

Lost Cause Textbooks: Civil War Education in the South from the 1890s to the 1920s

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Abstract

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(Under the direction of John Neff)

This thesis analyzes the origins, creation and implementation of Lost Cause history textbooks in the South in the decades following the Civil War and Reconstruction. Directed by secondary source material relating to the topic, primary source materials—magazines, newspapers, board minutes, etc.— were explored to find evidence for the motives of rewriting a history of the Civil War more favorable to the former Confederate states. These motives included the positive reflection of former Confederates by future generations of white Southerners and the advancement of white supremacy in the Jim Crow era. Several textbooks from both northern and southern authors, published in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were compared differentiate the Lost Cause narrative of the war from that of the victorious North. The Lost Cause narrative in these history textbooks promoted the following: the constitutionality of southern secession, the benevolence of the institution of slavery, the belligerency of Abraham Lincoln, and the heroism of Confederate soldiers and officers during the war. Primary source material was also discovered that showed how Confederate organizations like the United Confederate Veterans, United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the Sons of Confederate Veterans worked with state governments to expel textbooks deemed unfriendly to the South in favor of history books which promoted the Lost Cause. As a result of this educational movement, students throughout the South, both black and white, were taught the inferiority of the African race, the injustices done against the Confederacy by the North, and that the Southerners were right in all their actions for several decades to come.

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Introduction

I grew up and attended schools in Mississippi all my life. My personal history with Mississippi schools and history textbooks helped me notice a difference in how the Civil War was taught between the primary and secondary school level and the collegiate level. In middle school and high school, my textbooks presented the Civil War as a conflict between two distinct cultures and economic systems. The South left the Union because it valued states' rights and the North fought the South to preserve national unity. There was little mention of slavery and a heavy emphasis on sectional differences being the cause of the war. Being a young student that only liked to look at the pictures and maps of battles in textbooks, I was completely fine with the way I was taught the Civil War. Then I attended the University of Mississippi. In my History and English courses, I read multiple slave narratives which provided a greater perspective on the southern past. I was taught how causal the institution of slavery in the South was in bringing about the Civil War. After learning this new information about the antebellum South and the Civil War, I asked myself: "Why was I not taught this sooner?" So I attempted to find out why I was not taught in middle school and high school about slavery, the real reason why the South seceded and why the war was fought.

Currently, the Civil War occupies the prominent position in the teaching of United States history. It stands at the center of history textbooks, often having a few chapters dedicated to its understanding. It is the culmination of Early American history courses and the dramatic opening of Modern American studies. The war's causes, actors,

events, and aftermath are the subject of thousands on thousands of pages of scholarship. As with any significant historical event the Civil War has been the subject of numerous interpretations. It is necessary to understand the origins of these interpretations in order to comprehend why the Civil War is not uniformly portrayed by Americans today.

A study conducted in August 2015 by the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion showed just how divided Americans are on both the memory and education of the Civil War. When asked via cell phone or landline the question: “Was slavery the main reason for the Civil War, or not?” only fifty-three percent of participants said that slavery led the country to the Civil War whereas forty-one percent disagreed. This is troubling because the vast majority of Civil War historians agree that slavery was the cause of the conflict. When looking further into the regional breakdown of the poll, nearly half of participants in the South (49%) responded “No” to the previous question. What is still disconcerting is that around forty percent of participants in the Northeast and Midwest responded “No,” as did twenty-seven percent of participants in the West. As to whether or not school curriculums should include that slavery caused the Civil War, at least a majority of residents in the West (66%), Northeast (55%) and Midwest (54%) agreed with this statement. Southerners divide on this proposition with forty-nine percent believing slavery should be taught as the cause of the war and forty-five percent reporting that it should not.¹

Responses to the first question are troubling because they reveal how divided the American public is on a tenet held by those in the academic community: no slavery, no war. The argument for this position has become diluted in American textbooks alongside

¹ “A Nation Still Divided: The Confederate Flag,” *McClatchy-Marist Poll*, accessed March 28, 2017, <http://maristpoll.marist.edu/86-a-nation-still-divided-the-confederate-flag/>

past sectional, economic, and political differences. Why then do so many Southerners as well as many other Americans avoid the idea of slavery and its role in shaping American history? It is possible that in the case of social, racial, and religious groups text writers circumvent mention of the conflict for the sake of this country's social harmony and for broader textbook sales.² Not only is slavery avoided as the cause of what divided the country, but it also presents consequences regarding racial relations that Americans still have to face today.

The interpretation of Confederate emblems, monuments, and memory has become a point of contentious debate in the United States over the past few years. Some groups argue that the symbols are physical embodiments of hatred and white supremacy. Other groups claim that these Confederate symbols are mere representations of an old, honored heritage. Of course, the complete nature of that heritage is seldom explicated by members of this latter group, explicitly that the antebellum South placed millions of African-Americans in bondage. Why is it that, in the twenty-first century, many Americans all across the country are able to defend and even glorify a regime so steeped in cruelty towards other human beings? Because many Americans have not been taught that the Confederacy fought because of slavery's presence in the South. In order for Americans today to have clarity regarding the conflict that divided them as a nation, the origin and dissemination of a historical narrative must be understood. An answer lies in how Southerners have been taught the Civil War in schools in the decades since the Civil War.

Beginning in the 1890s and continuing well into the 1920s, Southern writers, organizations and academic institutions constructed a narrative known today as "The Lost

² Frances Fitzgerald, *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 18.

Cause.” The Lost Cause was a literary and intellectual movement, which originated from the remnant of the traditional, white Southern society that tried to reconcile the causes and outcome of the war in a way that best portrayed the antebellum South and the Confederacy as innocent, heroic, and right in its actions. This retelling of the Civil War meant to defend the memory of past Southerners and the dignity of those present and future. A plethora of history textbooks influenced by the Lost Cause were created and distributed to Southern schools that placed an emphasis on a morally upright Confederacy that acted out of necessity and seceded within the legal parameters of the Constitution. Aided by state and local governments, proponents of “The Lost Cause” were able to monitor the teaching of the Civil War in schools. All textbooks deemed unfriendly to the South by textbook committees were removed, unless revised by their respective authors. As Lost Cause ideas dominated Civil War education in the South, elements of the Southern narrative disseminated into other areas of the country. This is why many in the South disagree with the academic narrative of the war, but also in other parts of the country as well.

Lost Cause textbooks, as well as newspaper articles, board minutes, and *Confederate Veteran* articles regarding textbooks, are the main subject material of this paper. Other signs of the Lost Cause’s existence in the South can be currently seen through both Civil War monuments and a few state flags, but this paper discusses Lost Cause textbooks. Textbooks were chosen because they are one way to observe a type of perspective offered to a certain population of students. Not only do textbooks present facts, but they also offer a particular tone and impression of historical events.³ Lost Cause

³ Fitzgerald, *America Revised*, 18.

textbooks are interesting because they are good examples of motivated history—written with moral language and decidedly biased towards a single group—and they represent the attitudes and prejudices of the Jim Crow era. So the desires for those that sponsored these Lost Cause texts were to present a narrative that allowed white, Southern children to reflect positively on the South's past, and to assert the attitude of white supremacy that characterized the Jim Crow South.

I: Origins of the Lost Cause

One of the old adages familiar to both those who are students of history and those who are not is that “History is written by the victor.” The simple meaning of this phrase is that in a territorial, political, or cultural conflict, the prevailing party is able to assert enough authority to have its own narrative recorded. Not only is the victor’s narrative recorded, but it is widely-accepted in both society and academic institutions. The losing party in a conflict, regardless of its role as an instigator or a victim, has its story disregarded or suppressed. Long after the last shots are fired and the fighting ceases, a new war is waged. One in which the battles do not occur in open fields, but in the classroom. The objective of this new war is not to occupy or conquer land, but it is to control how the war is to be remembered. This is the context for how many Southerners felt in the aftermath of the war. Knowing what the rest of the country believed with regards to blame and motive for the conflict is key to understanding why Southerners felt their perspective of the conflict was being ignored.

In the years following the war, the memory of slavery was ever-present in the minds of many who favored the outcome of Northern victory. Frederick Douglass, for instance, encouraged other freedmen and freed women to resist empathy and sentiment, and to not seek reconciliation in accord with soldiers’ sacrifice.⁴ He offered a biblical

⁴ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American memory* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), 92.

allusion to symbolize how the South was to approach Reconstruction: “The prodigal son should at least turn his back upon the field of swine, and his face toward home, before we make haste to fall upon his neck, and for him kill the fattened calf.”⁵ The fact that Douglass alluded to the Bible suggests the moral language that both Northerners and Southerners used to describe the conflict and the parties involved. One side was definitively right, and the other was undoubtedly wrong. To Douglass, the war had not been one of “sectional character,” but rather “It was a war of ideas, a battle of principles and ideas which united one section and divided the other; a war between the old and new, slavery and freedom, barbarism and civilization.”⁶ Many today can agree with Douglass’s view of the war as being one of two, distinct ideologies, but many former Confederates felt threatened by his remonstrance of the antebellum way of life.

To counter the assertion presented by supporters of the Lost Cause concerning how the Union won the fighting, former Union commander Ulysses S. Grant dismissed this claim as post-war Confederate propaganda stating: “It is said that we overwhelmed the South. In foreign journals and foreign assemblies it is put this way, that we overran the South with the scum of the world—with hirelings and Hessians.... This is the way public opinion was made during the war, and this is the way history is made now. We never overwhelmed the South, and I am only sorry we could not have done so and ended the war and its miseries. What we won from the South we won by hard fighting, and the odds, when there were odds, were never decisive.”⁷ Grant regarded the Lost Cause as a

⁵ Frederick Douglass, “Speech in Madison Square, New York, Decoration Day,” *Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress*, May 30, 1878, accessed February 9, 2018, <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mfd.23011/?sp=5>

⁶ Douglass, “Speech in Madison Square, New York, Decoration Day.”

