

# MasterSlides for Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction

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The Civil War and Reconstruction is when we wrestled most overtly with race relations. You can't give Loewen's talk on these matters, but feel free to make any use you wish of my PowerPoint slides in making your own talk or workshop about these crucial eras.

# Teaching the Tough Topics

James W. Loewen

# Where does racism come from?

- 1. History [vague!]
  - “Othello” (1565)
  - Montesquieu (1748) They must not be men, else we cannot be Christian.
- 2. Social structure [vague]
- 3. Slavery
- 4. Cognitive dissonance



# We Live in a Landscape of White Supremacy

Names of towns and buildings

Statues and monuments

Columbus Day

Thanksgiving

The “Redskins”

The “Great Explorers”

# **What should we do about Confederate monuments?**

James W. Loewen

[Jloewen@uvm.edu](mailto:Jloewen@uvm.edu)

# Who is the most honored American in any state?

Who gets the most monuments,  
statues, historical markers, etc.?

Lincoln in Illinois?

Washington in Virginia?

**Nope!**

Nathan Bedford Forrest in Tennessee!

# Nathan Bedford Forrest HS?

Nathan Bedford Forrest in Tennessee gets a bust in the state capitol, a statue in Nathan Bedford Forrest Park in Memphis, two obelisks, and 32 different state historical markers, far more than any other person in any other state.

Jacksonville, FL, named a high school for Nathan Bedford Forrest in 1959, after the United Daughters of the Confederacy suggested the name.

Today the HS is >50% black. Should the name stand? [Note: it DID change, c.2018.]

# You need information, right?

- Before the Civil War, Forrest was a slave trader.
- During it, he was a brilliant Confederate cavalry leader.
- After his raid at Murfreesboro, TN, an officer brought a black man to Forrest, who asked what he was doing there. The man replied he was a free man and the servant to a U.S. officer. Forrest cursed, drew his pistol, and blew his brains out.

# Need more information?

- After taking Ft. Pillow, TN, acc. to a Confederate officer, “Gen. Forrest ordered [the surrendered POWs] shot down like dogs.”
- After the Battle of Brice's Cross Roads, Forrest's men again murdered African American POWs.
- After the war, Forrest was the first “Imperial Wizard” (national leader) of the Ku Klux Klan.

# Is it time to act?

- If you were black, would you want to attend Nathan Bedford Forrest HS?
- If you were white?
- If you were Latino?
- If you were Asian?
- What should be done? What can YOU do?

[Note: NBF HS has been changed. But what about the school (or street, etc.) named for a racist in YOUR town?]

OED word of the year, 2017:  
“post-truth”

Why should we privilege one narrative above  
others with the term “true”?

History got messed up with Keith  
Jenkins, Richard Rorty?

Historiography!  
“Sociology of knowledge”



“The Most Important Era in U.S.  
History You Never Heard Of,  
and Why It’s Especially  
Important Today”

James W. Loewen

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# “Making Public History Accurate and Inclusive”

James W. Loewen

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# Further corrections to our distorted public history

- Un-name Jeff Davis Highway with markers explaining why.
- Rename buildings named for racists, with plaques explaining why.
- Put up markers for white anti-racists. Bring them back to consciousness. Edward Coles, John Logan, William Mahone, etc.



Helena, MT: “A Longing Tribute to  
Our Confederate Soldiers” – 1916

Why did we have a Civil War?

or, better put,

Why did the South secede?

# Lies My Teacher Told Me in the Age of “Alternative Facts”

James W. Loewen

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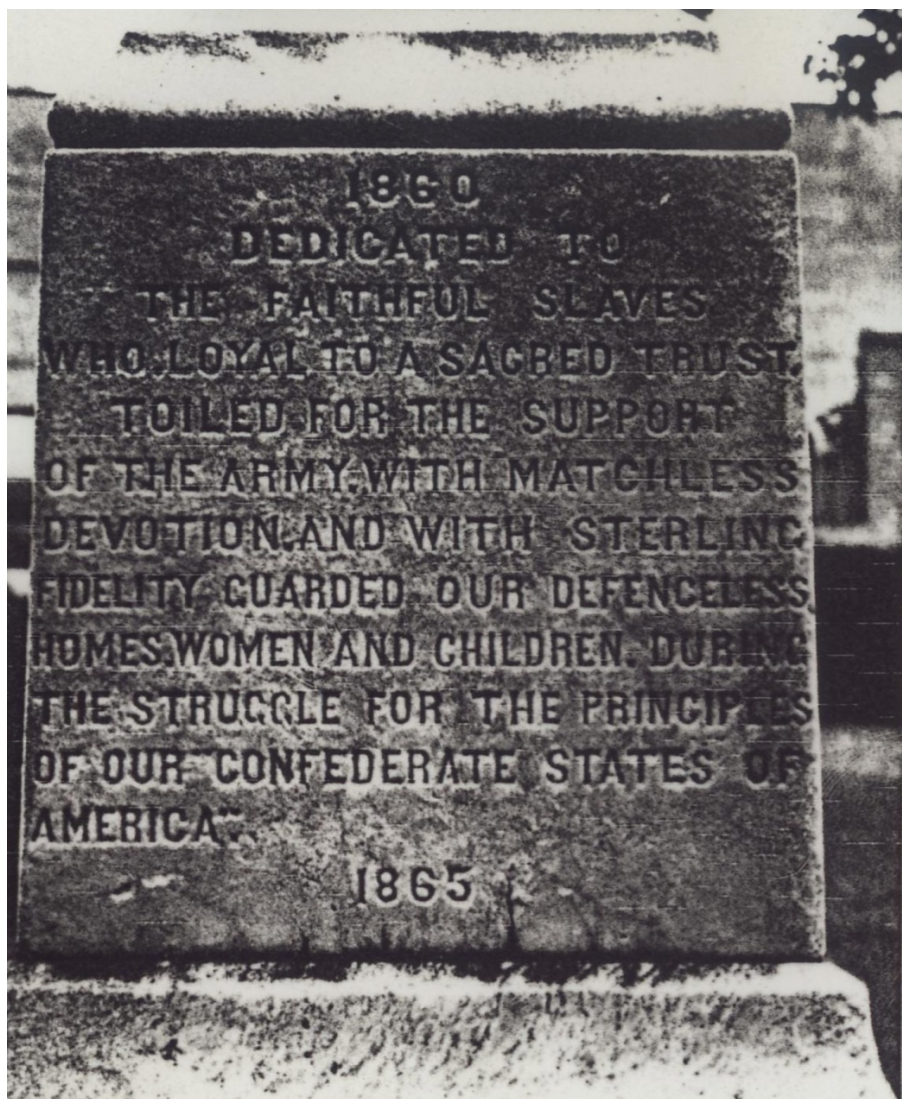
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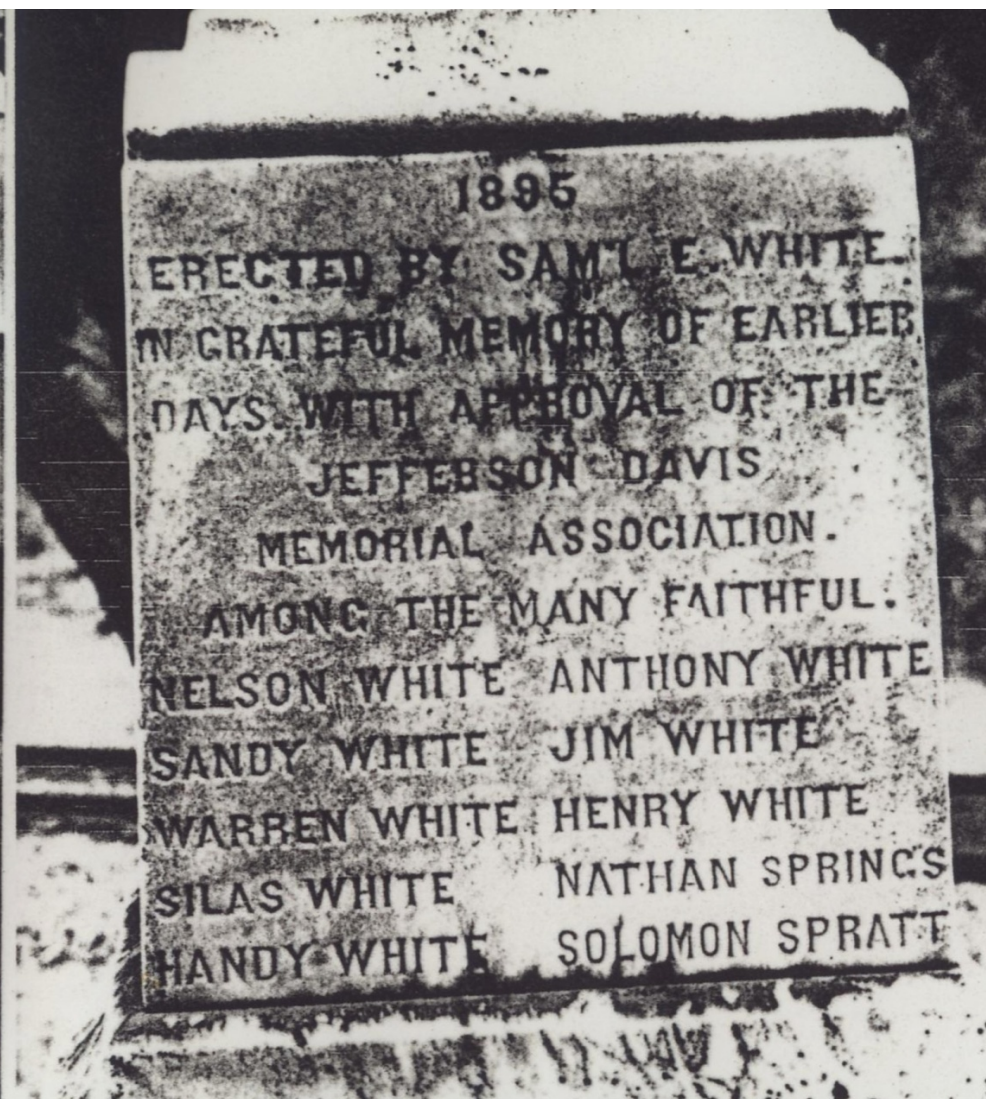




