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Not Just Stone and Metal
Message Effects and Symbols of the Confederacy
in the Contemporary South

by

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Undergraduate honors thesis under the direction of

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Dedicated to my mom,
for her support and care,
and to all the teachers and mentors
who helped me get here.

Thank you.

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INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE

In 1884, a bronze statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee was dedicated at Tivoli Circle on St. Charles Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana. Atop a 60-foot column, the statue overlooked the important traffic circle, which connects upriver and downriver areas along the banks of the Mississippi River. Residents began to refer to the space as "Lee Circle."

For 133 years, this symbol of the Confederacy stood high above the Southern port city. But on May 19, 2017, this statue, along with 3 others from around the city, were taken down. The other statues were dedicated to Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States during the Civil War; Pierre Gustave Toutant-Beauregard, a prominent Confederate general; and the White League, a Reconstruction-era organization of racial militants.

On the morning of the statues' removal, Mayor Mitch Landrieu explained why the city government had decided to rid New Orleans of these Confederate symbols:

> It is self-evident that these men did not fight for the United States of America. They fought against it. They may have been warriors, but in this cause, they were not patriots. These statues are not just stone and metal. They are not just innocent remembrances of a benign history. These monuments purposefully celebrate a fictional, sanitized Confederacy; ignoring the death, ignoring the enslavement, and the terror that it actually stood for. (Landrieu 2017)

This is one of the latest episodes in the continual debate over the presence of Confederate memorials and symbols in the contemporary South. The end of the Civil War and the ratification of the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution brought an end to the institution of slavery in the

United States. However, the legacy of slavery and of the efforts to maintain institutional white power which followed the end of the Civil War and Reconstruction have shaped American life, politics, and race relations for over 150 years.

A lasting legacy

Many of our impressions of and attitudes toward the Civil War stem from the ideas we are most exposed to. Whether we learn about the Civil War and its legacy around a family dinner table, at a museum or historic site, in a book or magazine, or in a classroom, these various points of exposure work to educate our understanding of the past and our views of the present.

There is some debate among Americans over the principal cause of the Civil War. The Pew Research Center found that 48 percent of Americans considered states' rights to be the primary cause of the Civil War. Thirty-eight percent felt that it was mainly about slavery, while 9 percent felt the war was about both, equally (Pew Research Center 2011).

Despite the debate over the causes of the Civil War, the majority of Americans still believe that, even 150 years after it ended, the war is still relevant to American politics and political life. (Pew Research Center 2011).

As far as opinions go on public discourse, more Americans thought it was inappropriate than appropriate for politicians today to praise the leaders of the Confederacy. However, the group which viewed this type of speech as inappropriate still accounted for less than half of Americans (Pew Research Center 2011).

Some of the disagreements over the Civil War's causes and implications stem from the American education system. The Southern Poverty Law Center found that many schools fail to teach the full impact and importance of slavery on American society. In its research, it found that only 8 percent of high school seniors were able to identify slavery as the central cause of the

Civil War. The majority of these seniors were also unaware that a Constitutional amendment was passed to formally end slavery. Less than half correctly answered that slavery was a legal institution in all 13 colonies at the time of the American Revolution. The results of this investigation found that the majority of teachers are dissatisfied with their textbooks' coverage of slavery. Additionally, almost 2 in 5 teachers reported that their state offered little to no support for teaching slavery (Southern Poverty Law Center 2018). Indeed, the Texas Board of Education did not change its curriculum to identify slavery as the central cause of the Civil War until 2018 (Fortin 2018).

The results of these faults in the educational system are crystal clear in measures of public opinion. The Pew Research Center found that people under the age of 30 reported the highest levels of support for the idea that the Civil War was waged mainly over states' rights. Those 65 and older were the only age group in which more people considered slavery to be the primary cause than states' rights. Shockingly, 39 percent of African Americans believed that states' rights was the primary cause of the conflict (Pew Research Center 2011).

But scholars have found that slavery, an institution which ended over 150 years ago, has measurable effects on modern society. This includes a direct correlation between slave population and higher degrees of economic inequality between African Americans and whites. Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen found a direct correlation between the county-level concentration of slaves in 1860 and white Southerners' partisan identification, attitudes toward affirmative action, levels of racial resentment, and attitudes toward African Americans. (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2018).

Several studies have identified that "Southerners are more conservative than non-Southerners in a host of areas including religion, morality, international relations, and race

relations" (Cooper and Knotts 2010, 1084). Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen expanded on this observation and determined that white Southerners who live in counties where there were high numbers of slaves in 1860 are more likely to "identify as a Republican, oppose affirmative action, and express attitudes indicating some level of 'racial resentment'" (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2016, 621).

These effects are likely a result of post-Civil War events. In the years after Reconstruction, whites created social and political infrastructures to ensure similar levels of economic and political power as were afforded to them during slavery (Acharya, Blackwell, and Sen 2016).

The racist implications of these social and political infrastructures were evident in referenda held in Mississippi and Alabama in 2001 and 2004, respectively. The people of Mississippi voted to keep a portion of the Confederate battle flag in their state flag by a margin of 65 to 35. In Alabama, they decided by a narrow margin to keep unenforceable laws from the era of *de jure* segregation in the state Constitution. These laws mandated school segregation, and endorsed a tax on voting. Orey et al. found that white voters who lived in areas with higher African American population were more likely to support keeping the Confederate flag within the Mississippi state flag and the antiquated laws in the Alabama state Constitution (Orey et al. 2011). Other scholars have found that African Americans perceive between 10 and 20 percent less political freedom than whites (Gibson 2008).

Not all of these issues go unnoticed by the American people. The Pew Research Center says that increasing numbers of Americans believe that racism is a major problem, and that more needs to be done to give African Americans equal rights with whites. In 2015, almost 6 in 10

Americans thought changes were necessary to achieve racial equality (Pew Research Center 2015).

Monuments and what they signify

The naming of public spaces signals importance and serves as a cultural practice in demonstrating shared cultural and regional identity (Cooper and Knotts 2010). One nation which takes this idea to heart is Germany. The Germans have made deliberate choices about which parts of their history they want to commemorate in public spaces, and which they would rather remember somberly and respectfully in the public conscience. They have removed all iconography celebrating the Nazis, and instead choose to remember the suffering of the regime's victims. Susan Neiman, an American Jew from the South who has lived in Berlin for several decades, says:

> For monuments are neither just about heritage or just about hate. They are values made visible. That's why we build memorials to some parts of history and ignore others. They embody the ideas we choose to lift up, in the hopes of reminding ourselves and our children that those ideas have been embodied by brave men and women. (Neiman 2019).

In the South, Confederate symbols and the ideas they represent have sparked considerable debate, especially in recent years. One of the latest episodes in this controversial debate occurred in 2015 as a result of the massacre of nine African Americans at a historical black church in Charleston, South Carolina. This tragedy reignited the nationwide movement to remove Confederate flags, statues, and other symbols from public spaces, and to rename schools, parks, and other areas which had been named in honor of the Confederacy.

Following this debate, the Southern Poverty Law Center conducted a thorough study to track Confederate monuments and symbols throughout the South. They found that in the year after the Charleston attack, 114 Confederate monuments had been taken down, but 1747 still remained. These included 780 monuments to the Confederacy, a large portion of which were located in Georgia, Virginia, and North Carolina. There were 103 public K-12 schools, and three colleges named after Confederate leaders and icons. Eighty counties and cities were named in honor of Confederates. Across 11 states, they found 23 Confederate holidays or observances written into state code, nine of which were paid holidays in five states. The Mississippi and Georgia state flags, and the Alabama State Troopers emblem each contained similarities to various flags used by the Confederacy. The Confederate flag still flew over four county courthouses in the South. There were even 10 U.S. military bases named in honor of the Confederates who waged war against the U.S. and its military (Southern Poverty Law Center 2019).

The convention of commemorating the Confederacy and its leaders in public places across the South began shortly after the end of the Civil War. However, there have been two significant spikes in the dedication of Confederate monuments. The first and largest spike occurred in the early 1900s, as post-Reconstruction Southern states began to implement strict, segregationist Jim Crow laws which were meant to disenfranchise the African American population. This first surge in Confederate commemoration lasted well into the 1920s, a period which saw a significant revival in the Ku Klux Klan. The second spike in the construction of Confederate symbols occurred in the 1950s and '60s, the period in which the Civil Rights movement sought to secure equal rights for African Americans and other discriminated groups (Southern Poverty Law Center 2019).

After a century of dedicating public spaces in honor of Confederates, these symbols are impossible to avoid in the South. Within Louisiana, we have Jefferson Davis Parish to the east of Lake Charles, Lee Circle and Jefferson Davis Parkway in New Orleans, and Lee High School just a couple miles away from the LSU campus in Baton Rouge, just to name a few. Outside of Atlanta, Stone Mountain serves as a Mount Rushmore of the South, with its rock carvings of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson. This site, the most visited tourist attraction in Georgia, shares strong ties to the Ku Klux Klan and was opened to the public on the 100th anniversary of the assassination of President Lincoln (Fausset 2018). In 2017, white supremacist protestors in Charlottesville, Virginia, marched through the streets with Confederate and Nazi flags. A young counter-protestor was killed in the violent protests.

