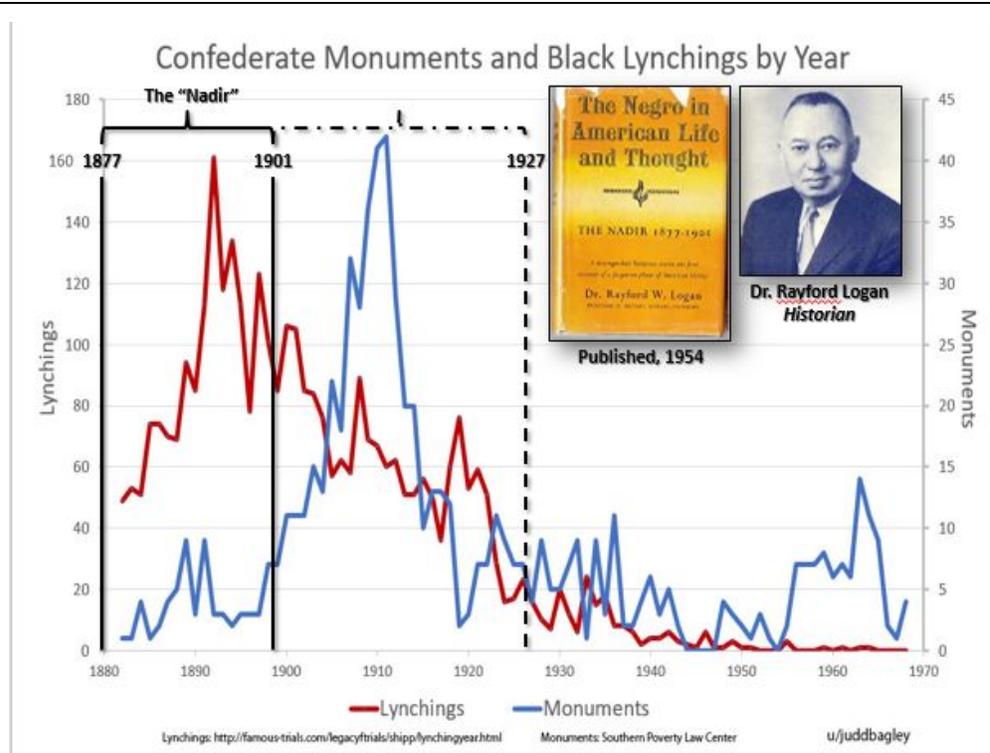


Reading Guide for The 1857 Project Essays

“Did St. Louis find a way to end the civil war over ‘Lost Cause’ monuments?” by Robert Joiner, pgs 59-61

Excerpt	<p>“The plain truth of the matter,” scholar W.E.B. Du Bois wrote in Crisis Magazine in 1931, is that an appropriate inscription of any of the monuments might read: “sacred to the memory of those who fought to Perpetuate Human Slavery.” On the other hand, his observation overlooks the millions of Americans who genuinely think about the Civil War in a different context. Their feelings make real the agony on the faces on statues like the one that once sat in Forest Park. Who can say that the family depicted in bronze in that concrete slab didn’t foretell stories of ordinary people worrying about the loss of loved ones, unidentified in death, left to rot on battlefields or dropped into unmarked graves or trenches. To some of these families, the monuments dotting the landscape probably are less an abstraction but a concrete (pardon the pun) source of comfort and closure for their losses. Of course, it might have made a world of difference if etchings on these monuments or plaques had at least acknowledged Du Bois’ point that slavery was at the heart of the war. Trout seems hopeful that both sides can learn and appreciate why these artifacts exist and save them, whether they acknowledge slavery or not. When he thinks about monuments, which is often, Trout says he tends to recall a favorite preservation quote, which says “through interpretation comes understanding, through understanding comes appreciation, through appreciation comes preservation.”</p>
Key Names, Dates, and Terms	Confederacy, Monument, “Lost Cause” propaganda/ideology, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Reconstruction, Confederate Monument Association
Supplemental Texts	<p>Primary Sources:</p> <p>Monumental Conversations, from Silence is Not an Option with Don Lemon</p> <p>Videos:</p> <p>How Textbooks Were Used to Shape Understanding of the Confederacy</p> <p>Images:</p>

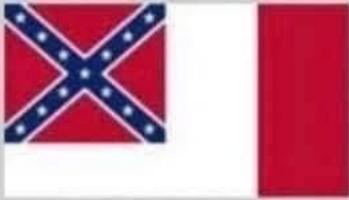


This is a synthesis of three different sources: The lynching numbers are derived from [Famous Trials by Professor Douglas O. Linder](#). Data on monuments is from the Southern Poverty Law Center. The Nadir is from Rayford Logan. Photo from the [American Historical Association](#).

ABOLITIONIST FLAG, c. 1859



The flag represents an abolitionist reconfiguration of the United States, deliberately excluding the slave states of the South. The twenty stars represent the free and border states in 1859, while the four stripes representing the slave-holding states of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia have been eliminated, leaving stripes for nine of the original thirteen states. This flag was discovered in 1996 at a tavern frequented by abolitionists in Cherry Valley, Ohio, where one of the sons of the militant abolitionist John Brown lived. (Gilder Lehrman Collection)

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">The History of Confederate Flags</h2> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="width: 75%;"> <p>"Stars and Bars": 1861-1863</p> <p>This was the original flag. It was made to look similar to the Union Flag. Individual states had their own flag and battle flag.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="width: 75%;"> <p>"Stainless Banner": 1863-1865</p> <p>The next flag featured the battle flag of Robert E Lee in Northern Virginia. The white space represented the superiority of the white race</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="width: 75%;"> <p>"Blood-Stained Banner": 1865</p> <p>The second flag looked like a white flag of surrender so they added a red stripe. This was the final Confederate flag.</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="width: 75%;"> <p>What is this then?</p> <p>This is a version of Robert E Lee's battle flag that was later adopted as the Naval Jack. Many historians argue that this flag was rarely used because it was so niche. The flag started to be used in 1904 by Confederate vets, but only became popular after states flew it at their capitals to support segregation laws during the Civil Rights era in Dixiecrat states and is now used as a symbol of white supremacy nation wide.</p> </div> </div>
<p>Guiding Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What role did slavery play in the Civil War? • How were textbooks used to influence the perception of the Civil War? • How did the losing side of the Civil War get to control the narrative and write the history of the war? • How do symbols like flags and monuments wield power over people? • What feelings and connotative meanings are connected with Confederate monuments and symbols? • Why is the Confederacy so hotly contested?
<p>Discussion Questions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do Confederate symbols influence the region in which you live? • How does changing the location of Confederate monuments change their meaning? • Why is the claim that the Confederacy was based on upholding

	<p>states' rights rather than preserving slavery a controversial concept?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many proponents of the Confederacy argue their motives for preserving Civil War iconography are based solely on “heritage, not hate.” Why is this contentious?• What is the connection between statues, flags, other Confederate items, and white supremacy?
Writing Prompt	<p>Develop a thorough and well-evidenced response to defend, challenge, or qualify the agreement between the city of St. Louis and the Civil War Museum to resolve the debate over the Confederate monument. Do you think this approach presents a good way forward for other cities to move beyond controversy and let people on both sides find peace?</p>