1860

DEDICATED TO  
THE FAITHFUL SLAVES  
WHO LOYAL TO A SAGRED TRUST  
TOILED FOR THE SUPPORT  
OF THE ARMY WITH MATCHLESS  
DEVOTION AND WITH STERLING  
FIDELITY GUARDED OUR DEFENCELESS  
HOMES WOMEN AND CHILDREN DURING  
THE STRUGGLE FOR THE PRINCIPLES  
OF OUR CONFEDERATE STATES OF  
AMERICA

1865



1895

ERECTED BY SAML E. WHITE  
IN GRATEFUL MEMORY OF EARLIER  
DAYS WITH APPROVAL OF THE  
JEFFERSON DAVIS  
MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION.

AMONG THE MANY FAITHFUL.

NELSON WHITE	ANTHONY WHITE
SANDY WHITE	JIM WHITE
WARREN WHITE	HENRY WHITE
SILAS WHITE	NATHAN SPRINGS
HANDY WHITE	SOLOMON SPRATT





Fred Wilson: “Mining the Museum”  
Harriet Tubman, Benjamin Banneker, Frederick Douglass

# Slavery was not like *Gone With the Wind!*

- No volition, moment to moment.
- No control over family relationships.
- Violence.
- Racism.

[Also: hard work (“sun to sun”); almost no way out (not even the children); robbed of purpose; etc.]

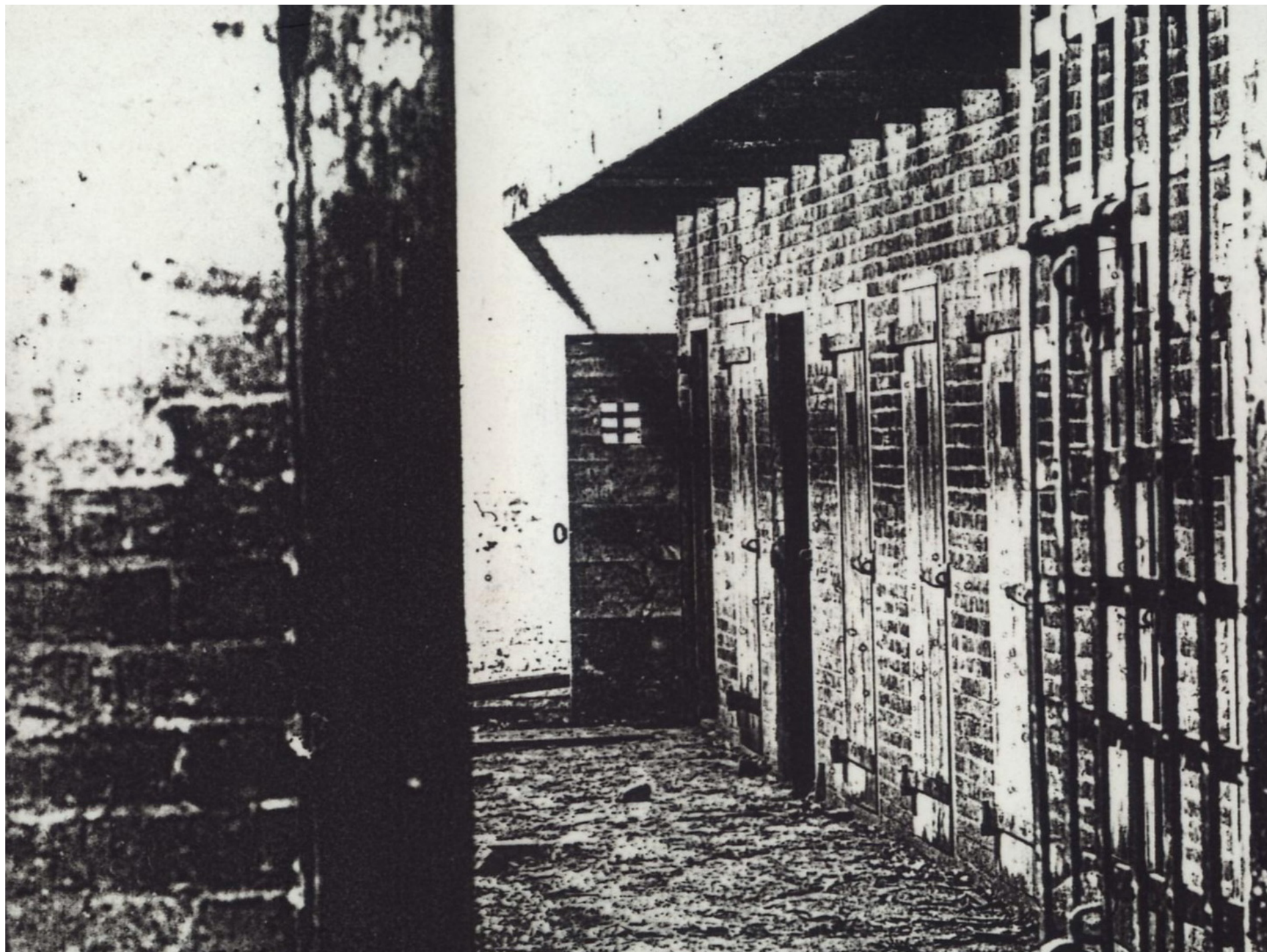
Incomplete: Shockoe Bottom,  
Lumpkin's Slave Pen, etc.

