors venerated Forrest as a god, whereas others emphasized his military acumen and his viciousness, saying, "Walker did not omit references to Forrest's harshness and violent temper. . .He relates that the general, with his own hands, put 30 Federals out of action during the war, and that he would not hesitate, if they showed cowardice, to shoot one of his own men."[122] The author does not condemn Forrest for killing his own troops, or for his role as the founder of the Ku Klux Klan despite mentioning both deplorable acts, showing how a sterling war record can absolve you in historical memory.

Walker also does not mention Bedford Forrest's war crimes in Tennessee in his article, with the closest reference being the aforementioned quote that mentioned Forrest's harshness and temper and propensity to shoot his own men. Referring to this as a violent temper is a gross understatement, as it fails to consider the scope of the war crimes Forrest committed against Union prisoners of war, especially African American prisoners of war, as the commanding Confederate officer at the Massacre at Fort Pillow.

African Americans in Nashville mobilized a protest of the bust on November 5, 1978, just days after it had been unveiled. Local newspapers covered the protest, which was organized by a Baptist pastor named Reverend Kelly Miller Smith, who called the memorial "an insult to all blacks."[123] The Reverend explained that, "We protested against the presence and unveiling of the bust in the Capitol because Forrest has the dubious distinction of being a Confederate general

[122] Hugh Walker, "Bookman Examines Forrest Studies," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 5, 1978.

[123] Susan Thomas, "Black Protesters Say General Forrest Statue Insulting," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 6, 1978.

and one of the founders of the Ku Kux Klan. . .Anything that symbolizes the Confederacy is an obvious insult to blacks."[124]

The fact that this paper, *The Tennessean*, would run two articles one day apart, one extolling the virtues of the great military commander and pride of the state Nathan Bedford Forrest, and a subsequent article detailing Forrest's record as a Klansman and his vicious war record, displayed the disparity between white Southern and black Southern memory of the Civil War had become in the intervening century.

Tennessee state Senator Douglas Henry saw no issue with the bust and in response to the protest said:

> "I don't think it's an insult to anyone who recognizes a man who had commendable qualities. In his time and place, Forrest was a man of compassion and humanity. Although times and circumstances change, the point I would like to emphasize is that the essential qualities of a good character do not change."[125]

Times and circumstances do change, and here is how a contemporary of Nathan Bedford Forrest, Union General and later President Ulysses S. Grant, viewed the Confederate general and his war crimes:

> "I will leave Forrest in his dispatches to tell what he did with them. "The river was dyed," he says, "with the blood of the slaughtered for two hundred yards. The approximate loss was upward of five hundred killed, but few of the officers escaping. My loss was about twenty killed. It is hoped that these facts will demonstrate to the Northern people that Negro soldiers cannot cope with Southerners." Subsequently Forrest made a report in which he left out the part which shocks humanity to read."[126]

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[124] Susan Thomas, "Black Protesters Say General Forrest Statue Insulting," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 6, 1978.

[125] Susan Thomas, "Black Protesters Say General Forrest Statue Insulting," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 6, 1978.

[126] Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant* (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1885), 471.

Even among his contemporaries Forrest was thought to be a war criminal whose actions shocked humanity. This disparity in how Forrest is interpreted by the black community in Nashville and the white community in Nashville when the state unveiled the memorial in 1978
show the incongruence between white and black Civil War memory and how far the two communities had drifted in their ways of remembering the Civil War. This is due to the sectional reunion between white Northerners and Southerners that took place in the preceding century, a reunion based on the mutual respect of Union and Confederate soldiers and their dead. However, this reunion excluded the causes of the war, primarily slavery and the protection of slavery and ensuring it in perpetuity, and ignored the role of African Americans in the Civil War in combat roles or otherwise.

White Northerners and Southerners put their own need for reconciliation ahead of the need to incorporate African Americans into the American polity. This created a distinct difference between white and black Americans in their respective war memories that lead a dissonance in memory. The Tennessee state senator who did not understand why the black community in Nashville took issue with a bust in the state capitol building honoring a secessionist who massacred African American prisoners of war and went on to be a founding member of the Ku Klux Klan in Tennessee exemplifies this dissonance. The Reverend even mentions that Forrest's role in the Confederacy would have been enough to protest his bust even discounting his prominent role in the early years of the Ku Klux Klan.