⁷ Ulysses S. Grant, “The Relative Power of the North and South,” *The New York Herald* (New York, NY), May 31, 1878.

vehicle for public opinion in the post-war South similar to how propaganda was used during the war. In other words, he viewed this narrative to be constructed more on emotion than accuracy.

In addition to Grant, former Union commander William Tecumseh Sherman presented a clear answer as to where the blame for the fierce fight lay. During a speech given on May 27, 1878, Sherman said: “There are such things as abstract right and wrong, and when history is written, human action must take their place in one or the other category. We claim that, in the great civil war, we of the National Union Army were right, and our adversaries wrong; and no special pleading, no excuses, no personal motives, however pure and specious, can change the verdict of the war.”⁸ Disregarding whether or not Sherman’s indictment of the South was rightly placed, Southerners felt that their own memory and historical identity were in jeopardy.

The conclusion of the Civil War and its consequences proved detrimental to white Southerners’ political and socio-economic status. Many white Southerners had long benefitted from the institution of slavery. Regardless of whether or not they were directly involved in this system, white citizens enjoyed a society which advocated their superiority and thrived on the oppression of other human beings. Although this paper cannot give a full description of the hardships endured by African-Americans, it must always be affirmed that the society, economy, culture, and wealth of the antebellum South was constructed on the exploitation of the enslaved. Good sources for this topic include, but are not limited to, Eric Foner’s *Forever Free*,⁹ Harriet Jacob’s *Incidents in*

⁸ Quoted in Grant, “The Relative Power of the North and South.”

⁹ Eric Foner, *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction* (New York: Knopf, 2001).

*the Life of a Slave Girl*¹⁰ and Stephanie Smallwood's *Saltwater Slavery*.¹¹

Since the end of the war, Southerners crafted explanations as to how and why the war began and why it ended. Often religious undertones were included in these explanations. For instance, many southerners believe that the South had not been defeated in a fair fight, but it was overwhelmed by an infinitely numerically superior foe. It was therefore destined by Providence to lose.¹² Disgruntled white Southerners also complained that the Union enlisted immigrants who had no stake in this familial affair to fight on its behalf. Many even boasted that the South was never truly defeated on the battlefield. Notions such as these fed into the idea that the South was far more righteous than the North, but somehow God destined for them to be defeated. Some Southerners found other ways to justify the Confederacy's motives for the war and one of those means was the Constitution.

Ideas for what Southerners believed can be more clearly seen in Edward Pollard's writing. Edward Pollard's work *The Lost Cause, a New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* was one of the earliest written works containing Lost Cause doctrine. Published in 1866, Pollard's book shows that the Lost Cause was being created almost immediately following the Confederacy's defeat. Pollard dedicated a significant portion of his work to explaining why Southern states seceded and how they were in their constitutional right to do so. He writes:

Even if the States are to be firmly held in the Union; even if the authority of the Union is to be held supreme in that respect, it does not follow that it is to be supreme in all

¹⁰ Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

¹¹ Stephanie Smallwood, *Saltwater Slavery: A Middle Passage from Africa to American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

¹² Caroline Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reunification* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 134.

other respects; it does not follow that it is ‘a national government over the States and people alike.’ It is for the South to preserve every remnant of her rights, and even, though parting with the doctrine of secession, to beware of the extremity of surrendering State Rights in gross, and consenting to a ‘National Government,’ with an unlimited power of legislation that will consider the States divided only by imaginary lines.¹³

Pollard reasoned the power of the national government was not supreme to the sovereignty of the states and their citizens. Likewise, it was the decision of the states to form a union in the first place. Because it was the states’ decision to form a union, then it was also theirs to dissolve it. Pollard derived this explication from his interpretation of the Constitution. Pollard claimed that it was the Union which breached the authority of the Constitution, not the South who had legally seceded. So, according to Pollard, the Constitution gave the states of the Confederacy the right to secede from the Union. This specific interpretation on state sovereignty came to dominate Lost Cause textbooks later in the twentieth century.

As far as slavery is concerned, Pollard not only defends the institution’s role in the South, but he also explains that the North went to extra-legal means to terminate it. He wrote that “the Government party proposed, in its amended platform to abolish slavery by an extra-constitutional means, there was no great difference between the positions of these two parties in regard to slavery itself.”¹⁴ Essentially Pollard argued that the South too disdained slavery, but they were content to let the system die out. When the institution would have died out and for how long the South would have tolerated it,

¹³ Edward Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates: comprising a full and authentic account of the rise and progress of the late southern Confederacy—the campaigns, battles, incidents, and adventures of the most gigantic struggle of the world’s history* (New York: E. B. Treat, 1866), 750.

¹⁴ Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 572.

Pollard left unanswered. The North, however, was willing to violate the law and see the institution dissolved prematurely in an effort to strike at the South's wealth. Although some in the South denied slavery as a cause of the war, many supported the idea that, catalyst or not, it had been allowed by the Constitution and sanctioned by the Bible.¹⁵ Pollard was a pioneer for the Lost Cause narrative of the war, and in the wake of blame that was directed at the South, many former Confederates clung to this idea of the Lost Cause.

Lost Cause ideas, such as those in Pollard's writing, were actively supported by many in the South. Not only this, but many Southerners wanted their idea of the war to be a part of general education. According to Mary B. Poppenheim, historian-general of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Southerners wanted to "struggle for principles they believed to be of vital importance."¹⁶ By this she meant that Southerners wanted to counter, in their minds, the false and antagonistic Northern story of the war in order "to keep from bias the minds of those who wish to know the true history of the United States, and of the great Civil War in which the South suffered so severely."¹⁷ The true history that Poppenheim mentions was a history in which the South's motives were pure and it was free of blame.

A United Confederate Veterans history committee wrote that "The Southern people desire to retain from the wreck in which their constitutional views, their domestic institutions, the mass of their property, and the lives of their best and bravest were lost the knowledge that their conduct was honorable throughout and that their submission at last

¹⁵ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reunification*, 134.

¹⁶ Mary Poppenheim, *History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy* (Richmond: Garret and Massie, 1938), 185.

¹⁷ Poppenheim, *History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 185.

to overwhelming numbers and resources in no way blackened their motives or established the wrong of the cause for which they fought.”¹⁸ The memory of the antebellum South and Confederate soldiers was clearly important to Lost Cause advocates, and this thesis concerns itself with a particular demographic that the Lost Cause targeted—children.

Perhaps one of the sincerest motives behind the Lost Cause had to do with future Southern generations. In her work on the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Karen Cox states: “The UDC, like other Confederate organizations, wanted children to believe that although the Confederacy suffered military defeat, the cause was still just. Furthermore, Lost Cause supporters did not want children to regard their ancestors as traitors or rebels. As textbooks with a pro-Confederate slant made their way into southern classrooms, children learned instead that the region’s veterans were heroes and defenders of states’ rights.”¹⁹ Cox’s claim concerning how Southerners wanted their children to remember them points out a very human train of thought. Very rarely do people both past and present desire to be remembered as inhumane or evil, whether or not these labels are deserved. The thought that must have surely lurked in the minds of former Confederates was if their children would think of themselves as inheriting the image of injustices from their ancestors.

White southerners, who were contemporaries of the nineteenth century, also had to consider the possibility of racial equality in a post-bellum South. For many, racism was too engrained in their culture to allow this scenario to unfold. To prevent this possible future, Southerners furthered the systematic revision of the war, its causes, and its

¹⁸ History Committee of the United Confederate Veterans at Nashville, “Patriotic School Histories,” *The Confederate Veteran* V (September 1897): 450.

¹⁹ Karen Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2003), 126-127.

outcomes. The most sensible way to accomplish this goal was for Lost Cause advocates to create, direct, and oversee Civil War education in Southern schools.

II: The Desire for Education Control

Post-war Confederate groups employed numerous methods to create a positive historical identity for the South. Among these was the construction of monuments to commemorate war-time figures, essay contests, and even collectible playing cards of Confederate generals and politicians. The purpose of this propaganda was for Southern children to think positively of their Southern past. But perhaps one of the most concerted efforts by Lost Cause promoters was influencing the educational field. John Dewey defined education as “The process of remaking experience, giving it a more socialized value through increased individual experience by giving the individual better control over his powers.”²⁰ History teaching had the potential to create a distinct social attitude, and the texts that school teachers taught from mattered. From a prescriptive view of education, schools tend to teach what the prevailing culture believes to be good values. Public schools are the incubators where official knowledge is transmitted with textbooks being the medium. Students then passively retain important social values and accepted truths that are sanctioned by the political and educational leadership.²¹ Southerners attempted to develop an attitude that reflected positively on the South.

Around the late 1890s, Southerners spoke out against histories they deemed biased against the South’s Civil War past. In 1896, ex-governor Richard B. Hubbard of

²⁰ Quoted in Bessie Louise Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History of the United States* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1970), 44.

²¹ Charles Eagles, *Civil Rights, Culture Wars* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 166.