President Trump has called the removal of "beautiful" Confederate monuments "foolish," and said that it is "sad to see the history and culture of our great country being ripped apart" (Southern Poverty Law Center).

After the Charleston church shooting, the Gallup poll measured Americans' views on the Confederacy and its symbols. It found that the majority of Americans think of the Confederate flag as a symbol of Southern pride. Thirty-four percent of the country, including over half of Democrats, viewed it as a symbol of racism. There was only a 1 percent difference between those who thought it was acceptable to display the flag on government property and those who thought the practice should be stopped. It noted that between 2000 and 2015, overall support for displaying the Confederate flag did not change much, but Republicans became 12 percent more likely to support the display, while Democrats became 11 percent less supportive (Jones 2015). These findings were echoed in another recent poll, in which over half of Republicans strongly

disapproved of the removal of a statue of Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville, Virginia, while only 16 percent of Democrats shared the same view (Frankovic 2017).

The Pew Research Center also polled on attitudes toward the Confederacy in light of the violence in Charleston in 2015. It found that reactions to seeing the Confederate flag were largely unchanged since 2011, but a majority of people had neither a positive nor a negative reaction to the flag. Roughly 1 out of 3 respondents who supported removing the flag cited the symbol's association with slavery and racism. Among those who oppose the decision to remove the flag, over half mentioned the flag's historical significance (Pew Research Center 2015). In 2011, it found that white people scored 12 percent lower than African Americans in negative reactions to the Confederate flag (Pew Research Center 2011).

Some researchers have rejected the notion that support for the Confederate flag cannot be separated from racial prejudice, and that it doesn't have much to do with a concern for historical preservation. Research has found strong and consistent relationships which show that higher levels of racial prejudice lead to greater support for the Confederate flag. In one poll conducted in South Carolinia, they found that 75 percent of white South Carolinians had a somewhat positive or very positive view of the Confederate flag. Meanwhile, a majority African Americans reported a very negative view of this symbol (Strother, Piston, and Ogorzalek 2017). They also discovered that "knowledge of the Civil War was actually negatively correlated with support for the Confederate battle emblem" (Strother, Piston, and Ogorzalek 2017, 311).

There appears to be a difference of support for Confederate monuments across different racial groups. Studies have shown that a majority of Millennials of color see the Confederate flag as racist and support the removal of Confederate statues and symbols from public areas. In

contrast, a majority of white Millennials perceive these symbols as representations of Southern pride and oppose their removal (Cohen et al. 2017).

Regardless of the controversies surrounding Confederate monuments, it is undeniable that these symbols represent a history that exclusively considers white Americans. Some monuments dedicated to the suffering of African Americans have repeatedly been vandalized. Signs erected to commemorate the lynching of Emmitt Till, a 14-year old African American boy who was murdered and tossed into a river in the Mississippi Delta in 1955, are "regularly riddled with bullet holes" (Neiman 2019).

Symbols and their effects

These symbols are more than just plain images; the feelings and associations they activate can have real-world implications on racial attitudes, behaviors, consumer choices, and political assessments. Researchers in France found that exposure to the national flag alters behavior and political and intergroup judgements. They also discovered that exposure to a regional flag from the area the study was conducted increased people's willingness to help the poor and their consumer preferences for various food products (Guéguen, Martin, and Stefan 2017).

The American flag has also been found to affect judgement and behavior. Individuals high in nationalism have been shown to view the American flag as a symbol of equality and justice. After exposure to the American flag, these individuals expressed less hostility toward outgroups than people in a control group which had no flag exposure (Ehrlinger et al. 2011).

Similar research has suggested that exposure to the Confederate flag can have strong negative effects on people's racial attitudes. White people who were exposed to the Confederate flag reported a lower willingness to vote for Obama among presidential primary candidates in

2008. Researchers believe this phenomenon occurred because "exposure to the Confederate flag heightens accessibility of negativity toward Blacks because the flag has salient and well-known cultural associations with racial prejudice" (Ehrlinger et al. 2011, 140). Individuals exposed to the Confederate flag were also more likely to give negative ratings of a potential African American target compared to the control. These effects were present even among those who had no inherent biases against African Americans (Ehrlinger et al. 2011). Considering the prominence of Confederate symbols in the South, these findings present a very troubling possibility—that even Southerners with no underlying racial resentment could be more likely to judge African Americans with prejudice, in public and in voting booths, due to their inevitable exposure to the symbols of the Confederacy.

The tools of research

In this thesis, I hope to manipulate opinions on Confederate symbols using some of the techniques which have been frequently deployed in political communication research. By manipulating media content and randomly assigning participants to various treatment and control conditions, researchers can isolate the essential pieces of a message that change public opinion and attitudes. Due to this ability to isolate causal effects of different messages and frames, experiments are one of the best tools to evaluate the way in which media and communication affect broader public opinions (White 2007).

Using varied message frames, which emphasize different aspects of issues to lead readers to focus on certain components of a message in crafting their opinions, has proven successful even in regards to some controversial issues in the United States. Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley were able to alter tolerance for the Ku Klux Klan using frames that either emphasized the group's right to free speech, or its disturbance of public order (Nelson, Clawson, and Oxley

1997). Other researchers performed a content analysis on newspapers and found a high correlation between the way newspaper stories covered poverty and government policy toward the poor (Rose and Baumgartner 2013). These studies show that different framings of issues can have significant effects on public opinion and policy.

Some researchers have even looked into framing effects on attitudes toward the Confederate flag. They found that when the racial significance of the debate was made explicit, support for the Confederate flag declined, but only among women. One frame which these researchers found had significant effects created an association between racist hate groups and the Confederate flag. This frame presented readers with an article about the debate over Confederate flags and included quotes from Ku Klux Klan members who showed support for the flag and what it represents (Hutchings, Walton, Jr., and Benjamin 2010).

This strong negative association makes sense, given that one researcher identified the Ku Klux Klan as the most disliked group in America. Behind this local white supremacist group, Americans' second-most disliked group were Nazis, whom 63.1 percent included among their three most-disliked groups. Apart from the Ku Klux Klan and Nazis, no other group in the study was targeted by a majority of Americans (Gibson 2008).

In this study, I hope to examine the effects these types of negative associations and frames have on attitudes toward Confederate flags and other monuments. The use of various negative frames in an experimental survey could yield significant shifts in the way people think about Confederate symbols and their role in the South today. Specifically, this thesis endeavors to find out whether an association between Confederate symbols and Nazi symbols enhances the effects of more traditional anti-Confederate messaging.

Hypothesis

I hypothesize that participants exposed to either the *Traditional* or the *Nazi* treatment will express a more negative reaction to Confederate symbols than those in the control group. I also predict that individuals who receive either treatment will view Confederate symbols as less appropriate across a broad spectrum of locations compared to the control. For respondents who read either of the treatments, I would hypothesize that they will also perceive Confederate flags and statues more as symbols of racism and less as symbols of Southern heritage, compared to the perceptions of the control group.

Finally, for each of the hypotheses detailed above, I predict that the *Nazi* treatment will have a significantly stronger effect in achieving the predicted attitude movements, compared to the *Traditional* treatment.

METHODS

For this experiment, I fielded an online survey to 2,500 adult residents of the United States using the web-service Lucid, which provides a quota sample representative of national demographics. I collected all 2,500 data entries on Friday, April 10, 2020. The entirety of this analysis deals with the responses of the white Southerners who participated in the experimental survey (n = 675). To identify white Southerners, I relied on the demographic data for ethnicity and region provided by Lucid. Respondents were randomly split into three experimental groups—one control group and two treatment groups. The control group simply answered the survey questions without being exposed to any additional stimulus or reading. The two treatment groups were exposed to short articles arguing against the presence of Confederate symbols in the modern South between answering the demographic questions and the other survey questions.

While the broad national survey allowed me to analyze results across large swaths of society and across various demographic backgrounds, this work primarily focuses on a specific cross-section of America. Because white Southerners are generally the most supportive of Confederate symbols, I focused all analytical scrutiny on this group.

Treatments

Both treatment groups were exposed to short articles arguing against the continued presence and promotion of Confederate flags, statues, and symbols in the South, with different framings, headlines, photographs, and overall arguments. For the ease of discussion, I refer to these groups as the *Traditional* condition and the *Nazi* condition. Copies of both treatments, as they appeared to survey respondents, are included in Appendix B.

The *Traditional* condition group was presented with a standard argument against Confederate symbols in the contemporary South—these flags and statues, which supporters claim represent the heritage of the region, ignore the heritage of African Americans. It argues that Confederate symbols are not just symbols of Southern heritage, but also of hate, slavery, and treason. It includes a tone-neutral headline, "Public Symbols of the Confederacy," and a photograph of a Confederate flag flying beside a statue of a Confederate soldier.