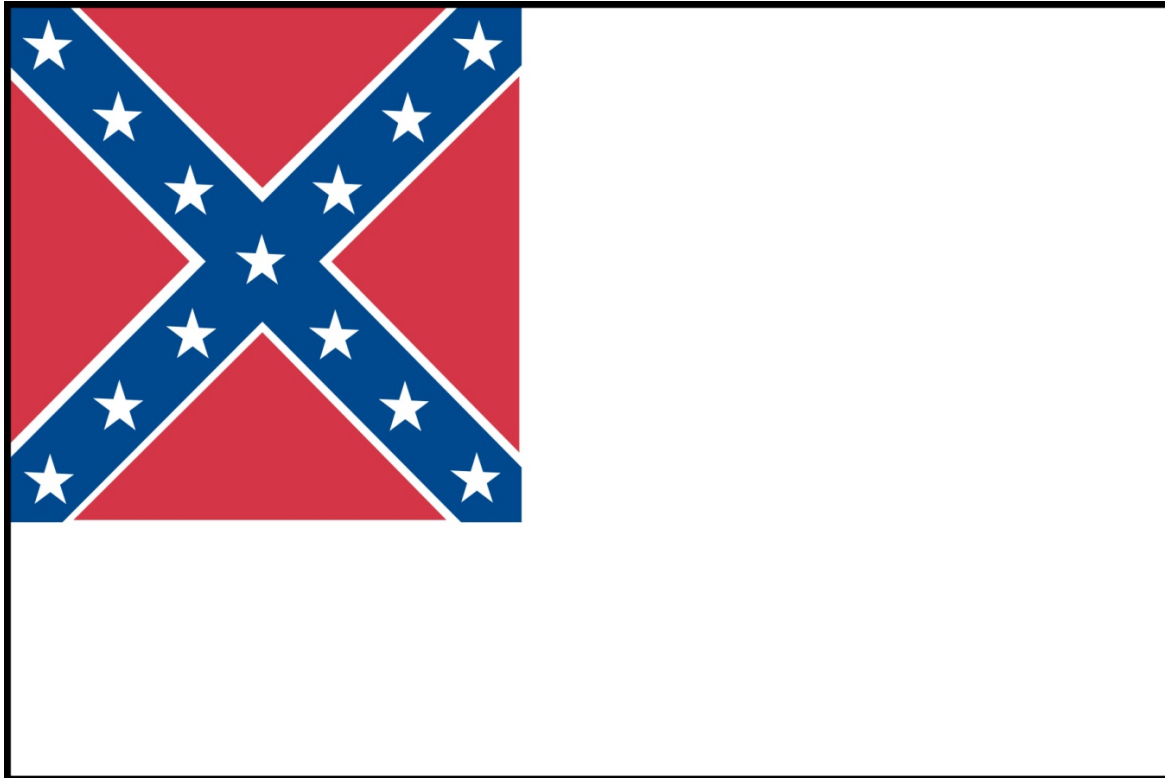


## If not for slavery ....

- There would have been no racism (only mutual ethnocentrism).
- There would have been no Nadir.
- There would be no wealth gap.
- There would be no racial SAT gap.
- Blacks would live as long as whites.
- Etc.!









## Second Confederate National Flag, “Stainless Banner”

“It is significant of our higher cause, the cause of a superior race.”  
— William Thompson, ed., *Savannah Morning News*, 5/4/1863.

“"The Confederate flag is becoming ... the symbol of the white race and the cause of the white people."  
— Roy V. Harris, ed., *Augusta Courier*, 1951,

Why did we have a  
Civil War?

or, better put,

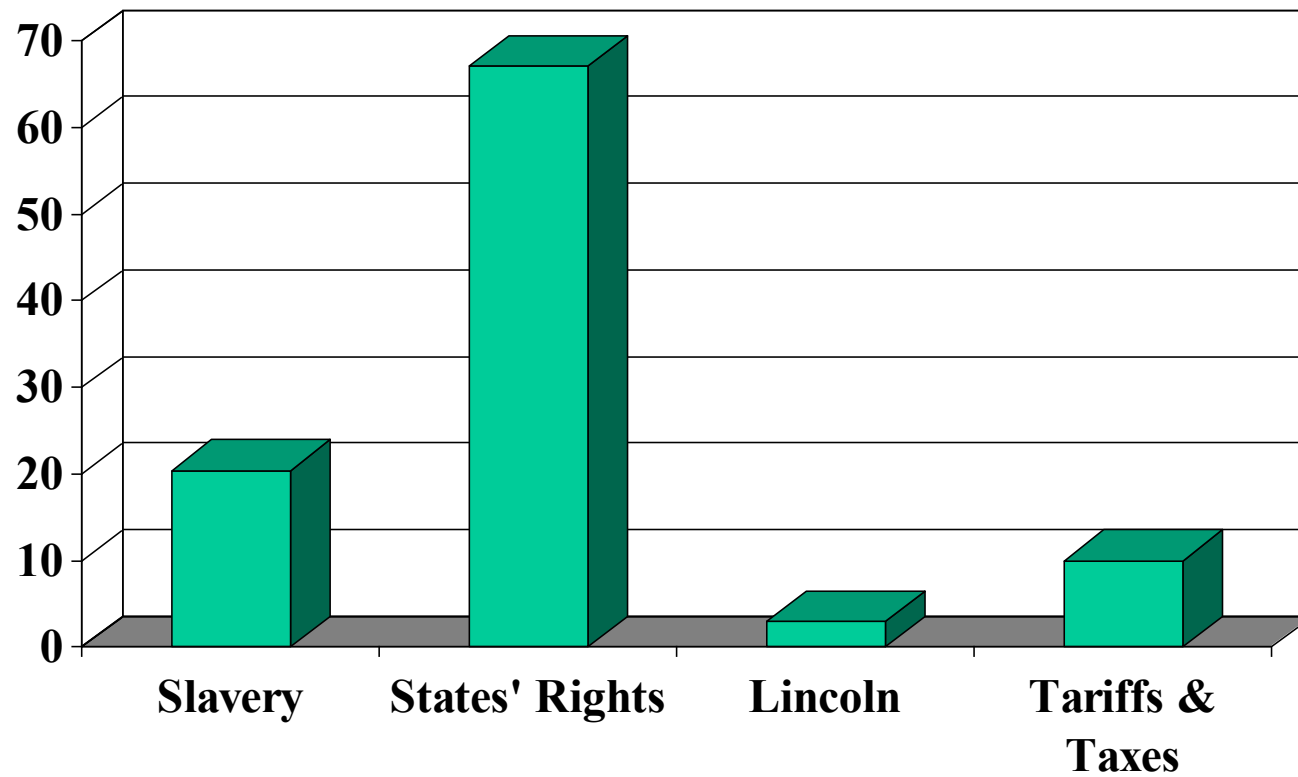
Why did the South  
secede?



## Alternatives:

- Slavery
- States' Rights
- the Election of Lincoln
- Tariffs and Taxes (issues about)

# Results Nationwide



# How could this happen??

When did it happen?

The Nadir: 1890-1940

What was its purpose?

Rationalize and defend the South

Why did the North acquiesce?

Unclean hands: complicit in white  
supremacy

# Historiography:

- The study of history
- Who wrote this? When?
- Who *didn't* write it?
- Who is “comforted” by it?

