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“To Cement the Bond of Friendship”:  
The Joan of Arc Statue in New Orleans, 1958-2020

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of New Orleans  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts  
In  
History  
International and Global Studies

by

Megan A. Miller

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2018

May, 2020

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I would like to thank all my professors for helping me get this far and for teaching me how to write history in an analytical and passionate manner. In addition, I would like to thank both Kathleen Bradshaw and Katelyn Woodel for helping me learn more about the long journey of the gilded statue of Joan of Arc to its present site in New Orleans' French Quarter.

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## **Abstract**

This thesis presents a study of the importance of statuary related to historical memory and influence focusing on the Joan of Arc Statue in New Orleans, Louisiana. Gifted to the city in 1958 and installed in 1972 officially in the wake of Charles de Gaulle's visit, the Joan of Arc Statue has been the subject of controversy and a costly reinstallation in the French Quarter. This thesis, using primary evidence from court cases, interviews, and newspapers, traces Joan's significance and use as a site of memory and link between France and the City of New Orleans.

keywords: Joan of Arc Statue, New Orleans, Louisiana

## Introduction

In New Orleans, Louisiana, a golden statue of Saint Joan of Arc stands above a small triangular park named the Place de France, situated on the riverside edge of the famed French Quarter. Designed by the French artist Emmanuel Frémiet (1824- 1910), the statue of Joan is one of several copies of the same statue erected in cities in France and the United States. Originally donated to the city of New Orleans in 1958, shortly before President Charles de Gaulle's official visit in 1960, statue Joan has come to serve as an important symbol of the real and imagined connections between France and the city of New Orleans,

However differences in the interpretation of the symbol of Joan of Arc in France and the United States have long been apparent. Joan of Arc's historic accomplishments, including her assistance to the Dauphin, Charles VII (1403-1461) in the Hundred Years War, her piety and devotion to the orders of the Saint Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine, and her tragic death have long made her a powerful political and religious symbol in France.<sup>1</sup> Yet Joan's image has been entwined with religiosity, patriotism, and nationalism in complicated and changing ways.<sup>2</sup> A key moment in her popular veneration came in 1920, when Joan was named a saint by the Catholic Church.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, her sanctification came in the midst of a wider struggle over her significance. For while Joan often serves a symbol of freedom from tyrannical outside rule, a theme that has been particularly powerful in wartime, she has also been connected to

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<sup>1</sup> Frances Gies, *Joan of Arc: The Legend and the Reality*, (New York: Hayer S Rev, 1981), 2.

<sup>2</sup> François Meltzer, "Joan of Arc in America," *Substance* 32, no. 1 (2003): 93, accessed August 5, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3685703>.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Brown, "The Battle for Joan," *The Hudson Review* 65, no. 3 (Autumn 2012):440, accessed August 5, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43489248>.

French nativist sentiment since the late nineteenth century. In the Dreyfus Affair, anti-Dreyfusard leaders instrumentalized Joan against French Jews and their religion.<sup>4</sup> In the 1920s and 1930s in France, right-wing ideologues continued to claim Joan as their symbol. As in the First World War, Joan became even more popular under the Vichy régime in the Second World War. On a newly-designated Joan of Arc Day, Vichy leader Marshall Pétain extolled Joan's victory over the English to suggest that France's enemies were once again the English, and not the Germans.<sup>5</sup> This tug-of-war over Joan has continued today, with members of the extreme right in France utilizing Joan's symbolism to forward their causes.

American interpretations of Joan of Arc have followed different paths, sometimes echoing French interpretations and uses, but also in tandem with discussions of gender. One famously enamored with Joan was none other than the American 19th century writer, Mark Twain, who labored over his work devoted to her.<sup>6</sup> Twain saw Joan as exemplifying the boundless nature of humanity, and was inspired by her military might, charismatic speech, and example for women.<sup>7</sup> In his work, Twain described Joan, writing that,

in the things wherein she was great she was so without shade or suggestion of help from preparatory teaching, practice, environment, or experience. There is no one to compare her with, none to measure her by; for all other among the illustrious grew toward their high place in an atmosphere and surroundings which discovered their gift to them and nourished it and promoted it, intentionally or unconsciously.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Brown, "The Battle for Joan," 448.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 452.

<sup>6</sup> Wilson Carey McWilliams, "Divine Right: Mark Twain's "Joan of Arc"," *The Review of Politics* 69, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 332, accessed August 5, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20452898>.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 334.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 332 as cited in Twain, *Complete Essays: 323, 321*.

During both World Wars and in between, Joan was sometimes used as a symbol marking changes in the shifting ideals the patriarchal society in America held toward women. For example in World War I, the U.S. media often used Joan as a role model of one who unified her nation against aggression. Yet during the late 1920s Joan started to be portrayed as an example of how “traditional authority” responded to “a disruptive female.”<sup>9</sup> Maxwell Anderson’s 1936 play *Joan of Lorraine* showed how the actors within the play searched for reasons for Joan’s reputation as a saint. Films depicting Joan of Arc throughout the 1930s struggled to depict Joan, who became a symbol of “self-sacrifice” rather than heroism in the United States.<sup>10</sup> The beginning of World War II again thrust Joan into prominence, as the U.S. struggled to address “the needs of a nation facing war abroad and social transformation at home.”<sup>11</sup>

Against this background of political, cultural and social struggle, Joan reemerged as a symbol in statuary in both France and the United States in the modern era. In Orléans, where the first monument in her memory was apparently built in the fifteenth century, the image of Joan has always been important, and two statues were installed successively in the central Place du Martroi through the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Under the Third Republic in the early

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<sup>9</sup> Robin Blaetz. "Joan of Arc between the Wars." *In Visions of the Maid: Joan of Arc in American Film and Culture* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2001),85, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt6wr23.10>. In a film from the 1930s, *St. Joan of the Stockyards*, Joan is portrayed as an energetic but naive young Salvation Army lieutenant in Chicago who is used by corrupt industrialists, harms her fellow workers and dies from a broken heart.