Following the November 1978 protest Reverend Smith's continued his campaign to have the bust removed. In January 1979, Smith led a coalition of African American clergymen who, speaking on behalf of black Tennesseans, called on Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander to involve more African Americans in his administration and to be more transparent about the

advocating of African American issues. Smith's coalition also asked Alexander to "[remove] from the Capitol a bronze bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest, a co-founder of the Ku Klux Klan."[127] Though the reverends brought many issues to Governor Alexander's attention, they prioritized removal of Forrest's bust. This would be the precursor to a series of protests from the black community surrounding the bust and Alexander's marginalization of African Americans in his administration.

The protests included African Americans descending on the capitol building, one brandishing a whip, yelling at the bust of Forrest and slightly damaging it. Eventually, these labors bore fruit and African American community leaders met with Governor Alexander in Nashville. Alexander remained adamant in his refusal to remove the bust, telling these representatives of Black Tennesseans for Action that, "I think you are talking to the wrong person. If you want it removed, you should talk to the legislature."[128] He referred to the initial piece of legislation that commissioned the bust in 1973, but left the funding to the local chapter of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

The assorted community leaders insinuated that his support for the bust made Governor Alexander a racist, to which the governor replied, "I have a different feeling about the bust. There are a lot of things we don't like in our past, but that's not a good reason to remove the bust."[129] Despite the litany of reasons the Black Tennesseans for Action had for speaking with the governor, including African American unemployment and the abolition of capital

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[127] Dwight Lewis, "Blacks Feel Alexander Neglect," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), January 11, 1979.

[128] Susan Thomas, "Alexander Refuses Bust Removal Aid," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), February 24, 1979.

[129] Susan Thomas, "Black Protesters Say General Forrest Statue Insulting," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 6, 1978.

punishment, the removal of the bust remained the dominant topic of the conversation and thus the subsequent article. The community leaders also took umbrage with Alexander's appointment of Grace Shadfur as an administrative assistant in the Department of Conservation, arguing that because she was the president of her chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy she was "anti-black."[130]

Alexander's arguments, that we have to remember all of our past, even the parts we do not like, do not hold water. The bust, if it is indeed remembering a part of the past that we do not like as the governor put it, is a commemoration, meant to honor the person of Nathan Bedford Forrest. The bust is a war memorial, and recalling the earlier definition of war memorials:

> "(1) They help to form a community's identity; (2) they commemorate public service; (3) they honor those persons who fought to defend the polity in times of crisis; and (4) they promote humanitarianism by reminding people of the horrors and losses associated with war, often questioning the logic and value of all war as human activity."[131]

then the bust adheres to the first three definitions of a war memorial while rejecting the fourth, as it glorifies Forrest's war record rather than condemning war.

This bust helps a community form an identity; however, the bust does not help the whole community form an identity as the veneration of Forrest excludes African Americans. If the bust is meant to commemorate public service, it honors a man that rose up against the United States in a rebellion that cost hundreds of thousands of American lives and became known for his brutality and how he "put 30 Federals out of action during the war,"[132] men who died in the Union army

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[130] Susan Thomas, "Alexander Refuses Bust Removal Aid," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), February 24, 1979.

[131] Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su, *Confederate Symbols of the Contemporary South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2001) 134.

[132] Hugh Walker, "Bookman Examines Forrest Studies," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), November 5, 1978.

to defend the Constitution. If the bust is to honor a person who fought to defend the polity in a time of crisis, it honors a man who rebelled against his legitimate government and committed war crimes in doing so.

This displays how far Civil War memory has evolved from the days of bloody shirt rhetoric in the North and South during Reconstruction, to the subsequent white reconciliation based on the mutual valor of Northern and Southern troops that eventually came to fruition during the Spanish-American War. This also demonstrates how the post-Civil Rights Movement landscape for African Americans allowed them greater opportunities for protest. The Sam Davis memorial, built in 1909, could not face organized protests from African American communities in Nashville because this time was the height of Jim Crow. These laws deprived African Americans of civil rights, much like the black codes that flourished under Andrew Johnson's Presidential Reconstruction.