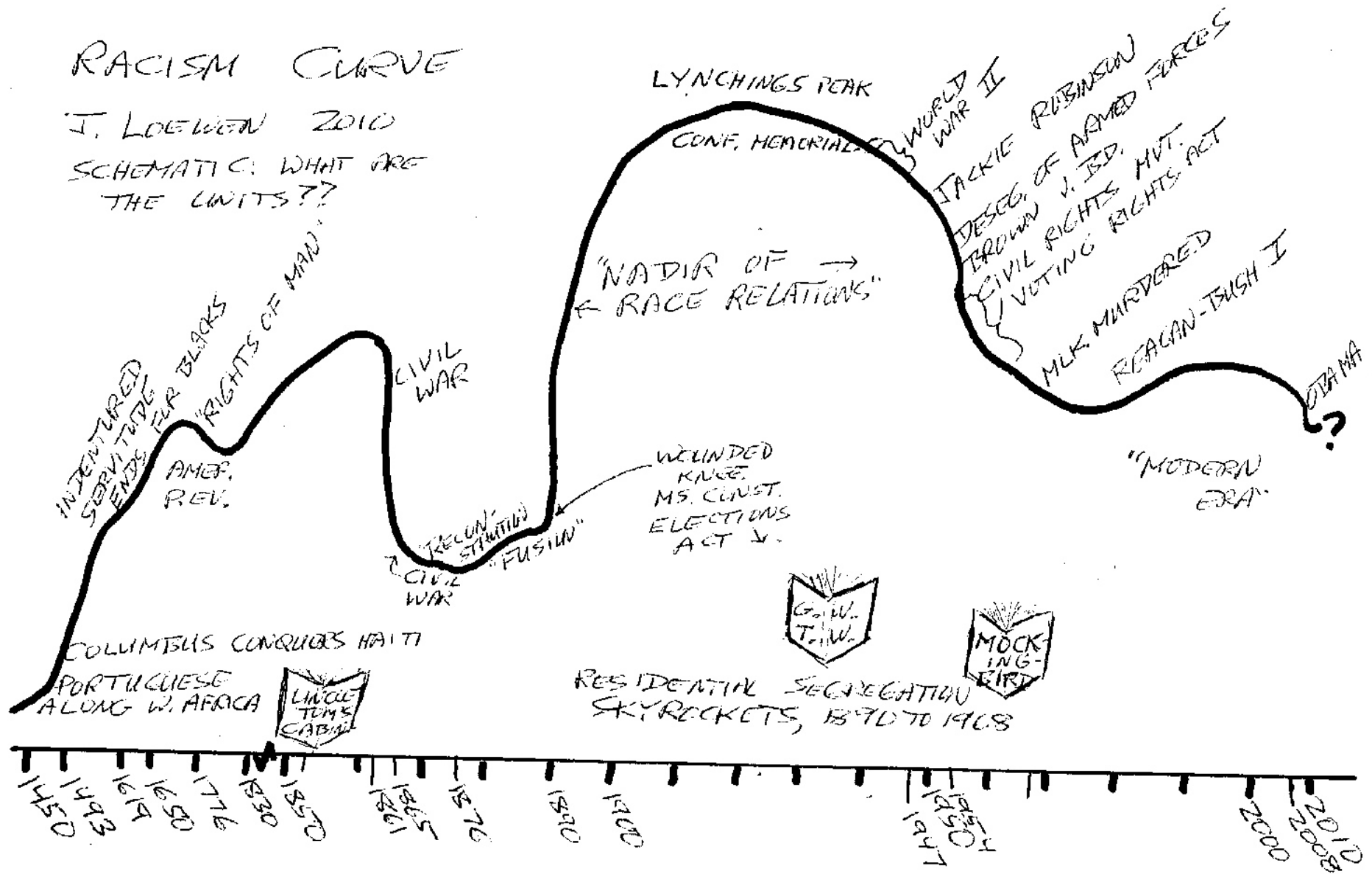


ALMO IDAHO  
DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY  
OF THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN A MOST  
HORRIBLE INDIAN MASSACRE 1861.  
THREE HUNDRED IMMIGRANTS WEST BOUND  
ONLY FIVE ESCAPED.  
ERECTED BY S. & D. OF IDAHO PIONEERS  
1938

# RACISM CURVE

J. LOEWEN 2010

SCHEMATIC: WHAT ARE THE LIMITS??



# The Worst Time for History: The Nadir of Race Relations

- Racism (as ideology) to all-time high
- 1890-1940
- “Three I’s”
  - Indian Wars
  - Immigrants (San Francisco, Ellis Island)
  - Imperialism





Othello and Desdemona



After the Flogging





THE TRUE DEFENDERS OF THE CONSTITUTION.—[DRAWN BY MR. JAMES WALKER.]



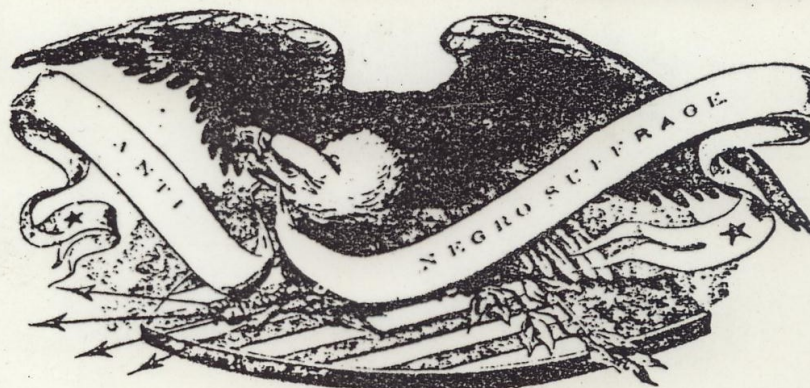






ORIGINALLY A VERY GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE MEDICAL MEDICINE

# DEMOCRATIC MEETING.



ALL WHO ARE OPPOSED TO

**NEGRO EQUALITY!**  
**AND CONGRESSIONAL USURPA-**  
**TIONS,**

and in favor of the payment of the  
**NATIONAL DEBT**  
**IN GREENBACKS,**

EQUAL TAXATION, ABROGATION OF THE "TEST OATH" AND SECURING TO ALL THE  
States of the Union their Rights under the Federal Constitution.

Are cordially invited to be present and take part in the deliberations at

**MASS MEETING,**  
at Sherwood's hall, February 22, '68.

THEY ARE GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE BOND HOLDER WHO PAYS NO TAXES

© 1868 by the Democratic Party

FACSIMILE OF POLITICAL POSTER IN THE CAMPAIGN OF 1868.