<sup>10</sup> Blaetz, 93.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>12</sup> Ministère de la Culture, "Monument équestre à Jeanne D'Arc," Plateforme Ouverte Du Patrimoine - Ministère De La Culture, last modified May 15, 2019, <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/merimee/PA45000051>.



1870s, French artist Emmanuel Frémiet was commissioned by the French state to create an equestrian Joan of Arc statue to stand in the Place des Pyramides.<sup>13</sup> For France, emerging from the catastrophic defeat of the war with Prussia, Joan symbolized an innovative change for the Third Republic and female independence. The Third Republic continued to rely upon Joan's symbolism for a new start and break from the Second Empire and the failure it represented.<sup>14</sup> Three more statues of Joan of Arc joined the original in France before World War I started. Other French cities with ties to Joan of Arc received their own modern statues. Frémiet, the sculptor, made a second Joan of Arc statue for Paris once more when a chance came for him when Nancy, France requested a similar statue of Joan of Arc in 1889. Frémiet was never satisfied with the horse and rider not being on the same scale. He made changes for his second Parisian statue of Joan that made him content with the horse's neck less thick, the actual Joan taller by twenty centimeters, along with the removal of the back harness, and the forehead being changed.<sup>15</sup> Supposedly, Frémiet sent the original of the statue to Philadelphia, which commissioned a Joan of Arc statue from him that same year. In the United States, Philadelphia unveiled this Joan of Arc statue by Frémiet in the late nineteenth century to mark its French community's one hundredth year

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<sup>13</sup> Musée D'Orsay, "Emmanuel Fremiet St Michael Slaying the Dragon," Musée D'Orsay: Accueil, last modified 2020, [https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/works-in-focus/sculpture/commentaire\\_id/st-michael-slaying-the-dragon-3194.html?tx\\_commentaire\\_pi1%5BpidLi%5D=842&tx\\_commentaire\\_pi1%5Bfrom%5D=729&cHash=4b08534e90](https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/works-in-focus/sculpture/commentaire_id/st-michael-slaying-the-dragon-3194.html?tx_commentaire_pi1%5BpidLi%5D=842&tx_commentaire_pi1%5Bfrom%5D=729&cHash=4b08534e90)

<sup>14</sup> Dennis Sexsmith, "The Radicalization of Joan of Arc Before and After the French Revolution," *Canadian Art Review* 17, no. 2 (1990): 127-128, accessed February 25, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42630458>.

<sup>15</sup> René van der Krogt and Peter Van der Krogt, "Paris - Jeanne D'Arc," Statues - Hither & Thither, last modified March 29, 2020, <https://vanderkrogt.net/statues/object.php?webpage=ST&record=frif006>

anniversary as a French community.<sup>16</sup> Another Joan of Arc statue in the United States happens to be in Portland, Oregon. The statue was given in 1924 to city by a physician named Henry Waldo Coe. Coe donated the statue of Joan as a testament to American soldiers who were killed in action during World War I in France.<sup>17</sup>

A pamphlet of a program of the celebration of Joan of Arc in New Orleans on May 1, 1918 refers to an early statue erected in New York City which was erected on December 6, 1915. The unveiling of this statue in New York City connected to a ceremony done by New Orleans to celebrate Joan of Arc by a representative of the city, General W.J. Behan, who was an ex-Mayor of New Orleans, a Confederate general, and a Commissioner from the city of New Orleans and to the city of Paris.<sup>18</sup> Along with Behan, were Paul Capedevielle, an ex-Mayor of New Orleans, A.G. Ricks, the acting Mayor of New Orleans at the time, Captain John Fitzpatrick, another ex-Mayor of the city of New Orleans, and Gaspar Cusachs, the President of The Louisiana Histori-

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<sup>16</sup> "Joan of Arc." Association for Public Art. Last modified 2020. <https://www.associationforpublicart.org/artwork/joan-of-arc/#>. This information is from the Association for Public Art in Philadelphia and the information on the Joan of Arc statue given by the association was part of the *Museum Without Walls: Audio program* which focused on providing an audio program for outdoor sculptures of the state's well known public art. It is available as a tour guide via the mobile app.

<sup>17</sup> Hannah Button, "Where We Live: Portland's Joan of Arc Statue," KOIN.com, last modified September 21, 2015, <https://www.koin.com/news/where-we-live-portlands-joan-of-arc-statue/>.

<sup>18</sup> State Historical Society of Iowa, *The Iowa Journal of History and Politics* (Iowa City, Iowa: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1918), edited by Benjamin F. Shambaugh, 126, accessed April 5, 2020, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=wu.89067282061&view=1up&seq=13>. For more information on General W.J. Behan go to: <http://nutrias.org/~nopl/info/louinfo/admins/beh.htm>.

cal Society of the time.<sup>19</sup> The reason for celebrating of Joan of Arc on May 1, 1918 in New Orleans is unclear, however one can speculate it is related to the celebration of Joan of Arc Day on May 12 in that year in New York and France.<sup>20</sup> Finally, in 1958, New Orleans received its own Joan of Arc statue as a gift from France, a copy of the Frémiet work in Paris' Place des Pyramides, installed in 1972. It was initially installed at the base of Canal Street, then the central business district of New Orleans, at the foot of the World Trade Center. Later the statue was moved to where it stands today, in the Place de France at the corner of Decatur Street.

This thesis examines the meanings and struggles over Joan's statue in New Orleans, tracing the period from its original installation through its dismantling and reinstallation in its current place adjacent to the French Quarter. I look as well at the use of the statue today, examining how collective memory and cultural identity of the city of New Orleans are expressed through the example of the Joan of Arc parade which inaugurates the Mardi Gras season and Joan of Arc's birthday. In this way, Joan of Arc's changing significance in New Orleans helps to illustrate the power of collective memory and cultural identity in a trans-Atlantic sense through statuary as a physical reminder to the population.

