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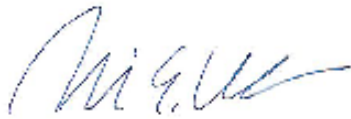
**CIVIL NEIGHBORS TO VIOLENT FOES:
GUERRILLA WARFARE IN WESTERN VIRGINIA DURING THE CIVIL WAR**

A thesis submitted to
the Graduate College of
Marshall University
In partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
In
History
by
Lauren Michelle Milton
Approved by
Dr. Michael E. Woods, Committee Chairperson
Dr. Kevin Barksdale
Dr. Robert Deal

Marshall University
August 2019

APPROVAL OF THESIS

We, the faculty supervising the work of Lauren Michelle Milton, affirm that the thesis, *Civil Neighbors to Violent Foes: Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia During the Civil War* meets high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by the Department of History and the College of Liberal Arts. This work also conforms to the editorial standards of our discipline and the Graduate College of Marshall University. With our signatures, we approve the manuscript for publication.



Dr. Michael E. Woods, Department of History

Committee Chairperson

7-8-19

Date

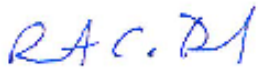


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DEDICATION

TO
DAVEY

Thank you for everything.

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As this thesis reaches its completion there are many people that I owe the deepest thanks. First, I cannot express enough gratitude for my fiancé, Davey. You have been by my side since day one of this journey and have been nothing short of a constant pillar of support. With that, you have listened to my ramblings, aggravations, ideas, and enthusiasms with a never-ending patience. You offered breaks in the form of traveling to both near and far places whether to get out in the outdoors to relax, or visit some of the places that have been a focus of recent and long past studies, allowing for a deeper appreciation and understanding of their histories. Your patience, support, and encouragement did not go unnoticed and I could not have gone through this process without you. For all of this and so much more, I am deeply grateful. I also have to thank my family and friends as well, whose support and general curiosity about the thesis was very much appreciated.

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Lastly, I am forever grateful to the numerous depositories that assisted me in locating sources that I was in need of for the research of this thesis. I would like to say thank you to the West Virginia and Regional History Center at West Virginia University. Catherine Rakowski and her staff there readily worked with me on numerous occasions and had the sources that I needed waiting on me after my drives to Morgantown. I am very thankful to Joe Geiger for his assistance at the West Virginia State Archives. I am grateful to the staff at the Drinko Library and the Special Collections at Morrow Library at Marshall University for their assistance in finding sources for me to research. Finally, I am grateful to Jack Dickinson at the Roseanna Blake Library at Marshall University for his enthusiasm and assistance in finding sources for this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

“Civil Neighbors to Violent Foes” researches the effect of guerrilla warfare in West Virginia during a national war and statehood movement, and the impact that emotions had on the people of the state. When President Lincoln won the election in 1860, secession was inevitable and war a likely possibility. At the time, West Virginia was still a part of Virginia, but old state political divisions, combined with the current national political divisions, fueled the fire for a new state, separate from Virginia and loyal to the Union. It would take West Virginia two years from the time delegates began holding conventions in 1861 to obtain statehood on June 20, 1863. In response to the statehood movement and the Civil War, guerrilla warfare ran rampant all over the new state. This thesis analyzes this irregular warfare. Further, this thesis analyzes the emotions that were driving the war and the people, whether soldiers, guerrillas, or innocent citizens. This thesis contributes to the field of guerrilla warfare by arguing that betrayal is the emotion that led to all emotions and people’s choice to partake in guerrilla warfare. Further, while significant scholarship does exist on guerrilla warfare in the Civil War in the western United States, scholarship on the topic in West Virginia is limited. This thesis adds to that limited scholarship. In addition, this thesis provides a further study on the possible effect emotions can have on people during chaotic events such as war. Understanding guerrilla warfare fully and completely is imperative in understanding the Civil War, as its issues started within homes and communities, just as did guerrilla warfare’s.

INTRODUCTION

Presently, a multitude of studies and preserved sites of the Civil War exist for the historian, student, or common history buff to read and enjoy whenever they please. With these already existing studies, historians continuously find more undiscovered facts about the war to work on and hopefully contribute to the understanding of this bloody conflict in our country's history. In their entirety, these studies typically focus on the organized warfare, covering topics such as enlistment records for both the Union and Confederacy, casualty records, the size of each army and who their leading commanders were, and, of course, who won specific battles and who was winning the war. To the common history buff and student, this is the main story they learn of the Civil War, and therefore, the source they use to understand its outcome and effects. However, it is just as important, if not arguably more, to further study the home front to fully understand the magnitude of this war. Scholars of the Civil War have known that ample information about the complexities of the war exist on the home front, but those outside of the history field do not and therefore misconstrue some of the details and intricacies of the it. More specifically, irregular, or rather, guerrilla warfare during the Civil War should be given more attention and respect. Within the past several years, there has been a great amount of research conducted by scholars on the topic; however, there is still more to be produced due to the importance of guerrilla warfare. The term, "guerrilla warfare," is used to describe any irregular or unorganized warfare that is exercised by individuals not officially enlisted in either armies that are fighting a war. This type of warfare was usually unpredictable and therefore caused fear in both the lives of enlisted men who passed through a certain area and the common citizens who lived in an area where guerrillas or bushwhackers would lay in hiding. The men who partook in this during the Civil War usually strongly supported one side or the other and would attack an

opposing army on its way through the area, or they would attack neighbors that supported the opposing side. Occasionally, guerrillas would use the war as an excuse to solve a personal grievance of the past. In some cases, the official armies would take on guerrilla bands as part of their own in an effort to control the guerrillas; these partisan rangers, as they came to be called, still ran by their own rule but had a higher authority guiding them along the way. It is important to remember that while they still used the same type of fighting, there were different types of guerrillas who had different motivations for what they were doing, and who also used different methods in their attacks on both armies and civilians.¹

A substantial amount of research on guerrilla warfare does exist in the western United States in places such as Kansas and Missouri, with a focus on brutal bands led by men such as William Quantrill, whose men were commonly called “Quantrill’s Raiders.” His specific group sided with the Confederacy. Of the scholarship on guerrilla warfare in the western territories, Michael Fellman’s *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the Civil War* is one of great importance. In his study of irregular warfare, Fellman documented the guerrilla activities that plagued and haunted Missouri during the war. Fellman recorded and recounted the violence and attacks that were made towards the innocent citizens of Missouri and neighboring Kansas in addition to legitimate troops of an opposing army. Fellman paints a picture of a lawless west filled with terror and uncertainty.² However, research on guerrilla warfare during the Civil War

¹ Karissa A. Marken, “They Cannot Catch Guerrillas in the Mountains Any More Than a Cow Can Catch Fleas: Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865” (master’s thesis, Liberty University, 2014) accessed August 18, 2018, https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C49&q=guerrilla+warfare+in+western+virginia+karissa+marken&btnG=&httpsredir=1&article=1325&context=masters.

² Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War*. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1989).

in the east is lacking; while some does exist, more needs to be discovered. More specifically, guerrilla warfare in western Virginia (present day West Virginia) and its surrounding Appalachian area deserves more attention. One such work on guerrillas in present day West Virginia comes from Karissa Marken in her 2014 Master's thesis: "They Cannot Catch Guerrillas in the Mountains Any More Than a Cow Can Catch Fleas: Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865." Marken's thesis is great in that it broke down the term "guerrilla warfare" and shed light on the fact that guerrillas and the irregular fighting that occurred were not one size fits all. Marken reveals that there were different units of guerrillas, and just as Fellman does in his work, she revealed that in West Virginia, both Secessionists and Unionists harbored guerrillas within their ranks both knowingly and obliviously.³ Like in the west, West Virginia was the unwilling recipient of several guerrilla attacks that terrorized civilians and passing armies. Making things more difficult was West Virginia's fight to become its own state, separate from Virginia; hostilities here were high because of the Civil War, just like any other state and territory in the country, but also because of the eventual split of western Virginia from eastern Virginia. Not only did the people of this region have to worry about becoming the victims of a guerrilla attack based on their national allegiances, but they also had to worry about becoming victims based on their position on West Virginia statehood. The area, therefore, was nothing short of tense and unpredictable. An atmosphere like this makes the irregular warfare in western Virginia very interesting and shows the complexities of the Civil War in this area as well as the rest of the country. However, what makes the guerrilla warfare in West Virginia and nearby areas even more interesting is the Appalachian people's long and specific cultural history.

³ Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865."

West Virginia and Appalachia as a whole, are historically known for their strong family and community ties that are stronger than many different areas thanks to the mountainous region that the state is placed in. This state holds the two qualities on a pedestal that very few things can match. This strong bond can still be seen today in situations such as the 2016 flood that devastated several parts of the state and saw people from all over the state joined together to help the flood victims whether they knew them or not. Even more recently the majority of the state came together to support the teachers in all 55 counties of the state who went on strike for several weeks in an effort to get better pay and better insurance benefits that they had long been fighting for. So, with a long-standing tradition or characteristic such as this, the question must be asked, how did the people of this state and the surrounding area become so hostile to each other from 1861 to 1865; why were there so many guerrilla raids on armies and common people across the state? In other words, how did these civil neighbors become violent foes?

Considering the nature of the Civil War and the tight-knit families and communities, the driving force behind this hostility was naturally a sense of betrayal felt amongst the people of this state. This betrayal could be felt among families who had some relatives who supported and left to fight for the Union while others supported and left to fight for the Confederacy, it could be felt by neighbors who sat next to each other in a church pew who suddenly felt they did not know each other at all upon realizing they held opposing opinions about the conflicts plaguing the country at the time, and it could be felt by complete strangers in the quest for western Virginia to leave, and in some people's eyes, betray its origin state by becoming its own state after Virginia seceded from the Union. Emotion is always a common driving force in the decision-making process, especially when violence is involved. Furthermore, in a tense environment such as this, it only makes sense that a strong emotional feeling of betrayal would

have led the people of the region to adopt unorthodox fighting as a means to support their cause or settle other disagreements.

Before the thesis can continue, a discussion on the meaning of guerrilla warfare must be made. In the broadest sense of the term, guerrilla warfare, also called irregular warfare, consisted of unorganized groups of people that banded together to fight without the guidance of a higher authority like in regular armies. As Karissa Marken explains, these guerrillas were known by several different names such as “bushwhackers,” “bandits,” “scamps,” “marauders,” and “deserters” and she writes that these terms were used to describe the irregulars indiscriminately when discussing those who did not practice common contributions and participation expected of them in a war.⁴ Marken goes on to explain that the use of these names to describe all guerrillas have tainted the history of these men to a certain extent and that, in an effort to explain their history more clearly, historians have tried to separate the guerrillas into three separate categories. She states that the first set of guerrillas have been described in “raiding warfare” and “was the most organized of the three, and involved regular cavalry officers—Union or Confederate—temporarily operating outside of the regular command structure. These raiders, usually with the permission of regular authorities, attacked strategic locations, such as railroad bridges or depots.”⁵ She goes on to explain that these raiders took advantage of the land around them and would freely take items from the homes of residents who were against their specific cause, and they would cause a substantial amount of destruction before they would leave and return to their units.⁶

⁴ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 9-11.

⁵ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 11.

⁶ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865” 11.

A second kind of guerrilla warfare Marken discusses has been called “partisan warfare.” The men who participated in this type of warfare were “partisans or rangers who were government sanctioned irregular troops loosely attached to the conventional army.”⁷ She continues on to explain that many of the men in this category banded together as soon as the Civil War started. They resided in areas that were largely for the opposing side and found help and encouragement from residents of the area whose loyalty lied with them despite where they lived. Marken goes on to explain that the partisan rangers kept from getting caught by completing certain missions and then returned home once they were finished where they blended into the area. In an effort to create and somewhat lead these partisan rangers, Marken explains that the Confederate States of America signed the Partisan Ranger Act in 1862. This act:

put partisans on the government payroll, gave them prisoner of war status in the eyes of many Union officials, and stipulated they give any weapons they captured to the Confederate government. The rangers were permitted to keep anything else they captured, making the position of a partisan as potentially lucrative as it was dangerous.⁸

The act was in place until 1864 when it was removed after the rangers proved to be uncontrollable and unwilling to follow directions given to them from the army. In addition, their behavior and exploits frequently hurt dedicated, Confederate civilians.⁹

Marken discusses the third type of irregular warfare described by historians as the remainder of the people involved in this type of fighting. These are the types of people who practiced this fighting “in the least civilized or honorable way according to nineteenth-century rules of warfare.” She goes on explaining that:

⁷ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 11.