Texas delivered an address regarding the current state of Confederate memory in Southern schools:

For thirty years our children have been using in our public and private schools and college histories written by prejudiced men and women and issued by the great publishing houses of the North and East. Every professor and teacher in the Southern states knows that until the last half of the decade or less, the actors in that mighty conflict on the side of the Confederacy were flippantly spoken of as ‘Catalines’ and ‘conspirators’ and ‘traitors’ and ‘rebels.’ Only now and then was a Southern victory ever acknowledged or recorded! Most often silence signaled the triumphs won from Manassas to Appomattox, by sea or land.²²

Hubbard did not reprimand Southern teachers and professors, but rather he blamed Northern publishers and textbook authors for acting in a prejudiced manner against the South. The subject that frustrated Hubbard the most was that the Confederates were labelled as traitors, conspirators, and rebels. The idea that the former Confederates refused to be called rebels is ironic enough, but it is connotation here that matters. The labels that described the Confederates were negative, notorious, and archetypal of evil. The prospect that this was going to be how white, Southern children remembered their ancestors in this way was what Hubbard found unacceptable.

Hubbard was just one example of a political figure in the Jim Crow South that supported Lost Cause ideology, but one woman would eventually come to dominate the Lost Cause movement. Mildred Rutherford was a prominent figure in the early history of Lost Cause activity. As the historian general of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, Rutherford devoted herself to promoting a more positive narrative of the Civil War

²² Richard B. Hubbard, “Southern Social Relations,” *The Confederate Veteran* IV (December 1896): 442.

South. Similarly, she was appalled by the host of biased Northern textbooks that Hubbard mentioned. In 1921, she claimed that eighty-one percent of the schools and colleges in the South were using “textbooks untrue to the South” and seventeen percent were “using histories omitting most important facts concerning the South.”²³

As a Southerner, and proud UDC member, Rutherford called for a crusade of educational reform and several other leaders in the Lost Cause community empathized with her. For example, Congressman Benjamin H. Hill declared “We owe it to our dead, to our living, and to our children to preserve the truth and repel falsehoods, so that we may secure just judgement from the only tribunal before which we may appear and be fully and fairly heard, and that tribunal is the bar of history.”²⁴ In a similar fashion, writer Thomas Nelson Page reasoned: “In a few years there will be no South to demand a history if we have a history as it is now written. How do we stand today in the eyes of the world? We are esteemed ignorant, illiterate, cruel, semi-barbarous, a race sunken in brutality and vice, a race of slave drivers who disrupted the Union in order to perpetuate human slavery and who as a people have contributed nothing to the advancement of mankind.”²⁵ Evidently there was a fair amount of animosity felt by many Southerners as to how the Civil War was portrayed.

Even though the rhetoric depicted clear sides of right and wrong, the Lost Cause was intended to be a cultural and academic movement rather than a terrorist one. To put it plainly, this movement did not intend to make the Old South rise again literally, but symbolically. Even with this variety of opinions, the Lost Cause was not about taking up

²³ Mildred Rutherford, *The Truths of History* (Athens, GA: 1920), i.

²⁴ Benjamin Hill quoted in Rutherford, iv-v.

²⁵ Thomas Nelson Page quoted in Rutherford, v.

arms again or continuing the fight for an independent Confederacy. The dreams of a reborn Confederacy had simply faded away by the late nineteenth century.²⁶ Lost Cause advocates attempted to defend the memory of the Confederacy. Former president of the UDC proclaimed that chief goal of the daughters:

To conduct a campaign against error, those who would lead must know that they know what they know. In our work we must not only love and honor our heroes and learn the true story of their deeds, but we must know how our people arrived at their course of action when the time for the parting of the ways was come.²⁷

Education reform offered a new type of warfare. Not one that would be waged on the battlefield, but in the classroom. This war would try to conquer the hearts and minds of future generations—one that would guarantee that Confederates' children, grandchildren and great grandchildren would know that the motives and cause of Southern independence had been true, legal and above all righteous.²⁸ Unwilling to let their cause die with the wartime generation, several organizations composed entirely of white Southerners ensured that the Lost Cause would alternatively complicate, promote and hinder racial and regional reconciliation well into the twenty first century.

²⁶ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 159.

²⁷ W. D. Lamar, "Reason for Faith of Southern Women," *The Confederate Veteran* XXI (January 1913): 31.

²⁸ Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*, 159.

III: Veterans, Daughters, and Sons

If fear against Northern indoctrination was the spark that ignited the Lost Cause, then organizations were the engine that allowed it to grow and persist. One of the earliest of these organizations was the UCV, or United Confederate Veterans. The UCV was first formed in 1889 and similar to its northern counterpart, the Grand Army of the Republic, it was a space for former Confederate soldiers to voice their concerns over contemporary events. Opportunities for former Confederate soldiers to reflect on the war became more accessible with the publication of S. A. Cunningham's magazine *The Confederate Veteran* which attracted poems, copies of war correspondence, and memories from aging soldiers and their families. This magazine became a voice of the UCV, a community in which Lost Cause ideals flourished. Such an extensive formation of ideas allowed the UCV to participate in education reform with a unified message.²⁹

As more and more members of the UCV rejected the Northern narrative, as seen from figures like Douglass and Sherman, the strength of a history crusade in the South became more and more pronounced. In 1895, a UCV Historical Committee stated the basic principles of this crusade. This committee urged a social and educational revival that would demand "vindication of the Southern people, and a refutation of the slanders, the misrepresentations and the imputations which they have so long and patiently

²⁹ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 277.

borne.”³⁰ Like many other committees created by Confederate organizations to come later, this committee defended the right of secession and dismissed slavery as the cause of the war. “Slavery” the committee a stated, “was the South’s misfortune, the whole country’s fault.”³¹ If the whole country was to blame for slavery’s existence in the Southern states, then slavery was not the cause which pitted fellow countrymen against one another. The UCV committee resolved that “The true cause of the war between the states, was the dignified withdrawal of the Southern states from the Union to avoid the continual breaches of that domestic tranquility guaranteed, but not consummated by the constitution, and not the high moral purposes of the North to destroy slavery, which followed incidentally as a war measure.”³²

The United Daughters of the Confederacy was founded in 1894, shortly after that of the UCV. Their activities almost immediately ranged from “the task of marking soldiers’ graves to a comprehensive educational and historical program which commands the interest and respect of thoughtful people everywhere.”³³ Town squares throughout the South provide ample evidence of the UDC’s efforts as monument builders, and the group also provided financial assistance to widows and orphans of former Confederate soldiers. Chief among the UDC’s work was providing financial assistance for the education of young men and women of Confederate descent. This service was more than just an act of charity. The UDC had an ulterior motive to instill the Confederate amidst upcoming generations of white southern youths. From this perspective, the organization’s acts for

³⁰ “Report of the Historical Committee,” *The Confederate Veteran* III (June 1895): 164.

³¹ “Report of the Historical Committee,” 166.

³² “Report of the Historical Committee,” 165.

³³ Poppenheim, *History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 1.

public welfare were influenced by its loyalty to Lost Cause ideals.³⁴ If one adhered to the UDC's values, then he/she benefited from the organization's financial benevolence. Foremost, among the UDC's work was the recruitment of children into their post-war Confederate culture.

The Daughters made attempts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to encourage the southern youth to value Confederate culture. One of the ways that the Daughters tried to spur on Confederate culture was the implementation of an annual essay contest. Each UDC chapter would offer a prize for the best essay submitted a, "handsome set of books carefully chosen from the works of the best Southern authors."³⁵ Most notable among the Daughters' initial attempts to rally children to the Lost Cause was the formation of the Children of the Confederacy. At a convention in Asheville, North Carolina, Vice-President-General Holt reported that "the work of the Children of the Confederacy had become firmly established, and was being directed exactly along the lines of its constitution. For the first time the registration of the C. of C. was reported, there being 1,314 children from fourteen Divisions."³⁶ Holt's address regarding this organization showed that it did have a fair number of followers. Many in the UDC were pleased with the C. of C. In the hope of garnering more support for the C. of C, Cornelia B. Stone spoke at a UDC convention in Houston in 1909: "Greater activity in the organization of C. of C. cannot be too strongly urged upon the chapters. For upon the training of these boys and girls—our citizens and patriots of the future—depends the

³⁴ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 73-74.

³⁵ Owen Walker, "Medals for True History in Tennessee," *The Confederate Veteran* XIX (April 1911): 160.

³⁶ Poppenheim, *History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 188.

perpetuity of the organization.”³⁷ Like the UCV, the Daughters had the hope for longevity of their values.

From the founding, one of the UDC’s foremost desire was to influence the schooling of southern children, particularly in how the Civil War was portrayed. For instance, the Constitution of the Mississippi Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy says “The objects of this association are memorial, historical, benevolent, educational and social; to honor the memory of those who served and those who fell in the service of the Confederate States; to protect, preserve and mark places made historic by the Confederate States; to collect, and correct and preserve the material for a truthful history of the War Between the States.”³⁸ The correction of education was at the heart of the UDC’s mission, because they desired a truthful history.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the United Daughters of the Confederacy made organized efforts to have an active presence in Southern schools. The Daughters managed a consistent presence in the South’s white public schools between 1894 and 1919. This presence consisted of school visits, ceremonial activities to honor the birthdays of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis, and ensuring portraits of Lee and Davis were hung in classrooms. The UDC also sponsored essay contests for both students and teachers, and through the Daughters’ influence in state governments, public schools were renamed for Confederate heroes. In summary, the UDC intended for southern classrooms to be a place where the student would be immersed in Confederate culture.³⁹ The classroom was such a valuable space for the Daughters because it was a place where

³⁷ Poppenheim, *History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 186.

³⁸ Mississippi United Daughters of the Confederacy Collection, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, The University of Mississippi.

³⁹ Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 127.

young minds could be molded by Lost Cause ideals and its interpretation on the Civil War.