Later in 1979, an editorial from *The Tennessean* and letter to the editor contended on Forrest's legacy, debating the calls for the bust to be removed. Hugh Walker, a *Tennessean* staff writer who authored the article "A Calvary Commander Who Became a Symbol," argued that Forrest was one of the greatest Confederate heroes of the Civil War on the basis of his military record as a cavalry general.[133] Walker goes on to assume that the African American leaders took issue with the Forrest bust because of his association as a Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, despite the fact that his newspaper published a quote in an article that stated that African American community leaders' issue was primarily with his Confederate association, though they also resented that Forrest founded the Ku Klux Klan. Walker asserted that the Klan Forrest

[133] Hugh Walker, "A Calvary Commander Who Became a Symbol," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), February 25, 1979.

founded was very different from its modern interpretation, despite the Ku Klux Klan terrorizing freedmen when Forrest was a member. Walker downplays the Massacre at Fort Pillow by calling it "a little fort."[134] Furthermore, Walker absolves Forrest of blame for his role in the massacre of the prisoners of war, by saying "[Forrest] sought to terrify the garrison by a threat of no quarter, as was his custom."[135]

A reader named Dr. Bobby L. Lovett responded in his subsequent letter to the editor in response to Walker's piece. He went on to list a litany of Forrest's war crimes against African American civilians and soldiers beyond the Massacre at Fort Pillow, and the issues behind memorializing a racist.[136] Lovett articulates the aversion of African Americans in Tennessee to the bust saying:

> Let the readers understand that Tennesseans of the worst sort have lifted Forrest up, not because he was such a military genius—that is a myth founded by desperate southern historians—but because Forrest was an anti-Negro symbol in an age of Jim Crowism and racism. It is my opinion and assessment that black people do not oppose the man Forrest, but the ideas his memories symbolize; we oppose the sick, sadistic racists who use Forrest's name and record as an inspiration to insult and terrorize twentieth century blacks."[137]

No better example of this inspiration can be found than a year later when the Tennessee chapter of the Ku Klux Klan held a press conference in front of Forrest's bust in the capitol building, and discussed how they were training SWAT teams for the inevitable race war between white and

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[134] Hugh Walker, "A Calvary Commander Who Became a Symbol," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), February 25, 1979.

[135] Hugh Walker, "A Calvary Commander Who Became a Symbol," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), February 25, 1979.

[136] Dr. Bobby L. Lovett, "Letters to the Editor," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), March 4, 1979.

[137] Dr. Bobby L. Lovett, "Letters to the Editor," *The Tennessean*, (Nashville, TN), March 4, 1979.

black Americans.[138] Dr. Lovett's words ring true when he condemns those who might invoke Forrest's name in order to promote their cause of racism, just as Dr. Lovett predicted they would. The Klan members posed for photos in front of the bust with their hoods on. Afterwards, beyond sporadic calls for the bust's removal, the bust remained in the capitol building uncontested until very recently, following the protests and counter-protest violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, in the summer of 2017.

The fact that local newspapers featured highly publicized outrage from the African American community towards the bust of Forrest is in itself telling of how much the coverage and discussion of Civil War memory has changed in the years between when Middle Tennesseans raised a statue of Sam Davis at the beginning of the twentieth century compared to when they raised a bust of Forrest in the late 70s.

We do not know if the African American community in Nashville protested the statue of Sam Davis when the statehouse first revealed it. Though the newspapers reported nothing about it, given their biases at the time it is unlikely newspapers would report African American opposition, and given that this was during Jim Crow, it is doubtful they were able to protest. By the1970s, more than a decade after Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, African Americans possessed the political power to protest and challenge the Lost Cause narrative that had been so pervasive in the century following the Civil War, and did so by protesting the bust of Forrest.