The *Nazi* condition was exposed to almost the same article, but with a few key differences which I hypothesize will result in significant attitude differences between this treatment group and the *Traditional* condition. At the very beginning of the short piece, the headline and photograph were changed to emphasize the message of this treatment. The headline reads, "Confederate Symbols are Like Nazi Symbols," and a black-and-white photograph of Nazi flags burning in the street is included below. For the body text of this condition, I copied the *Traditional* condition in full, and added a few sentences throughout to draw a comparison

between Confederate symbols in the South and Nazi symbols, or the lack thereof, in modern day Germany. The article offers the German approach of commemorating the victims of the regime's violence rather than the regime itself as an alternative to the status quo in Southern society.

While I believe the *Traditional* condition's treatment represents a common type of argument against Confederate symbols, the *Nazi* treatment relies on a new comparison which has failed to make its way into larger national debates in the past. For this reason, I hypothesize that the *Nazi* treatment will yield a larger, more substantial change in attitudes versus the control, compared to the changes elicited by the *Traditional* treatment.

Survey Questions: Outcomes

All survey questions can be found in Appendix C. After exposure to the treatments, I first tried to gauge respondents' general attitudes toward the Civil War and Confederate symbols. I asked how important the current debate over Confederate symbols was on a 5-point scale so that I could see how invested people were in the issue. I also asked, using a binary scale, whether respondents thought the Civil War was only important historically, or if it still mattered in American politics and society. To test opinions on a popular line of debate, I polled participants on whether the principal cause of the Civil War was slavery or states' rights; participants could choose either of those two options, declare that both equally contributed, or choose that neither was a cause. The final question in testing general attitudes toward the Civil War and its legacy asked whether participants had a positive or negative reaction when they saw a Confederate flag, on a 3-point scale.

Once I had measured some general opinions on Confederate symbols and the Civil War, I narrowed the questioning on a few themes in the debate over Confederate symbols. The first of these themes was appropriateness. I measured whether the respondents thought it was

appropriate or not for public officials today to praise the leaders of the Confederacy on a binary scale. Next, I provided three matrices (one for flags, one for statues, and one for building and street names) for participants to rate the appropriateness of Confederate symbols in a wide variety of locations where each type of symbol is found, using a four-point scale ranging from "completely inappropriate" to "completely appropriate." For the purposes of this analysis, I created an additive index of ratings across all locations for each symbol type, so that I could better understand general feelings toward these symbols' appropriateness.

With the next set of questions, I took the debate one step further. Rather than simply measuring appropriateness, I wanted to see how respondents felt about actually removing Confederate symbols. I asked the participants, using a binary scale, whether they would support or oppose removing existing Confederate statues and symbols, and whether they would support banning the construction of any new Confederate symbols.

Finally, I wanted to test opinion on one of the major lines of debate surrounding Confederate symbols, and to better understand what these symbols represented to the participants. I asked whether respondents saw Confederate flags, statues, and building and street names more as symbols of Southern pride and heritage, or more as symbols of racism, on a binary scale.

Survey Questions: Demographics

To begin the survey, I asked a range of standard demographic questions. Some basic demographic questions were left out of the survey, as Lucid, the company which helped field the survey, already collects a wide array of basic demographic information, which is included in data packages. After receiving consent to take the survey, I asked respondents to choose which state they reside in. If respondents selected any of the 11 former Confederate states, I asked them to

rate how important their identity as a Southerner was. While Confederate imagery can be found throughout much of the country, and even sometimes around the world, I chose to include this question for Southern residents as they are the group most likely to encounter Confederate symbols on a regular basis, and since their identity as a Southerner is most likely to create complex feelings regarding the Confederacy and its legacy. Then, for all respondents, I asked the importance of both racial/ethnic identity and gender identity.

Survey Questions: Race and Racial Resentment

I used a standard battery of questioning, including a 5-point scale, to measure agreement with various arguments about race in America. Specifically, the question set measured whether participants thought African Americans faced and were hindered by societal racism, or whether the African American community simply needed to try harder, without any special favors. These questions have been used across multiple studies to measure racial resentment.

While these questions and several of the other demographic questions did not work their way into the data analysis, I still thought it was important to include them in the survey. Asking survey participants questions about their identity and racial attitudes can prime these attitudes and ideas ahead of their interaction with the treatment texts. Attitudes toward Confederate symbols are obviously tied into one's identity, so I hoped this priming would give us a more accurate picture of how all of these factors interact.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

All graphical data presentations and tables, even those which are reproduced in this section, can be found in Appendix A.

To analyze the data, I relied primarily on one statistical function: the two-sided difference of means t-test. This statistical process allowed me to compare the average responses of various

groups for each of the outcome questions, and to determine if these averages were significantly different. The null hypothesis for each t-test was that the difference between the two group means was actually 0. In order to confidently reject this null hypothesis, and support the claim that there is a non-zero difference in the group averages, I used the standard 95 percent confidence level. In other words, I failed to reject the null hypothesis in any case where there was over a 5 percent chance that any group differences were the result of random sampling error.

The results of these t-tests are contained in the two tables included in this section (which are also in Appendix A). I compared public attitudes between: the treatments, taken as a whole, and the control; the *Nazi* and *Traditional* treatments; the *Traditional* treatment and the control; and the *Nazi* treatment and the control. For each outcome variable comparison, I included the mean difference, the p-value, and asterisks to signal levels of significance. It is worth clarifying how the mean differences were calculated. For all variables, I converted the range of outcomes to go from 0 to 1 before calculating the means. Binary scales required no transformation, but other scales were condensed. For example, a 5-point scale would have been recoded from "1, 2, 3, 4, 5" to "0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, 1." I decided to calculate and report the mean differences in this manner so that the differences between groups could be directly compared on the same scale across all variables and between all group testing combinations.

Changes in perception

The treatments, on the whole, were most successful in significantly altering public attitudes when it came to the perception of Confederate symbols—whether these symbols primarily represent racism or Southern pride and heritage.

Participants who were randomly placed into either of the treatment groups scored .08 higher to view the Confederate flag as a symbol of racism than those in the control group (p-

value < .05). This significant difference signals that exposure to the arguments criticizing Confederate symbols and imagery was at least able to change the way people think about the Confederate flag.

Variable	Treatments v. Control		Nazi v. Traditional	
	Mean difference	p-value	Mean difference	p-value
Positive reaction	.02895	.3361	.04855	.1716
Public Official: Appropriate	-.03654	.4471	.04735	.3935
Flag: Appropriate	-.008621	.7388	.04204	.1656
Statue: Appropriate	-.001029	.9699	.004760	.8809
Building/street: Appropriate	.01976	.4938	.02096	.5506
Flag: Symbol of racism	.07576*	.04039	-.09531*	.03318
Statue: Symbol of racism	.02436	.4896	-.04015	.3366
Building/street: Symbol of racism	.06110	.06977	-.03889	.3499
Removal	-.001587	.9714	-.1158*	.02062
Ban	.01951	.6677	-.04521	.3839

Subscripts represent statistically significant differences:
$* = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

Changes in perception were not limited to just the Confederate flag, though. While the treatments, when taken as a whole, created only a marginally significant (p-value < .07) difference of .06 in the public's views on buildings and streets named after Confederate leaders, the *Traditional* treatment did find significant success. Those in the *Traditional* treatment scored .08 more likely than the control to perceive buildings and streets named after Confederates as racist (p-value < .05). The *Nazi* treatment did not have a significant difference on this issue, with a mean difference of .04 (p-value > .27).

It is worth noting that, despite some significant shifts in how white Southerners understand the symbolism of Confederate flags and building & street names, the majority view is still that these Confederate symbols are mainly about Southern pride and heritage. Even within the *Traditional* treatment, which consistently generated the greatest support for the idea that these symbols represent racism, over 60 percent still perceived the Confederate flag as a symbol of regional pride. And when it came to buildings and streets named after Confederates, less than 30 percent of participants in this treatment group saw them as inherently racist.

Variable	*Traditional* v. Control		*Nazi* v. Control	
	Mean difference	p-value	Mean difference	p-value
Positive reaction	.004280	.904	.05283	.1244
Public Official: Appropriate	-.05985	.2801	-.0125	.8221
Flag: Appropriate	-.03081	.3134	.01185	.6925
Statue: Appropriate	-.003430	.9132	.001329	.9664
Building/street: Appropriate	.009112	.7888	.03007	.3709
Flag: Symbol of racism	.1244**	.005083	.02908	.4881
Statue: Symbol of racism	.04493	.2826	.004787	.9051
Building/street: Symbol of racism	.08098*	.04533	.04210	.2775
Removal	.05631	.2744	-.05948	.2359
Ban	.04194	.4211	-.003278	.9503

Subscripts represent statistically significant differences:
$* = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

The failure of the *Nazi* treatment

The effects of the *Nazi* treatment were actually the opposite of what I had hypothesized. I believed that this bolder, more radical message against the value of Confederate symbols would generate a bolder, more radical response. In one sense, it was a rather bold response. It just so happened that the response was one of backlash, rather than support. This treatment achieved the

opposite of its intended effect. It negated all progress in making white Southerners less supportive of Confederate symbols, and in some cases, it made people more supportive of these symbols than those who received the *Traditional* argument.

As one can see in the table above, the *Nazi* treatment never generated a significant difference from the control. Thus, every time that the treatments as a whole had a significant difference of means from the control, it was the *Traditional* treatment which carried all the weight, so to speak. In every case where the *Traditional* treatment succeeded in reshaping public opinion, the *Nazi* treatment failed.