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<sup>19</sup> The Historic New Orleans Collection. ID number 2002-11-RL-16, *Ceremonies in Connection with the Presentation of A Bronze Statue of Joan of Arc to the Louisiana History Society by The Museum of French Art Through Mr. J. Sanford Saltus, Vice-President* (Cabildo, New Orleans, 1918).

<sup>20</sup> U.S. National Archives Public Domain Archive, *Ceremonies - Joan of Ark Day, 1918 - New York - French societies celebrate Joan of Arc Day. Joan of Arc day was celebrated simultaneously in New York and in France on Sunday, May 12, 1918. The Joan of Arc statue in New York was the scene of festivities, which were enlivened by the presence of French sailors, who placed wreaths at the base of the statue of the heroine of France*, (New York: U.S. National Archives Public Domain Archive, 1918), <https://nara.getarchive.net/media/ceremonies-joan-of-ark-day-1918-new-york-french-societies-celebrate-joan-of-846bfe>.

This thesis begins with a review of the literature, followed by a study of the installation of the statue of Joan of Arc in New Orleans, Louisiana. It then examines the controversy raised by the removal of the statue in order to build the Harrah's casino complex and then concludes by focusing on statue Joan's significance and use in the present time in New Orleans. Throughout the thesis, I seek to show how the symbolism of public statuary can have multiple meanings based on cultural and historical interpretations that change over time.

### **Literature Review**

From the fifteenth century onwards, scholars have examined Joan of Arc as an emblem of faith, feminism, military strength, and memory. From her military exploits to her personal life, scholars have combed through her iconic life and times. Particularly in recent times, the scholarly literature has examined interpretations of Joan's symbolism in terms of her relationship to culture and society.

The intertwining of contemporary politics and Joan's legacy has been clear for some time. In 1985, Martha Hanna described how Joan's image was shaped by the right-wing *Action française* from 1908 to 1931. Hanna delves into how the *Action française* spread the image of royalty to encourage support for the old monarchy.<sup>21</sup> *Action Française* (AF) utilized their newspaper to challenge and resist the Republic and chose Joan as their icon for "integral nationalism," stressing how she fought for royalty in the fifteenth century.<sup>22</sup> For the AF, Joan's mission this time was to help lead French citizens to believe the monarchy provided the only way to unify a

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<sup>21</sup> Martha Hanna, "Iconology and Ideology: Images of Joan of Arc in the Idiom of the Action Francaise, 1908-1931," *French Historical Studies* 14, no. 2 (Autumn 1985): 215-216, accessed November 12, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/286583>.

<sup>22</sup> Hanna, "Iconology and Ideology," 216.

torn country. As adversaries of the secular Third Republic, the AF believed the Maid of Orléans offered a religious alternative, and stressed her supposed purity and religious aspect. In this way the AF aligned itself alongside the Catholic Church's treatment of Joan, who was beatified in 1908 and canonized in 1920.

In a similar way, in 1989, Pierre Nora began writing about Joan with regard to what he called realms of memory, or "les lieux de mémoire" and their role in shaping French identity. In Nora's book, translated into English in 1998, he analyzed and reviewed the use of Joan of Arc through the ages since her death to the twentieth century. He explained how the idea of Joan functioned as a memory important to the identity of France, especially during World War II. Nora discussed how Free France and the Resistance used Joan to win and encourage the citizens to follow her example in defying the German who abused the weak and called forth protection for all that are good, just as Vichy did as well by examining how posters of Joan were used as an encouragement for French citizens to kick out the English.<sup>23</sup> Throughout his chapter on Joan, Nora showed how this humble girl built "a certain idea of France," throughout the country.<sup>24</sup> Nora brought attention to the relationship between memory and history based on the importance on specific details through time such as a person, a place, or an event in history. Nora explained how constructed and imposed types of memory worked in connection with the human mind. Applying his analysis to Joan of Arc, especially to her statue in New Orleans, will show how a person long since dead still remains an important part of a city's identity.

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<sup>23</sup> Pierre Nora, "Joan of Arc," in *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past Volume III: Symbols*. Edited by Lawrence d. Krizman. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 472-473.

<sup>24</sup> Nora, "Joan of Arc," 475.

Joan thus provides an example of how cultural memory, using past events remembered through cultural rites, enhances how a group identifies with their past and build their sense of self. For a memory to remain intact through countless centuries or generations, a recording of it is not enough nor a physical representation. What is also needed is how a group identifies with the memory, how a society reconstructs it, how its told, and the need to re-tell it through reference to physical sites, including monuments and statues.

A 2007 dissertation by Stephanie Coker, now a visiting Assistant Professor of French in the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of North Alabama, further examines how Joan's legend helped build France's national identity.<sup>25</sup> Coker analyzes Joan's legend in Medieval France, her trials, and how philosophers judged her, before finally turning to how postwar political parties in France used her image by political parties. Coker evaluated how essential Joan became to France. Coker investigated when Joan appeared throughout legend and use along with the portrayals of her. Throughout her dissertation, Coker sees Joan as a mystery to be seen as someone pointing towards an unexplainable higher purpose, but who is shaped by politics and shown this difference through literary works.<sup>26</sup>

In a 2012 article, Frederick Brown discusses Joan's rise in popularity from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century. Brown shows how Joan's popularity rose from the nineteenth century through Jules Quicherat's five volumes of narration on Joan's trials.<sup>27</sup> These volumes

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<sup>25</sup> Stephanie L. Coker, "How Legend Constructs French National Identity: Jeanne d'Arc," (PhD diss., Louisiana State University, 2007), vi, accessed on December 12, 2019, [https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3458&context=gradschool\\_dissertations](https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3458&context=gradschool_dissertations)

<sup>26</sup> Coker, "How Legend Constructs French National Identity," 161-163.