Print Matthews, Shot, Nov. 6, 1883

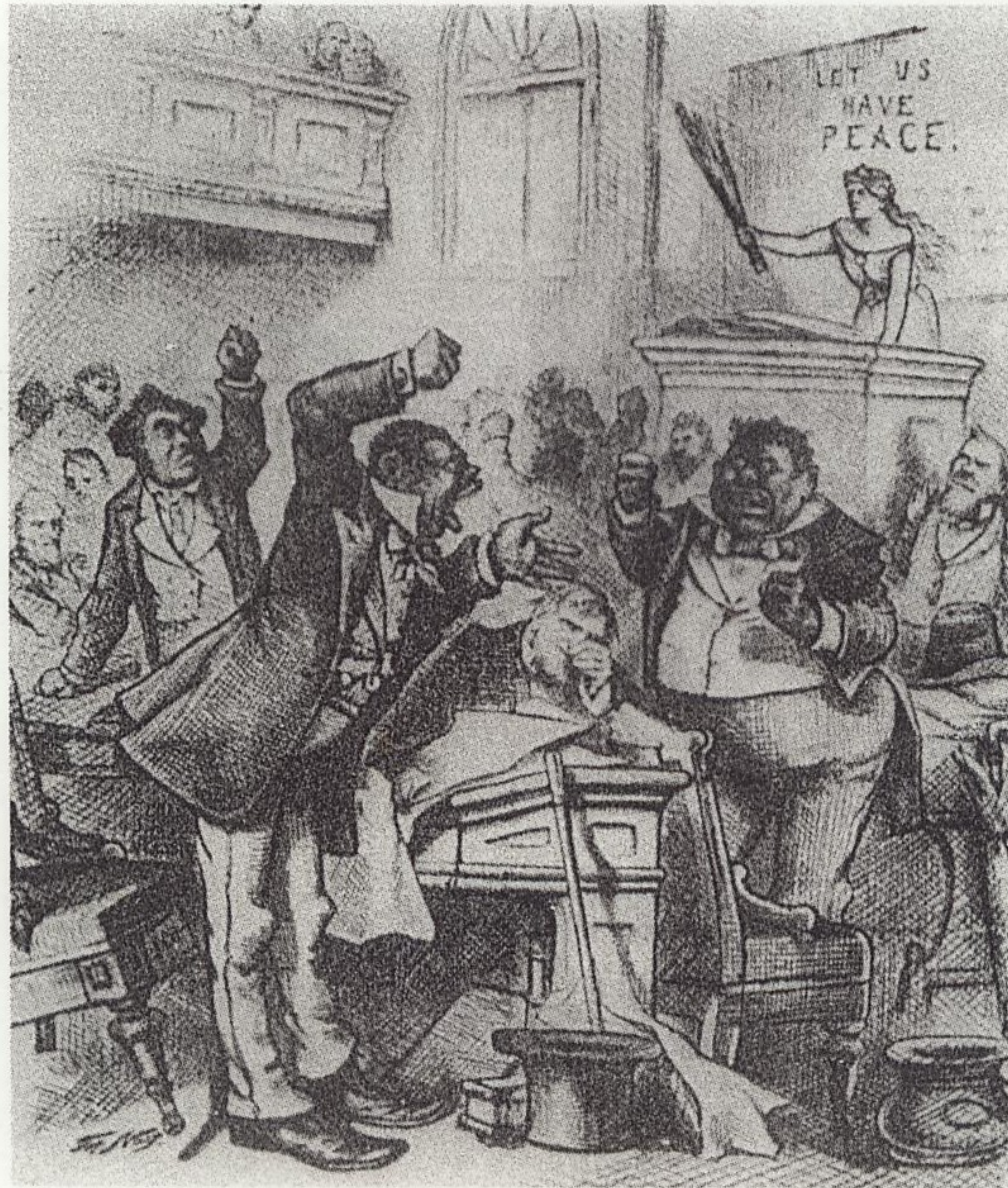




Print Matthews, Remembered by Students from Boston







# How Our Public History Flattens Lincoln

Jim Loewen

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*See Lies Across America*

# How could this happen??

When did it happen?

The Nadir: 1890-1940

What was its purpose?

Rationalize and defend the South

Why did the North acquiesce?

Unclean hands: increasingly  
complicit in white supremacy

**Jim Loewen**  
Jloewen@uvm.edu

***Lies Across America***

***The Confederate and Neo-Confederate  
Reader***

**"Five Myths About Why the South  
Seceded," Washington Post, 1/9/2011**

**"Rejection Of Flag Exposes Larger Truths  
About The Confederacy," NPR, 7/3/2015**

Every monument is  
a tale of three eras:

What it's about;  
When it went up;  
and  
Today.



NE

# "The End of the Trail"

by James Earle Fraser



Shown smaller  
than actual size  
of 9" high.

© NE 1993

One of the most beloved and acclaimed sculptures in American history, "The End of the Trail" is James Earle Fraser's world renowned tribute to the American Indian. The few existing bronze originals are virtually beyond valuation, but now this magnificent 1/3 size museum quality reproduction is available for the exceptional offering price of just \$69.00 per sculpture.

Each "End of the Trail" sculpture will be meticulously crafted of cold-cast bronze — a remarkable medium that holds even finer and more intricate detail than traditional hot-cast bronze. Every sculpture will be individually cast from a special blend of powdered resins and bronze, then hand-finished with a classic patina, similar to the original. Each "End of the Trail" will be hallmarked and serially numbered. A Certificate of Authenticity will accompany each sculpture.

The edition will be strictly limited to just 9500 pieces worldwide and after that, all molds will be destroyed forever. To reserve this important Limited Edition Fraser reproduction, simply return the reservation application below.

*The New England Collectors Society is a division of  
Reed & Barton Silversmiths, makers of fine products since 1824.*

NE The New England Collectors Society  
237 Saw Mill Road, Box 464  
West Haven, CT 06516

ET0185

Please accept my reservation for "The End of the Trail" to be crafted for me in cold-cast bronze at \$69.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping and handling.

☐ I have enclosed my deposit of \$18.50\* I will be billed for the balance in three equal monthly installments of \$18.50\* each, upon shipment of my sculpture.

☐ I need send no money now. I will be billed for my deposit of \$18.50\* prior to shipment, and for the balance in three equal monthly installments of \$18.50\* each upon shipment of my sculpture.

☐ I would like my four equal payments of \$18.50\* charged to my:

☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA ☐ AMEX ☐ Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

All applications are subject to acceptance.

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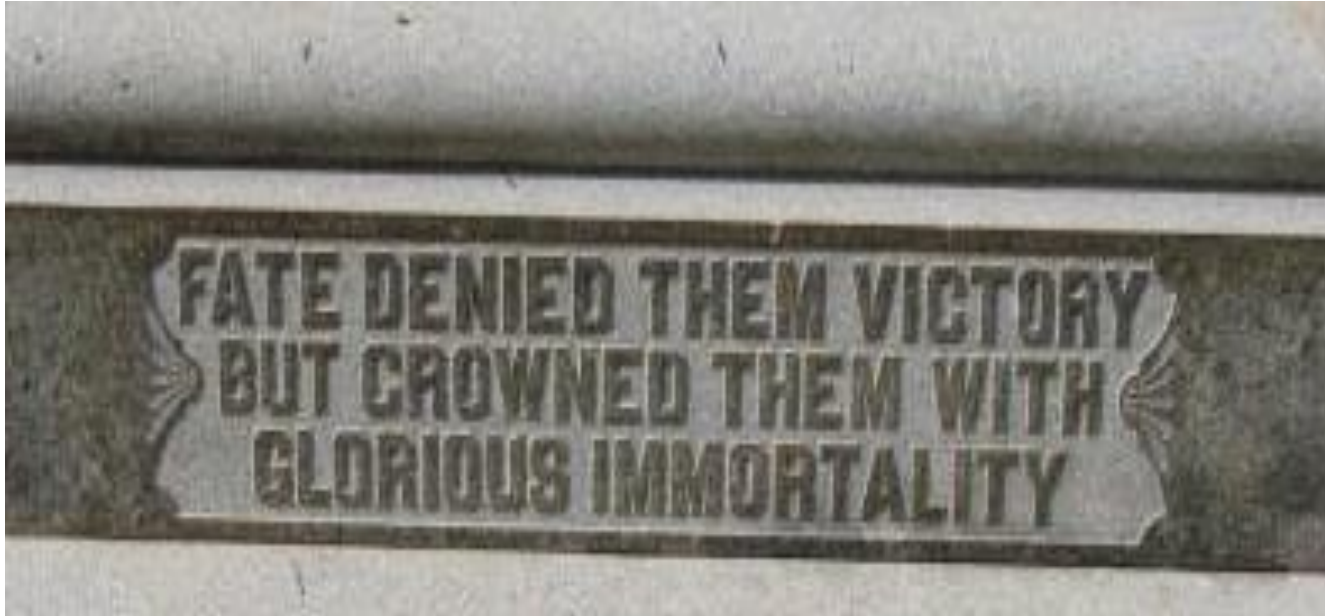