The Daughters' activities can also be observed in Katherine DuPre Lumpkin's *The Making of a Southerner*. In her autobiography, Lumpkin remembers the ringing call of Confederate organizations to educate white southern children. At veterans' reunions and within her own home, pro-Confederate education was considered important to the preservation of conservative values. The changes brought about by the movement to monitor what children learned about regional culture and the southern past were distinguishable in her childhood schoolrooms. She attended school in South Carolina, but her experience as a student in the early twentieth century was the experience of thousands of children who attended white public schools in the region.⁴⁰

Although the intentions of the UDC and UCV were to preserve and maintain their values among the region's white youth, the reality is that the very materials approved by these committees eventually made their way into the hands of black students, since they received the cast-off books of the white schools. Thus, young African-Americans were also exposed to a biased narrative, which included assertions about the inferiority of their race. This was not unintentional. Lost Cause textbooks, being often blatantly racist, were put in the hands of African-American children purposely by southern state legislatures to uphold the white supremacist order that dominated the South throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, in 1956 the Mississippi the House of Representatives passed a bill that required the State Library Commission to purchase books that endorsed white supremacy.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 127.

⁴¹ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 161.

As the twentieth century went on, the UDC's presence in Southern schools became all the more recognizable. By the 1920s most southern public schools had adopted pro-Confederate textbooks, created curricula that included the study of the Confederacy, and allowed students to be released from classes to attend Confederate Memorial Day ceremonies. Classrooms often included a portrait of Robert E. Lee next to that of George Washington.⁴² In his study of civil rights in Mississippi, historian John Dittmer argues that as recently as the 1990s, most whites in the state still believed in the Lost Cause myths of Reconstruction, which he attributed to "an interpretation drilled into the minds of generations of schoolchildren."⁴³ The UCV and UDC had similar motives for wanting to influence and oversee the education of the Civil War in public schools, but the schools were not their only concern. To fully control how the Civil War was taught, the UDC and UCV had to regulate the reading materials brought into the classroom.

Both the UDC and UCV formed history and/or textbook committees with the dual purpose to "select and designate such proper and truthful history of the United States, to be used in both public and private schools of the South," and to "put the seal of their condemnation upon such as are not truthful histories."⁴⁴ Likewise, other Southern states were quick to follow. As for the UDC, they met initial success in forming these committees. These panels were created and actively supported by their respective organizations and there is ample evidence of UDC and UCV committees partnering with state governments with the common goal of monitoring Civil War education.

Nearly all Southern states formed some type of textbook commission to prescribe

⁴² Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 160.

⁴³ Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 160.

⁴⁴ "From Report of the Committee on History," *The Confederate Veteran* VI (October 1898): 476.

textbooks for all public schools instead of leaving the choice up to local school systems, as most Northern states did—an interesting application of the state sovereignty these same textbooks maintained that the Confederacy once stood for. One effect of this oversight was to compel national publishers to eliminate anything offensive to the South to avoid a state or regional boycott of their books. But before the manner in which textbook authors and publishers modified their history books to be accepted in the South is discussed, one must first understand what a Lost Cause history textbook contained and what in particular textbook committees sought and forbade in the materials Southern children would read.

IV: Lost Cause Textbooks

At around the end of the nineteenth century, something dramatic happened in the field of public education in what we now consider to be middle-school and high-school: a textbook revolution. Prior to this period, most schools taught U.S. history as part of their curriculum, but the manner it was taught was not uniform across the country. This changed in the 1890s when the professional discipline of history reached the university level, and U.S. history entered the curriculum in secondary schools across the board. As with any new market, publishers rushed to produce textbooks for this new consumer base. Regarding the distribution of those producing these books, James McPherson claims that the majority of authors and publishers were situated in the North—nine out of the ten leading U.S. history textbooks prior to 1900 came from the North. As a result of most textbooks coming from the North before the twentieth century, students' point of views emulated the elated nationalism that stemmed from Union victory in the Civil War.⁴⁵ The Union nationalism McPherson alludes to in the textbooks was the same factor that made Southerners fear for the memory of the South. This textbook revolution, although it initially appeared threatening to advocates of the Lost Cause, actually gave them a platform in which to write, publish, and distribute their principles and interpretation of history into schoolrooms across the South.

⁴⁵ James McPherson, "Long-Legged Yankee Lies: the Southern textbook crusade," in *The memory of the Civil War in American culture* ed. Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 67.

Reasons for Confederate veterans wanting textbooks to be corrected varied greatly. At the very least, a textbook correction would have consisted of a disgruntled veteran reporting that his company fired the final shots or led the last charge of a battle.⁴⁶ Complaints were also lodged about how the size of the Confederate army was portrayed in textbooks. Confederate veterans believed that books such as John Franklin Jameson's *Dictionary of United States History* depicted their armies as having more men than they reportedly did.⁴⁷ Referring to Jameson's description of the Battle of Opequon, A former captain in the Confederate military wrote: "Now, it is a shame that such absolute falsehood should become prominent as a handbook for future generations. At no time in 1864 did Early have twenty-five thousand troops. Sheridan had from three to five men to our one all the time, and Early's force in the aforesaid battle was not fifteen thousand, while Sheridan had over forty thousand. I was in that army all the time and know of what I write. Mr. Jameson must have meant to say twenty-five hundred, not twenty-five thousand....It grieves me to see the Confederate Army so unjustly treated by historians. Coming generations will believe these reports."⁴⁸

The textbook revolution at the start of the twentieth century permitted almost anyone with a passion and a publisher to create one. A good example of how a Lost Cause writer produced a textbook can be seen in Joseph T. Derry's account in *The Veteran*:

I wrote the *Story of the Confederate States*⁴⁹ for the benefit of the young people of the South. I made a careful, conscientious effort to obtain from official sources an

⁴⁶ Stan C. Harley, "Corrections Suggested," *The Confederate Veteran* V (June 1897): 296.

⁴⁷ John Franklin Jameson, *Dictionary of United States History* (Boston: Puritan Publishing Co., 1894), 718.

⁴⁸ S. D. Buck, "Unjust History Refuted," *The Confederate Veteran* IV (December 1896): 427.

⁴⁹ Joseph T Derry, *Story of the Confederate States* (Richmond: B. F. Johnson Publishing Co., 1895).

accurate, truthful account of all the events narrated in that book. I submitted the manuscript to Gen. Evans, who, after reading it though, indorsed it heartily. It also received the indorsement of the Historical Committee of the United Confederate Veterans' Association at the Richmond reunion in 1896....I have yet to see the work which, in its treatment of our great struggle, has satisfied everybody in all particulars' and I do not hope for my story of those thrilling days exemption from the common lot.⁵⁰

Two things to notice were Derry's motive for publishing and whose endorsement he received to make his book viable. Of course, the reason Derry wrote his book was for the benefit of white, southern children. As has already been mentioned, one may infer from Derry that children in the South were not benefiting from history books currently in use and there needed to be a change. Derry also mentioned that his work was indorsed by the national Historical Committee of the UCV at their annual reunion. All in attendance of the reunion would have noticed that his textbook was on the list of approved books for use in southern schools. A couple decades later, however, many Lost Cause writers sought not only the approval of historical committees, but also the endorsement of one woman: Mildred Rutherford.

Mildred Lewis Rutherford, one of the notable figures in the textbook revolution, was a native Georgian and prominent member of the UDC's chapter in Athens, Georgia. She served as historian-general for the UDC from 1911 to 1916 and in that time she propagated why she believed that the South needed for its history school books to be corrected which she described in her *The Truths of History*. Firstly, Rutherford believed that history, as it was written at the time, condemned the South to infamy. In other words, textbooks created by pro-North authors both placed blame for the war upon the South and

⁵⁰ Joseph T. Derry, "Answer to Historical Criticism," *The Confederate Veteran* VIII (March 1900): 114.

asserted that its defeat was an overall good thing for the country. Secondly, as long as the falsehoods in Northern textbooks remained in the hands of the student, then all other teachings by Confederate organizations would be fruitless.⁵¹ Here, yet again, one can see the value placed on a textbook when it comes to a student's sense of identity and heritage.

Lastly, Rutherford believed that several history textbooks in circulation omitted a lot of the war's events, particularly those that involved the Confederacy achieving a victory in whatever capacity or interpretation Rutherford believed.⁵² For example, Rutherford claimed that "At the First Battle of Bull Run, raw untrained Union soldiers were defeated by well-trained Confederate soldiers. Congress, however, and the President were only nerved by this defeat to prepare for a bigger war."⁵³ Another example of Rutherford's idea of a harmful omission is in the treatment of the Battle of Hampton Roads. According to Rutherford:

It was April before the *Merrimac* (Virginia) had completed some alterations, then she steamed down to Hampton Roads under Commodore Tatnall to engage and capture the *Monitor*. She was afraid to go too close to shallow water, but three times she dared and challenged the *Monitor* to come out and fight...Had she taken the dare, she would undoubtedly have been captured and she knew it.⁵⁴

This account seems like more of an opinionated observation rather than a factual account, because it delves into an alternative outcome. Nevertheless, Rutherford felt that the full scope of history was not realized without this commentary on the battle. A condemned

⁵¹ Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 104.

⁵² Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 104.

⁵³ Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 112.

⁵⁴ Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 113.

South, the threat of Northern textbooks indoctrinating the southern youth, and the omission of facts were all reasons why UDC leadership like Rutherford believed textbook reform to be an urgent matter, but what exactly did these propagandists of the Lost Cause narrative want in a textbook?

In her succinctly titled book, *A Measuring Rod to Test Text Books, and Reference Books in Schools, Colleges and Libraries*, Rutherford lists what elements a history textbook should contain when describing the era of the Civil War. In no particular order of importance the points are as follows: “The Constitution of the United States 1787, was a compact between sovereign states, and was not perpetual nor national”, “Secession was not rebellion”, “The North was responsible for the War Between the States”, “The War Between the States was not fought to hold the slaves”, “Slaves were not ill-treated in the South. The North was largely responsible for their presence in the South”, “Coercion was not constitutional”, and “The Federal Government was responsible for the Andersonville Horrors.”⁵⁵ The UDC, UCV, and SCV historical committees used Rutherford’s *Measuring Rod* as a means to approve or reject textbooks put into Southern schools.