⁸ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 12.

⁹ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 12.

this is usually called the “people’s war” or just the “guerrilla war,” deriving its name from its participants being regular civilians who became involved over local concerns. Bushwhackers, Jayhawkers, and bandits operated in this realm, taking advantage of the breakdown between law and order the war brought and generally paid no attention to local goals. They victimized regardless of age or sex, although they generally killed only men and boys.¹⁰

It is important to note that despite this, women were still subject to attacks and cruelty. Marken wrote that since the phrase “guerrilla war” is frequently used to describe this third type of irregulars, historians usually use the phrase “irregular warfare” to encompass each category.¹¹

The parallels between the guerrilla warfare in West Virginia during the Civil War and the war in the rest of the country between 1861 and 1865 are striking. The Civil War is commonly described as a war in which “brother fought against brother;” this idea can be seen clearly in the irregular fighting in West Virginia. In the rest of the country families and communities saw their ties break when different members went to fight for opposing sides and the American people grew to hate each other. Like with family and community gatherings, these men would meet on opposing sides of the battlefield where, in some cases, they would say their final goodbyes. This narrative is dark and reveals just how complicated and twisted the Civil War was; however in West Virginia it would be even more so with the region’s deep roots and the unpredictability and chaos that came with guerrilla attacks here. As will be discussed later in this thesis, the mountaineers of West Virginia are historically known for their closeness; family and community are two of the region’s top priorities. This closeness deteriorated for a while in the years prior to the Civil War and during it. Arguments occurred among people of the region over breaking away from the eastern portion of Virginia and becoming a new state as well as about the opposing

¹⁰ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865,” 12.

¹¹ Marken, “Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865.”

ideologies that were occurring in the rest of the country. As the Civil War approached, not everyone in western Virginia supported the Union and not everyone supported the Confederacy. The area of western Virginia that showed the most support for the formation of a new state and loyalty to the Union was the northwest. Several counties in the southwestern portion of the region leaned more towards the Confederacy. Therefore, in the state of West Virginia, there was a split between north and south, with a few counties having a mixture of sympathies, just as the whole country was divided between North and South and had a few states that had a mixture of sympathies or loyalties. In other words, the guerrilla fighting in West Virginia was a miniature version, or the little brother, of the Civil War. In West Virginia neighbors fought against their literal neighbors at times, a dynamic that is constantly discussed in the broader war. Each portion of the region was divided over politics based on the lifestyles they lived by just as the whole country was. When the war was over, these people had to learn how to live together in peace and harmony again, just as each state had to do the same when the southern states rejoined the Union after the end of the war.

This thesis produces three key arguments. The use of existing secondary scholarship and primary sources will assist in the explanations of each argument presented. For background purposes, and in an effort to set the scene for the state of the country at the time, this thesis will briefly observe the basic ins and outs of the Civil War. Second, it will explain the motivations and influences that led people to participate in guerrilla warfare. While the style of fighting was similar among all guerrillas, different bands of these irregulars had different motivations and influences in their lives that led them to this irregular kind of fighting. Additionally, the motivations and influences in the guerrillas' lives differed from the motivations and influences in the lives of those who chose to enlist in either the Union or Confederate armies, hence why their

methods of fighting differed from each other. Having this knowledge will help distinguish between the different types of soldiers in this war. Third, the thesis will show that a sense of betrayal in an emotionally bonded area like West Virginia, was one of the leading causes of the strong hostility in this area that led to the long list of reoccurring guerrilla raids. In doing this, there will be a strong emphasis placed on the role of emotions and, more specifically, betrayal in decision making during traumatic national or global events such as a war. The emotions felt by the American people in response to national issues was what largely caused the Civil War to start in the beginning. People on both sides of the slavery argument held strongly to their beliefs on the issue no matter what side of the battlefield they were on. In response, the possibility that others in the country would not agree with them or give them what they wanted, caused a slew of emotions ranging from fear, anger, disappointment, confusion, and betrayal.

These three arguments will arise from the existing literature on guerrilla warfare and the Civil War in the state of West Virginia that will be used in the following pages of this thesis. In these sources, the politics of western Virginia and the state movement are discussed and highlight the division within the new state born from a war. The literature will reveal the reasoning behind some of the violence that the new, supposedly united, state had during its statehood movement and after the fact. These sources also mention the drive emotions had on each individual who lived in the years leading up to and during the war. The literature acknowledges that emotions did in fact affect people's actions, but the right emotion or emotions were not given as much emphasis as they should have been given. The discussion of different types of emotions is where the thesis offers a new approach. It will analyze the emotional arguments that have already been made and propose a new argument about emotions that is born from the already existing approaches. There is no denying that a need for revenge and a sense of

loyalty to a state or country drove people to either enlist in the Union or Confederate armies or adopt guerrilla warfare as their preferred method of fighting and retribution. However, there is more substance to these arguments than what has been proposed. In addition to revenge and patriotism, there has to be a driving force behind these two factors and any other emotions that were felt during wartime. The main argument of this thesis will be that this said driving force was a sense of betrayal after everything in the American people's lives changed.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CIVIL WAR AND GUERRILLA WARFARE IN WEST VIRGINIA

Today, the Civil War is known as one of the darkest moments in our nation's relatively short history. It was a time when men debated so vehemently on their supposed right to own a group of people that verbal altercations turned into combat on the battlefield. Men from the North fought to stop the expansion of slavery and eventually fought for the freedom of the slaves while men in the South fought to protect their property (slaves) because they thought it was their state right to own people for labor purposes. The impact of this war and the politics that sparked it are still visible in politics and culture today. The Civil War was the first real crisis that the young country had faced within its borders since becoming an independent nation. While they did fight in the War of 1812, and the U.S. Mexican War was fought along the U.S. border in the south only a few years prior, the U.S. saw its own people take up weapons against each other to fight to defend their differing opinions. The once unified country was at risk of permanently breaking apart because it could not settle a long-standing political debate. Each side was very passionate about the position it held on the topic of slavery and neither was going to waver easily on their stance. The unwavering debates were reflected on the battlefield as men who fought for the Union and Confederacy were not going to surrender without giving their one hundred percent effort in each battle that occurred from 1861-1865.

The war was a time of division between the country and between people who lived in the same state. Not everyone participated in fighting and not everyone was happy when their state chose to secede. Some states were not able to reach a sound vote to either stay in or leave the Union, so they chose not to participate in war at all, and instead remained neutral. One such state that saw much division between its different regions was the state of Virginia, much larger than

than it is now. After Virginia chose to secede from the Union in 1861, politicians in the northwestern part of the state met to seriously discuss separation from VA and the formation of a new state. The formation of a new state was not a novel idea, it had been mentioned in the decades before the 1860s, but the suggestion was always viewed as a radical alternative and was ultimately turned down when discussed. After a couple years of conventions and legislation, a new state was created from the western counties of Virginia on June 20, 1863; the new state was simply named West Virginia. It is important to note that while a new state was formed from these counties, the people of West Virginia were not united themselves. Almost half of the new state's population supported the Confederacy either privately or publicly. Some of these people even joined the Confederate army during the war. This division in the new state led to a kind of fighting that was different and more chaotic than the organized fighting seen by the Federal and Confederate armies.¹²

As mentioned, while the Civil War did not actually start until 1861, the debates, politics, and events that caused the war had been ongoing for a whole decade before if not longer than that. For the sake of this thesis, just the decade prior (the 1850s) will be the farthest researched. It was in the 1850s that people of both the northern and southern states realized that the issues plaguing the country would not be solved by civilized negotiations. The 1850s were a time when the arguments turned to violence. One of the major issues of the time was that of slavery; the arguments on this topic ranged from whether it should be allowed period, to whether it should be allowed to expand westward to the territories. Westward expansion was popular among the people in the east; it was an area with an ample amount of land and many people saw it as a

¹² Richard Orr Curry, *A House Divided: A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964).

place of opportunity and a place to start a new life. Some of these people were slaveowners from the South. At that time slaves were considered property; when slaveowners moved west they wanted and thought they should be able to bring all their “property” with them. However, at this point in the country many people no longer thought the institution of slavery was moral or needed even if they did not believe in the African American’s equality to the white man. Therefore, these people did not want slavery to spread beyond the states that it already existed in.

Slavery became such a heated debate that legislation was passed in an effort to solve the problem. One example of this is the Compromise of 1850 which added California as a free state while also amending the Fugitive Slave Act.¹³ Another example, which did more harm than good, was the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. This act allowed the Kansas and Nebraska territories to decide if they wanted to become free or slave states through the policy of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty was this idea that the territories, not Congress, chose whether or not they would be free or slave states. The problem with this was it violated the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that stated everything north of the 36° 30′ line would be free while everything south would be slave territory. With this act, several pro-slavery supporters from neighboring Missouri flooded into the Kansas territory to unlawfully vote for the territory to become a slave state. Two governments were formed, one made up of actual citizens of the territory that supported a free state and one supporting a slave state and made up of invaders,

¹³ “The Compromise of 1850,” U.S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium, Copyright 2008-2019, Accessed July 24, 2019, <http://www.ushistory.org/us/30d.asp>.

both of which claimed to be the legitimate government. Violence ensued here and as this issue boiled in the territory for the next few years.¹⁴

In the presidential election of 1860 one of the candidates was Republican Abraham Lincoln. The Republican party was new and supported the idea of free soil, which meant they did not believe in the expansion of slavery. Lincoln strongly objected to the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 so much that he came out of his political hiatus to debate the issue. Although he was against slavery and its expansion personally, Lincoln had no intention of taking away slavery in the areas where it already existed. Despite this, southerners feared a Lincoln victory in November 1860, and discussions of the possibility of secession if a Lincoln victory occurred became common talk. Some believed that a Lincoln victory would call for an immediate secession, while others believed that the southern states should wait and see what Lincoln would do after being elected. In November 1860, the southerners' fears came true with Lincoln's election as the next president. Almost immediately in December, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union. By April 1861 the country was at war with itself and by June of that same year, 11 states had seceded from the Union.¹⁵

Some of the states that did not secede were called border states due to their location on the map that placed them literally on the border of both sides of the war. These states consisted of Missouri, Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and later, West Virginia. Often, the people who lived in these states and the states' governments were significantly divided when they voted on

¹⁴ Zach Garrison, "Kansas Nebraska Act," Civil War on the Western Border: The Missouri-Kansas Conflict, 1854-1865, The Kansas City Public Library, accessed July 24, 2019, <https://civilwaronthewesternborder.org/encyclopedia/kansas-nebraska-act>.

¹⁵ "Timeline of Secession," Digital History, Copyright 2019, accessed March 15, 2019, http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/south_secede/timeline_secession.cfm.

whether or not to secede. The division was so great that they could not definitively claim either Union or Confederate sympathies broadly. Although these states remained in the Union, both the Union and Confederacy knew how easily opinions in these states could sway to one side or the other. The fact that these border states were divided deserve a further discussion to understand why exactly its people were not largely unified on the topic of secession. Their reasonings came from much deeper influences than just differences in opinion. On several occasions, the division in these states, and even the unified states, was derived from sectional conflicts within the state. It is important to remember that while the people in these states shared the same state as each other, not every part of the state looked the same, and therefore, groups of people within these states had different methods of living based on which part of the region they lived in. They had no choice but to adapt to the landscape they lived in; they could not adopt a style of living that was universally liked, and have it be successful where they lived. In other words, the area they lived in determined how their lifestyle would be. Keeping the area and lifestyle they experienced in mind, people heavily chose which side of the secession argument would be most beneficial for them. In some areas that were poor, the people who lived here voted not to secede in their respective state's vote because they would not gain anything from secession since they could not afford to own slaves. In other areas of certain states, the landscaping did not provide the right environment for slave labor so there was no point in siding with secession in those areas either. Furthermore, some areas of certain states just hosted more people who were more northerly influenced, so naturally they would side with the Union. As previously mentioned, the divisions of the people of Virginia became so strong that they skipped the idea of simply becoming a border state. Virginia, although it voted for secession and became a part of the Confederate States of America, would see itself split in two and its western portion become its own state in

1863, in the middle of the Civil War. This state of course, is present day West Virginia, and its people sided with the Union.