# Monument, UVA Confederate Cemetery 1873, before the Nadir



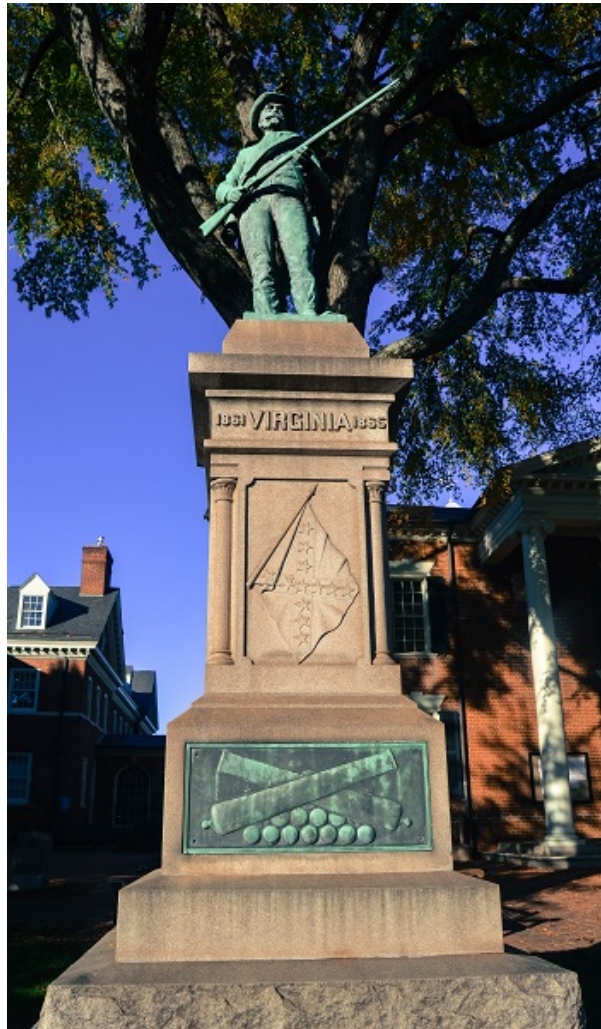
# UVA Cemetery

## Confederate Monument Detail

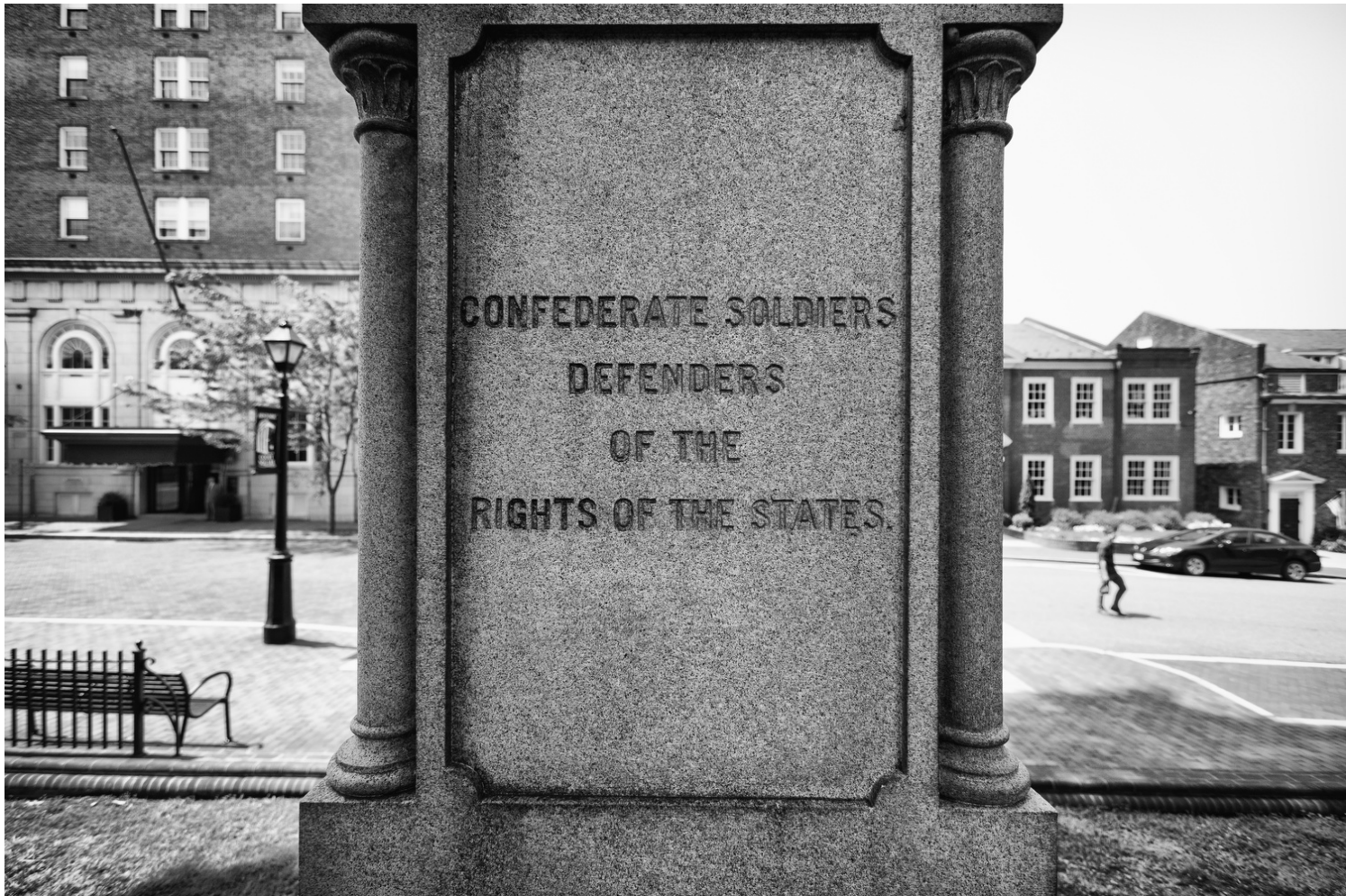




# Confederate monument, Courthouse, 1909, in the Nadir



# Bad history about “states’ rights”







1924, in the Middle of the Nadir  
Robert E. Lee, Charlottesville

Confederate monuments never unified  
Charlottesville and never will.





# No real “contextualizing” of the monuments



“Reconciliation,” in Richmond, treats the Triangular Trade. Has Charlottesville put up any monuments of reconciliation?



# Modest Proposals for Charlottesville's 3 Monuments

1. Move them all to the Confederate cemetery.
2. Add markers there, telling when each went up, and why.
3. Contextualize them with accurate markers that tell about the Nadir. Use the word “propaganda.”
4. Add to your landscape African Americans and anti-Confederate or anti-racist whites.

# Modest Proposals for Confederate Monuments

1. Move them all to a Nadir Park or Confederate cemeteries.
2. Do not clean or repair them when they get vandalized.
3. Add monuments of enslaved and other African Americans.
4. Add anti-Confederate and anti-racist whites.
5. Contextualize them with accurate markers that tell about the Nadir. Use the word “propaganda.”