Sam Davis, the Boy Hero of the Confederacy, and Nathan Bedford Forrest present very different figures in the Civil War. One was a teenaged conscript who died young, executed as a spy, while the other represented all that was wrong with the slave holding planter class in the

[138] Alan Hall, "KKK Said Training SWAT Teams for War," *The Tennessean,* (Nashville, TN), October, 4, 1980.

antebellum South, a white planter of immense wealth who owned hundreds of slaves. However, they both fought for a cause that ultimately was about the protection of slavery, and now face calls to come down by various segments of a community that has changed in the intervening decades.

CHAPTER 3:

CHARLESTON, CHARLOTTESVILLE, AND MODERN MEMORIAL CONTROVERSIES

Today, the debate over Confederate memorials rages in Middle Tennessee in the wake of the Charleston Church Shooting by Dylann Roof and the subsequent violence over the removal of a statue memorializing Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia, between protesters and counter protesters. Middle Tennessee, much like during the Civil War when it was divided into Unionists and Secessionists, is split on the issue on what to do with its Confederate memorials under mounting pressure from the local populace, lawmakers, and news outlets calling for their removal.

Modern Protests of Nathan Bedford Forrest

Two memorials that are particularly embroiled in controversy are the aforementioned memorials to Sam Davis and to Nathan Bedford Forrest, located in the exterior and interior of the capitol building in Nashville, respectively. What particularly draws attention to these two memorials are their location in the state's capitol, giving them increased visibility and prominence, coupled with the fact that they are on public land.

Nathan Bedford Forrest's bust in particular a divisive subject given his war crimes and role as a Ku Klux Klan founder. Some wish for the bust to be taken down and put in a museum where it can be placed in the proper historical context. In Tennessee, following the passage of the Tennessee Heritage Protection Act in February 2016 by the state legislature following calls to take down Confederate memorials, makes it difficult to remove such memorials introduced by

Representative Steve McDaniel, a Republican.[139] Now, a two thirds majority vote from the Tennessee Historical Commission is needed for such action to take place. Such a vote took place on September 1, 2017, as there was growing mounting pressure to remove the bust from the capitol building, but the vote failed 7-5.

Protesters called for the bust's removal in the wake of the aftermath of the violence following the Charlottesville protest, with many coalescing to protest the bust in the capitol building calling for the bust to be removed.[140] The protesters spoke with Tennessee's governor Bill Haslam, and he and Tennessee Senator Bob Corker have called for the removal of the bust, though local politicians have stymied their efforts.[141] It is interesting to note that the upper echelons of Tennessee's government seeks to remove the memorials while the state-level representatives make efforts to keep them untouched by protesters.

Perhaps local politicians feel more protective of their state and its heritage, and are thus more resistant to outside pressures to remove the statues. The local politicians, more insulated from the national mood of the country than their federal colleagues, are able to ignore these calls to remove the memorials. Most recently, on December 4, 2017, House Bill 1466 was introduced

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[139] Jordan Buie, "In wake of Charlottesville, protests take aim at Nathan Bedford Forrest bust in Tennessee Capitol," *The Tennessean*, August 14, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/08/14/charlottesville-protests-take-aim-nathan-bedford-forrest-bust-tennessee-capitol/564351001/.

[140] Jordan Buie, "In wake of Charlottesville, protests take aim at Nathan Bedford Forrest bust in Tennessee Capitol," *The Tennessean*, August 14, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/08/14/charlottesville-protests-take-aim-nathan-bedford-forrest-bust-tennessee-capitol/564351001/.

[141] Jordan Buie, "In wake of Charlottesville, protests take aim at Nathan Bedford Forrest bust in Tennessee Capitol," *The Tennessean*, August 14, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/08/14/charlottesville-protests-take-aim-nathan-bedford-forrest-bust-tennessee-capitol/564351001/.

by Representative Brenda Gilmore, a Democrat, to get around the cumbersome voting rules of the Tennessee Historical Commission.[142]

Modern Protests of Sam Davis

Sam Davis, is a less incendiary character than Nathan Bedford Forrest, having not committed war crimes in service of the rebellion, owned slaves (though his family did), or been a member of the Ku Klux Klan. However, his statue still sits prominently in front of the state house and venerates a Confederate spy, attracting local protests. The memorial has served as a gathering place for neo-Confederates who wish to honor the cause of the Confederacy.[143] Like the aforementioned Dr. Lovett said, it is not necessarily the personhood those drawn to the memorials value, but rather the ideas that the memorials stand for, in this case celebrating Confederate valor and by doing so minimizing the role slavery played in the outbreak of the conflict.