Although the treatments, on the whole, were significantly different from the control in their assessment of what the Confederate flag symbolizes, it was only the *Traditional* treatment which induced a significant difference. Members of the *Traditional* treatment scored .12 higher than the control in their ratings of the Confederate flag as a symbol of racism (p-value < .01). The *Nazi* treatment was not significantly different from the control in this area. In fact, the *Nazi* treatment was even significantly less likely than the *Traditional* treatment to report the Confederate flag as a racist icon. Participants in the *Nazi* treatment scored .10 less likely to consider the Confederate flag as a symbol of racism than the *Traditional* treatment (p-value < .05). This disparity in opinions on what appears to be one of the most flexible areas of public opinion in the debate signifies that many of those in the *Nazi* treatment closed themselves off to the argument that Confederate symbols neglect African American heritage, and instead dug their heels in, so to speak, in regards to their attitudes about Confederate symbols in the South.

While neither treatment was significantly different from the control on the debate over whether to remove existing Confederate statues and symbols from public places, the *Nazi* treatment was significantly less likely than the *Traditional* treatment to support this removal.

Those in the *Nazi* treatment scored .12 higher in their opposition to the removal of Confederate symbols from public spaces, such as government buildings and parks (p-value < .05). This suggests that the *Nazi* treatment does not only negate any intended opinion effects, but that it also might make people less likely to support any real-world actions to alter the landscape of Confederate symbols in the South.

It is worth noting that the *Nazi* treatment has many similarities with the *Traditional* treatment. The vast majority of the text is copied from the *Traditional* treatment. There were only a few sentences added suggesting the South follow the Germans, who have outlawed the display of Nazi symbols and torn down all the old statues. Other than that, the headline and accompanying picture were amended. Thus, the differences between the treatments' effects can be credited to those few added pieces of content.

The limits of the communication effects

Outside of the opinion shifts detailed above, the treatments were ineffective in changing public opinion on the debate over Confederate symbols in any significant way. On the vast majority of issues surrounding Confederate symbols, white Southerners were unmoved, regardless of which treatment they might have received.

Neither treatment was successful in inducing a significant change in the reaction to Confederate flags and symbols. This might have been partly a result of the large number of people who didn't have a strong reaction one way or the other. Across the control and both treatments, almost half of respondents reported they had neither a positive nor a negative reaction. Perhaps this signifies the complexity of the Southern reaction—one which could contain feelings as varied as pride and shame. Or it could simply mean that white Southerners

claim to see these symbols as ordinary objects, devoid of any inherent emotional connection. I imagine it is probably a combination of the two.

Another possible reason for the ineffectiveness of the messages in achieving a difference in reaction is that the leap from a negative reaction to a positive one is a rather large jump. For something as instinctual as a reaction, most people's feelings are probably tied deep into the psyche and the individual's history and worldview. While the treatments were able to achieve a certain level of success in reshaping the way people think about complex debates over what these symbols serve to represent, the treatments did not go far enough in their effects to reshape people's instinctual reactions.

Even though the *Traditional* treatment was able to significantly move participants' perceptions of Confederate flags and building & street names, neither treatment had an effect on the debate over whether statues of Confederate leaders represented racism or Southern heritage and pride. Compared to the control, the *Traditional* treatment only generated a mean difference of .04 (p > .28), while the *Nazi* treatment had a mean difference of .005 (p > .91). Perhaps this symbol type was the most resistant to change because of its artistic nature, but it is impossible to tell from the data. Exploring the reasons behind support for Confederate statues specifically would make for interesting research in the future.

Across the board, the treatments had no significant impact on any ratings of appropriateness. Neither treatment created a significant difference in approval ratings for public officials who praise the leaders of the Confederacy. Within each of the treatment groups and the control, over half of white Southerners found this behavior to be appropriate.

The treatments were unsuccessful in shifting average levels of appropriateness for flags, statues, and building & street names. Looking at Graph A2b in Appendix A, one can see that the

flag was consistently rated as less appropriate than Confederate statues or building & street names. This observation, coupled with the fact that the perception of what the Confederate flag symbolizes was one of the most flexible areas of debate, suggests that Confederate flags are the least supported of the three major types of Confederate symbols. It certainly seems the personal nature of statues and building & street names might have some impact on their support levels. White Southerners might be more likely to deem these symbols as appropriate because they honor specific people, rather than simply the regime. This prediction could serve as another intriguing research question for the future.

I opted to run t-tests on additive indices for the appropriateness levels of each symbol across a wide array of locations. But there are still a few interesting observations to be had in examining Graphs A2c, A2d, and A2e in Appendix A. The highest mean ratings of appropriateness are consistently found in museums, private residences, and cemeteries or memorial sites. These observations express the reality of Confederate symbols for many across the South—many Southerners see these symbols as a way to remember the past. In museums and in cemeteries, the past is generally all that one thinks about. On the other end of the spectrum, schools consistently received the lowest mean approval ratings across all symbol types. This observation, like many others in this project, could present an interesting path for future research. Do white Southerners want to shelter children from these symbols? Do they want to avoid drama in the classroom or create a more inclusive environment for all students? Or is it something else?

As noted above, the only significant difference of average support for removing existing Confederate symbols from public spaces was between the *Traditional* and the *Nazi* treatment groups. Neither treatment group generated a significant difference from the control in support for removing existing symbols or for banning the creation of new Confederate symbols. Support was

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consistently higher in both treatments and the control for banning these symbols than it was for removing them from the South. In both treatments and the control, over half of participants supported a ban on new Confederate imagery. So, while the treatments were ineffective in eliciting a change in opinion on a ban, it seems the majority of white Southerners would actually be supportive of this action. A removal of Confederate symbols, on the other hand, consistently received less than 50 percent support (Graph A4a in Appendix A).

The hypothesis, revisited

I hypothesized that survey participants who were exposed to either of the treatments (and thus exposed to an anti-Confederate symbol message) would have a more negative reaction to these symbols, rate them as less appropriate, and perceive them more as racist symbols. For all of these predictions, I also hypothesized that the *Nazi* treatment would be more effective than the *Traditional* treatment.

For the most part, the hypotheses were rejected. The *Nazi* treatment was never more effective than the *Traditional* treatment. At times, it was significantly less effective than the *Traditional* argument.

Exposure to anti-Confederate symbol arguments was only able to significantly increase support for the idea that the Confederate flag is inherently a symbol of racism. The *Traditional* treatment, specifically, was able to achieve a similar effect on ratings of Confederate building and street names. Neither treatment generated a significant mean difference in the perception of statues. Thus, the hypothesis about the perception of Confederate symbols is only partially supported.

The hypotheses about the reaction to and appropriateness of Confederate symbols were rejected.

LIMITATIONS

A note on COVID-19

Before examining the limitations of the work and procedures, I would be remiss not to acknowledge the impact of one of the most world-shaking crises of the last century. While this project was in one of its most critical phases, the COVID-19 pandemic completely changed the landscape of academia.

While I was able to eventually collect data, delays brought on by school closures, travel, and communication issues with IRB made it so that I only had a short amount of time to produce the completed thesis, which now includes detailed data analysis.

Still, I believe the work I completed is of great academic value. I found the answers to many key questions, and this research has laid the groundwork for any future scholars to pick up where I left off and explore the subject more deeply.

And it is valuable work, even outside of the realms of academia. As I have discussed, these symbols can have real, detrimental impacts on policy and attitudes across the South. This work is important because it deals with a very real problem and point of contention in our own backyard.

Procedural limitations

The first limitation I faced procedurally was in the population choices. Initially, I intended to target the survey exclusively to white people living in former Confederate states. This seemed the ideal population, as this group was the most likely to actually support the preservation and public presence of Confederate flags, statues, building names, and street names. Therefore, I would see the most room for a negative attitude change among this population.

Yet when I submitted the survey to Lucid, the online survey website, they would have charged significantly more to focus the work on this specific subset. Instead, I was forced to shift the focus to a national sample. And while this certainly has its advantages—Confederate symbols are not found exclusively in the South, and people from all around the country are likely to have complex feelings tied into the memory of the Civil War and its repercussions—it limited the number of Southern white people I could realistically employ in the survey. I was fortunate to still have a large dataset of white Southerners, and I was able to track medium and large-scale opinion shifts, and even some shifts less than 10 percent. Future researchers would do well to increase the sample pool of white Southerners to be able to track even more minute changes with statistical significance. Indeed, I was expecting only minor attitude shifts, as Southerners' feelings on the Civil War and its legacy can be very complex, having been built up over years of societal, educational, and political exposure.

The scope of the treatments included in this study could be expanded in future research, as well. While the purpose of the study, at its core, was to trace how incorporating arguments about denazification into traditional arguments against Confederate symbols would impact public opinion, it still would be interesting to explore many more treatment angles. In particular, it could be intriguing to include a pro-Confederate symbol treatment to see how people respond. These additions in treatment types would make for interesting research in the future.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Researchers would likely find a treasure trove of information in examining how these symbols and the various frames arguing for or against them affect citizens' political identities and partisanship. I did not examine this variable specifically, as I wanted to analyze the message effects as they applied to white Southerners as a whole. However, much of the research suggests

that these symbols and political ideology might have a strong connection. Indeed, it would be intriguing to find out if the *Nazi* treatment, which negated all the message effects of the other treatment, and even sometimes appeared to generate higher levels of support for Confederate monuments, would have any impact in shifting political opinion in a more Republican or racially conservative direction.