What did a textbook friendly to the South look like? Several examples of Lost Cause textbooks include: Joel Steele’s *A Brief History of the United States*,⁵⁶ Huger William Johnstone’s *The Truth of the War Conspiracy of 1861*,⁵⁷ Jefferson Davis’s *A Short History of the Confederate States of America*,⁵⁸ Susan Pendleton Lee’s *Primary*

⁵⁵ Mildred Rutherford, *A Measuring Rod to Test Text Books, and Reference Books in Schools, Colleges and Libraries* (Athens, Georgia: 1919), 4.

⁵⁶ Joel Steele, *A Brief History of the United States* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1885).

⁵⁷ Huger William Johnstone, *The Truth of the War Conspiracy of 1861* (Curryville, Georgia: H. W. Johnstone, 1921).

⁵⁸ Jefferson Davis, *A Short History of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Belford Co., 1890).

School History of the United States,⁵⁹ and much more. To best answer the previous question, however, one should look no further than Susan Pendleton Lee's *New School History of the United States*,⁶⁰ and J. L. M. Curry's *The Southern States of the American Union, considered in their relations to the Constitution of the United States and to the Resulting Union*.⁶¹ Lee's series of textbooks were exceptionally popular among Southern boards of education and thus made their way into the hands of thousands of Southern students. This acclaim was assisted by the fact that her books were written in order to paint the South in a far more positive light compared to Northern textbooks. To do this, Lee had to tackle the topics of both the Constitution's original intent, state's rights, and slavery.

One attribute which was absolutely essential in any Lost Cause textbook was to include a negative portrayal of President Lincoln. The simplistic way of looking at the goal of the Lost Cause was to prove that the South was a force for good and the North was a force of oppression. Lincoln was portrayed, therefore, as a tyrant. Advocates of this story could not accomplish this without attacking the leader who was, and still is, widely held as a selfless, humble leader and a martyr. Rutherford never stated Lincoln started the war, but she insisted that he was not a fit example of a leader for children to model themselves after.⁶² Her goal regarding Lincoln was that he would not be remembered as the selfless leader of the Union. Lee depicts Lincoln as somewhat war-mongering. She

⁵⁹ Susan Pendleton Lee, *Primary School History of the United States* (Richmond: B. F. Johnson Publishing Co., 1897).

⁶⁰ Susan Pendleton Lee, *New School History of the United States* (Richmond: B. F. Johnson Publishing Co., 1900).

⁶¹ J. L. M. Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union, considered in their relations to the Constitution of the United States and to the Resulting Union* (New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1895).

⁶² Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History of the United States*, 157-158.

interpreted his inauguration speech to be a belligerent threat against a South that was peacefully and legally defending its rights as an independent government.⁶³ Lincoln's supposed desire for war fit the narrative that Lost Cause writers created which regarded the North as an entity which placed little value on the law and the Constitution.

Lost Cause writers like Lee created this story of the South as the defenders of both the Constitution and defenders of the original intent of the Founding Fathers. Lee described it this way: "In 1861 the North maintained that the National Government was supreme; the South held to the views which both North and South held in the early years of the Republic—namely, that the States were sovereign and independent, and that the Federal Government could exercise only such powers as had been delegated to it by the Constitution."⁶⁴ Lee operated with this interpretation of the Constitution and state sovereignty in order to justify the South's secession. What is more vindicating than operating off of the precedent set forth by the Founding Fathers? Many in the former Confederacy would have agreed with this explication on behalf of them already associating the Confederacy's secession from the United States with the United States' separation from Great Britain. The Constitution, therefore, was believed by Lost Cause writers to be subordinate to the prerogatives of the States.

The prerogative in dispute prior to the Civil War was a state's right to practice slavery. Lee painted a disturbingly romantic portrayal of the institution of slavery in the Southern states before the war. Concerning the enslavement of human beings, she wrote this:

⁶³ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 261.

⁶⁴ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 261.

The outcry against slavery had made the Southern people study the subject, and they had reached the conclusion that the evils connected with it were less than those of any other system of labor. Hundreds of thousands of African savages had been Christianized under its influence. The kindest relations existed between the slaves and their owners. A cruel and neglected master or mistress was rarely found. The sense of responsibility pressed heavily on the slave-owners, and they generally did the best they could for the physical and religious welfare of their slaves. The bondage in which the negroes were held was not thought a wrong to them, because they were better off than any other menial class in the world.⁶⁵

Much can be said regarding how far from the truth this description of slavery is. To suggest in any fashion that enslavement and natal alienation was not inhumane was, and still is, folly. However, one thing to take away from this passage regarding the writing of Lost Cause history is that the narrative these Southerners were constructing was not meant to degrade the South. The Lost Cause, being a movement to memorialize the antebellum South, had to embellish slavery, the social and economic system that characterized it, in order to claim that the Confederates were victims in the Civil War. A Confederate sympathizer could not make this argument if all the many injustices of slavery were presented candidly. Therefore, slavery was taught to white Southern children in this manner so that they would not feel guilty of their collective past. Lost Cause writers, such as Lee, upheld the notion that slavery was a benevolent institution and beneficial for both African slaves and the planters.

Lee made it clear in her textbooks: “The Southern states did not secede from the Union to preserve or to extend slavery.” She believed their secession to have been

⁶⁵ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 262.

brought about by the violation of the South's constitutional rights.⁶⁶ One topic Lee touched on was the Supreme Court's opinion in the Dred Scott Case that slaveholders could take their slaves to any part of the country that the former so desired. She used this decision and the North's reaction to it to her advantage. She wrote "The determination of the Northern States to prevent the carrying of slaves into the Territories was in way no shaken by the decision of the Supreme Court against them."⁶⁷ Here one can see the North being aligned with anarchy pitted against the law-abiding South. Lee was trying to portray the South as a victim that was avoiding war at all costs. Even then, Lee still did not place the cause of the war on slavery, but rather its extension into the territories. Lee still continued to distance the war's cause to slavery by stating: "It can therefore be said that although the North and South had gradually become hostile to each other on account of various conflicting interests, the immediate cause of secession was the question of the extension of slavery into the Territories."⁶⁸ Notice that Lee believed there to have been multiple elements at play prior to the war. The only reason, from Lee's perspective, that slavery is remembered as the sole cause of the conflict was because it was the immediate short-term catalyst. In summary, Lost Cause writers consented to slavery being a factor to the war, but only in how it related to the rights of southerners and southern states to govern themselves.

To further show the similarities between Lost Cause textbooks, one can analyze J. L. M. Curry's *The Southern States of the American Union* and how it presented slavery, the Constitution and the overall unfairness of the conflict itself. Like Lee, Curry did not

⁶⁶ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 262-263.

⁶⁷ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 263.

⁶⁸ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 263.

present slavery as an evil, but rather as a beneficial economic system. Unlike Lee, however, Curry emphasized the entire country's initial tolerance and support for the institution. He wrote how "Slavery as a domestic institution, was, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, common to all the colonies; at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, common to nearly all the states."⁶⁹ He was not wrong, but the intention here was to put both the North and the South on the same moral level. If future southern generations were to interpret slavery as an inhumane practice, then Curry ensured that the North would be indicted in the spread of slavery alongside the South. Again, one of the purposes of these textbooks was to not make the South the guilty party. By generalizing the institution of slavery to the entire country, Curry hoped to prevent critics of the South from using slavery as a means to indict the former Confederacy of its crimes.

After generalizing the practice of slavery, Curry emphasized the constitutionality of slavery, as well as directing blame towards the North for the South's slave practices. Regarding the Constitution and slavery, Curry wrote "As to the doctrine that slavery existed by force of positive law and, consequently, could only exist within the limits of the State enacting that law, it was replied that slavery existed within every one of the British American Colonies without being sustained by statute."⁷⁰ The point of Curry bringing up old colonial statutes was to put the North and the South the same level with regards to slavery. He did write against the North more so, however, in order to get his point across of slavery not having been limited to the South. By citing accounts of New England merchants who sold Africans "by the pound as any other merchandise", Curry clearly had an agenda he was trying to get across which would have certainly influence, if

⁶⁹ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 162.

⁷⁰ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 170.

not dictated, his writing of history.⁷¹ In this instance, that agenda was to blame the North for the South's crimes regarding slavery in order to paint southern slaveholders as the innocent ones in the institution.

Having dealt with the topic of slavery in his textbook, Curry then wrote extensively on the supremacy of state sovereignty and the South's steadfast observance of the Constitution. On the Constitution, he wrote:

What the South has uniformly held is that the best preservative of the Union is a faithful adherence to the Constitution, and that to vest in Congress, in the President, in the Supreme Court, the right of determining finally and exclusively the extent of powers delegated to the Government, is incompatible with the integrity and the rights of the States, and the limitations of the Constitution.⁷²

The South according to this narrative valued the rule of law with the Constitution being the mutual agreement that held all the states in check. However, it must be noted that Curry believed all the authority given to the Constitution came from the states and could be taken away. Curry believed that the states rightfully held all the power, and he reasoned that the United States could not function as a political entity if it forgot this. He wrote that "there could be no such political body as the United States. The preservation of the States and the maintenance of their Governments are as much within the care and design of the Constitution as the preservation of the Union and the maintenance of the National Government."⁷³ The preservation of State sovereignty superseded that of the National government. This interpretation of the Constitution by Curry not only placed the

⁷¹ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 163.

⁷² Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 180.

⁷³ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 181.