While originally one state, Virginia's eastern and western portions were very different from each other and therefore, people's views were different based on which part of the state any given person lived in. The sectional differences within the state of Virginia were a conflict from the time it officially became a state after the United States won their independence from Great Britain. The conflicts that arose from sectional differences varied from things such as who could vote and how votes were determined to other basic topics. As the Civil War approached and votes on secession were occurring throughout all of the southern states, the sectional differences between the people of Virginia were becoming more heated, especially with Virginia's turn to vote on secession. The eastern portion of Virginia was well versed in using slave labor for their economic gains, however the western portion, while there was some slave labor used, did not rely so heavily on the said institution because of landscaping, income status, and other income opportunities. What is more is the mindset of people in different regions of the state was different as well. The northwestern portion of the state leaned more towards Union influence through the banks, occupations, and ethnicities of the region; consequently, this is the region that led the campaign for the creation of a new state. The politicians in this region proposed that the whole western portion of the state become separate from the rest of Virginia when it became evident that Virginia would side with the Confederacy. After Virginia's vote to secede and the outbreak of war, conventions were held in Wheeling in northwestern Virginia to discuss the creation of a new state, separate from Virginia, starting in 1861. It would take men like Francis Pierpont two years to succeed in the creation of this new state after President Lincoln gave his

approval so long as the new state would be a free state, and so the state of West Virginia was born on June 20, 1863.¹⁶

West Virginia, as the name implies, consists of the former western counties of Virginia. What is important to realize for the purposes of this thesis is that just because this new state was created in opposition to certain politics and opinions in Virginia, does not mean that all the people in the counties included in the new state were unified. This said unity is a common conclusion that many people mistakenly come to. In reality, the main part of West Virginia that strongly sympathized with and related to the Union was the northern part of the new state, while several people in many of the other counties were strong, Confederate sympathizers, and sent men to fight for the Confederate army. While some of the northwestern counties of West Virginia did harbor some secessionists within their borders, Confederate sympathizers were present in higher numbers in other counties. The counties with the higher Confederate sympathies were located in the southwestern and valley counties of the region. It is even more important to remember that these sympathies were in response to both the war and the dismemberment of the state, and they lasted throughout the entirety of the war. It cannot be emphasized too much throughout this thesis that the politicians in the northwest, namely Francis Pierpont and Arthur Boreman, never had complete control of the western portion of Virginia even after it became its own state.¹⁷ Some people took their unhappiness with the creation of the new state and their Confederate sympathies a step further than Confederate enlistment. This further step was a form of fighting called guerrilla warfare and it plagued the new state of West Virginia before and after its creation. Although the state lay in Union control or occupation,

¹⁶ Curry, *A House Divided*.

¹⁷ Curry, *A House Divided*.

again, the new government leaders never had complete control over the residents of the new state thanks to the sporadic attacks of the guerrillas. In fact, 40 percent of West Virginia's residents were secessionists. Surprisingly enough, while this 40 percent of secessionists were considered a lesser portion of West Virginia society by the northwestern politicians, they inflicted a heavy toll on armies and the residents that lived in the same communities as them. In some counties that held more of this 40 percent, Unionists wrote to their new government leaders fearing for their lives and the lives of any other Union men in the area. In some areas of the western counties, secessionists bullied Unionists into voting for the Secession Ordinance in May of 1861 before a new state was even created.¹⁸

Like in western Virginia communities where neighbors bickered about the right side to cheer for, the would-be new state leaders could not agree amongst themselves what exact course of action they wanted to take after the Secession Ordinance passed in Virginia. Some called for immediate separation from the state of Virginia and the creation of a new government even before the Ordinance passed, while others believed that was too rash of an action. Others still, thought separation from Virginia should be a hesitant action even after the Ordinance passed. Ultimately, Francis Pierpont, Arthur Boreman, John Carlile, and the other northwestern politicians decided to form a new state government, the Reorganized Government of Virginia, with Francis Pierpont as governor, and the new state officials began the process of the creation of a new state separate from Virginia. It is important to note again that 40 per cent of future West Virginians were secessionists, and even more importantly, fifty percent of the new state was not only loyal to the Confederacy but also opposed separation from Virginia. Therefore, in their decision to break from Virginia, the new state officials ignored half of their fellow would be

¹⁸ Curry, *A House Divided*.

West Virginians.¹⁹ The lack of attention to the desires of the rest of the people within the state is shocking in the sense that misrepresentation was one of the grievances the Reorganized Government officials had with the state of Virginia. Furthermore, this lack of representation reflects issues that were happening in other areas in the south. Just like in Southern states where a few government officials made the decisions and ignored the “lesser” of their society, so too did the new West Virginia officials ignore half of their population’s thoughts and wishes. This misrepresentation only opened the door for angry secessionists to take out their frustration either by enlisting in the Confederate army or conducting guerrilla raids either on passing Union armies or their neighbors who they knew supported the Union and the new state. This anger led to other emotions that only fueled the fire for irregular warfare as will be discussed later in this thesis. Newspapers in this region were well adapted in expressing the views of both sides in western Virginia. The *Richmond Daily Dispatch* was a key newspaper in expressing these views of Confederate sympathizers. Of the Northwest, the newspaper had to say:

Northwestern Virginia has brought grief and shame to the State and to the South by her woful defection; but by none is this felt more keenly than by those sons of that section who have left their homes, and, in many instances, their wives and little ones, to battle for the right. They hear jeers and sneers thrown out even at themselves, and endure them with apparent patience, but with an inward resolve to testify on the battlefield their fidelity to their country’s cause.²⁰

In contrast, the *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer* was the key newspaper in expressing Unionist views that consisted of praising the Union armies and disgracing Confederate guerrilla bands. Of secessionists, the paper wrote in one of its entries:

¹⁹ Curry, *A House Divided*.

²⁰ “Northwestern Virginia—an encouraging view of its present condition.” *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, September 12, 1861, West Virginia State Archives.

An Outrageous State of Affairs.—A Mr. Doty, from the town of Spencer, the county seat of Roane county, Virginia, reached the city yesterday for the purpose of soliciting aid in men and arms to help the Union men of that county. Mr. Doty says that people residing in civilized communities can have no conception of the inhuman outrages which the Union men of Roane county have been compelled to suffer.²¹

Ultimately, guerrilla warfare became a common lifestyle in West Virginia, causing constant fear for its inhabitants.

Different parts of the future state of West Virginia experienced more division and guerrilla raids than others. One such area is that of present-day Upshur County, specifically in the small community of French Creek. At the outbreak of war, the majority of Upshur County residents held Union sentiments. A large and important reason for that is partially due to the family backgrounds of the people that lived in this part of the state. The lineage of several of the antebellum people in the county has been traced to New England families where slave labor was not nearly as widely used in the country. For those with family backgrounds in the state of Virginia, several of these families still did not come from the slaveholding areas of “old Virginia.” Here, historians are shown just how important family is in determining future factors in the country. While Upshur County was largely for the Union, some county members supported and left the county to fight for the Confederacy, including the sheriff and the county clerk. French Creek community members that joined the fight for the Union became part of Company E of the Third Virginia, renamed West Virginia after the addition of the new state, and those who supported the Confederacy joined a group called the Upshur Grays. No matter what side they were on, the men in these two companies usually fought close to home.²²

²¹ *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*. August 21, 1861, West Virginia State Archives.

²² Sirene Bunten, *We Will Know What War Is: The Civil War Diary of Sirene Bunten*, ed. Stephen Cresswell (Buckhannon, West Virginia: West Virginia Wesleyan College Press, 1993);

While the men of the community were gone serving whichever side they supported, the women, children, and the old, were tasked with the responsibility of keeping the homes and land running as it always had. The upkeep of the homes and land was done at the same time that there was always a chance that attacks, either little or big, could occur. During these attacks Confederate troops or guerrillas would take livestock, horses, saddles, food, or blankets. If this new reality was not bad enough for members of the French Creek community and other communities, those left behind never really knew what news they were hearing about battles or male family members were true or false. This lack of clarity is a common trend seen in the diary of Sirene Bunten. Bunten was only fifteen years old when she started her diary in 1863; the diary entries continued throughout the duration of the Civil War and the post-war years. Sirene's diary gave an insight into the daily lives of French Creek residents. The division of the people hit close to home with Sirene when her brother-in-law left to serve for the Confederacy. Of this unfortunate turn of events for her family Sirene wrote in her diary, "It is dreadful to think one of our family is a traitor to our country."²³ Two other trends that pop up in the analysis of this time are evident in Sirene's account. One of these trends was that of a constant uncertainty. The people of French Creek in Upshur County never really knew of the health or safety of their family members off serving in the war nor did they ever really know who was winning and losing the war. At one point, Sirene and her family received word that her brother, Walter, had been captured by southerners and died of starvation. However, they were never certain of the truth of the rumor due to the lack of an official report and because they were used to hearing

Marcia Phillips, "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War," West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, A&M 1846, 20.

²³ Bunten, *We Will Know What War Is*, 41.

news that were just rumors. It was not until Walter did not return home after the war that it made the rumor appear to be truth.²⁴ This uncertainty flooded over into residents never knowing just how close the enemy was to them or if the enemy was heading their way. All of this uncertainty led into the other trend that coattails everything about this war and that is a feeling of fear. This fear was held by residents for their own safety, the safety of their family members who fought in the war, and the future of the country.

A feeling of fear was dominant throughout the entirety of the Civil War, and it could be found in all aspects of the war. Prior to the outbreak of war, slaveowners feared that the politicians in the North were going to take away their slaves, an important asset to their livelihood at the time, while the politicians of the North feared the expansion of slavery to the western territories and thus the slaveowners' ever growing political and social powers. Everyone in the country feared for its future at the time. Although men who fought on both sides of the war were brave enough to fight for whatever cause they believed in, whether it be right or wrong, the fear of death and the security of their families back home were on these soldiers' minds. The wives and families of these men found themselves concerned not only for the safety of the men who were on the battlefield but also for their safety in their own homes. What is more, if the war itself was not enough to fear, common diseases and ailments of the time occasionally paid civilians a visit, causing a fear of death by that route. All of this can be seen in the account that Marcia Phillips, another French Creek resident left behind in her diary.²⁵

²⁴ Buntin, *We Will Know What War Is*, 77.

²⁵ Phillips, "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War."

Phillips lived in Buckhannon in Upshur County of present-day West Virginia. Her husband, Sylvester, served for the Union during the war and was away from home periodically. Throughout the diary, Phillips expressed her fears for Sylvester's safety and well-being while he was away and dreaded the days he had to leave when he did get a brief break to visit home. In addition to worrying about the safety of her husband, Marcia had to worry about the safety of herself, family, and neighbors due to the possibility of an attack from secessionists. Early in her diary, Phillips mentioned that the area she lived in included a handful of Unionists among several secessionists, therefore, the threat of a secessionist attack was very real here. There were rumors in the area that several groups of secessionists haunted the nearby forests, keeping the residents of the French Creek, Buckhannon area alert and on edge. Threats of an attack on French Creek where Rebels planned to destroy the town caused even more fear and panic among the civilians living there. The daily fear of an attack was so prevalent in the French Creek society that people, including some of Marcia's family, lost endless hours of sleep. In multiple entries, Phillips recorded that some people vacated their homes at the possibility of a raid in the community carried out by some of the Rebels.²⁶

The fear of an attack made by secessionists on the French Creek community and the high possibility that it could happen, led to a creation of a Home Guard. Of this creation and its purpose Marcia writes, "He and his orderlyseargent, Loomis Gould came up here for the purpose of forming a Home Guard and organizing it, so the citizens may protect themselves and homes when the Federal troops are gone. Enough arms were captured in the late battles to arm them."²⁷

²⁶ Phillips, "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War."