It would be great for future research to apply repeated messaging and questioning. Returning to respondents with the same message, or contrasting it with a second, alternate message, would help to highlight how these message effects potentially might accumulate over time. Even if the message was not repeated during the follow-up evaluation, researchers could examine how long the messages significantly changed attitudes, and the rate at which these effects wear off.

Either in a one-off questioning survey design, or using the repeated messaging process, it would be valuable to explore message effects on 2x2 or larger matrices to see how the use of competing arguments affects public opinion. This sort of survey design would also likely allow scholars to assign weights to the importance of various aspects of the message in altering public thought and behavior.

When examining a subject with so much real-world significance, attitude is not the only area of concern. The other area which would be invaluable to learn about is how these symbols affect human behavior. Indeed, several of the most exciting studies I examined in preparation for this research looked at human behavior, whether it tracked real-world policies and naming conventions, or simply consumer preferences for treats with different flags in a bakery.

Any future scholars who care to receive a more complete understanding of the issue would do well to craft a component which tracks behavioral changes after exposure to these messages. In doing so, we would better be able to see how these messages enact real change.

Perhaps, we would also gain better insight into the nature of attitudes toward Confederate symbols. We would be able to learn how attitudes toward Confederate symbols impact real world behavior, and to see whether these types of attitudes are more personal and "close to the chest," so to speak, or if they manifest themselves frequently into speech, political action, and consumer and interpersonal behaviors.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the difficulties in changing public opinion on controversial issues, the delicate and almost personal nature of many Southerners' feelings toward the Confederacy and its legacy, and the importance of message testing when dealing with sensitive issues.

While I did find that this messaging had some success in affecting white Southerners' public attitudes, these results were limited. The only areas of debate in which the treatments achieved a significant effect centered around the perception of Confederate symbols—whether they primarily symbolize Southern pride and heritage, or racism. Specifically, I found significant differences between the *Traditional* treatment and the control in regards to Confederate flags and the naming of buildings and streets after Confederate leaders. Attitudes toward statues were unmoved.

Across the board, both of the anti-Confederate symbol treatments were ineffective in reshaping beliefs on the appropriateness of these symbols, the reaction toward them, and support levels for removing them or banning the production of new Confederate symbols. The *Nazi*

treatment, which I predicted would yield even more significant anti-Confederate shifts than the *Traditional* treatment, never generated a significant difference from the control. Sometimes, participants in the *Nazi* treatment were even more likely to support Confederate symbols than those in the other treatment.

There are several possible reasons these messages induced such limited effects. For one, Southern attitudes might be largely inflexible in the debate over Confederate monuments. The messages were able to change the way people think about some symbols, but not the way people thought we should handle them. This Southern conviction likely stems from the fact that ideas about the Confederacy and its legacy are steeped in familial and societal identities and traditions. Notions of the past and attitudes toward race are a complex concoction brewed in our history classrooms, our churches, and our own back porches. To begin to pick apart some of these less flexible opinions, which are as strongly rooted in identity as the tall, old Southern oaks are in the soils of Louisiana, we would likely need to either perform repeated messaging, or simply look for a more powerful message.

These results highlight that it can sometimes be easier to change the way people think than the way they act. Even though the *Traditional* treatment succeeded in altering how people perceive Confederate flags and building & street names, there were no changes in the attitudes of what we should do with these symbols in the real world. It's a rather troubling observation. Even when people are more likely to acknowledge Confederate symbols as racist, they are unwilling to change their attitudes on the real-world actions to combat this racism. They see the injustice but don't stand up to change things.

Even the statistically significant opinion shifts were limited, as they were only experienced in the *Traditional* treatment group. The *Nazi* argument, which aimed to take the

debate over Confederate symbols one step further through creating a strong negative association with the symbols of Nazi Germany, was entirely unsuccessful. Perhaps this line of reasoning was too extreme for readers to stomach. Both regimes might have represented movements fueled by regional and racial supremacy, in a fight against a system of authority which they believed had neglected their interests. Yet these parallels might not be enough to overcome the common belief that the Civil War was, at least partially, a conflict over something as innocent as states' rights. White Southerners often have complicated feelings about the region's history, so even suggesting a parallel between the region and one of the most hated institutions in human history might have been a step too far for many Southerners.

Even though many can at least acknowledge that the racist institution of slavery was one issue that sparked the Civil War, there remains in the South a belief that many of the people who fought for the South were patriots and had an air of nobility. On LSU's campus, there is even a national fraternity that recognizes Robert E. Lee as its Spiritual Founder, citing his chivalry and gentlemanly conduct.

It's also possible that suggesting that we follow a European example and remove all symbols of the Confederacy sparked a sharp rejection fueled by the foundational American belief in freedom. As one can see especially clearly in this time of COVID-19, a large number of Americans associate any significant level of government action with a trespass of essential freedoms. Whatever the reason, it is clear from this testing that the *Nazi* treatment is not a viable option at the moment for anyone seeking to reshape the landscape of Confederate symbols in the South.

These findings suggest that, with the right message, it is possible to change the way people think about Confederate symbols and what they represent. The foundational ways in

which we contextualize these symbols of a time past—whether they are modern visualizations of the continued legacy of racist institutions, or proud memorials to honor the heritage of the region—are at least somewhat flexible. That change could play a huge role in reshaping the debate over Confederate symbols over time. But for now, that change appears to have no immediate effect on the actionable opinions of white Southerners. To create a significant impact in what Southerners think we should do with Confederate symbols, it will require either a long period of repeated exposure or a stronger message, if it is possible to have an impact on these beliefs at all.

As the warmth of a Southern summer night approaches, the sun sets on the marshes and the fields. It sets on New Orleans and Atlanta. But it also sets on Jefferson Davis Parish. On Stone Mountain, with its massive stone carvings of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Jefferson Davis. It sets on flags of a separatist rebel movement. On statues venerating the generals who led a regional insurrection which resulted in the deadliest war in U.S. history. These are no ordinary memorials. These are not just stone and metal. As the sun sets on this Southern landscape, on these symbols of a violent and racist past, it casts a lingering shadow of a fictionalized and whitewashed history. We must hope that we will learn from this past and change the landscape of the South to be one of inclusion and hope and equality. Until then, we wait for the sun to rise again.

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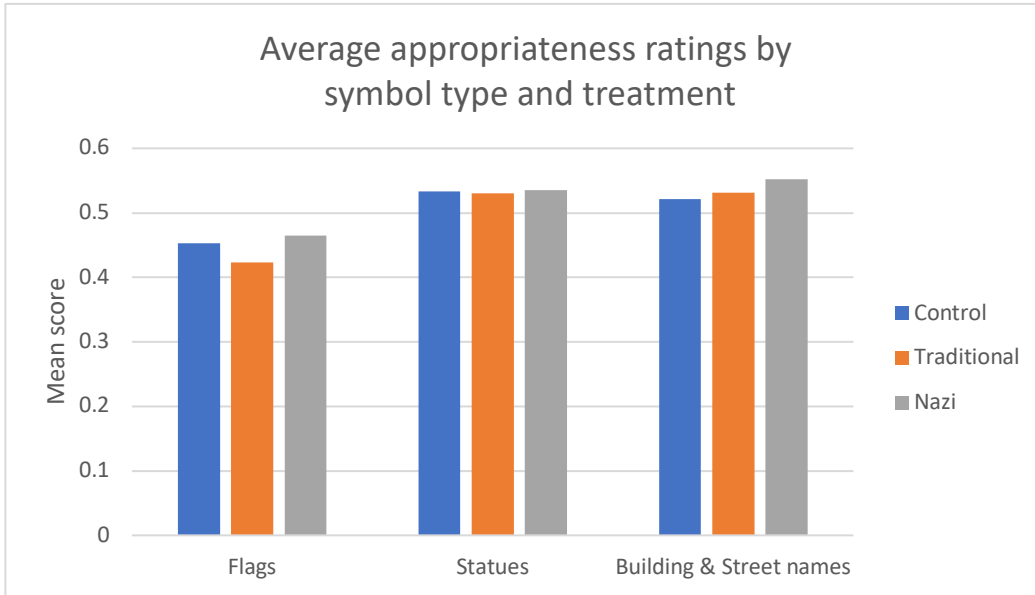# Appendix A: Graphical Data Presentations and Tables