South on the right side of the law, but it also yet again portrayed the South as a victim.

Another staple in Lost Cause textbooks that Curry exemplified was the unfairness of the war itself. He listed off nearly all the Confederacy's disadvantages prior and during the fighting:

For the arbitrament of arms, the South had made, could have made, no preparation. Without the organized machinery of an established national government, without a navy, or the nucleus of an army, without even a seamen or soldier, with limited mechanical and manufacturing facilities, with no accumulation of arms of ordnance and with no existing means for making them, without revenue, without external commerce, without foreign credit, without a recognized place in the family of nations, with the hostile prejudices of the world, it is not easy to conceive of a nation with fewer belligerent capabilities.⁷⁴

So, in hindsight, it would have been nearly impossible for the South to win a long-term conflict with a multitude of disadvantages. Curry did not simply wish to show how troubling the Confederacy's situation was. He also wanted to construct a narrative in which the North fought dishonorably. This is evident when he wrote how the bulk of the Union's military was composed of "hordes of foreigners."⁷⁵ One can assume that Curry was drawing a comparison between the Union and how the British recruited mercenaries to fight in the American Revolution. This analogy obviously links the Confederates to the Continentals. Curry also wrote about the inhumanity of the Union blockade in how it directly harmed both soldiers and civilians alike. He mentioned how "Bibles even had to be introduced surreptitiously, by evading the vigilance of formidable fleets."⁷⁶ This

⁷⁴ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 215.

⁷⁵ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 216.

⁷⁶ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 215.

comment concerning the religious needs of the South during the war would have been completely relevant to the Lost Cause's depiction of Confederate soldiers and officers.

Another trope in Lost Cause literature was that of the noble, chivalric soldier. Men such as Robert E. Lee, Thomas Jackson, and many others were memorialized, nearly deified in Lost Cause literature. Curry wrote, "It would seem that all this should teach justice, and magnanimity; and chivalrous courtesy, and a ready recognition of the noble and valorous and knightly deeds which secured for the conquerors so much fame."⁷⁷ Curry needed an ideal to contrast his negative image of the hordes of foreign Union soldiers. This image of the noble Confederate soldier was not limited to Curry's textbook. Lost Cause texts included these positive descriptions for a uniform purpose; so that these figures could be what Southern children would imagine when looking back on the Old South. If the narrative presented to school children was one that told of morally upright defenders of liberty, tragically defeated in an unfair war, then would not these young men and women side with these tragic heroes. This was the goal of the Lost Cause.

To both Lee and Curry, the South's position in history as a victim was paramount. Curry did this very well. He claimed that, before the war, the South abided by the law and the Constitution. Yet, it was backed into a corner by the North's constant aggressive sentiments: "What was the South to suppose had been the meaning of the motive of the nullification acts of all Northern States, of the bitterness of hostility towards her institution, the canonization of John Brown, and the growth and dominancy of the abolition sentiment."⁷⁸ All of the textbook points demanded by Rutherford and written by

⁷⁷ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 218.

⁷⁸ Curry, *The Southern States of the American Union*, 184.

Lee and Curry exemplified the Lost Cause story of the Civil War. This story can best be summarized in Lee's textbook. The final sentence is key.

As the peaceable secession of the Southern States was neither an extension of slavery nor a violation of the Constitution, we may conclude that the war was caused by the determination of the North to preserve the Union. This determination led to open war when the United States flag was fired upon at Fort Sumter. The result of the war, though not proving that the South was wrong, has been for the best interests of both sections.⁷⁹

Southern children had to understand that their ancestors were not wrong in their actions and beliefs. They also had to be confident in their heritage and their futures. These were the books that millions of southerners, in both black and white schools, would read throughout the twentieth century.

⁷⁹ Lee, *New School History of the United States*, 263.

V: Negative Responses to Lost Cause Textbooks

An analysis of David Saville Muzzey's *American History* helps reflect how Lost Cause textbooks differed from their Northern counterparts. The content of Muzzey's book stood in direct opposition to the retelling of the Civil War that Lost Cause advocates were trying to sell. Published in 1911, *American History* almost instantaneously became a best-seller. It continued to sell impressively in the thirties and it even went on selling throughout the forties and fifties until its popularity faded in the sixties. For nearly half of the twentieth century, a near majority of American schoolchildren learned the history of the United States through the lens of Muzzey.⁸⁰ Muzzey aligned himself fixedly with the Union and Lincoln's policies. He knew slavery to be a fundamental evil and the cause of the conflict that led to the tragic death and destruction of the war. He held that the North had decisively won a war based on its superior wealth, resources, and manpower, the likes of which the South had no hope of overcoming.

Muzzey's positive portrayal of Lincoln was one which Lost Cause writers criticized for not being indicative of the president's true character. As to his character and demeanor, Muzzey wrote that "Lincoln was undeviatingly honest in thought, making his speech always the servant of reason."⁸¹ This falls in line with the idea of an "Honest Abe" that was always gentle in tone and humble in his speech. Before Lincoln even ran for president, Muzzey adds, he acknowledged the danger slavery posed to the country's

⁸⁰ Fitzgerald, *America Revised*, 64.

⁸¹ David Saville Muzzey, *An American History* (Boston: Ginn and company, 1920), 316.

stability. In the book, one can find Lincoln's speech on the condition of the nation marked by the quote: "I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."⁸² This speech is significant because it shows that Muzzey wanted schoolchildren to know that slavery was at the forefront of the political arena leading up to the war. Likewise, it was Lincoln that wanted to rid the country of the cancerous institution that had been almost unchecked for decades. Muzzey wrote that Lincoln knew slavery was "a great moral, social, and political evil, and never hesitated to say so."⁸³ The depiction of Lincoln as a liberator is critical because Lost Cause writers tried to discredit this notion in their textbooks.

Slavery as the direct cause of Southern states seceding from the Union is immanent in Muzzey's textbook. He described the South prior to the war as a backward region in terms of its class system and its lack of industry, the cause of this backwardness being slavery, "the bane of the South."⁸⁴ Muzzey went to great lengths to assure that students retained this fact of the war, that a vile and corrupt way of life existed in the South. So contaminating was this evil that it provoked political, social, and spiritual battles amongst Americans in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. "Although slavery was the cause of the Civil War, both the North and the South insisted that the war was not begun on account of slavery. The South declared that it was fighting for its constitutional rights, denied by a hostile majority in Congress and destroyed by the election of a purely sectional president; while the North, with equal emphasis, insisted that it took up arms not to free the slaves but to preserve the Union."⁸⁵ Simply put,

⁸² Muzzey, *An American History*, 317.

⁸³ Muzzey, *An American History*, 374.

⁸⁴ Muzzey, *An American History*, 342.

⁸⁵ Muzzey, *An American History*, 374.

whether or not one opposed or defended it, slavery was the reason that men enlisted, fought, and died in the war. Muzzey did not just stop at this claim, but rather he entertained Southern arguments over how the war started and undermined them.

One point that Lost Cause supporters ardently protected was the legality of the South's secession. Muzzey disagreed with this premise in his textbook by pointing out that the only right the South wished to defend was its right to practice slavery. Muzzey argues:

Both [Jefferson] Davis and [Alexander] Stephens in their accounts of the Southern Confederacy, written after the Civil War, asserted that not slavery but the denial to the South of her rights under the Constitution was the cause of secession and of the war which followed. But the only 'right' for which the South was contending in 1860 was the right to have the institution of slavery recognized and protected in all the territory of the United States. Whether or not the Constitution gave the South this right was exactly the point of dispute. It was not a case of the North's refusing to give the South its constitutional right but of the North's denying that such was the constitutional right of the South. It was a conflict in the interpretation of the Constitution; and slavery alone was the cause of that conflict.⁸⁶

Muzzey wanted schoolchildren to know why the South seceded. Lost Cause supporters argued that the Constitution granted a state the right to leave the Union, and the North withheld that right from the South. Muzzey disagreed and claimed that no such right was enumerated in the Constitution. Even if the South had the backing of the Constitution, Muzzey still believed that the true motivation for secession was to continue practicing slavery.

⁸⁶ Muzzey, *An American History*, 330.

Muzzey also debunked the idea that the South was unfairly beaten. To Muzzey, it was a simple matter of who had the most resources at their disposal. It was foolhardy for Confederate strategists, to take on “the superior resources of the North in men and wealth.”⁸⁷ He does hold that the South had the advantage of fighting a war on familiar territory, but this does not nullify his former point. These claims spoke only to the strategic aspect of the war, however, Muzzey does not omit a moral perspective from his work. He mentions prior that “the system of slavery was a blight on industry and a constant menace to the character of the slaveholder. That the men of the South, in defending what they believed to be their rights under a government of ‘liberty and equality,’ were pledged to perpetuate such an institution was a misfortune which is deplored by none more heartily than by the descendants of those men today.”⁸⁸ Muzzey, like many in the North, maintained that the cause for which the South fought was neither just, nor righteous, nor worth memorializing. The Confederate cause was ironic to Muzzey because although these soldiers were defending their rights as Americans and Southerners, the freedom they were defending was the freedom to keep other men and women in chains.

As Lost Cause history textbooks became more prominent in Southern schools and as textbook committees started to eliminate books they did not approve of, Northern newspapers began to take notice and speak out against this sectional retelling of history. For example, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* wrote the following article on Lost Cause histories:

⁸⁷ Muzzey, *An American History*, 346.

⁸⁸ Muzzey, *An American History*, 342.