²⁷ Phillips. "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War," 20.

Based on Marcia's account, the historian can see just how strong the fear of the people was in this area. Through her diary logs the reader also discovers how fear affected some people and drove them to make certain choices. For example, Phillips mentioned a man by the name of Mr. James Pickens; according to her this man confirmed that he fought in the war because he wanted to, explaining he would prefer to die during battle over being killed by a secessionist in his own home.²⁸ Therefore, the fear of being attacked on the home front was stronger than the fear of dying on the battlefield, leading men just like this Mr. Pickens to make a choice of how and where he wanted to fight and possibly die. Furthermore, not only can historians see fear, but through Phillips they see just how real and unexpected these attacks could happen. This revelation is important in understanding the full impact that this war had and how these guerrilla attacks that Phillips described played a role.

Through the fear that is seen among the people of French Creek and what it does to those who reside in the community, it is evident how powerful emotions were during the Civil War. This specific emotion led people to abandon their homes, join the army, lose sleep, and literally look over their shoulders wherever they went. If the emotion of fear can cause a change in how the people of a small community live their daily lives, other, more negative emotions certainly can lead to the decision to participate in the guerrilla warfare that has been discussed. The fighting on the home front seems to have caused the most fear and turmoil on the Upshur County residents at least if not anyone else. Furthermore, at least on the battlefield soldiers had a somewhat decent idea of when the opposing army was approaching, and after the initial start of the war the soldiers knew who their enemies were for the most part. On the home front civilians

²⁸ Phillips. "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War," 39.

were playing a guessing game with both time and the players (people) within their own communities and families. Guerrilla warfare became extremely important during the Civil War and is imperative to one's understanding of the war. This type of fighting rocked towns in areas like the western territories of the United States and in the Appalachian regions of the country such as Kentucky, western Virginia, eastern Tennessee and North Carolina. The study of groups of guerrillas terrorizing the people in this town is a very important factor in the Civil War's history. In fact, historian Daniel Sutherland argues that: "The Civil War was a struggle not just between two blocks of states but the collected experiences of individual states. Even more to the point, it needs to be explored through the lives of individual communities."²⁹

The guerrilla fighting in West Virginia was a direct representation of the Civil War on the home front and all that it was derived from. The guerrilla fighting here is key to the understanding of the rest of the war considering the war exploded from the years of arguments that were made off of the battlefield over the issues that ultimately caused the war. The guerrilla fighting in places like West Virginia show just how much chaos and turmoil the country was in at the time in a way that the battlefield cannot. The irregular warfare brought the issues full circle in the sense that the guerrillas kept the fighting within their communities that existed before the war, only in a verbal form in most cases and in most areas of the country in the years leading up to the war. While the battlefields revealed to the country the chaos and loss that came with the Civil War through depictions of it in newspapers, the fighting on and amongst people on the home front made a deeper impression on the average civilian as they had to see this fighting or experience this violence themselves in some way. The following chapter will explore more

²⁹ Daniel E. Sutherland, *Guerrillas, Unionists, and Violence on the Confederate Home Front* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1999), 7.

deeply into the motivations and influences that led people to participate in guerrilla warfare, in an effort to explain the reasoning behind the unorthodox act. It is important to remember that like in the western territories, in places such as Kansas and Missouri, many West Virginians took up guerrilla warfare to fight for whatever cause they believed in during the war instead of enlisting with either the Union or Confederacy. This type of fighting involved a band of unorganized men attacking passing armies and their neighbors if they were not on the same side of the political spectrum as them, to solve past grievances, and simply to survive in a brutal war in a just as brutal terrain. When the new state was created, the northern section was largely pro Union but several of the southern counties were sympathetic to the Southern cause and did not agree with a separation from Virginia either. Therefore, just as the United States started its independent life in division over key issues so did the new state of West Virginia. The people of West Virginia lived in an uninterrupted state of fear and turmoil between 1861 and 1865, and even for some time after the end of the war due to this division. West Virginians had to worry about their once civil neighbors either ratting them out to the opposite side for their political beliefs, setting their homes on fire, stealing their property and money, physically assaulting them, or murdering them during this time. Passing armies had to be extra alert when passing through towns known to hold strong sympathies for the opposing side because these guerrillas would spontaneously attack from the shelter of bushes and hills and disappear just as quickly. Therefore, just like the rest of the country also, the division of the West Virginia people started with talk and debate, and quickly escalated to sudden and unpredictable violence.

CHAPTER TWO

MOTIVES AND INFLUENCES

For a topic like guerrilla warfare, understanding irregulars' motives for fighting is important in understanding the complexity of this whole story. Marken argues that while the bushwhackers, raiders, rangers, deserters, and bandits were the same in what they did, they had different reasons for their fighting. Furthermore, some Confederate and Union supporters who participated in the irregular fighting did not want to. Marken stresses the significance of studying the reasons behind the guerrilla warfare in western Virginia arguing that the people in the area had several supporters for both the Union and the Confederacy, and the terrain allowed coverage for people. Marken argues that guerrillas in this area had three motivations:

One motivation, a driving factor for fighters from all three historical categories, was the opportunity to assist in military strategy for a political cause. Both raiders and partisans, who at least answered to their government in name, if not always in practice, fought for this reason, as did those band of bushwhackers who targeted enemy soldiers or supply lines. These were often the bands that sympathetic civilians referred to as "guerrillas" rather than "bushwhackers." Those who desired to assist the organized war effort in western Virginia derailed trains, attacked foraging parties, and generally threatened the efficient conduct of military operations.³⁰

Several people of the region liked this type of fighting because they wanted to contribute to the army they supported while also staying close to their homes. A group called the Home Guards were also included with these fighters and were the last protectors for their homes; while they protected their homes from threats from guerrilla groups, they too practiced irregular

³⁰ Karissa A. Marken, "They Cannot Catch Guerrillas in the Mountains Any More Than a Cow Can Catch Fleas: Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865" (master's thesis, Liberty University, 2014) accessed August 18, 2018, https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C49&q=guerrilla+warfare+in+western+virginia+karissa+marken&btnG=&httpsredir=1&article=1325&context=masters, 25.

fighting when they went after guerrillas and when they chased after those who ran from the service. However, occasionally they contributed to the problem when they went beyond their duties and adopted bushwhacking, causing more issues.³¹ Marken goes on to discuss the second motivation stating that hatred, revenge, and the chance to better their lives in some way played a role in the people's choice to participate in guerrilla warfare. She argues that the guerrillas who had this motivation followed their own rules and murdered no matter what the reason or the side of the war their victims were on. Marken goes on to explain that these guerrillas used the war as an excuse to attack their neighbors and gain revenge for past grievances, or to achieve influence and riches by disobeying the law in one way or the other. Although the residents of local towns were frequently irritated with the military driven guerrillas, who took what they wanted or needed whenever they wanted, they were extremely fearful of the irregulars who fought out of simple hatred for something whether of the present or the past.

The third motivation for some guerrillas to fight was for the sake of living. While they had rather not have any part in the guerrilla fighting, many people saw it as the only way to guarantee that they would live through the war. These guerrillas took food and broke into homes to take items they had to have in order to live. They were willing to commit murder if they were chased or harmed. The type of guerrillas who held this kind of motivation involved deserters from the Confederate and Union armies, those fleeing from the draft, and Unionists or Confederates who resided in locations that were not largely supportive of the side they were loyal to. Marken argues that the guerrilla conflict was very complex and was used whenever the perpetrators felt that they and their lifestyles were not safe in one way or another.³² This idea is

³¹ Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865," 25-26.

³² Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865."

parallel to what started the Civil War in the first place; the southerners felt as if their way of life was going to be taken away from them, so they took action. This need to protect a certain lifestyle through action happened with guerrilla warfare but in an unorganized fashion.

Marken's explanations behind the motivations of guerrillas is key in understanding the basics of guerrilla warfare and the guerrillas themselves. The purpose of this thesis is not to challenge her innovative reasonings but to adapt and build on them. Emotions and protecting one's own self and daily life were no doubt motivations in the guerrilla conflict; however, the type of emotions may be different, and their effects may be as well. The analysis of different emotions and their effects will be a main adaptation made to Marken's argument throughout the contents of this thesis. More specifically, this thesis will add betrayal as the key motivational emotion amongst guerrillas. Furthermore, it will argue that betrayal was the provider of all other emotions that motivated people to adopt irregular fighting.

As previously discussed, there were different types of guerrillas and they had different motives for their choice to practice guerrilla warfare. In addition to different motivations they had different methods that they used for their attacks. For example, in several instances, especially in [West] Virginia, these "bushwhackers" hid in local forests and waited for passing armies to cross their path. The armies, either Union or Confederate, not only had to worry about completing their mission and coming into contact with a unit from the opposing army, but also about attacks from bushwhackers that could happen at any time without warning.³³ In other cases, guerrillas robbed and burned homes of people within their own towns that supported an opposite side than them. As Michael Fellman discusses on his study of guerrilla warfare in

³³ Frank Zeller, Civil War Diary, A&M 3501, West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries.

Missouri in *Inside War*, in several of these home robberies the guerrillas would also kill the man of the house; the level of sympathy, or lack thereof, shown toward women depended on each band of guerrillas.³⁴ As previously mentioned several of these guerrilla bands claimed that their actions were in support of either the Confederacy or Union and they thought this was the best way to help. Other guerrillas used the Civil War as an excuse to settle past grievances with their neighbors. Neighbor exposed neighbor to existing bands if they were known to hold sympathy and lent support to the side in the war that did not have many supporters in the specific neighborhood.³⁵

The guerrilla warfare in [West] Virginia was not isolated to one part of the western area; instead fighting was widespread in the western counties of Virginia that turned into present day West Virginia. This widespread fighting is evident through several primary sources available that report some sort of guerrilla raid in one part of the region and future state and then in a completely other area in other sources. The inhabitants of [West] Virginia lived in constant fear of being victims of an unexpected guerrilla raid. The citizens of this area not only had to fear these guerrilla raids but also the whole war itself at the same time. What was even more terrifying were the changes that the brutality of guerrilla warfare went through as it became a regular occurrence in the area. By early 1862, irregulars would not stop at just killing an enemy. They started taking further action by setting the dead person's body on fire, tearing the body

³⁴ Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War*. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1989).

³⁵ Brian D. McKnight, *Contested Borderland: The Civil War in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006).

apart, or placing the dead body in a certain location where they knew the victim's family would see it.³⁶ Brian McKnight explained the complex situation perfectly when he said:

The invasion of local areas by both traditional and renegade commands threw communities into turmoil. Fearful of war in the first place, these small Appalachian villages initially found themselves occupied by forces representing the upstart Confederate States and threatened by a watchful Union army. Not sure how an erroneous declaration of loyalty might impact their futures, the people of this contentious mountainous region dealt with the daily uncertainty in a variety of ways, from manipulating personal loyalty to actually fighting back in armed conflict.³⁷

The mountainous terrain of the area was perfect for these kinds of surprise attacks on organized armies and citizens. Not only did it conceal the perpetrators until they wanted to make their attack, it also shielded them when they vanished just as abruptly. As previously mentioned, these attacks were not prejudiced toward men and women or children; no one was ever really safe from an attack. In several instances, especially in the western territories but also in western Virginia, a band of guerrillas would demand that the man of the house step outside and make his presence known. At this point the guerrillas would shoot and kill the man on the spot and proceed to raid his home and property and sometimes burned the house after their search was done. This violence is very similar to what was seen in the western territories of the U.S. as Michael Fellman discussed. Again, here, just like in the west, the sympathy towards women and children depended on the men in each guerrilla band. In some cases, it has been reported that the guerrillas were gentleman like to the lady of the house and would sometimes not burn her home upon her request. Other times, the women of the house were not given special treatment other

³⁶ Kenneth W. Noe. "Who Were the Bushwhackers? Age, Class, Kin, and Western Virginia's Confederate Guerrillas, 1861-1862." *Civil War History* 49, no. 1 (2003): 5-31. <https://muse.jhu.edu/> (accessed June 14, 2019).