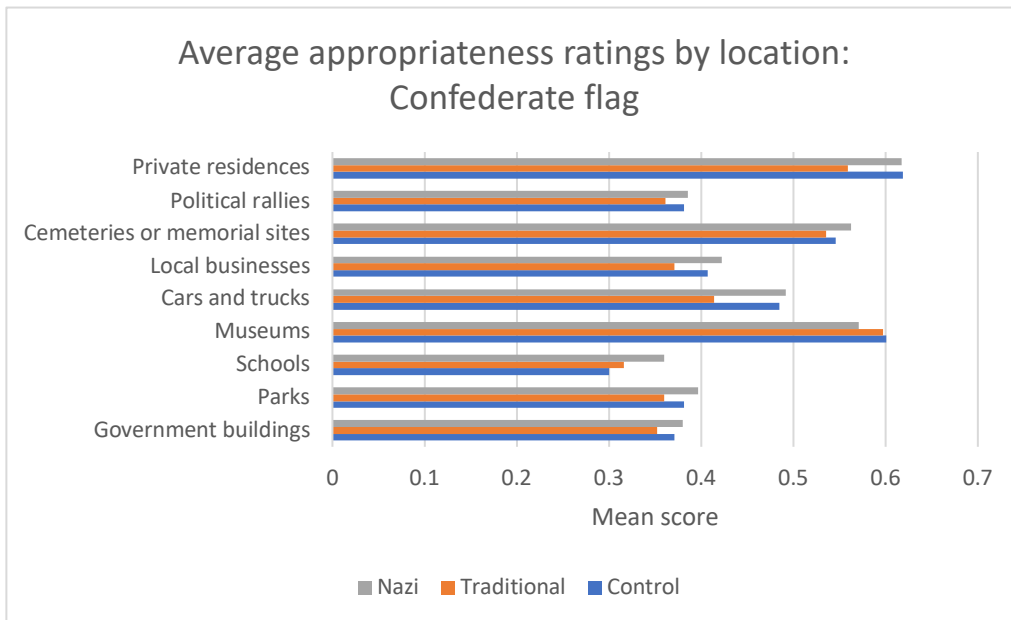## A1. Reactions to the Confederate flag
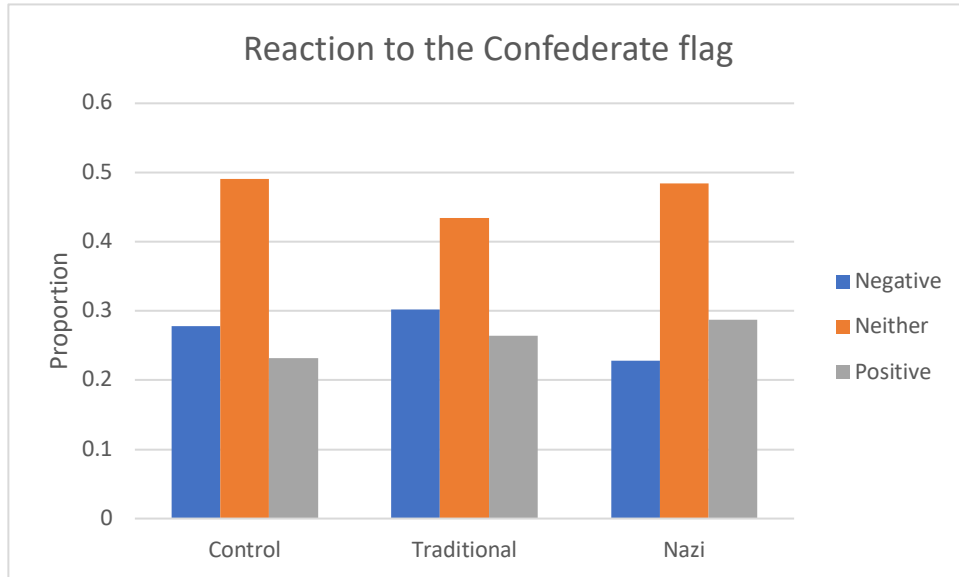
A2a. Appropriateness ratings: public officials praising the leaders of the Confederacy
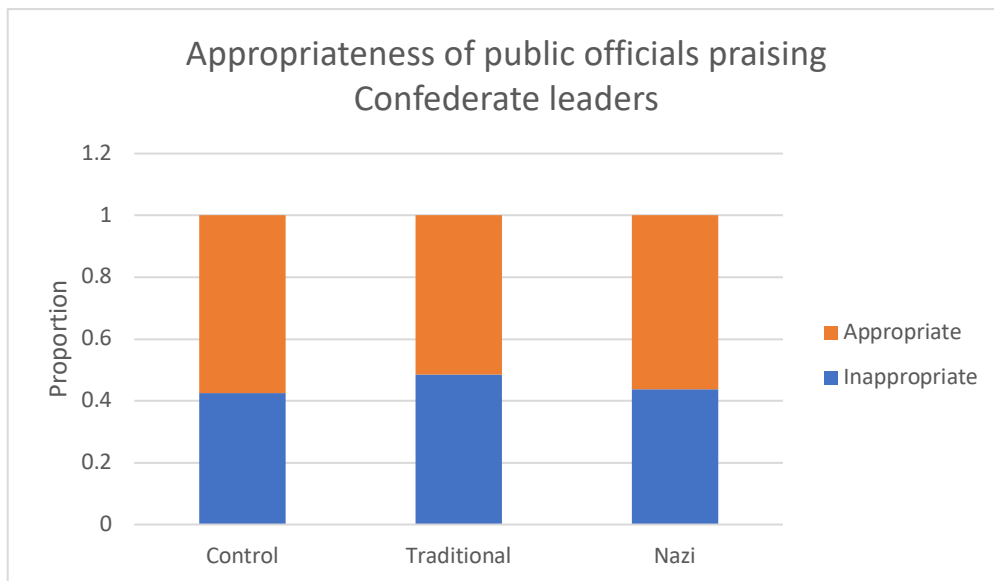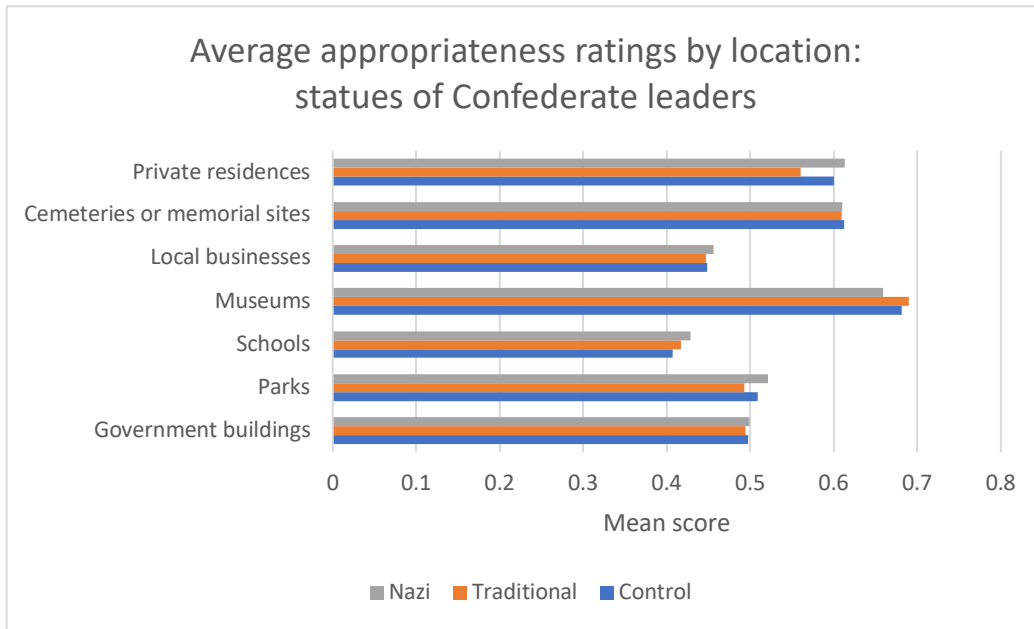
**A2b. Average appropriateness ratings: Confederate flags, statues, and building & street names, by symbol type**

**A2c. Average appropriateness ratings: Confederate flags, by location**

**A2d. Average appropriateness ratings: Confederate statues, by location**

Average appropriateness ratings by location: statues of Confederate leaders

A2e. Average appropriateness ratings: Confederate building & street names, by location