<sup>27</sup> Frederick Brown, "The Battle for Joan," *The Hudson Review* 65, no. 3 (2012): 439. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43489248>.

made Joan more accessible, creating a symbol useful for unifying people under the Church and instilling patriotic zeal for country. Brown describes the process of Joan's sanctification and why her sainthood status was not official until 1920. Joan of Arc's canonization took four hundred years because, as Brown put it, four hundred years were needed for her story to spread across Europe and overseas. Future prime minister, Raymond Poincaré, along with an old French newspaper *La Croix* aided Joan's ascension into her sainthood.<sup>28</sup> Brown concludes by noting how the twentieth century right-wing politicians in France have depicted Joan as being the defender of France's religious identity.<sup>29</sup>

Also in 2012, Haverford graduate student Minerva Pinto wrote on the confusion generated by the struggle over Joan by both De Gaulle's and the Vichy's government. The second World War altered the meaning of Joan in France because of De Gaulle and Maréchal Pétain. Pinto describes how both Pétain and De Gaulle utilized different characteristics of Joan to win over the French population. Pinto noticed how Pétain as the top Vichy leader decided to emphasize Joan's anglophobia and her faithfulness to her religion, in order to promote Vichy anti-Semitism and fidelity to the monarchy.<sup>30</sup> The Vichy Regime sought to establish a clear break with the values from the Third Republic. Pétain and the German invaders were against both the religious and political aspects of the Third Republic. The image of Joan of Arc the Vichy Regime used was one of a devout Catholic following her calling and sought to link her divine purpose to the country's

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<sup>28</sup> Frederick, Brown, "The Battle for Joan," 444.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 452.

<sup>30</sup> Minerva Pinto, "Nationalist Symbol of a Nation Divided: The Paradox of France's Joan of Arc, 1940-1944," (master's thesis, Haverford College, 2012), 5, <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/8d08/fb45840df01311775c2ec322483b3fd293e6.pdf>.

piety.<sup>31</sup> In addition, Pétain's own experience of the previous war became magnified by associating Joan's story with his own. During the short time of Pétain's popularity, he rose to new fame and sought to be understood almost as a monarch of France once more. In contrast to Pétain, De Gaulle highlighted Joan's zealous defense of a France free from foreign interference and her birth in the contested region of Lorraine. De Gaulle bolstered his argument with the view that France should be free from all foreign presence including Germany and England. In 1944, the Allied Forces worked with de Gaulle and Free France forces in expelling the Nazis in order to show France as strong and autonomous.<sup>32</sup> Again citing Joan as the example after the overturning of the Vichy government, de Gaulle expanded women's rights, including the right to vote, as he restored the Republican tradition. As a Résistance hero, Joan's image was far from stagnant.

These recent scholars each examine Joan as a person, saint, icon, and legend. This emerging literature shows how the cultural memory of Joan in France has continued to change and remain relevant. Hanna, Nora, Brown, Coker and other scholars have opened new paths to understanding Joan of Arc's significance beyond France itself, particularly in the trans-Atlantic context of New Orleans.

### **Installing Joan's statue**

In New Orleans, Frémiet's statue of Joan of Arc astride a horse stands at the Place de France where there is an intersection of Decatur and St. Philips streets. The statue of Joan's history within New Orleans, Louisiana since its arrival in 1958 has been a long and arduous one. It is a replica of a statue originally created by Emmanuel Frémiet was ordered by the French gov-

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<sup>31</sup> Pinto, "Nationalist," 7.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 24.



ernment after the Franco-Prussian War.<sup>33</sup> Napoleon III requested Frémiet create the statue to aid in re-building the faith in France after their defeat by the Prussian army two years beforehand.<sup>34</sup> After the statue's completion, it was placed in Paris' *Place des Pyramides*. Nine copies of Frémiet's statues were made and sent throughout the world in the late nineteenth century to early twentieth century. One of those copies found its way to the World House Galleries in New York City, founded by a Herbert Mayer, Sr., in 1953. It was transferred to New Orleans, Louisiana in 1958.<sup>35</sup> Though the Joan of Arc statue was partially funded by France in 1964, it was not installed until 1972 due to lack of installation funds and agreement regarding the most meaningful spot for its placement.<sup>36</sup>

The New Orleans statue of Joan is also known as the "Maid of Orléans." It is a gilded bronze equestrian statue weighing 2,700 pounds with a height of thirteen feet, resting atop a seven-foot base. In 1958, the Joan of Arc statue was sent by Robert Whyte from World House in

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<sup>33</sup> "Joan of Arc," Association for Public Art, last modified September 22, 2015, <https://www.associationforpublicart.org/artwork/joan-of-arc/>.

<sup>34</sup> Public Art Around The World, "Jeanne D'Arc Statue," Public Art Around The World, last modified October 4, 2018, <https://publicartaroundtheworld.com/public-art-in-france/public-art-paris/jeanne-darc-statue/>. The website was made as a guide on public art around the world and the creator, GlobeVista, wanted to show interesting facts about the art that is out there in the world.

<sup>35</sup> Smithsonian, *World House Galleries records, 1927-1991, bulk 1953-1980*, Retrieved from Archives of American Art website. (2020). <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/world-house-galleries-records-6036>.

<sup>36</sup> Vincent Lee, "Ceremony Held At New Statue: 'Jeanne d'Arc' Unveiled After Long Wait," *Times-Picayune*, October 26, 1972, Thursday edition, section one, page three. The url for the *Times-Picayune* articles from henceforth are not provided because the library resource was not available during the final edit. The newspaper offers an online archive database <https://no-la.newsbank.com/> through a member subscription as an alternative source of finding the newspaper articles.