The Sam Davis statue also attracted protests in late August following the violence in Charlottesville. The group protested the Fraternal Order of Police who had a convention that they held in Nashville.[144] The protesters objected to the presence of the Fraternal Order of Police due to the shooting of Terence Crutcher, an unarmed African American man shot a year before by

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[142] Jordan Buie, "In wake of Charlottesville, protests take aim at Nathan Bedford Forrest bust in Tennessee Capitol," *The Tennessean*, August 14, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/08/14/charlottesville-protests-take-aim-nathan-bedford-forrest-bust-tennessee-capitol/564351001/.

[143] Steven Hale, "It's Time to Put the 'Boy Hero of the Confederacy' to Bed," *Nashville Scene*, August 21, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.nashvillescene.com/news/pith-in-the-wind/article/20973119/its-time-to-put-the-boy-hero-of-the-confederacy-to-bed.

[144] J.R. Lind, "Anti-FOP Protesters Block Broadway, Shroud Sam Davis Statue," *Nashville Patch*, August 29, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://patch.com/tennessee/nashville/anti-fop-protesters-block-broadway-shroud-sam-davis-statue.

police in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and because of police violence against the African American community.

The protesters, though focused on criticizing law enforcement, also contained elements of protesting Civil War memory when they gathered around the statue of Sam Davis in front of the capitol building. They tied this to Sam Davis because they viewed a statue honoring a Confederate soldier as honoring the Confederate cause of slavery, and thus thought it as part of the culture of violence between the police and unarmed African American men. Protesters affiliated with the group Showing Up for Racial Justice Nashville and coalesced in downtown Nashville, marching until they hit the capitol building and the statue of Same Davis.[145]

Once there, the protestors covered the statue of Sam Davis in a white sheet and chained a bust of one Terence Crutcher to the statue of the Boy Hero of the Confederacy.[146] The bust's inscription read "Honor Black Lives." This protest was much more disruptive to the general populace of Nashville than the protests surrounding the Forrest bust, as members of Showing Up For Racial Justice Nashville marched down the Broadway of the city carrying the bust they would later chain to the memorial, and threw a sheet over the statue of Sam Davis.

The protesters' choice of using a bust to represent Terrence Crutcher is interesting because by choosing a bust the protesters invoke the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest in the capitol building. His bust is located in the state capitol building that the Sam Davis statue stands in front of, so it could also be seen as a criticism of the Nathan Bedford Forrest bust as well as a criticism of the statue of Sam Davis. The protest of the Sam Davis memorial encapsulated more

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[145] J.R. Lind, "Anti-FOP Protesters Block Broadway, Shroud Sam Davis Statue," *Nashville Patch*, August 29, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://patch.com/tennessee/nashville/anti-fop-protesters-block-broadway-shroud-sam-davis-statue.

[146] Natalie Allison, "Protesters block Broadway, cover Confederate Statue in Nashville," *The Tennessean*, August 28, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/08/28/marchers-cover-confederate-statue-nashville-sheet-erect-bust-black-man-shot-police/610035001/.

than the fact that it was the Confederate memorial, as it also included references to the criminal justice, racism in criminal justice, and American gun violence, which displays how Civil War memory has intermingled with current social issues.

The protests of the memorials now go beyond taking down the simple statues and busts, as they now also call for a normative change of what the memorials represent. The protest and counter-protest in Charlottesville best exemplifies this idea at the Unite the Right Rally, where the protest started as a protest to the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee. However, given the protest's name and the values it stood for, it represented a larger protest to unite the disparate wings of the far right of American conservatism. It started with a statue, but it became about values, just as how memorials represent the values of the community that builds them.

The reactions to these memorials in the wake of Dylann Roof's white supremacist hate crime shooting in Charleston, South Carolina, and the violence surrounding the protests and counter protests concerning the removal of a statue in Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia, display the shifting public opinion concerning Confederate memorials. That both these violent events took place in the South is telling, as the South holds a vast majority of all of these memorials to the Confederate side of the Civil War.