Average appropriateness ratings by location: buildings and streets named after Confederate leaders
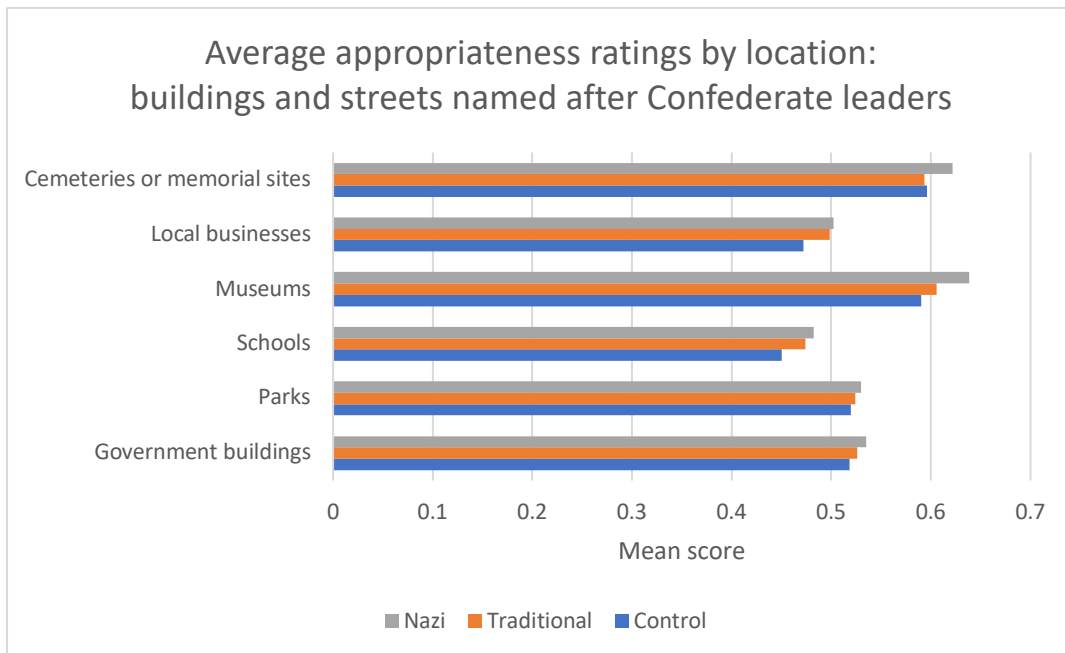
A3a. Perceptions of the Confederate flag
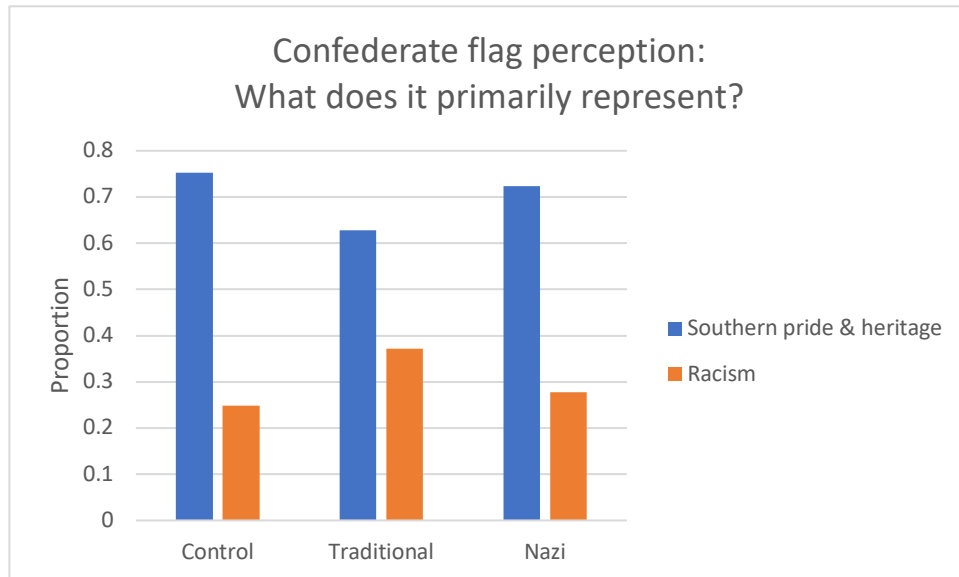
A3b. Perceptions of Confederate statues

A3c. Perceptions of Confederate building & street names

Confederate building & street names perception:
What do they primarily represent?
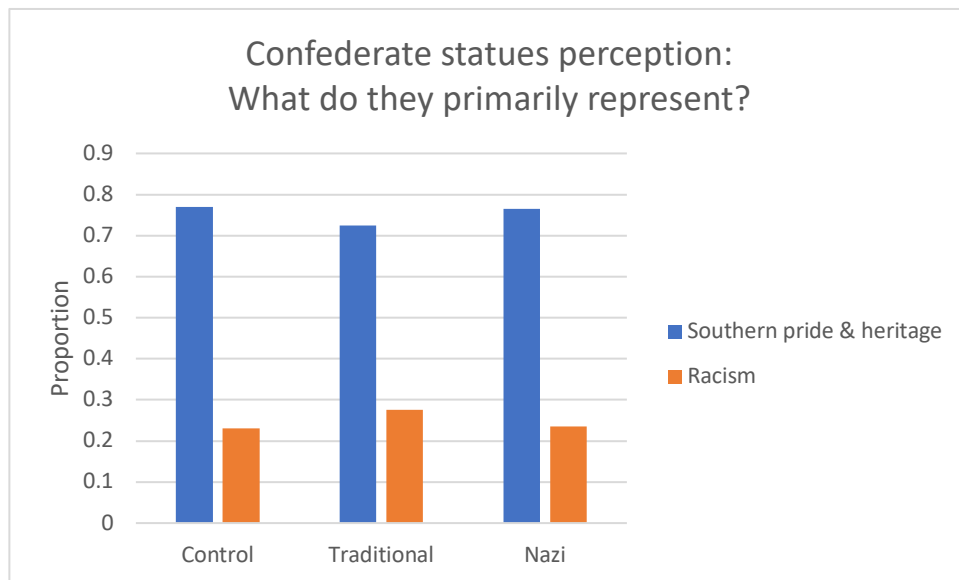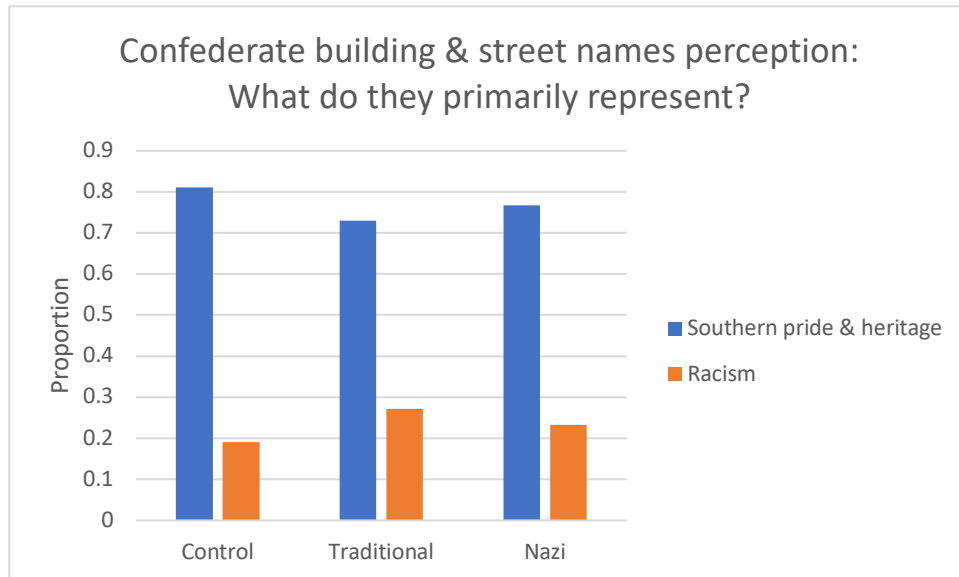
A4a. Support levels for different approaches to getting rid of Confederate symbols

Support for different approaches to getting rid of
Confederate symbols in public spaces
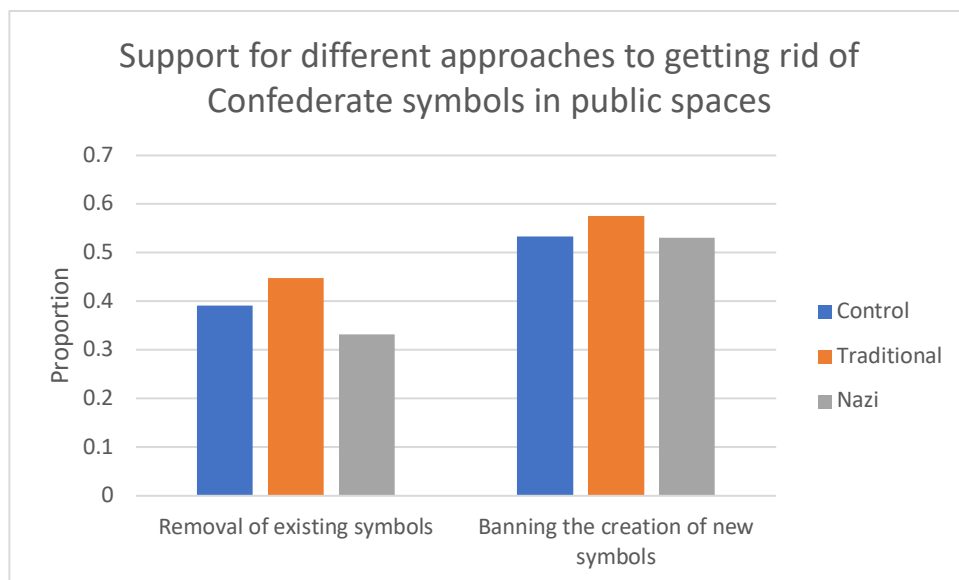
A5a. Mean Differences and Significance levels: Cumulative treatment effects and Differences between treatments