New York state.<sup>37</sup> The World House Galleries in New York City proposed the city of New Orleans as the proper destination for the statue, as the only one within the fifty states that could bring meaning to the statue, and offered to sell her to New Orleans at a discounted price.<sup>38</sup> However, once received, the city of New Orleans could not afford to install the statue at a proposed cost of \$35,000. The mayor of New Orleans at the time, Delesseps “Chep” Morrison, called for a campaign to raise the necessary funds. Morrison even planned on having young school children help contribute the funds.<sup>39</sup> Morrison stated, “This project will cement the bond of friendship with the Republic of France and our counterpart, Orleans, France.”<sup>40</sup> Despite fundraising efforts, however, the statue still remained in storage until 1972.<sup>41</sup>

On April 28, 1960, President Gen. Charles de Gaulle visited the city of New Orleans as his last stop on his tour of the United States to share his message that France had recovered from the war, and remained powerful despite the ongoing Algerian war. Charles de Gaulle wanted to enhance France’s economy and military, its status as an independent superpower, and expand his

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<sup>37</sup> John Craven, "The Maid in New Orleans," Saint Joan of Arc Center, <http://www.stjoan-center.com/topics/jcraven.html>. The Saint Joan of Arc Center is a website made by Virginia and Tim Frohlick to promote information on Joan of Arc and show their devotion to the Saint Joan.

<sup>38</sup> Many thanks got to Kathleen Bradshaw for being willing to sharing her unpublished essay with me. Kathleen Bradshaw, “Joanie on the Pony” ( Unpublished Essay, University of New Orleans, 2016). Source: “Statue Funds Will be Asked,” *The Times-Picayune*, November 25, 1958, from Mayor’s Subject Files.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Source: “Drive Studied to Acquire ‘Maid of Orléans’ Statue,” *The Times-Picayune*, 1958 from Mayor’s Subject Files.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Source: Mayor Chep Morrison, Subject Files: Joan of Arc—Purchasing, 1959, The New Orleans Public Library, Louisiana Special Collections Archives.- Form letter

<sup>41</sup> Blake Pontchartrain, "Blake Pontchartrain: Joan of Arc in the French Quarter," *Gambit*, January 15, 2018, [https://www.nola.com/gambit/news/blake\\_pontchartrain/article\\_cf3ee718-821c-59d9-9eb0-70b05d48a649.html](https://www.nola.com/gambit/news/blake_pontchartrain/article_cf3ee718-821c-59d9-9eb0-70b05d48a649.html).

country's overall power in Europe and Africa.<sup>42</sup> De Gaulle wanted his trip to the United States to diminish the significance of the Algerian war and encourage others to not intervene. In addition there was another political significance to De Gaulle's visit which was to share the French leaders' concerns regarding an upcoming international conference.<sup>43</sup> The summit conference's purpose was a discussion of, "cultural East-West exchanges, commercial relations, and agreements of non-intervention in a nation's internal affairs."<sup>44</sup> De Gaulle wanted to plant the seeds for friendship for the Summit Conference of May 1960 which would be held in Paris, France. The summit's focus would be on the United States, Great Britain, France, and what was then the Soviet Union, and a discussion of the future of Berlin and ending the Cold War once and for all.<sup>45</sup> New Orleans welcomed De Gaulle with open arms, with Mayor deLesseps Morrison of New Orleans, seeking to ensure De Gaulle's twenty-four hour stay was both favorable and memorable.

As De Gaulle arrived Thursday night, a parade welcomed him down Canal Street to cheers and shouts of 'Vive De Gaulle'.<sup>46</sup> Mayor Morrison stated to De Gaulle:

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<sup>42</sup> United States Department of State:Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960, Western Europe, Volume VII, Part 2: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF THE FIFTH REPUBLIC*, (United States Department of State:Office of the Historian, Foreign Service Institute, 1960), <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v07p2/d201>.

<sup>43</sup> "France Strong, Is Boyer's View: Says Political Stability Insured by De Gaulle," *Times-Picayune*, April 28, 1960, Thursday edition, section 1, accessed February 5, 2020.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> E. B. Geelhoed, "Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Spy Plane, and the Summit: A Quarter-Century Retrospective," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 100, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27550396>.

<sup>46</sup> Fritz Harsdorff, "Crowds Cheer De Gaulle as He Rides in Open Car: Cannons Boom, Kisses Fly in Welcome Parade," *Times-Picayune*, April 29, 1960, Friday edition, section one, accessed March 8, 2020.

This is indeed an historic day for New Orleans. In our 242 years as a city, we have never had the pleasure before to have as our guest the president of the Republic of France. New Orleans is truly the Paris of America, and you shall find here a beachhead or bastion for the French in the United States — with the Old City, The Vieux Carré, retaining as a living community the customs, the language, the traditions, the architecture, the spirit, the atmosphere and landmarks of the French who came here in 1718 to establish this city on the banks of the Mississippi river. Your countryman, Jean Baptiste LeMoyne, Sieur de Bienville, is our founder, and I am sure that if he were here today, he would indeed be proud to know that one of the greatest statesmen of the world has honored us with his presence and that of his gracious wife, Madame Yvonne de Gaulle.<sup>47</sup>

De Gaulle seems to have been impressed. As the French president was leaving, he stated, "... what struck and impressed me was the evidence and the depth of Franco-American friendship."<sup>48</sup> The visit of de Gaulle in New Orleans had heavy political tensions underneath the surface. The political tension was more of a contest of power between Mayor Morrison of New Orleans and the Governor of Louisiana Earl K. Long. Mayor Morrison needed the visit with de Gaulle to go well to increase his popularity and electoral chances in an upcoming election.<sup>49</sup> Given Governor Earl K. Long's fragile mental health, many thought it was better he not attend all of the events scheduled for de Gaulle's visit, but rather only the luncheon for the next day.<sup>50</sup> However, this proved to be a serious mistake. Governor Long did not take kindly to being marginalized or sidelined, which led to a massive embarrassment on Mayor Morrison's side. Howev-

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>48</sup> "De Gaulle Urges Firm, United Stand: Welcome in N.O. Called Wonderful," *Times-Picayune*, April 30, 1960, Saturday edition, section one, accessed March 8, 2020.