³⁷ McKnight, *Contested Borderland*, 4.

than being allowed to live. If the children of the house were male, they, like the man of the house, often met a violent end.³⁸

In his study of guerrilla warfare in the western region of Missouri, Michael Fellman discusses some of the guerrillas' motivations for their actions at least in this part of the country. He writes that often the irregulars were in search of food, while still admitting that this may not have been the single purpose for an attack. A frequent problem related to the victims of these attacks was that occasionally the victims would keep a portion of the story of what exactly happened and what the irregulars looked like to themselves because they were afraid of what would happen to them if they did share that information. In these cases, the victims would provide the authorities with some information on the attack in order to not be accused themselves of being guerrilla supporters. While such an accusation seems like an outrageous thing to accuse a victim of guerrilla violence of, this did occur frequently, and not surprisingly considering anyone in this time period could have, unknowingly by their peers, been a guerrilla or a guerrilla sympathizer.³⁹ Fellman writes that an entire town would be crippled by fear of attacks from people of their own towns or from guerrillas who were strangers. He goes on to say that guerrillas and militia alike commonly dressed in civilian attire and Confederate irregulars dressed in Union uniforms to conceal their identities on a regular basis. In addition, Union troops would occasionally pose as guerrillas when they too, would attack civilians or raid their homes. These Union troops, at least the ones from Kansas, were known as "Jayhawkers." Therefore, the people who lived in these communities could never be sure who their enemy and who their ally was, who they could trust and who they could not trust. The people were so fearful and so

³⁸ Fellman, *Inside War*.

³⁹ Fellman, *Inside War*.

untrustworthy that they would often change their loyalties quickly and temporarily depending on what kind of band of guerrillas or troops were present in their local town at the time.⁴⁰ This use of fear was a common thread in the western Virginia region just as in the western regions of the U.S. in places like Missouri. This lack of trust can be seen in western Virginia too as the people who were once family and civil neighbors turned on each other based on their national and local opinions. The small community of French Creek in present day Upshur County, West Virginia, saw some of their neighbors and family members either leave the town to join the Confederate army or to stay on the outskirts of town to prowl the boundaries. The women and children that were left behind by their husbands or fathers who were fighting in the war were left to face the fear of an attack as reports of enclosing bands of irregulars or organized armies constantly reached them.⁴¹ In addition to the use of fear, Fellman notes that in Missouri, "...revenge was the obsessive theme. Vengeance was the theme which tied together the tattered bits of self-justification on these guerrilla boys assembled in their public proclamations."⁴² This theme of revenge can also be read about and seen in Richard Curry's work on West Virginia as guerrillas fought in response to the war and the separate statehood movement.⁴³

The difference between Missouri and western Virginia in regard to this fact was that Missouri's guerrilla warfare was initially started thanks to the outbreak of the Civil War. While western Virginia was undergoing this same conflict, which no doubt was a contributing factor to the war, the people of the region were at conflict with themselves as the western region of

⁴⁰ Fellman, *Inside War* 40.

⁴¹ Marcia Phillips, "Marcia Louise Sumner Phillips, Journal of an Upshur County Resident Regarding the Civil War," West Virginia and Regional History Center, West Virginia University Libraries, A&M 1846.

⁴² Fellman, *Inside War*, 139.

⁴³ Richard Orr Curry, *A House Divided: A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964).

Virginia wanted to split from the state and form its new state. The conflicts that arose from this desire was that not everyone in the western region of the state wanted to leave Virginia, and not everyone in the western portion of the state supported the Union, despite the claims of the northwestern Virginia politicians who pushed for dismemberment and separate statehood. Another difference between Missouri and western Virginia are the regions and the assistance they gave to the guerrillas. Both regions saw guerrillas attack and flee very swiftly and suddenly, almost unexpectedly sometimes. However, Missouri is a much flatter region than West Virginia where the rolling hills and thick brush gave the guerrillas in this region an added advantage of concealment. The terrain added to the fears of the people in the new state since they could not see their guerrilla attackers coming at all, and they could not see where the attackers fled. Adding to the already high fears at least of the people in the western territories, several guerrillas were not disciplined in checking which sides the people they were attacking supported so often even if someone was sympathetic to the guerrillas' cause they too were still attacked because the irregulars did not take the time and caution to see where the people's allegiances were directed towards.⁴⁴ Therefore, in theory, no one was safe from guerrilla warfare, showing just how unorganized these bands of fighters really were.

Guerrilla warfare in the Civil War is a relatively unresearched topic especially in the western [West] Virginia region. However, new things have been discovered about it in this century and still are to this day. For example, it was recently discovered that several bushwhackers were not young and poor troublemakers. Instead, while there were some young and poor irregulars, several of these men were older landowners.⁴⁵ This discovery could point to

⁴⁴ Fellman, *Inside War*.

⁴⁵ Noe, "Who Were the Bushwhackers?"

information about the type of people who took up guerrilla warfare. Considering that there were several older irregulars who were landowners than there were poor and young irregulars, there could be a generation gap on the level of importance this war was on for some people. The war and the ideas that caused it could have been more important to people in the older generation because it is what they knew for several years. As previously mentioned earlier in this thesis, one of the issues that led to the outbreak of war was slavery and states rights' relationship to it. This older generation could have felt that the government was attempting to control them by taking away the livelihood and main source of income and labor that they had been accustomed to for years. However, people in the younger generation at this time were being exposed to newer opportunities for the betterment of their lives, their economic standing, and learning how to work in different kinds of fields. Therefore, this younger generation may not have been as passionate about the same issues given that they now had other options that their parents or grandparents did not have or did not know about. These different opportunities and lack of passion could have led to the generation gap in irregular soldiers and would not be surprising either seeing as this is often the situation in most wars in history especially with the United States in the 20th century. For example, when the United States officially entered the Vietnam War the country was still praising the heroic World War II veterans and believed that all the generations to come should aspire to be like them. However, the children of the World War II era families were being offered so many new opportunities and ideas in the 1960s and 1970s that the two generations were at odds with each other on lifestyle types, what was really important in their life and for the country, and even the war itself.

Then, there were men that were in between the younger and older generations that were looking for something more in their lives that they believed war could offer them. General John

S. Mosby, for example, fitted into this in between generation of men who fought in the war. By the start of the war, Mosby was nearing his 30s, neither old nor considered very young either at the time. What is interesting about Mosby is that he was already well on his way to a comfortable and distinguished life; he was an attorney at the break of war and left that career to serve in the Confederate army. Soon, Mosby found himself craving a different kind of fighting than the organized strategies of the formal Confederate Army. Not long into the war, Mosby was granted permission to lead a band of partisan rangers who carried out irregular war methods that the more organized Confederate army did not take part in. Mosby's partisan rangers were feared across Virginia and their tactics became so well-known that the band gained the nickname, "Mosby's Confederacy." In some of his exploits as a partisan Mosby described some instances as "comical" instead of dreadful and was unapologetic about his and his men's actions. Mosby was not even offended at the fact that his band was referred to as guerrillas, stating instead that he would take the term without protest: "The word "guerrilla" is a diminutive of the Spanish word "guerra" (war), and simply means one engaged in the minor operations of war. Although I have never adopted it, I have never resented as an insult the term "guerrilla" when applied to me."⁴⁶

Mosby's diaries are extremely important assets for the research that has been conducted on guerrilla warfare since most of the research done on this topic is collected from the diaries and other recollections of non-guerrillas in the war. Most of these sources come from the diaries of Union soldiers, and residents on the home front who found themselves as victims of guerrilla warfare or potential victims as rumors spread of oncoming attacks. It is rare to find a primary source on this topic from the mind of one who fought using guerrilla or partisan tactics. It is even

⁴⁶ John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby* ([n.p.] Arcadia Press, 2017), 120.

more significant to find a source that was a leader of a band because not only does the researcher read of the actions carried out by said band, he or she can understand the reason behind the band's movements and their reasons for partaking in guerrilla warfare in the first place. What is most interesting about this insight into the irregular fighting is the lack of remorse, or more accurately the sense of an unapologetic attitude expressed by Mosby and his men in response to his and their actions. For example, Mosby described his confrontations with Union men in a delighted tone and stated that he "...had a gay time with the Yankees." Mosby goes as far to say that at the beginning of his career as a partisan his days were filled with more "comical" incidents than they were with "tragic" incidents.⁴⁷ Mosby would give reasonings to justify his attacks such as in one instance where he was accused of being a horse thief, a common accusation made of guerrillas. He justified the stealing of a horse with the fact that the horse not only originally had a rider, but that the rider also had weapons that could be used against Mosby and his men. So, Mosby used self-defense as his justification for stealing horses during his career. He was very arrogant in his and his men's ability to not only fight but to also successfully escape capture and escape quickly. After one such attack, Mosby provided an account of their escape: "As soon as it was daylight, a strong body of cavalry was sent up the turnpike to catch us—they might as well have been chasing a herd of antelope. We had several hours' start of them, and they returned to camp in the evening, leading a lot of broken-down horses. The pursuit had done them more harm than our attack."⁴⁸

Another important insight that a guerrilla's account provides is the level of sympathy they experienced during their escapes after partaking in an attack or raid, which was so important

⁴⁷ John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby*, 56.

⁴⁸ John S. Mosby, *The Memoirs of Colonel John S. Mosby*, 56.

for their lives and the longevity of their band and its future attacks. From the viewpoint of a guerrilla the historian realizes more fully the division of the people on the home front in this part of the country. Mosby's band was successful largely in the fact that they were able to find allies on the home front that aided them in hiding or with guidance as the band passed by the farms and homes of the locals. Mosby's band could have easily been a blip in the history books if they had not come into contact with people on the home front who held Confederate sympathies; they could have stumbled across large group of Union sympathizers instead that would have ended their quests much sooner. Understanding this division is important in understanding why and how guerrilla warfare became so widespread, and a significant threat and danger to those who were not on the same side in the states and territories that experienced it. Understanding this division from a guerrilla's standpoint is also important in order to grasp how complicated this war was. In sources provided by those who fought for the Union or those who supported the Union cause on the home front, the guerrillas and regular Confederate soldiers were the bad guys; they were heartless animals determined to break apart the country and destroyed anyone and anything that got in their path of doing so. These type of sources also make the guerrillas look like rogues of society and those on the home front who sympathize with the rebels as outcasts that were not normal. Instead, with a source from a guerrilla, the historian finds that they were normal men who had aspirations and opinions that they fully believed were rational. The same too can be said for those on the home front who aided the guerrillas in escaping or carrying out future attacks. Ultimately, what this reveals is that this war was not a black and white, cut and paste, conflict. Instead, it was much more complicated than what it appears to be upon a first, quick glance.

It is important to study guerrilla warfare in general to get to the bottom of what was really going on in the war. The Civil War was a conflict that started as a result of disagreements on the home front—what would be allowed on certain territories, what economy was the best for this region, the number of people enslaved in this region and the number of freemen in that region, the politicians that ran state governments, representation—therefore it only makes sense to study the irregular fighting that occurred on the home front where everything manifested into this one bloody war. The home front and the irregular fighting on it, are at the heart of the Civil War. Furthermore, in [West] Virginia, the people who partook in the guerrilla fighting fought as a result of the main conflict of the nation at the time and of a war within a war. At the same time the nation went to war with itself, western Virginia was seeking a split from Virginia and desired to become its own state loyal to the Union. What is important to realize about this is that not everyone in the western Virginia region was unified in this effort. The strongest outcry for the creation of a new state came from people in the northwestern part of the region while more people in the southwestern part did not want to secede from Virginia. Other parts of the region hosted a mixture of people with different opinions. By 1863, those who wanted a new state were successful in their efforts when the state of West Virginia was born on June 20 of that year. The disagreements over this issue both before and after 1863 gave guerrillas in this region another reason to attack in addition to their reasons related to the broader war. Consequently, residents of West Virginia not only had to worry about which side they sympathized with in the war, but they also had to worry about which side they chose to take in the debate over statehood. In this region, the residents could be attacked both for their national opinions or allegiances and also their state opinions and allegiances. In other words, the people of this region had much to fear with not

knowing which opinions their neighbors held and not knowing when an attack could be coming, or what exactly would happen to them if an attack would come.