# Confederate monument, Alexandria 1889 (before the Nadir)





Robert E. Lee, Monument Avenue,  
May 29, 1890, after the Nadir  
“Hieratic” Scale



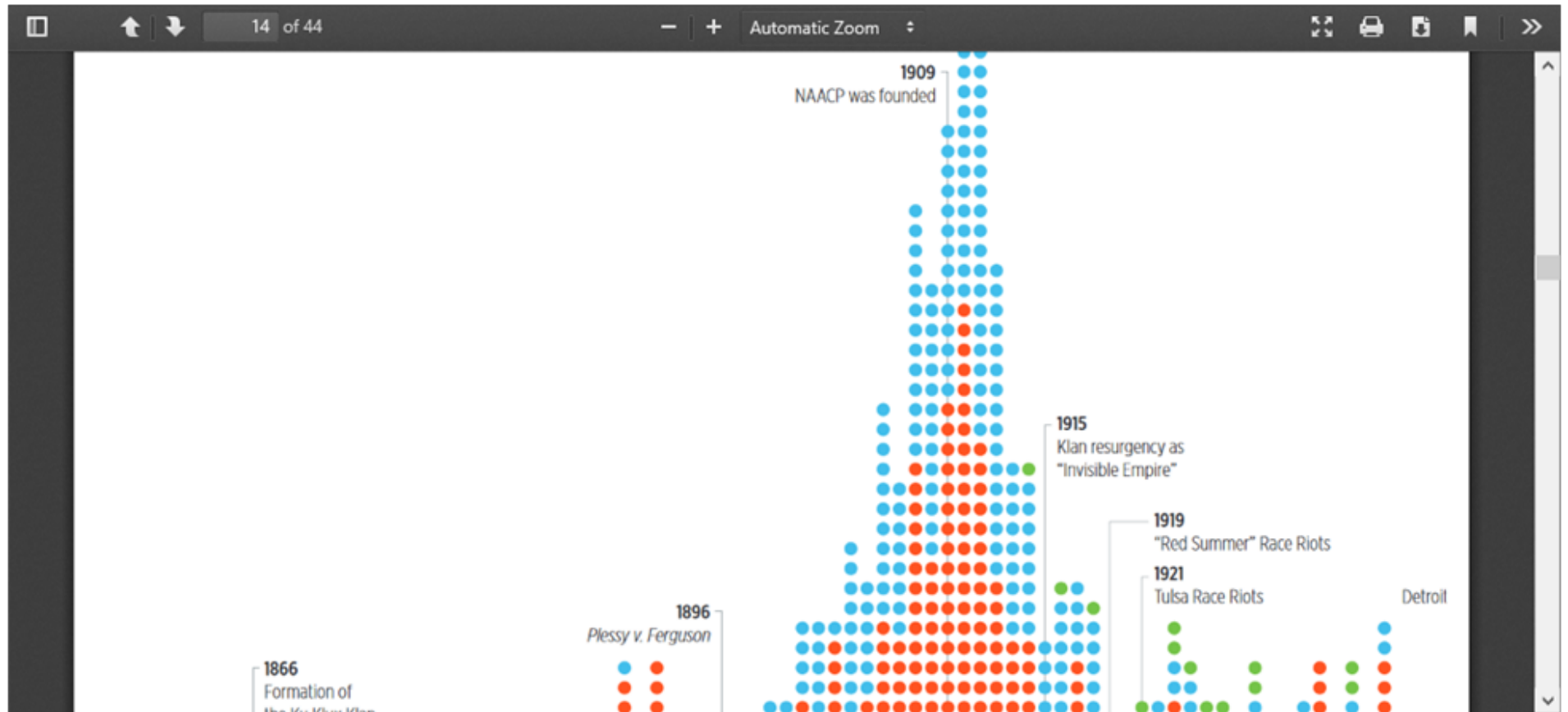






# Severn Teackle Wallis

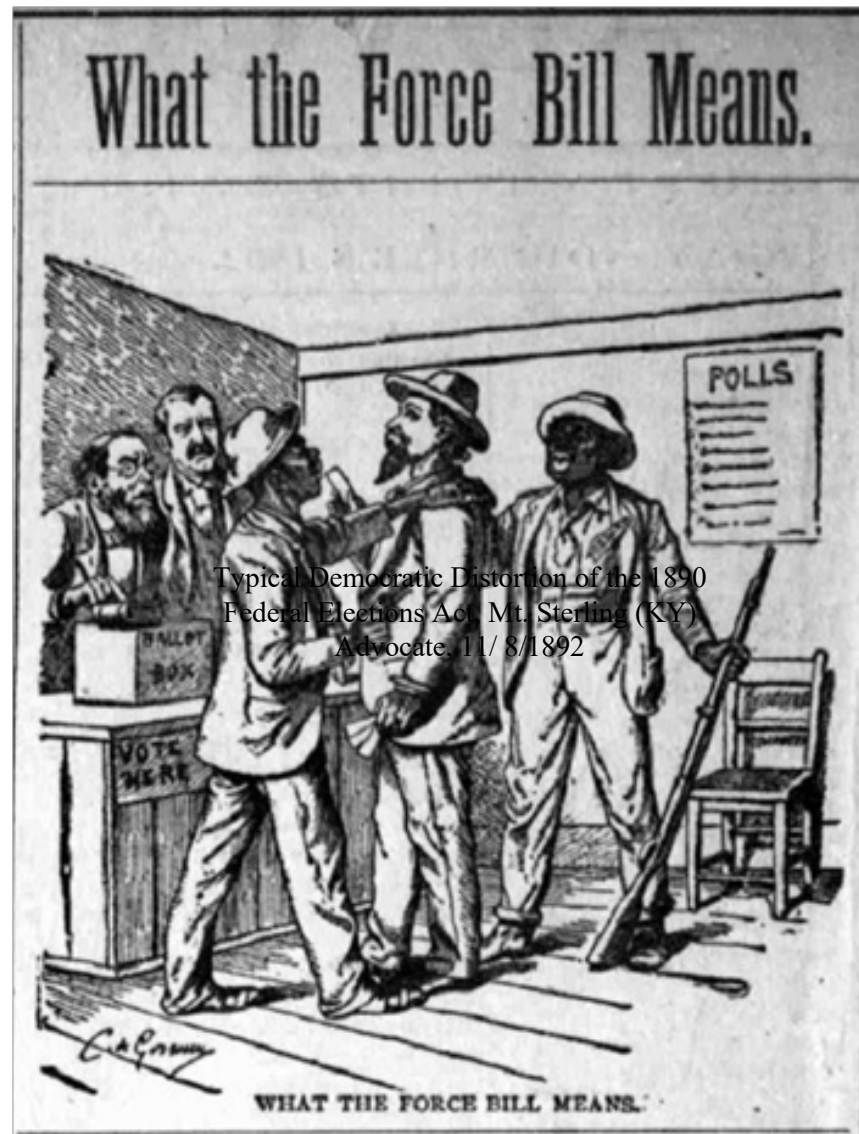




Most Confederate monuments go up during the Nadir.

# Why 1890?

- “Mississippi Plan,” new state constitution disfranchises African Americans
- Massacre at Wounded Knee sends Natives to their nadir
- Democrats defeat Federal Elections Act. Republicans back away from the cause.



Typical Democratic Distortion of the 1890  
Federal Elections Act, Mt. Sterling (KY)  
Advocate, 11/ 8/1892

Confederate monuments never unified  
Charlottesville and never will.











"GIDDAP, UNCLE!"

Painted by Eda, V. Brown for Cream of Wheat Co.

Copyright 1914 by Cream of Wheat Co.