<sup>49</sup> Philip C. Cook, "Le Grand Charles, Delasoups, and Uncle Earl: De Gaulle's Visit to New Orleans," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 49, no. 1 (Winter 2008), 7, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25478522>.

<sup>50</sup> Philip C. Cook, "Le Grand Charles," 10.

er, de Gaulle and his wife took all of this in stride since they mostly enjoyed themselves and also needed the visit to go well. It was during this visit that French president Charles de Gaulle came to know of the Joan of Arc statue's situation in New Orleans which presented the opportunity for de Gaulle to solidify a positive image of himself to not just New Orleans, but to the United States.

On March 29, 1964, Robert Picquet, the French consul general in New Orleans, said the statue would be officially donated on April 18 within the same year. The statue would commemorate the previous visit of General Charles de Gaulle back in 1960, and after the warm welcome de Gaulle received, he and the government of France donated funds to install the statue in the city as the *Times Picayune* wrote, "in recognition and appreciation of close ties that united us since the city's founding."<sup>51</sup> De Gaulle supposedly called upon the French cities of Orléans, Paris, Rouen, and Reims for aid in installing the statue in New Orleans.<sup>52</sup> *Times-Picayune* wrote, "The statue, which has been in storage in New Orleans for several years is half a personal gift of France's President Charles de Gaulle, once a visitor to New Orleans, while the other half of the cost is being borne by four cities closely identified with the career of Jeanne d'Arc — Orléans, Paris, Rouen and Reims."<sup>53</sup> The statue was to be installed and dedicated at the International Trade Mart at the foot of the main street downtown, Canal Street. In response, Mayor Schiro was

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<sup>51</sup> "Guillory Heads Ship Visit Unit : Named by Mayor for Call of Jeanne D'Arc," *Times-Picayune*, April 11, 1964, Saturday edition, section three, accessed November 2019.

<sup>52</sup> Kathleen Bradshaw, "Joanie on the Pony" (Unpublished Essay, University of New Orleans, 2016). Source: Seale Paterson, "Moving Joan: The History of Joan of Arc's Statue in New Orleans," March 2015, *MyNewOrleans.com*.

<sup>53</sup> Friendship Events Planned: Parade Saturday will Climax Visit," *Times Picayune*, April 17, 1964, Friday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

personally excited by the dedication because, as he put it, “In effect this occasion is but another official and personal reunion between France and New Orleans. Our long historical associations, our personal friendships with officials of France, have served to cement the ties between us. We are delighted always to commemorate this friendship.”<sup>54</sup> In addition to paying for the statue, in a letter, Robert Picquet wrote to Schiro, “Along with this statue, the French government will be happy to offer to New Orleans two old bronze cannons, dating back to 1813, and intended to flank the pedestal of the statue,” at the site to be named ‘Place de France.’<sup>55</sup> France’s assistance to New Orleans with the Joan of Arc statue cemented a new friendship between the two. The week of the dedication of the statue a French cruiser, Jeanne D’Arc, arrived in port to celebrate the camaraderie between France and New Orleans.<sup>56</sup>

The Saturday of the week of April 19, 1964 was the future site of the Joan of Arc statue’s formal dedication ceremony. The president of the International Trade Mart, Lloyd Cobb, expressed delight at the installation of the statue at the foot of the tall building, stating:

A new spirit pervades our people in New Orleans. It is the same vital spirit of Joan of Arc. It is faith in our destiny. A straight line is the shortest distance between two points, the people of New Orleans will never deviate again from the course nature intended for New Orleans as America’s greatest world market place. The faith of Joan will be our faith; and this great statue in the Place de France will be an eternal reminder that come

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> James H. Gillis, "Two Foreign Countries Donate Statues to N.O.: Equestrian Joan of Arc Given by France," *Times Picayune*, March 29, 1964, Sunday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>56</sup> "Friendship Events Planned: Parade Saturday will Climax Visit," *Times Picayune*, April 17, 1964, Friday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

what will, the faith of Joan will sustain our people with dignity, pride and accomplishment.<sup>57</sup>

The dedication ceremony was held with sailors from the *Jeanne d'Arc* military cruiser and her escort Victor Schoelcher, a frigate, and featured another parade along Canal Street. The naval visit, proclaimed a 'friendship event' by the *Times-Picayune*, took shape as a five-day showcase of the friendship between France and the city of New Orleans.<sup>58</sup> The finale of the event was the actual dedication of the site of Joan of Arc at the International Trade Mart plaza. Mayor Victor H. Schiro of New Orleans stated his pleasure at having Joan of Arc be a part of the city because as, he stated, "since she was known as the Maid of Orléans, it is appropriate that she should sit, imperishable and forever, at the very gateway of our French-Founded city."<sup>59</sup> M. Bruno de Leusse, minister-counsellor from the Embassy of France inaugurated the Joan of Arc statue calling his, "one of the most pleasant missions which can be entrusted to a diplomat. Indeed, nothing is more gratifying than to bring to a nation of friends, in a city of friends, a new token of these old, deep and warm feelings which tie France to the United States, to Louisiana and to New Orleans."<sup>60</sup> The statue was blessed by Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General L. Abel Caillouet of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, and *Jeanne d'Arc* chaplain Guy Roquais. New Orleans became a land of