We are moved to wonder, ‘What is history?’ The Standard Dictionary defines it as ‘a systematic record of past events.’ No better definition in six words occurs to us. But more or less recent events in world politics, coupled with the current action of the Confederate Veterans, indicates that that definition is in error. History is becoming, if it has not already reached that stage, a medium of propaganda. That became evident in the world war, when European histories were combed for evidence of the innate barbarity of the German people. It was more evident in the efforts to arouse the American people to the point of intervention and actual warfare to free Ireland. It is now emphasized through the efforts of the Confederate Veterans to impose upon the children of the south their own interpretation of the Civil War, regardless of accuracy or the effect upon the nation. The Veterans are attempting to pass on their old hates and rancors to their descendants. They have not yet surrendered to Grant. They are a trifle feeble, to be sure, but apparently becoming less so. They are busily engaged in swapping their old glands for new.⁸⁹

The article’s remonstrance of the Lost Cause pointed out a few noteworthy flaws of the movement. First, the Lost Cause revived old, sectional hatreds in the country. Reading just one Lost Cause textbook explains why white, southern children would grow up valuing the South’s past and despising the North. Secondly, the Lost Cause was meant as propaganda to lift the defeated identity of the South. In doing so, it distorted the facts of the war to fit its narrative. Using history as a platform to assert one’s prejudices was as dangerous in the early twentieth century as it is in the twenty-first century.

Northerners were also not pleased with how Lincoln was openly slandered in many of these Southern textbooks. In an editorial in *The New York Times*, Lost Cause writers were mentioned to “have no regard for the sensibilities of an enormous majority

⁸⁹ Quoted in “The Confederate Veterans’ New Glands,” *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 23, 1922, 8.

of their fellow-citizens in all parts of the country, there is no particular reason why their own should have anybody's delicate consideration. When they attack the memory of Lincoln—when they charge that by him what they call 'the Confederate war' was 'deliberately and personally conceived' and 'he was personally responsible for forcing the war on the South'—then the only way to avoid the anger is to realize how far these statements are from accurate and to view them with astonishment rather than indignation."⁹⁰

The majority of the public outside of the South was baffled by certain elements of the Lost Cause narrative, such as asserting that Lincoln caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. One critique about new, southern textbooks that both the *The Chicago Tribune*'s and *The Times*' article had in common was the lack of an unbiased narrative. The events of the Civil War were twisted in an effort to glorify and memorialize the Old South. The War Between the States, as the UDC insisted the war be called, was a romantic and tragic story about a group of honorable men and women trying to defend their liberty. Unfortunately, it did not necessarily matter how accurate non-Southerners viewed Lost Cause textbooks, because they were true and factual to many white Southerners. What was important was whether or not Lost Cause textbooks would be implemented into Southern schools and Northern textbooks would be eliminated from the southern schools. In this regard the UDC, UCV, and other ex-Confederates, for the most part, succeeded.

⁹⁰ *The New York Times* (New York, New York), June 23, 1922.

VI: How Textbook Committees Ousted Non-Southern Textbooks from Southern Schools

In 1896, at a reunion for Tennessee and Kentucky Confederate veterans in Nashville, the UCV recognized Mary Lewis Morris. In a Nashville seminary, years prior, Morris “came to her history teacher one morning and her she didn’t intend to study Mr. Higginson’s History any more, that she had burnt her books up, for ‘it made the Yankees win all the battles.’ The other little girls in the class who were daughters of old soldiers burned their books, too, and there was no history class.”⁹¹ This book burning was praised by members of the UCV to the extent that Morris was invited to the reunion. In a speech she delivered, Morris stated “Though the flag be furled and mute be the drum, we, your children, shall ever teach, as we have been taught, that for all past as well as for all future ages it is to the Confederate soldier that we look for the brightest and truest exemplar of courage, endurance, and patriotism.”⁹² Here is evidence that the Lost Cause worked and that white, southern children felt convinced that the Confederacy’s cause was just and worth fighting for. These beliefs became more evident in children as they were exposed to an increasing amount of Lost Cause literature.

As the textbook revolution unfolded in the 1890s, Lost Cause advocates formulated a plan by which to make their vision for the Civil War’s depiction a reality. Even before Rutherford published her *Measuring Rod* and *The Truths of History* which set the guidelines for Lost Cause textbook canon, Lucius Wilson proposed a plan to weed

⁹¹ “Delightful Reunion at Nashville,” *The Confederate Veteran* IV (November 1896): 361-362.

⁹² “Delightful Reunion at Nashville,” *The Confederate Veteran* IV, 362.

out works that according to many of his colleagues did not grant the South its rightful place in history. In *The Confederate Veteran*, Wilson said:

I have a word to offer to the people of the eleven Southern States that formed the Confederacy. I have read the [UCV] Committee's report on schoolbooks in *The Confederate Veteran*. I agree with that committee. Northern histories or Northern text-books should not be used in Southern schools....My suggestions to the Southern people are these: Let each one of those eleven States compile and publish their own text-books for their schools. The State that has the power to furnish free education to make exemplary citizens of her infants has the power to furnish the tools to do it with. The tools not being satisfactory, the State has the power to make them itself. If the Southern people will keep watch of their school officers, and elect the best talent in their communities as well as to the Legislature, they can have everything their own way and text-books in their schools to suit their natural environments and public sentiment. A very comprehensive plan would be for each State to call into counsel the best Southern schoolbook publishers and educators, and under State power compile and publish all textbooks to be used in their public schools....As to the histories, let the Confederate soldier bring in the truth about the war they waged for independence, and have that truth printed and given to the children of the Southern people.⁹³

In many ways Wilson predicted the process by which Lost Cause textbooks would enter schools (via recommendation from textbook committee) while interest groups would work with the state government to expel Northern histories. Moreover, Wilson believed histories should be brought forth by the soldiers who witnessed the fighting rather than seasoned historians. The goal of the Lost Cause was to present one history that favored the regional and cultural past of most white, southern children.

⁹³ Lucius O. Wilson, "Advice About Schoolbooks," *The Confederate Veteran* VIII (March 1900): 103.

Throughout the early decades of the twentieth century there was a collaborative effort by Confederate organizations and Lost Cause supporters to eliminate history textbooks deemed unfriendly to the South from its schools. One of the infamous examples that gave life to this collaboration took place at Roanoke College and involved Henry W. Elson's *History of the United States of America*.⁹⁴ On March 9, 1911, the *Salem Times-Register* of Salem, VA released information that Elson's book was in use in schools, colleges and universities in a number of Southern states.⁹⁵ Protest of Elson's textbook began with the Baltimore chapter of the UDC. Elson's book was so controversial among Lost Cause circles that Mrs. F. G. Odenheimer wrote that it made her "blood boil." Daughters such as Odenheimer were specifically upset that the Elson referred to the Civil War as "The Slaveholders' War," and that "the relations of our people in regard to the slaves are falsified in a language unfit for print."⁹⁶ In the wake of other protests from various UDC and UCV chapters, the faculty of Roanoke had to make a frantic reply in an effort to defend their institution from the accusations against their university's president and history professors. One difference between the faculty at Roanoke and the supporters of the Lost Cause was that the former group was dedicated to discussing "all sides of any mooted question with a view of arriving at the truth."⁹⁷ The latter group committed themselves to removing any history they did not consider true rather than debating them.

Mildred Rutherford led the charge in this educational crusade. She made

⁹⁴ Henry Elson, *History of the United States of America* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1904).

⁹⁵ D. Giraud Wright, "Protest by Baltimore Daughters," *The Confederate Veteran* XIX (April 1911): 148.

⁹⁶ F. G. Odenheimer, "Protest by Baltimore Daughters," *The Confederate Veteran* XIX, 148.

⁹⁷ "Faculty of Roanoke College Makes a Statement," *The Confederate Veteran* XIX (May 1911): 196.

persistent attacks against William M. Davidson's *History of the United States*⁹⁸ and D. H. Montgomery's *Beginner's American History*.⁹⁹ Montgomery's book was not slandered, but it was also not recommended by Rutherford because according to her, he insulted Rutherford's home state of Georgia.¹⁰⁰ This did not necessarily pertain to the Civil War, but it was a slight against the South so it sufficed. Rutherford ridiculed Davidson because he claimed that "The Confederacy was now placed before the civilized world in its true light as the champion of the detested institution of slavery."¹⁰¹ This statement contradicted the Lost Cause claim that the North had just as much to do with slavery as the South, thereby placing the South on unequal footing with the North.

Muzzey's *An American History* was perhaps the most attacked of all history books unfriendly to the South. In *Truths of History*, Rutherford alleged that Muzzey said in his textbook, "The cause for which the Confederate soldiers fought was an unworthy cause and should have been defeated...it is impossible today to feel otherwise than that the cause for which the South fought was unworthy."¹⁰² What Muzzey actually said was "It is impossible for the student of history today to feel otherwise than that the victory of the South in 1861-1865 would have been a calamity for every section of our country. But the indomitable valor and utter self-sacrifice with which the South defended her cause both at home and in the field must always arouse our admiration."¹⁰³ Rutherford twisted Muzzey's words to get the point across that his book was not just to the South and therefore could not be accurate. Here is one of the leaders of this movement twisting

⁹⁸ William M. Davidson's, *History of the United States* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1902).

⁹⁹ D. H. Montgomery, *Beginner's American History* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1902).

¹⁰⁰ Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History of the United States*, 160.

¹⁰¹ Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 110.

¹⁰² Rutherford, *The Truths of History*, 110.

¹⁰³ Muzzey, *An American History*, 372-373.

evidence to suit the narrative she wanted to build. Needless to say, Rutherford's judgement regarding textbooks had an effect throughout the South and there is evidence of Confederate groups taking action against Montgomery's, Muzzey's, and other textbooks as well.