When studying the Civil War in general the emotional and ideological charges are important to look at. When studying guerrilla warfare in the Civil War it is even more important. This war was a series of emotions that eventually boiled over after years of debate among slaveowners, non-slaveowners, and politicians. A certain set of conflicting ideologies were held not just in this region but across the country as a whole on the topic of slavery. These ideologies can be traced back before the nineteenth century to the eighteenth century when the colonists were deciding how their new country's government would be organized after winning independence from the British. Perhaps the most significant ideology that was at the foundation of each debate was the iconic statement that everyone is equal made by Thomas Jefferson himself in the Declaration of Independence. For years this idea was drawn into question; are all men really equal? What does equality mean exactly? What does this statement mean for the institution of slavery? Even in the late 18th century the new Americans debated on the morality and legality of the institution of slavery, concluding that after a certain amount of years it should peacefully end. This gradual end to slavery did not happen. As the transition into the 19th century occurred, and the new United States grew, the gradual fade of slavery that the founding fathers envisioned was even farther away than what many had thought.⁴⁹ As the United States became its own entity, the economic dependence on slave labor in the south grew with the ever-increasing high demand for cotton. Therefore, in the eyes of a plantation owner, his whole

⁴⁹ "The Debate about Slavery," American History from Revolution to Reconstruction and Beyond, Copyright 1994-2012, Accessed July 24, 2019, www.let.rug.nl/usa/outlines/government-1991/the-constitution-an-eduring-document/the-debate-about-slavery.php.

livelihood depended on his slaves and the labor they provided. Another set of ideologies that occurred partly as a result of this defended the use of the institution of slavery through misconstrued explanations. One of these ideologies was that slavery was biblical. Slaveowners used the argument that the people of the biblical times had slaves and it taught slaves that they should respect and be thankful for their masters.⁵⁰ Another ideology the slaveowners used was that slaves were unruly, lawless, and lost without this type of controlled labor. Slaveowners argued that the slaves gained from this bondage because their owners looked after them more than the worker who was not in bondage was by their employer. They said that if the slaves were given freedom, they would basically become no better than animals and would not have any control over their behaviors.

While there were ideologies in place that supported slavery, there were also ideologies in place that did not support it. Just as the pro-slavery side used the Bible, so did those against slavery, arguing instead that the Bible taught that slavery was actually morally wrong and was a sin. To make the conflict between those who supported and disagreed with slavery even more difficult, two branches of people who did not support slavery existed. One category was called anti-slavery, while the other was known as abolitionism. The anti-slavery supporters were not as passionate and as aggressive in their demands as the abolitionists were; this difference caused strife between the two groups. The abolitionists believed that not only should the slaves be freed but they should be eligible for equal rights and opportunities. Some of the abolitionists were more passionate and rasher in their actions and decision making than their fellow anti-slavery

⁵⁰ “The Southern Argument for Slavery,” U.S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium, Copyright 2008-2019, accessed July 24, 2019, www.ushistory.org/us/27f.asp.

supporters.⁵¹ One of the most popular abolitionists was John Brown, who led raids against pro-slavery men in the Kansas territory during the Bleeding Kansas conflict, but his most famous incident was his raid on Harpers Ferry, VA (present day West Virginia) in 1859. Brown's plan was to arm local slaves and have them assist in robbing the armory at Harper's Ferry. When Brown did not get as much support as he thought he would, his raid failed drastically. Even though his raid failed, slaveowners became angry, and felt like their way of life had been threatened even more than they had thought before.⁵²

This mishmash of ideologies in the whole country was present in western (West) Virginia just as much among other ideologies specific to this region. The mountaineer has always had strong family and community ties; the people in this region tend to hold these relationships in the highest regard. In her thesis Marken touches on this relationship and relates its importance to guerrilla warfare in the state: "As in other areas of Appalachia, Virginia mountaineers placed high value on family and put local concerns over state or national concerns, and how guerrilla warfare was conducted in the area was a direct result of those customs."⁵³ This bond could relate to one of the motivations that Marken discusses that some of the guerrillas fought to protect the towns they lived in and their families and to stay with their families.⁵⁴ Even today in the state of West Virginia there are several people who act as if they do not know a stranger. When discussing why some people may have taken up bushwhacking at the outbreak of war, Kenneth Noe explains that instead of the class structure being a strong influence on their decision to fight

⁵¹ "I Will Be Heard," Abolitionism in America, Copyright 2002, accessed July 24, 2019, rnc.library.cornell.edu/abolitionists.htm.

⁵² "John Brown's Raid," U.S. History: Pre-Columbian to the New Millennium, Copyright 2008-2019, Accessed July 24, 2019, www.ushistory.org/us/32c.asp.

⁵³ Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865," 28.

⁵⁴ Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865."

the people's connection to their family, towns, and what the leaders of the towns believed in, influenced their decisions to take up guerrilla warfare.⁵⁵ However, is it possible that these types of relationships were also negatively used by pitting people against each other? When the years before the Civil War started to intensify, the ideologies that were a part of the whole country put a strain on these strong family and community relationships. In debates on war in the late 1850s, people in this region had family members and neighbors arguing for the opposite side as them, making things awkward when they had to cross paths or live with each other. This tension only increased when the war actually began and the neighbor across the street sent their son to fight for the other side or a family member went to fight for the other side. This tension existed in both the organized warfare and the guerrilla warfare that ripped through this state. What makes guerrilla warfare in western Virginia even more complicated is that tensions were not just high as a result of the war starting but also from the potential of the formation of a new state. In fact, some of the guerrilla raids that took place were done so in an effort to have either a good or bad influence on the formation of western Virginia as a new state separate from Virginia. In fact, the use of guerrillas sympathetic to the Union was extremely helpful in allowing those who wanted a new state to achieve all it needed for the state of West Virginia to be born.⁵⁶

A perfect example of a family rift in this state would be that of Thomas (Stonewall) Jackson and his sister Laura Jackson. After family members and siblings died and the family was split up, Stonewall and Laura were all each other had while growing up as children. Throughout their childhood together they were very close. When rumors of secession started to brew in the country and their tiny community, Stonewall's sympathies leaned toward the southern states,

⁵⁵ Noe, "Who Were the Bushwhackers?"

⁵⁶ Marken, "Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia, 1861-1865."

while Laura's sided with the northern states. When the war started, Stonewall enlisted into the Confederate army and today is one of the most well-known and recognized Confederate soldiers in history. In contrast, Laura's views remained loyal to the Union so much that she opened her home to wounded and passing Union troops where she provided aid and rest for the men. Each sibling was so passionate and stubborn about their views, that the difference in opinions caused a rift so strong between the once close siblings, that they stopped speaking to each other. They had never settled their differences when Stonewall lost his life after being wounded in battle in 1863. Laura is recorded to have not shown much emotion at the news of her brother's death.⁵⁷

Stonewall and Laura Jackson's story is an example of the strains that the organized warfare that occurred during the war caused, but the guerrilla warfare is perhaps more interesting to look at. At least in the case of the organized warfare, soldiers were fighting other soldiers, or when they did attack people on the home front there was a specific, organized purpose for it. In the case of guerrilla warfare, it was unorganized and unexpected, and the chosen victims could be anyone for any reason essentially. Therefore, the question must be asked, what caused such a strong family unit and community to break up and literally fight each other to the death if the circumstances came to that?

The answer to this question may lie in an examination of emotions and the things that they can make people do. The study of emotion in history is a relatively thin field but it has a very important role in studying historical events and places so that we can better understand

⁵⁷ "13. The Jonathan Arnold House." Historic Beverly Preservation, Inc. Accessed February 3, 2018. <http://www.historicbeverly.org/builds/jonarnold.htm>; "Laura Jackson Arnold." Civil War Women: Women of the Civil War and Reconstruction Eras 1849-1877. Accessed February 3, 2018. <https://www.civilwarwomenblog.com/laura-jackson-arnold/>

them. People's emotions are what drive them to make decisions and carry out actions on a daily basis; this has been true since the beginning of time and it is still just as true today. These emotions can cause people to do both good things and bad things, sometimes consciously and at other times subconsciously. Naturally, negative emotions can cause negative actions and decisions which appear to have happened in West Virginia during the Civil War. With such strong family and community ties in an area such as this, tensions were high among family members and neighbors. When someone sided with the opposite side of their kin or friend, it could have made each feel as if they had not known the person as well as they thought. Anger then could have occurred initially in response to the other person's refusal to see the issues plaguing the country at the time as they did, and then that they chose to fight for the other side. This anger can then turn to a sense of betrayal. A betrayal by family members for not sticking with the family, or not being there or refusing to help with farming and other stuff around the house that was important for survival in that time. This betrayal could be felt by community members as they too are an integral part to the community's survival and having bickering neighbors naturally stalls things and takes away attention. A sense of betrayal could be felt in a way that people thought that their friends or kin did not support them. This type of betrayal was all anyone could focus on instead of unity or tolerance as the main war waged on. It was this sense of betrayal that could have led the people of present day West Virginia to take up irregular, or guerrilla warfare, to settle the score they had with their family or neighbors, whether it be related directly to the war and its issues or past issues that had stewed for several years. The difficulty of this argument has two key points; first, several of the primary sources that exist on guerrilla warfare come from the victims of the irregular attacks. In these we read what happened to these victims and how they felt about the attacks, but we do not get the guerrillas' side of the

story most of the time. Discovering primary sources, if they exist, that come from the viewpoint of the actual guerrillas is greatly needed to see just to what extent exactly, that emotion had on their actions and their decision to partake in this kind of fighting. The second point that makes the study of emotion difficult in this case is the fact that everyone from this time period has died. Unlike half of the wars of the twentieth century and the current wars of the twenty-first century, historians cannot interview the men and women that were a part of the fighting, both regular and irregular, in the Civil War. Therefore, historians are left to analyze these people's actions and take into consideration that the primary sources that do exist from this time only tell half of the story.

The guerrilla fighting in this region went on for the duration of the Civil War and was just as heated if not more than the regular fighting. What is more interesting is the fact that some of this guerrilla warfare continued in West Virginia for a few years after the war's end in 1865. One instance of this is the band of guerrillas led by the feared "Rebel Bill." Throughout the war Bill's band of irregulars was not very large, but they intimidated the locals and passing armies when they learned of his presence close by and several Union troops were tasked with trying to keep him in line.⁵⁸ Early in the Civil War, Union troops in western Virginia were fed up with the guerrillas and the terror and chaos they caused. In fact, by October 1861, some Union troops began the execution of captured guerrillas. The Union troops took the executions to a new level come January 1862, when they started to set whole towns on fire because they believed that the people of those towns were shielding guerrillas.⁵⁹ With this level of violence against former

⁵⁸ Jack L. Dickinson, *Wayne County, West Virginia in the Civil War*, (Wayne: Higginson Book Co., 2003).

⁵⁹ Noe, "Who Were the Bushwhackers?"

neighbors and family members, a further look into the effect of emotions, and more specifically betrayal, deserves space in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNITY AND BETRAYAL IN WAR

Every region in the United States has its unique set of characteristics that determines its own ideologies and ways of life. Within these regions, the states themselves form even more ideologies specific just to them. The ideologies of the mountaineer community have briefly been discussed as a community that held family and relationships with other community members on a pedestal who they readily help whenever necessary still today. The mountaineer community puts hard work high on its list of priorities, second only to its relationships and time with family and neighbors. While these ideologies can be found nearly everywhere, in western Virginia they were and are a part of the identity of the people who lived and live in this area. Descriptions of the people in this area have always used this identity to define them properly. These are ideologies and practices that were practiced for years in this region in the years leading up to the Civil War and the years after the war; in fact, they are still found and practiced in West Virginia today. The question, then, that must be asked is what happened in this region and this state in the war that led people to forget these ideas and lifestyles from 1861 to 1865? The question can only have a possible answer by delving into the intricacies of a society and its people, and how each functioned every day. An event such as war can flip a society upside down in a moment's notice. The community and the people are tested and tried every day that a battle occurs within its boundaries or community members leave either temporarily or permanently to fight on a specific side. Of course, these are challenges that every community faces in any war that has or will occur. The Civil War, however, is a special case, one in which the country has never really experienced since. Like in different areas of the country, people in different areas within the state of West Virginia had opposing views on the issues and conflicts that led to the Civil War.