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<sup>57</sup> Paul Atkinson, "Gift Statue Accepted Here with Oratory After Parade: Spirit of Joan of Arc Is Praised by Cobb," *Times Picayune*, April 19, 1964, Sunday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>58</sup> "Friendship Events Planned: Parade Saturday will Climax Visit," *Times Picayune*, April 17, 1964, Friday morning edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>59</sup> Paul Atkinson, "Gift Statue Accepted Here with Oratory After Parade: Spirit of Joan of Arc Is Praised by Cobb," *Times Picayune*, April 19, 1964, Sunday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

opportunity with the help of Joan of Arc's character. As an icon, she meant something to New Orleans as not just a French symbol but as a symbol of friendship to France, a connection, and as a representation of New Orleans. Joan, as Mayor Schiro stated, "...symbolizes the spirit of France, dauntless and dedicated. We have long loved her. Now she is here, sharing her spiritual chair with us, and constantly reminding us that France and New Orleans are of the same rich blood."<sup>61</sup> For the statue to be placed at the future opening of the International Trade Mart would complete the image of an innovative and engaged city while also becoming an appealing sight for tourists. The statue's placement would by the International Trade Mart would represent the importance of international trade and international relationships.

Three years later on February 4, 1967, plaques from the French *Jeanne D'Arc* military cruiser were given to New Orleans to be gilded and affixed to the base of the Maid of Orléans statue. These plaques represented the continued friendship between the city and France and a remembrance of the old cruiser. The four plaques given each had a coat of arms on them with a city from France bearing names of places of importance to Joan of Arc. One plaque was Lorraine, the plaque where Joan was born, then a plaque of Orléans, where Joan freed the city from the British occupation, the third plaque was Reims, this was where Charles VII was crowned as the French king, and the final plaque was of Rouen, where Joan's life ended by burning at the stake.<sup>62</sup> Mayor Schiro said the history of the city would be forever linked to the traditions of "its

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Scott Manning, "Joan of Arc Monument at New Orleans," *Historian on the Warpath*, last modified November 23, 2011, <https://scottmanning.com/content/joan-of-arc-monument-at-new-orleans/>. On this website, you can see actual pictures of the Joan of Arc statue with the plaques and cannons. Scott Manning is a historian who is very active in his field and does multiple projects, and writes books.



mother country France,” and foresaw the continued friendship between the two.<sup>63</sup> During the week of April 10, 1968, the senior councilman of the city of Orléans in France, Jean Guerold, stated how he and the city would always remember the help sent by New Orleans following the Second World War. Guerold later visited the city on behalf of Orléans Mayor M. Roger Secretain to commemorate the 250th anniversary of its namesake Orléans, France, praised the efforts of the U.S. soldiers who saved his city from the Germans in both wars and made a comparison to Joan of Arc doing the very same thing with the English in 1431.<sup>64</sup> The aid of New Orleans would be a continued reminder of the friendship shared by the two countries. Guerold said, “American assistance given to Orléans in the past has solidified a friendship between it and New Orleans that will last eternally, in spite of political fluctuations.”<sup>65</sup> The Joan of Arc statue came to symbolize this promise between the city and the nation of France.

More time passed, however before statue Joan was installed. Finally, after 14 years, October 26, 1972 marked the official day as the Joan of Arc statue was officially unveiled at the newly-designated Place de France between the International Trade Mart and the Rivergate complex. The French ambassador, Jacques Kosciusko-Morizet, officially presented the statue to the city on behalf of the French government at the new site while he marveled at the, “Maid of Orléans finally took her proper place illustrating the faith in common values of courage and free-

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<sup>63</sup> "Joan of Arc Plaques Presented to City: Plaques Given to City By France: Will Grace Statue of Maid of Orleans," *Times Picayune*, February 4, 1967, Saturday edition, section two, accessed November 2019.

<sup>64</sup> "Orleans, France: Official Talks: Won't Forget Aid from N.O., He Says," *Times Picayune*, April 10, 1968, Wednesday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>65</sup> "Orleans, France: Official Talks: Won't Forget Aid from N.O., He Says," *Times Picayune*, April 10, 1968, Wednesday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

dom shared by France and America.”<sup>66</sup> The mayor of New Orleans, Moon Landrieu, received the statue calling its new site a “very appropriate setting for Jeanne d’Arc” and soon to be, “the most beautiful site on the entire length of the Mississippi River.”<sup>67</sup> Moon Landrieu held the statue in high esteem because not only was it a gift from France but it also presented a strong tie to France while enhancing the physical scenery of the city. Kosciusko-Morizet said, “the likeness of St. Joan symbolizes France’s friendship with New Orleans...the friendship between France and New Orleans, France and Louisiana is so alive, so natural, it is no longer necessary to explain it at length. France is here in memory, tradition, institutions and even language.”<sup>68</sup> Kosciusko-Morizet also recounted how De Gaulle, the president of France at the time of gifting the statue, had several fond recollections of his time in New Orleans back in the 1960s and had wanted to personally aid in the purchase of the statue after his visit.

Commemorations continued afterward as well. On November 29, 1976, French sailors came to pay homage to New Orleans and Joan of Arc. The ceremony was a component of a French memorial service at the St. Louis Cathedral. There was a French mass as well for the commemoration for the 1,000 crewmen of the French navy’s helicopter carrier *Jeanne d’Arc*. French Consul General Gilbert Bouchet and Captain Stephane Beaussant, of the *Jeanne d’Arc*, placed a wreath on Joan’s statue.<sup>69</sup> A spokesperson for the French consulate made a point to

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<sup>66</sup> Vincent Lee, “Ceremony Held At New Statue: ‘Jeanne d’Arc’ Unveiled After Long Wait,” *Times Picayune*, October 26, 1972, Thursday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>67</sup> Vincent Lee, “Ceremony Held At New Statue: ‘Jeanne d’Arc’ Unveiled After Long Wait,” *Times Picayune*, October 26, 1972, Thursday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> “French Sailors in Tribute to N.O. and Joan of Arc,” *Times Picayune*, November 29, 1976, Monday edition, section one, accessed November 2019.

speak on how special the connection between the Joan of Arc statue, the sailors from the Jeanne d'Arc ship, and how Joan continued to be the Maid of Orléans.