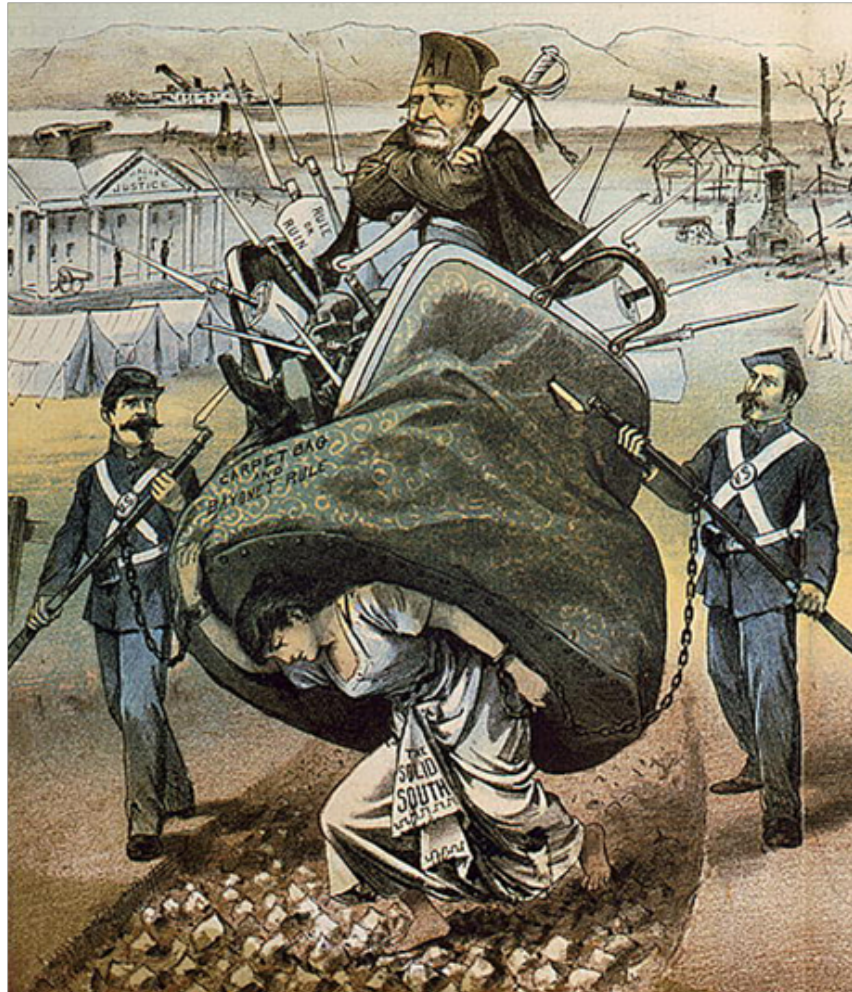






In 1965, SC Says It Seceded for “States’ Rights”





Traditional Reconstruction Image

## Three Key Concepts

- Historiography, “the study of history, or of the writing of history.”
- Political efficacy, “a sense that one can have some impact,” hence is a part of the polity.
- Hieratic scale, “use of size, height, materials, etc., to proclaim the importance of the person or cause.”

THAT MEN OF HONOR MIGHT FOREVER KNOW  
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF FREEDOM.  
DEDICATED SOUTH CAROLINIANS STOOD  
AND WERE COUNTED FOR THEIR HERITAGE  
AND CONVICTIONS. ABIDING FAITH IN THE  
SACREDNESS OF STATES RIGHTS PROVIDED  
THEIR CREED. HERE, MANY EARNED  
ETERNAL GLORY.



# What is the effect of this lie today?

1. Makes us all stupid (bad history).
2. Minimizes role of African Americans.
3. Valorizes the Confederate cause.
4. Bolsters white supremacy.
5. Alienates people of color from school, especially history/social studies. Widens performance gap.

# What happened during Reconstruction?

Tougaloo students said: That was the period right after the Civil War when blacks took over the Southern states, but they were too soon out of slavery, so they screwed up, and whites had to take control again.

# Twin Legacies of the Nadir Today

1. Distorted History [right in this room]
2. Sundown Towns

# Other Effects of the Nadir

- Eugenics [CA sterilization; David Starr Jordan]
- IQ Tests [Lewis Terman, Stanford-Binet]
- SAT [What does it stand for?]
- Residential segregation within cities (D)
- Racial ghettos in large cities



# What Caused the Nadir to End?

- “Great Migration” plus sundown towns leads to political representation.
- Imperialism ends. “Third world” nations wind up in the U.N.
- Hitler and Nazi Germany shows us what can happen.

Our sites are still so white!

Compare, say,

Museum of Man, Dominican Republic

Great Blacks in Wax, Baltimore

# Modest Proposals for Confederate Monuments

1. Move them all to a Nadir Park or Confederate cemetery.
2. Contextualize them with accurate markers that tell about the Nadir. Use the word “propaganda.”
3. Honor heroes on the other side: anti-Confederate or anti-racist white(s); black leaders.









THREE AND A HALF MILES SOUTHWEST,  
AT MONROE, MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM  
MAHONE WAS BORN, DECEMBER 1, 1826.  
HE SERVED BRILLIANTLY IN THE CONFED-  
ERATE ARMY THROUGHOUT THE WAR, AND  
WON THE TITLE, "HERO OF THE CRATER",  
AT PETERSBURG, JULY 30, 1864. HE WAS  
UNITED STATES SENATOR, 1881-1887.  
MAHONE DIED IN WASHINGTON, OCTOBER  
8, 1895.



## W.E.B. DuBois on Reconstruction

"One cannot study Reconstruction without first frankly facing the facts of universal lying."

Reconstruction history was "one of the most stupendous efforts the world ever saw to discredit human beings, an effort involving universities, history, science, social life, and religion."

“We have got to the place where we cannot use our experiences during and after the Civil War for the uplift and enlightenment of mankind.”

- There is a reciprocal relationship between truth about the past and justice in the present.
- When we achieve justice in the present, then we can face the past more openly
- When we tell the truth about the past, we can see the continuing problems and make it right from here on.

# What You Can Do About Biased History

- Give teachers my book!
- Teach them the Nadir.
- Research a Confederate monument.  
(Pick a *bad* one!) Get it down (to a museum?).

## What You Can Do About Biased History in HS

- Give your teacher my book!
- Teach them the Nadir.
- Point out its relevance today.



Despite heroic steps toward change,  
Richmond's public history still legitimizes  
parades like these  
and the attitudes that underlie them.  
Richmond has only just begun to achieve a  
landscape of truth and justice.



# Modest Proposals for Confederate Monuments

1. Move them all to the Confederate cemetery.
2. Add markers there, telling when each went up, and why.
3. Contextualize them with accurate markers that tell about the Nadir. Use the word “propaganda.”
4. Add to your landscape African Americans and anti-Confederate or anti-racist whites.

# Further Corrections to Richmond's distorted public history

- Un-name Jeff Davis Highway with markers explaining why.
- Get Lincoln's walk onto the landscape so it can be followed.
- Mark Reconstruction with markers at the Capitol, City Hall, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Good marker for William Mahone.

# Modest Proposals for Monument Avenue

1. Move them all to a Nadir Park or Confederate cemetery.
2. Desegregate sexually: add Elizabeth Van Lew and Mary Bowser.
3. Add enslaved African Americans to Jefferson Davis. (The bars are already in place.)
4. Add anti-Confederate or anti-racist white(s).
5. Contextualize them with accurate markers that tell about the Nadir. Use the word “propaganda.”

**Note: the monuments *have* all been removed.**

# What You Can Do About Biased History in HS

- Give your teacher my book!
- Teach them the Nadir.
- Point out its relevance today.
- Suggest ways students can research it.



## 4 Movements about Race Relations:

- BLM
- De-Confederatizing America
- Improving college campuses
- Ending sundown towns

## 3 Kinds of Racism

- Cultural racism [e.g., textbook treatments of Vasco da Gama]
- Individual racism [e.g., Dylann Roof]
- Institutional (or structural) racism [e.g., Skymall catalog]

# History and the 4 Movements

- BLM ties to slave patrollers, SDTs
- De-Confederatizing America, tied to Nadir
- Campuses: Calhoun College, SAE lynching song, Byrd Stadium (UMD)
- Ending sundown towns: DWB policing, Ferguson, etc.

# The Truth Shall Make Us Free

The truth shall make us free.

The truth shall make us free.

The truth shall make us free someday.

Oh, deep in my heart, I do believe,

We shall overcome someday.

# Patriotism, not Nationalism





“Patriotism” [Frederick Douglass]: “rebukes his country for its sins and does not excuse them.”

“Nationalism”: “always right, never wrong, except by accident, and with the best of intentions.”



# Basic Premise

Telling the truth about the past helps cause justice in the present. Achieving justice in the present helps us tell the truth about the past.