Civil War memory is evolving in the American South due to greater challenges to that memory. For decades after the Civil War, following the withdrawal of federal troops ending Reconstruction, the power structure of the South was exclusionary to African Americans. With laws like those found in Jim Crow, the state governments in the South repressed African Americans and their ability to speak out against the Lost Cause narrative that had become so pervasive after the Civil War. It was not until African Americans had the tools, like those found in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that African Americans were able to challenge the pervasive

narratives of the day, such as the community leaders that protested the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest as a continuation of the flawed and incomplete Lost Cause narrative.

Now, as current events like police shootings of unarmed black men, the race-motivated massacre in Charleston, and the violence of the protests in Charlottesville galvanize people to speak out against these narratives, we see the South's Civil War memory gradually changing to accept a new narrative.

CONCLUSION:

LIVING MEMORY IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

Civil War memory has been changing and evolving ever since Appomattox, first as bitter sectarian disputes under the time of bloody shirt rhetoric, to the mutual mourning of American dead, to a mutual reconciliation between white Northerners and white Southerners based on the mutual veneration of their troops while ignoring the causes of the war. However, these reunions came at a price, as when white northerners and white southerners reconciled, they left African Americans out of the memory and thus the polity.

By ignoring the causes of the war, and by ignoring the role African Americans played in the war, white Northerners and white Southerners achieved a sectarian reunion. However, they marginalized African Americans in Civil War memory and American society under the Black Codes, Jim Crow, and other forms of institutionalized discrimination both de jure and de facto. This stemmed from the Faustian Bargain taken to reunite and reincorporate into white Southerners as quickly and as painlessly as possible into America, but to the detriment of the freedmen.

These war memorials, built to enshrine not men like Sam Davis and Nathan Bedford Forrest, but their ideas and the ideas and values of the Confederate States of America they fought for, are damaging not because they are part of our American heritage, but because we place them in our American heritage without context. We need to remember our past, but through a clear lens and not one that has been distorted through a century of hateful racial politics.

The cable network HBO recently announced a show that would be an alternative history about if the South had won the Civil War titled *Confederate*.[147] The show poses an issue because

[147] Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Lost Cause Rides Again," *The Atlantic*, August 4, 2017, accessed February 20, 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/08/no-confederate/535512/.

of its reductionist concept of the South, referring to it as a monolithic entity, rather than a diverse nation filled with white slaver owners, slaves, freedmen, and Unionists. The white South would come into a sectarian reunion with their exhausted Northern white counterparts over simultaneous veneration of their soldiers and willful ignorance as to why there was a Civil War in the first place. The same white South that would later dominate the memory of the Civil War with its significant memorializing apparatuses in groups such as the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

The city of Memphis, in Western Tennessee, also dealt with the difficulty of removing a statue of Nathan Bedford Forrest. The city government sold the park the statues was located on cheaply to a government employee so that it was then private property and the statues could be removed before selling the land back to the government.[148] Civil War memory, and how it is dealt with and interpreted is constantly evolving, and in Middle Tennessee, divided during the Civil War and now how to remember it, the battle rages on.

The state legislature of Tennessee filed a bill last December to vote on relocating the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest to a museum. No such legislature has been filed to remove the statue of Sam Davis from public grounds. Both the bust and the statue continue to stand where they were prior to the protests, and a majority of the state legislature continues to protect the memorials behind byzantine laws.

Earlier, I quoted Lamar Alexander, who said this about the bust of Nathan Bedford Forrest: “There are a lot of things we don’t like in our past, but that’s not a good reason to remove the bust.” Governor Alexander argued that we have to remember even the parts of our

[148] Daniel Connolly and Vivian Wang, “Confederate Statues in Memphis Are Removed After City Council Vote,” December 20, 2017, accessed January 16, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/20/us/statue-memphis-removed.html.

history that we do not like, but there is no need to glorify it and commemorate it as the bust of Forrest does. This is not a question of remembering the past, though. Perhaps instead we should be asking about how we have changed in the present.

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