Rutherford was not alone in her opposition against certain textbooks. All across the South during the first thirty years of the twentieth century, history textbooks that did not meet Lost Cause standards spelled out in Rutherford's *Measuring Rod* were eliminated from school curriculums. For instance, *The Daily Times* of Wilmington, North Carolina reported that "The 6,000 members of the North Carolina United Daughters of the Confederacy are backing the movement to take Muzzey's American History out of the schools of the South writes Mrs. F. L. Wilson, of Gastonia, State chairman of the U. D. C. text-book committee. Mrs. Wilson's communication bears out the statement told in this correspondence ten days ago that there would be no let up on the part of the North Carolina chapters of the U. D. C., until the State committee on high school textbooks...had withdrawn the Muzzey publication."¹⁰⁴ In Texas, the state's UDC chapter informed the *El Paso herald*, "Mrs. John Van Wert, the secretary, of Marshall, then read the report of the textbook committee chairman, Mrs. Mary M. Bridge of Austin. The report condemned the book, 'When Men Grew Tall,' by Alfred Henry Lewis, for 'pure downright viciousness against the south. *An American History for Grammar Schools*, published by McMillan company, was also condemned as being unfair to the southern side."¹⁰⁵

Montgomery's *History for Beginners* was reprimanded as early as 1901. The

¹⁰⁴ *The Daily Times* (Wilmington, NC), Aug. 15, 1921.

¹⁰⁵ *El Paso Herald* (El Paso, TX), Oct. 29, 1914.

UCV's Historical Committee adopted a resolution against the textbook. Its first point was "that the Montgomery history for beginners is partisan in its composition, in that it lauds Lincoln and throws on the South unjustly the burden of the origin of the war."¹⁰⁶ Due to the book's unfairness to the South, the committee petitioned the state's board of education to expel the book from the state's schools.¹⁰⁷ If this first point was not performed, then the committee demanded that Montgomery create a new edition of his textbook. In this new edition it was requested that "the Lincoln laudation is retained, a like number of pages be devoted to Jefferson Davis" and that "[Lincoln] and his party would repudiate that constitution as constructed by the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case in 1857, and that this case decided that slaves could be taken in the territories as any other property, and that by Lincoln's repudiation of the law as constructed by the tribunal of last resorts war resulted, and he and his party were in fact the real revolutionists and are morally responsible for all the loss of life and destruction of Southern homes and property ensued."¹⁰⁸ The UCV essentially asked Montgomery to characterize Lincoln and the Republicans as the guilty party in the war, and that the Constitution supported the existence and expansion of slavery.

Finally the UCV issued in its resolution that, in the event that neither of the two previous points were accomplished, the committee recommended that "Mrs. Pendleton Lee's series of the history of the Civil War as now in use in Virginia be used, in which the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is narrated."¹⁰⁹ The committee's

¹⁰⁶ W.L. Wilson, "Extracts from the minutes of Confederate reunion, Belton, Tex., July 2, 3, 4." *The Confederate Veteran* IX (July 1901): 331.

¹⁰⁷ Wilson, "Extracts from the minutes of Confederate reunion, Belton, Tex., July 2, 3, 4." 331.

¹⁰⁸ Wilson, "Extracts from the minutes of Confederate reunion, Belton, Tex., July 2, 3, 4." 331.

¹⁰⁹ Wilson, "Extracts from the minutes of Confederate reunion, Belton, Tex., July 2, 3, 4." 331.

resolution against Montgomery and his textbook was significant because it was an attack on the established history of the war. If Montgomery did not comply with the UCV's unrealistic demands, then his book would be campaigned against and Lee's textbooks would take its place in the classroom.

Confederate organizations not only tried to persuade authors and publishers into editing textbooks, but they also made direct threats against schools using unapproved textbooks. In an address before the Georgia Division of the UDC, Anna Caroline Benning, Chairman of the Text-Book Committee, said the following concerning how to deal with schools using unfriendly textbooks: "We will never get anything if we do not ask for it. Ask! Demand! State money is the watchword. If State money be given only to those schools which use the books that the State stamps with her approval, all the schools will clamor for such books, and they will get them, for the manufacturer must cater to the market. For the bravery, the devotion of the Confederates, and the fearful odds against which they fought."¹¹⁰ Here one can see another negative aspect of the Lost Cause movement: cutting necessary funds to any school that had fallen out of line. How could any school district risk having their state funding cut? The UDC and UCV worked alongside state governments in order to grant these threats some backing.

State governments worked alongside UCV and UDC textbook committees and in doing so showed regional government's alignment with the Lost Cause narrative of the Civil War. In Mississippi, the state legislature enacted a law requiring the state textbook committees, the UCV, and the UDC to choose a uniform series of texts so that "no history in relation to the late civil war between the states shall be used in this state unless

¹¹⁰ Anna Caroline Benning, "Review of Histories Used in Southern Schools and Southern Homes," *The Veteran* X (December 1902): 551.

it be fair and impartial.”¹¹¹ Mississippi UDC chapters fully partnered with the state’s department of education. In many cases, local UDC chapters were large enough to form their own textbook committees. For example, the J. Z. George Chapter of Greenwood, Mississippi, had its committee interview the state’s Textbook Commission and the Daughters requested that the state eliminate from the schools all books not dealing fairly with the War Between the States. This committee also conferred with the state’s superintendent of education in an effort to make women (UDC members) eligible to serve on the Mississippi Textbook Commission.¹¹²

Mississippi Daughters were not the only ones to work with the state government. In addition, North Carolina’s legislature passed “An Act to Promote the Production and Publication of School Books relating to the History, Literature or Government of North Carolina for use in the Public Schools,” and funds were procured with the intent “to encourage, stimulate and promote the production and procure the control and publication of such books as in the judgement of the board properly relate to the history, literature and government of North Carolina.”¹¹³ Florida also garnered funds to initiate the creation of “a Correct History of the United States, Including a True and Correct History of the Confederacy”¹¹⁴ One must consider that the state governments that colluded with Confederate organizations to push Lost Cause ideology in schools were also crafting laws that upheld the Jim Crow South.

Confederate groups would even actively support each other in their lobbying of the state government. This can be seen in *The Confederate Veteran*: “Gen. C. I. Walker

¹¹¹ Approved March 11, 1904. *Laws of Mississippi*, 1904, ch. 86 (S. B. no. 51), 116. *ibid.*, 70.

¹¹² Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 124.

¹¹³ Approved March 4, 1905, *Laws of North Carolina*, 1905, ch. 707, 863.

¹¹⁴ Approved June 3, 1915. *Laws of Florida*, ch. 6939 (no. 133), vol. 1, 311.

reports that the Veterans and Sons are working closely together in the fight for teaching the young of the South the absolute truth of Confederate history. With the Mississippi Textbook Commission, Commander in Chief N. B. Forrest exerted all his strong influence and contributed most materially toward convincing that adopting board of the justice of the cause.”¹¹⁵ In the end, each group was after a common goal—to promote a narrative that supported the Confederacy in the Civil War.

At the UDC annual conference in 1917, the UDC’s national textbook committee presented news of its progress in promoting histories favorable to the South. After obtaining information from Superintendents of Education in various states, the committee reported that,

From a careful examination of their reports and their lists of text books, she gathers that the United Daughters of the Confederacy in all of the States formerly under the Confederate States’ Government have done excellent work in having histories which are just to the South, placed in their public schools; some of them have extended their work to colleges and private schools. In several States she found good results from similar work done by Sons of Confederate Veterans.”¹¹⁶

To know that state and local governments were cooperating with their education movement would have delighted many in the UDC and UCV, private groups like the UDC worked alongside government officials to see their plans of a uniform history of the Civil War taught in southern schools come to fruition. Lost Cause agents influencing state governments continued well into the twentieth century. As late as 1974 the

¹¹⁵ C.I. Walker, “Teaching True History,” *The Confederate Veteran* XXVIII (September 1920): 358.

¹¹⁶ Esther Carlotta, Cornelia Branch Stone, and Nelly C. Preston, “Report of Committee on Endorsement of Books,” *Minutes of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Convention of the United Daughters of the Confederacy* (Chatanooga, TN), Nov. 14-17, 1917, 317-318.

Mississippi State Textbook Purchasing Board rejected Charles Sallis and James Loewen's *Mississippi: Conflict and Change*,¹¹⁷ a textbook that discussed racial conflict and accurately pointed out contributions that African-Americans had made to the state.¹¹⁸ Even though the Mississippi Textbook Purchasing Board approved *Mississippi: Conflict and Change* in 1980, after a long battle in court, the survival of Lost Cause ideals still permeate Southern society to the present day.¹¹⁹

A singularly-minded group of activists influenced a narrative that was supposed to be constructed on unbiased evidence and critical analysis. The Lost Cause was a story of the Civil War built on resentment towards an entire region of the country and against African-Americans. Embellished ideas were created that made the Confederacy out to be the protagonist in an epic and tragic story. Stories of the South's innocence before the war and heroism after the war were transmitted into textbooks. All the while, Confederate organizations safeguarded Confederate memory and made certain that any books containing painfully true accounts of the Civil War remained out of reach from Southern children. This was done in the name of defending Southern memory so that succeeding generations of Southerners could hold their heads up high about their region's past, present and future. Alongside defending Southern memory, Lost Cause textbooks were intended to educate a populace with materials that upheld white supremacy and the policies of the Jim Crow era South. In the meantime, millions of people in the United States have been taught that the Union was the aggressor in the Civil War, the institution

¹¹⁷ James Loewen and Charles Sallis, *Mississippi Conflict and Change* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974).

¹¹⁸ Fitzgerald, *America Revised*, 29.

¹¹⁹ Eagles, *Civil Rights, Culture Wars*, 225.

of slavery was not an abomination and that even though the South lost, it was not wrong.

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