Several people thought slavery was immoral and outdated and should not be allowed to spread or even continue to exist, while others believed that it was an individual state issue and for the national government to try to control this source of economy and labor for some was out line. Each person's beliefs were dependent on where their families came from, their income, and the location in which they lived.

In a place like West Virginia, the differing ideas people held of the war and secession led to a serious rift in society. Once close-knit families saw their family fall apart as arguments supporting one side or the other and different members of the same family leaving home to fight for opposite sides became the new normal of the mountaineer society. Civil neighbors in the area turned into horrible strangers who soon turned into violent foes as the war began. There is no doubt that a sense of betrayal was felt by community and family members as the people they once thought they knew and talked to daily, supported a side that was, in their view, "wrong." As betrayal is felt, the stability of a person's mind can break down just as the stability of a society is torn apart in response to the chaos of warfare. Emotions have always been powerful and have dominated people's actions as long as history has been written. It only makes sense that an emotion as powerful as betrayal turned a loyal community into a place filled with fear and suspicion. Betrayal may also help explain why people turned to guerrilla warfare in this region and ratted neighbors out to guerrilla bands. A further analysis into ideologies and the workings of a society need more attention in order to better understand this possibility.

A society depends heavily on the repetitive and sometimes monotonous acts carried out by community members with relatively the same mindset or common goal. When there are several different people with different goals, a rift begins in society where civil community members start fighting with each other because they cannot agree with one another on the details

of that said society. If said rift is not stressful enough on the life of a society, negative outside sources only make things worse when they arrive at the same time as the community disturbance in said society. These outside sources could be catastrophes such as natural disasters, an economic depression, an increased crime rate, or even, and more specifically for this thesis, war. War itself is a messy and dreadful thing. It is born out of the inability for the sides involved to meet a common ground or make peace with whatever conflict they are fighting over. It involves men, and now women, who are not even in the same arguments as their leaders themselves, fighting and killing other human beings in the hope that the government they serve gets their way when the war comes to its bloody end. It allows people who are possibly not as different as they appear to be on paper, to wound or kill each other even though they might be more similar to each other in their basic goals than they appear to be. War takes away the men and the women in a society that desperately relied on their presence in order to fully help the society function. When war takes away community members, it is difficult and stressful on a community when they attempt to continue to function. In other words, something like a war completely turns society upside down. However, a war where the members of the same society support different sides, is even worse for the life of a society.

The mountaineer of present-day West Virginia was used to the members of its different communities relatively agreeing on the same ideologies, morals, and identities. However, when the Civil War began in the country, the area saw its community members fall apart and attack each other over the issues of the war and the possibility of a new state, separate from Virginia. Political differences had been common in the twenty or so years leading up to the war, but a cultural shock came to the region when the people here realized they could no longer trust their neighbors or even their family members to a certain extent. The neighbors they were once civil

with turned into strangers who were now enemies because they believed differently than the house that was literally down the street. Family members shunned and felt embarrassed of those who went to fight for the side in which the majority of the family or community did not support.⁶⁰ With this change in dynamic in this society, a number of emotions no doubt swirled around the present-day West Virginia communities. Based on a number of sources from the time, the common emotions felt by the people in this region were fear, anger, hopelessness, and weariness. Fear, in fact, became a normal occurrence in daily life as the war continued, especially the fear of these guerrilla attacks. As seen previously in the Upshur County society, the people who lived here were fearful of rumored attacks that may or may not have happened. The same uncertain threat and fear of it could be seen in Wetzel County when a guerrilla threat was made to the citizens of Martinsville. In response to the threat, reinforcements were sent to the city for protection purposes; the result was no attack and the people of this Wetzel County town no doubt feeling both relieved but uncertain of when to take the threat of an attack seriously.⁶¹

Emotions are very important when analyzing a historical event, especially one such as a war. Our emotions are what lead us to make the choices we make, and therefore, the actions we make. In order to fully understand the psychological connection between emotions and actions an examination of emotions throughout history must be conducted. First, one must understand certain terms; the first term, coined by Peter and Carol Stearns, is emotionology and is described as, “the attitudes or standards that a society, or a definable group within a society, maintains

⁶⁰ Sirene Bunten, *We Will Know What War Is: The Civil War Diary of Sirene Bunten*, ed. Stephen Cresswell (Buckhannon, West Virginia: West Virginia Wesleyan College Press, 1993).

⁶¹ “Great Excitement at Martinsville, VA.” *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, July 27, 1861, West Virginia State Archives.

toward basic emotions and their appropriate expression; ways that institutions reflect and encourage these attitudes in human conduct, e.g., courtship practices as expressing the valuation of anger in job relationships.”⁶² The second term is emotion, slightly different than emotionology in that it is,

a complex set of interactions among subjective and objective factors, mediated through neural and/or hormonal systems, which give rise to feelings (affective experiences as of pleasure or displeasure) and also general cognitive processes toward appraising the experience; emotions in this sense lead to physiological adjustments to the conditions that aroused response, and often to expressive and adaptive behavior.⁶³

While the two terms are almost the same, it is important to realize the difference to fully understand how they affect each individual person. The Stearns also wrote a book called, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History*, in which at one point they discuss the absence of emotionology and its effects. During this absence, people in what is called the “pre-modern period,” were more apt to express their emotions openly and to the eyes of people today in the modern period, this expression would have seemed immature. The emotions that were expressed could range from outbursts of anger to outbursts of happiness. Furthermore, the Stearns continue this idea by saying the time from 1850 to 1920, was a time when people in United States societies held mixed feelings about open expressions of anger in society; the Civil War just so happens to fit into this period of complicated feelings about emotional expressions.⁶⁴ These two ideas from the Stearns are important for the argument presented in this thesis.

⁶²Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, “Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards,” *American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (October 1985): 813-836.

⁶³ Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, “Emotionology,” 813-836.

⁶⁴Carol Zisowitz Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, *Anger: The Struggle for Emotional Control in America's History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Barbara H. Rosenwein, “Worrying About Emotions in History,” *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (June, 2002): 821-845.

Historically, people did not fear expressing their emotions for all to see. Furthermore, it was people's sympathy or understanding for one side or the other that led them to choose to fight for a specific side or to choose to stay on the home front and watch. It was also people's emotions that led them to partake in less organized warfare after they chose not to fight in the regular armies for whatever reason.

There is a specific emotion, however, that could have led to some people's decisions to take up guerrilla warfare instead of enlisting in either the Union or Confederate armies. A sense of betrayal is a strong biproduct emotion that comes from the emotions of fear and anger when that fear and anger has been caused by someone who a person was once close to or thought they could count on. The bulk of research that has been conducted on betrayal thus far in scholarship mainly analyzes the effects of betrayal in romantic relationships or a range of abuse cases. While this scholarship opens the door for further research of betrayal by close acquaintances, scholarship on betrayal in communities and families during national or global, traumatic events such as war, remains relatively vacant. Further research then should be made in the future on the emotional correlation between the two. What can be concluded now, however, is that in a traumatic event such as war, betrayal is felt as the person that one trusted, does something out of character or the limits of friendship and family that was not expected from their usual behavior at all. From this change in character comes a wave of initial emotions like fear, anger, confusion, sadness, and loneliness, and out of these emotions comes the outcome of feeling betrayed. Betrayal more often than not leads to revenge in one form or another; it can cause a person to make decisions in the moment that may not be best or to stew and focus on the event or person who made them feel betrayed in the first place. Betrayal is a common human emotion and only makes sense that it was felt during a war like the Civil War that pitted "brother against brother,"

as is commonly said; this of course is both a figurative and an accurate description as has been seen with the number of families that saw their households split with different family members in different armies and different political views and ties. In the midst of this betrayal some of these people in the western Virginia communities chose to take matters into their own hands by partaking in guerrilla warfare. In this way, these guerrillas could choose who, how, when, and why they attacked without having to answer to a higher authority or achieve someone else's overall goal. Numerous newspapers covered the stories of guerrilla warfare in western Virginia as they were unfolding. Through these article findings in fact, it appears the guerrilla method of fighting was a more common occurrence than a Confederate attack. In one such paper it writes about the worsening situation of Confederate sympathizers within western Virginia who have turned into nothing more than "assassins" in every county. The article explains the horrible acts that these "assassins" have conducted as calculated murders of both Union troops and innocent and peaceful neighbors; the attacks occurred during both the day and the night. Several of these guerrillas were initially arrested but were freed as they participated in the oath of allegiance.⁶⁵ In other words, guerrilla warfare allowed them to express their feeling of betrayal however they wished.

In the case of family, there are not a substantial number of instances of members of the same family taking out actions specifically against relatives because of their differing opinions and loyalties. Instead, family members would often cease correspondence on all levels with relatives who supported or were sympathetic to the "wrong" side in their eyes. An example of this family tension is seen between Stonewall and Laura Jackson as previously mentioned in the

⁶⁵ "The War in Western VA." Our War Correspondence [Special Correspondence of Cincinnati Times]. September 18. Roy Bird Cook Papers, A&M 0895. West Virginia and Regional History Center. West Virginia University Libraries.

last chapter. Frequently, these, what one may call, rogue family members were often shunned by the larger family or seen as an embarrassment to the family's name and reputation. Family conflict was clearly discussed in Sirene Bunten's diary previously as well, in relation to a brother-in-law. The tensions and rifts between family members show how powerful an emotion like betrayal can be. This emotion cut through the mountaineers' strong family morals and tore the families apart. This betrayal took everything the mountaineer once knew and threw it away as if it had never existed in the first place. If betrayal can destroy families in an area where family was once so important prior to war, it certainly can lead people to be even more hostile towards their community members who they have no blood or marital relations to and therefore no explicit loyalty to them. Betrayal itself leads people to make decisions when they are not thinking straight. However, betrayal mixed with chaos that comes from such things as a war, can cause a society to completely flip on itself. The people then forget any previously existing loyalties or affections for their neighbors because the chaos is so strong and feeds into that anger and confusion that lead to betrayal and to actions that are usually out of character.

Strong community ties are important to the life of a society. Each member of a community works together for a common goal of the success of the society in which they live, and through this they form relationships. These relationships are important to make sure that the community members do in fact work together for this common goal. Eventually, the members of these communities create a daily routine that, for the most part, goes uninterrupted or at least without any major setbacks. Therefore, when chaos such as war drastically interrupts the flow of these routines in a community, the identity of the neighborhood takes a direct hit. Everything they had known for so long suddenly changes and they have no control over it. Chaos, and the sudden changes that occur with it, happens in every society; however, daily lives are not as

turned upside down when mostly everyone agrees with one specific side. In the Civil War, West Virginia communities realized they were not as similar in their thinking and political affiliations as they once believed, as people of the same communities either left to fight for the opposing armies or spoke words of support for a community's opposing side. As these political affiliations came to light, the people of western Virginia realized they did not know their neighbors as well as once thought. This revelation led to even more turmoil and a sense of betrayal which eventually developed into actions. Scholarship of said turmoil exists in regard to West Virginia communities. One such study is a book written by John Shaffer and titled, *Clash of Loyalties: A Border County in the Civil War*. In this book, Shaffer researches the division amongst the people in Barbour County, West Virginia and the effects the war had on the county's communities. The findings revealed a county filled with chaos and turmoil as the people's different loyalties caused intense conflict within the county.⁶⁶ Several people in this region opted to turn to guerrilla warfare instead of enlistment in either one of the main, organized armies during the war. As previously mentioned, some of these bands still worked for an overall goal for whichever side they were sympathetic to, while others were owned by none. It was the groups that were owned by none that were most likely led by betrayal and anger, despite whatever other excuses they may have used to explain why they chose that route. As discussed, these bands attacked in brutal and sudden ways, both when targeting passing armies and civilians who took up no arms. Their feeling of betrayal could have led them to seek revenge on the army they thought was responsible for bringing the turmoil of war into their communities, and thus tearing their societies and what they thought to be their truths down. When guerrillas attacked homes, they

⁶⁶ John Shaffer, *Clash of Loyalties: A Border County in the Civil War* ([n.p.] West Virginia University Press 2003).

sometimes burned the homes to the ground, stole the family's possessions, and killed the man of the house; such actions can only be explained with emotional connections and a desire for revenge in response to those emotions. Furthermore, those who stayed on the home front assisted these bands by informing them of their neighbors, who they once liked, who were sympathetic to the other side's cause. Such reporting can only be a product of that feeling of betrayal and a wanting of revenge. Betrayal led a community of people who were once close and considered themselves friends, to fighting each other, destroying each other's property, ratting each other out, and even killing each other.