	Treatments v. Control		*Nazi* v. *Traditional*	
Variable	**Mean difference**	**p-value**	**Mean difference**	**p-value**
Positive reaction	.02895	.3361	.04855	.1716
Public Official: Appropriate	-.03654	.4471	.04735	.3935
Flag: Appropriate	-.008621	.7388	.04204	.1656
Statue: Appropriate	-.001029	.9699	.004760	.8809
Building/street: Appropriate	.01976	.4938	.02096	.5506
Flag: Symbol of racism	.07576*	.04039	-.09531*	.03318
Statue: Symbol of racism	.02436	.4896	-.04015	.3366
Building/street: Symbol of racism	.06110	.06977	-.03889	.3499
Removal	-.001587	.9714	-.1158*	.02062
Ban	.01951	.6677	-.04521	.3839

Subscripts represent statistically significant differences:
* = *p* < .05, **= *p* < .01, *** = *p* < .001

A5b. Mean Differences and Significance levels: Comparing each treatment to the control

Variable	*Traditional* v. Control		*Nazi* v. Control	
	Mean difference	**p-value**	**Mean difference**	**p-value**
Positive reaction	.004280	.904	.05283	.1244
Public Official: Appropriate	-.05985	.2801	-.0125	.8221
Flag: Appropriate	-.03081	.3134	.01185	.6925
Statue: Appropriate	-.003430	.9132	.001329	.9664
Building/street: Appropriate	.009112	.7888	.03007	.3709
Flag: Symbol of racism	.1244**	.005083	.02908	.4881
Statue: Symbol of racism	.04493	.2826	.004787	.9051
Building/street: Symbol of racism	.08098*	.04533	.04210	.2775
Removal	.05631	.2744	-.05948	.2359
Ban	.04194	.4211	-.003278	.9503

Subscripts represent statistically significant differences:
$* = p < .05, ** = p < .01, *** = p < .001$

Appendix B: Treatments

B1. "Traditional" treatment

Read the short text on the next page and answer the questions about it that follow.

Public Symbols of the Confederacy

Across the South, communities have begun taking a critical look at many symbols honoring the Confederacy and its icons—statues and monuments; city seals; the names of streets, parks and schools; and even official state holidays.

Critics may say removing a flag or monument, renaming a military base or school, or ending a state holiday is tantamount to "erasing history." But the argument that the Confederate flag and other displays represent "heritage, not hate" ignores the near-universal heritage of African Americans whose ancestors were enslaved by the millions in the South. It trivializes their pain, their history and their concerns about racism. And it conceals the true history of the Confederate States of America and the seven decades of Jim Crow segregation and oppression that followed the Reconstruction era.

Removing these symbols is about acknowledging the injustices of the past as we address those of today.

B2. "Nazi" treatment

Read the short text on the next page and answer the questions about it that follow.

Confederate Symbols Are Like Nazi Symbols

 Across the South, communities have begun taking a critical look at many symbols honoring the Confederacy and its icons—statues and monuments; city seals; the names of streets, parks and schools; and even official state holidays. Confederate symbols in the United States are a lot like Nazi symbols in Germany.

Germany has no monuments that celebrate the Nazi armed forces, however many grandfathers fought or fell for them. Instead, it has a dizzying number and variety of monuments to the victims of its murderous racism. Instead of visiting glorified plantations, Germans visit somber concentration camps.

Critics may say removing a flag or monument, renaming a military base or school, or ending a state holiday is tantamount to "erasing history." But the argument that the Confederate flag and other displays represent "heritage, not hate" ignores the near-universal heritage of African Americans whose ancestors were enslaved by the millions in the South. It trivializes their pain, their history and their concerns about racism. And it conceals the true history of the Confederate States of America and the seven decades of Jim Crow segregation and oppression that followed the Reconstruction era. In examining Germany, we see another way to remember the past, one which contextualizes our past failings and gives us a more complete understanding of our history.

Removing these symbols is about acknowledging the injustices of the past as we address those of today.

Appendix C: Survey questions

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Evaluating Politics & Society

Study Purpose & Procedures: This study is a survey to understand the relationship between various social and political preferences, including evaluations of public policy. The survey takes less than 15 minutes.

Inclusion criteria: Participants must be residents of the U.S. who are at least 18 years old.

Exclusion criteria: People who are not residents of the U.S. or who are less than 18 years old are not eligible to participate.

Risks/Discomforts: The risks associated with this study are minimal. The study will include evaluation of various policy issues to help us better understand how people think about leaders and policy.

Contacts: If you have questions about the study or procedures, please contact:

Principal Investigators:
Nathan P. Kalmoe
225-578-8013
Available Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST

Andrew D. Searles
770-656-7430
Available Monday-Friday, 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST

Right to Refuse: Subjects may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which they might otherwise be entitled. You may decline response to any question for any reason. If you do not voluntarily consent to participate or are under the age of 18, exit from the website.

Privacy: Your responses will be completely anonymous; no identifying information will ever be collected. All data collected will be held securely behind username and password protections.

This study has been approved by the LSU IRB. For questions concerning participant rights, please contact the IRB Chair, Dr. Dennis Landin, 578-8692, or irb@lsu.edu.

Clicking "Yes" and the ">>" button to begin the study indicates you are over the age of 18. By continuing this survey, you are giving consent to participate in this study. Clicking "No" means you do not consent and the study will end when you click the ">>" button.

Do you consent to participate in the study?

○ Yes

○ No

In which state do you currently reside?

▼ Alabama ... I do not reside in the United States

How important is living in the South to your identity?

○ Extremely important

○ Very important

○ Moderately important

○ A little important

○ Not at all important

How important is your race or ethnicity to your identity?

○ Extremely important

○ Very important

○ Moderately important

○ A little important

○ Not at all important

How important is your gender to your identity?

○ Extremely important

○ Very important

○ Moderately important

○ A little important

○ Not at all important

Agree or disagree?

	Agree strongly	Agree somewhat	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree strongly
Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.	○	○	○	○	○
Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.	○	○	○	○	○
It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.	○	○	○	○	○
Over the past few years blacks have gotten less than they deserve.	○	○	○	○	○

How important is the debate in the South about Confederate symbols and monuments to you personally?

○ Extremely important

○ Very important

○ Moderately important

○ A little important

○ Not at all important

Which of the following most accurately describes your thoughts on the Civil War?

○ The Civil War was important historically, but has little relevance to American politics and public life today.

○ The Civil War is still relevant to American politics and political life today.

○ Don't know

What is your impression of the main cause of the Civil War? Was the Civil War...

○ Mainly about slavery

○ Mainly about state's rights

○ Both equally

○ Neither

○ Don't know

When you see the Confederate flag displayed, do you have a positive reaction, a negative reaction, or neither?

○ Positive reaction

○ Negative reaction

○ Neither

○ Don't know

Do you generally think it is appropriate or inappropriate for public officials today to praise the leaders of the Confederate States during the Civil War?

○ Appropriate

○ Inappropriate

○ Don't know

How appropriate do you think it is to display the Confederate flag in the following places?

	Completely inappropriate	Only a little appropriate	Fairly appropriate	Completely appropriate
At government buildings	○	○	○	○
At public parks	○	○	○	○
At schools	○	○	○	○
At museums	○	○	○	○
On cars and trucks	○	○	○	○
In local businesses	○	○	○	○
In cemeteries or memorial sites	○	○	○	○
At political rallies	○	○	○	○
At a private residence	○	○	○	○

How appropriate do you think it is to display statues of Confederate leaders in the following places?

	Completely inappropriate	Only a little appropriate	Fairly appropriate	Completely appropriate
At government buildings	○	○	○	○
At public parks	○	○	○	○
At schools	○	○	○	○
At museums	○	○	○	○
In local businesses	○	○	○	○
In cemeteries or memorial sites	○	○	○	○
At a private residence	○	○	○	○

How appropriate do you think it is to name buildings or streets after Confederate leaders in the following places?

	Completely inappropriate	Only a little appropriate	Fairly appropriate	Completely appropriate
At government buildings	○	○	○	○
At public parks	○	○	○	○
At schools	○	○	○	○
At museums	○	○	○	○
In local businesses	○	○	○	○
In cemeteries or memorial sites	○	○	○	○

Do you support or oppose efforts to **remove existing** Confederate statues and symbols from public places such as government buildings and parks?

○ Support

○ Oppose

○ Don't know

Would you support or oppose efforts to **ban the creation of any new** Confederate statues and symbols in public places such as government buildings and parks?

○ Support

○ Oppose

○ Don't know

Do you see the following things more as symbols of Southern pride, or more as symbols of racism?

	More as a symbol of Southern pride and heritage	More as a symbol of racism
Confederate flags	○	○
Statues of Confederate leaders	○	○
Buildings and streets named after Confederate leaders	○	○

On a different topic, we have a few questions about partisanship to finish.

Please rate your feelings toward the parties using the feeling thermometer.

	Cold (Unfavorable)	Neutral	Warm (Favorable)
	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100		
Democrats			
Republicans			

Who would you prefer to see elected president in 2020 -- Donald Trump or Joe Biden?

○ Definitely Trump

○ Probably Trump

○ Neutral/Don't Know

○ Probably Biden

○ Definitely Biden

In the U.S. House of Representatives elections this year, would you prefer to see Republicans or Democrats win a majority of the seats?

○ Strongly prefer a Republican majority

○ Prefer a Republican majority

○ No preference

○ Prefer a Democratic majority

○ Strongly prefer a Democratic majority