While the reactions that occurred due to the feeling of being betrayed were certainly surprising with the kind of community and family ties that were common in mountaineer society, this is certainly not the first time that emotions have driven people to carry out actions that are not necessarily in line with their character or their community's characters. For years prior to the Civil War, and still today, emotions have guided and led people to say and do things, sometimes without the backing of logical thinking, especially in times of war or other hardships that challenge a society's stability, harmony, and identity. These times of crises challenge the minds of everyone in every society and therefore challenge the societies themselves. In the Civil War's case, the influence of emotions was even more influential as the identity of the western Virginia society was being challenged at the same time that the identity of the entire country was being challenged. The United States had just been split into two separate countries and nobody knew for certain just how long that would remain. Since they won their independence from Great Britain not even one hundred years earlier, the people of this country were used to the idea of being united and disliking and fighting one common enemy: Great Britain. The fact that the

country was actually split in half over certain political issues did not exactly become visible to them until the last decade before the war.

The Civil War was a confusing and troubling time for all people with a supposed united country going to war with itself, the formation of two different national governments, family members going to fight on separate sides of the battlefields, differing politics, chaos in the forms of violence and fear in the once calm streets, the realization that some family members, friends, or neighbors were not returning home, the possible freedom of enslaved men, the possible opportunities of freedmen and what it meant for society as a whole, the uncertainty of the country's future after the war ended, the uncertainty of what would happen to those who fought on either side after the war's end depending on who won, and no certain end date for the war. The combination of all these issues led to the overstimulation of emotional responses during this tragic event. Each individual person attempted to grasp all the rushing and difficult details while simultaneously dealing with their own personal ties to the war as well. Often, what happens during overstimulating and stressful periods in people's lives is that the individual will have an emotional breakdown on some level after an issue or set of issues builds an enormous wall of stress on the person over an extended period of time. For some people this is an occasional occurrence but for others it is a normal aspect of their lives. No matter which category a person falls into, their emotions are not intact, and they cannot grasp ahold of their emotions until the breakdown or panic attack has subsided. In some cases, people's lack of control over their emotions during this time leave them to behave in ways that are normally out of character or out of societal norms.

All of the above-mentioned war time thoughts and uncertainties led to a heavy burden of stress on people while the world as they knew it was turned upside down. This stress could have

led people to irrational decision making and thought processes as the people who experienced the stress were not in complete control of their emotions and had outside factors dominating their thoughts. The stress that dominated people's thoughts, emotions, and actions during the Civil War could have left them with the irrational idea that their family and community members who supported or fought for the opposite side they stood by, purposely meant to betray them after years of love, trust, and sharing. While people having different opinions and supporting different groups is a common factor of war, the emotions caused by the stress of war left people, especially those living in western Virginia where family and community ties were strongly emphasized, taking the differing opinions personally. Just as when people have panic attacks or breakdowns and are not in control of their actions or emotions, the people of western Virginia allowed their feeling of betrayal to lead them to take up the irregular fighting in the region as a means to express their emotions during the Civil War. The question might still be asked why these guerrillas refused enlistment in the regular armies of the war; to this, the response could be that guerrilla warfare was much more personal than enlistment and fighting in a regular army. Guerrilla warfare, unless a partisan band, for the most part, allowed irregulars to fight when, who, where, and why they wanted for their own personal reasons, whereas enlistment in a regular army involves fighting to reach an overall goal of those who are in leadership positions. It was personal reasons that led them to fight; it only makes sense to fight in a personal manner as well. In addition to that, when these irregulars attacked armies or former neighbors, or their sympathizers ratted out other neighbors, each attacker had the personal satisfaction of carrying out their own grudge on specific individuals, an opportunity that they do not quite get being a soldier in a regular army. Basically, in a twisted sense, guerrillas received more of a satisfaction in their fighting than they would have in a regular army where decisions would be made for them

for one goal made by one person. The desire that often follows betrayal is that of revenge as many of the secondary sources used in this thesis have discussed, and irregular fighting allowed those who felt betrayed to seek and find their revenge more personally and fully than fighting in a regular army.

CONCLUSION

To this day, the Civil War is still considered one of the bloodiest and darkest periods in United States history. As research on guerrilla warfare began in the twentieth century, historians and students alike began to realize the war was much more brutal than what any history class had ever taught them. Furthermore, the research of guerrilla warfare reveals how much of an emotional war the Civil War actually was. This fact reveals why the study of guerrilla warfare is so significant to the history of antebellum America. Nearly every war is driven by a common goal: power, defense of land, resources, money, honor, political gains, or national security. However, the Civil War, other than the defense of labor, was largely influenced by the emotions that had continuously grown since the birth of the new country. On top of those nationally related emotions, the people in tight-knit communities like in western Virginia, felt the emotions that were a result of fellow community members' departure to fight for the other side or participating in debates where they supported a different side than their neighbor or family members. Of course, as previously mentioned, there were other factors that led to people in western Virginia to take up arms in irregular fighting. With this being said, however, all of these factors were led by some sort of emotion or emotions, whether they were fear, anger, enthusiasm, and so on.

As previously discussed, the western United States were plagued with guerrilla warfare and met with extreme violence and terror. This guerrilla warfare was born out of the emotions experienced by the people of the region in response to the outbreak of war. Guerrillas in this region could have been either Confederate or Unionist sympathizers and claimed they were acting for either side, while others, still took on violence based on their own interests and for themselves. It is important to remember again that the majority of those who incited terror for personal gain through this violence often still claimed that they fought for either the Union or the

Confederacy. Present day West Virginia, too, saw an extensive amount of guerrilla activity within its region's borders. However, the people of West Virginia experienced more change in their region besides the onset of the Civil War. At the same time the country broke apart as a result of a lack of compromise on longstanding political, social, and cultural issues, western Virginia broke from their home state as a result of unsettled grievances as well. The guerrilla fighting that occurred in this state, then, was fueled by war and staying "loyal" to whichever national side, and by either staying loyal to the mother state of Virginia or supporting the people's right to form a new state as a result of the oppression and lack of representation from the present state they were a part of. No county in the new state of West Virginia was free of the irregular fighting, and the new state was never a unified home for Union sympathies, hence assisting the emotions that led people to fight. People's close neighbors and relatives became their bitter foes, and chaos and uncertainty haunted the region. While the existing literature on the topic cover the different types of emotions that were felt by the people, especially anger and revenge, enough attention has not been placed on the sense of betrayal that fueled and often comes before these other emotions. Betrayal at the news that family members and neighbors that were once cordial, supported a different side or held a different opinion than previously thought, led to the people feeling as if they were betrayed by the relative or neighbor, by the country, and by everything they thought they knew. This betrayal led people to feel anger, confusion, and a desire for revenge, and therefore caused the sufferer to form irrational decisions, in this case guerrilla warfare and the horrible violence that was a staple of it.

It is interesting to look at what occurred in these regions that suffered from guerrilla warfare after the war ended. It seems that in the areas of the western United States, such as Missouri, a majority of the youthful men who partook in the irregular fighting went back to their

homes and lived normal lives for the most part, with the exception of a few, of course.⁶⁷ In West Virginia however, the atmosphere of the region after the war was much different. While several people went back to their normal, daily lives as best they could, the politics in West Virginia were still intensely heated. As mentioned, numerous times, throughout the war, the new state was never, at any point, fully unified. Each county had hosted supporters of the Confederacy and of the Union within their lines, some having more than the other depending on which county. The counties were also divided on the creation of the state of West Virginia from Virginia, even questioning the legality of the new state. These divisions lasted throughout the entirety of the war and the Reconstruction years after. Those who supported the new state attempted to keep control of the state politically, going as far as barring the rights of ex-Confederates, guerrillas, conservative Unionists, and Democrats or “Copperheads” so that they would not gain enough political support to overpower the staunch Republican politicians within the state and undo all they had accomplished. Ultimately, however, the Republicans lost control in the 1870 elections, and the Democrats controlled the new state for the following almost two decades.⁶⁸

An immense amount of work is still yet to be done on guerrilla warfare in West Virginia during the Civil War. The area that needs the most research still, is the effect of betrayal on people’s psyche in a tight knit community during wartime. Following that, more research needs to be done on people’s decision making when they experience betrayal and all of the other emotions it causes during traumatic events like war, especially war in such personal and close proximities, like in the Civil War. Further research also should be done on the reasonings behind

⁶⁷ Michael Fellman, *Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri During the American Civil War*. (New York: Oxford University Press. 1989).

⁶⁸ Richard Orr Curry, *A House Divided: A Study of Statehood Politics and the Copperhead Movement in West Virginia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964).

the choice of participation in guerrilla warfare, rather than enlistment in the organized armies of both sides of the argument. The participation in guerrilla warfare is especially interesting since several of the guerrillas would give themselves military titles and associate with either army. Yes, betrayal led people to participate in ways that were not rational and made the sudden or immediate and free nature of guerrilla fighting attractive, but there is more to the story that is missing and needs to be discovered in the near future by scholars. In addition, it would be interesting to see more research conducted on the benefits and harms of guerrilla warfare in the West Virginia region for the entire war agenda. The effects of the irregular fighting on the war and its armies' goals are briefly mentioned but a study on that alone would both be very interesting and allow for an even deeper understanding of the fighting's impact on the war and the people.

The study of guerrilla warfare during the Civil War reveals just how complicated this war actually was. Furthermore, the study of this irregular fighting in tight-knit communities such as western Virginia, reveals how detrimental this war was to the family and community units more than the phrase "brother against brother" ever will when attempting to give someone a perspective of the war. Today, a visitor or even a resident of West Virginia would never guess that the people who lived here during the antebellum period fought each other and undermined each other in violent ways. The present-day West Virginian still holds family, community, and hard work at its core, and willingly lends a helping hand to people whether they are friends or strangers. The suspicious and violent times are now gone, and this community of mountaineers are back to trusting each other, while also understanding that it is okay for their neighbors to have some differing political views as them. The lesson the West Virginia mountaineer appears to have gained from the violence of the Civil War and guerrilla warfare is that a community and

family can still function and thrive on basic foundational ideologies, while simultaneously thinking differently about national issues or ideals. From the violence and the chaos, the West Virginia mountaineer stitched its society back together and once again made the state feel like home to any and all who stay or pass through it.

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APPENDIX A: OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY APPROVAL LETTER



Office of Research Integrity

July 15, 2019

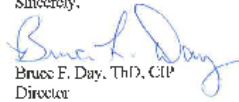
Lauren Michelle Milton
1499 Kilgore Creek Rd.
Milton, WV 25541

Dear Ms. Milton:

This letter is in response to the submitted thesis abstract entitled "*Civil Neighbors to Violent Foes: Guerrilla Warfare in Western Virginia During the Civil War.*" After assessing the abstract, it has been deemed not to be human subject research and therefore exempt from oversight of the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Code of Federal Regulations (45CFR46) has set forth the criteria utilized in making this determination. Since the information in this study does not involve human subjects as defined in the above referenced instruction, it is not considered human subject research. If there are any changes to the abstract you provided then you would need to resubmit that information to the Office of Research Integrity for review and a determination.

I appreciate your willingness to submit the abstract for determination. Please feel free to contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding future protocols that may require IRB review.

Sincerely,



Bruce E. Day, PhD, CIP
Director

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