Three years later in 1979, Joan of Arc was again officially honored by the recently founded Association of Joan of Arc in New Orleans. The celebration commenced at Joan's statue next to the International Trade Mart where two dozen people dressed in medieval garb. A procession symbolized the liberation of Orléans, France five hundred and fifty years prior. The group's vice president, Sidney L. Villere commented on how the city took the time to remember and rededicate the Joan of Arc statue each year, following Orléans, France's own example of celebrating Joan. The group in New Orleans rode on horse-back to St. Louis Cathedral while looking the part of fourteenth century villagers.<sup>70</sup> An official proclamation by the mayor of New Orleans named it St. Joan of Arc Day for the city, marked by the New Orleans Police Band playing both countries' national anthems.

In 1984, Joan's statue was spiffed up by two Frenchmen, Claude Ducroizet and Jean Maillard, who re-gilded her once more.<sup>71</sup> It took the two Frenchmen three weeks to restore her former shine. The re-gilding project of Joan of Arc was a collaboration between Orléans, France and the Morial administration with the additional support of the International Trade Mart. Two years prior, the mayor of Orléans, Jacques Douflagues, visited New Orleans as part of the La Rochelle Transatlantic Yacht Race of the Louisiana Tricentennial.<sup>72</sup> The mayor of Orléans and

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<sup>70</sup> "St. Joan of Arc Honored in Celebration Here," *Times Picayune*, May 9, 1979, Wednesday edition, section one, accessed March 2020.

<sup>71</sup> Valerie Faciane, "Statue regains her shine," *Times Picayune*, April 12, 1984, Thursday edition, section one, accessed February 2020.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

Mayor Ernest Morial of New Orleans discussed refurbishing the statue. After the re-gilding, Mayor Douffiaques of Orléans returned a month later to rededicate the Maid once more and participate in the commencement of the world's fair.

Throughout this period, then, the Joan of Arc statue and the Place de France at the foot of Canal Street came to be a kind of site of memory at which people came to see New Orleans and the sites that represented the city. The Joan of Arc statue became an integrated part of the cultural identity of New Orleans. The city placed a new meaning on the statue different from its European counterpart. This situation was to change in the 1990s, when the Rivergate Convention Center building became up for grabs. Harrah's Casino decided to place its mark there along with removing the Joan of Arc statue that had become a beloved part of the city. However, the people of New Orleans were not going to roll over and let the statue become just a forgotten memory.

### **The Harrah's Controversy and Moving the Statue**

Since her original placement at the International Trade Mart in 1964, Joan's statue remained a cornerstone at the International Trade Mart and an icon of the relationship between France and New Orleans. However, the Joan of Arc statue and its surrounding Place de France were challenged when Harrah's Casino set eyes on its site for a vast new gaming complex at the center of New Orleans in the early 1990s.

Public reaction to the proposal was swift. In an ironic foreshadowing of controversies to come, Kim Gandy, the executive vice president of the National Organization for Women, pointed out the gender significance of the proposal. "It's another example of men moving women out of the way. If that was a statue of Robert E. Lee, they wouldn't be moving it, or they'd be talking

reverently about moving it to someplace important.”<sup>73</sup> Others worried that Joan would be moved somewhere less prominent. Dr. Homer Dupuy, the head of the committee that had helped raise money to have Joan’s statue installed, said, “I would be extremely opposed to moving it at all, and if it is to be moved it would have to be in a very conspicuous place in that area.”<sup>74</sup> City Planning Director Kristina Ford stated that “Statues do have a significance —they’re not simply like curtains. They should have some connection to something historic or something that’s part of our city.”<sup>75</sup> Ford argued that if the statue needed to be moved at all, the decision should be approved by her staff and the Arts Council of New Orleans. Significantly, she also argued that Joan be installed in a site “adequate to allow public functions similar to those currently occurring at the Place de France.”<sup>76</sup>

Preservationists entered the fray in December, after Harrah’s workers started work on demolishing the plaza. Susan Lafaye, a Louisiana Landmarks Society attorney, filed a suit on December 6, and the city ordered work to be stopped, stating Harrah’s did not possess a proper permit and fining them \$17,000.<sup>77</sup> This led to a long drawn out legal fight which no one expected to occur for as long as it did.

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<sup>73</sup> Susan Finch. “Casino could leave Joan of Arc statue without a home,” *Times-Picayune*, April 27, 1994, Wednesday edition, section B-2, accessed February 2020., quote from Kim Gandy, was the executive vice president of the National Organization for Women, but moved to Washington D.C., six years before the Joan of Arc statue’s move.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., quote from Kristina Ford, the City Planning Director at the time.

<sup>77</sup> Bill Voelker. “Joan of Arc wins court round,” *Times-Picayune*, December 22, 1994, Thursday edition, B-2, accessed February 2020.

A legal battle ensued, pitting Harrah's Jazz Co. against the Louisiana Landmarks Society. On December 21st, U.S. District Judge A.J. McNamara temporarily halted the casino owners from moving the statue and disturbing the Place de France, giving the preservationists a victory.<sup>78</sup> In his ruling, McNamara stated the city made use of federal money to build the plaza in 1971, allowing the city to create the Place de France as a "permanent open-space land for scenic, historic and park purposes."<sup>79</sup> Judge McNamara continued to hear arguments regarding the movement of the statue and the destruction of the Place de France throughout January.<sup>80</sup> Both sides continued to debate whether the use of federal money meant that US authorities from the Interior Department and Housing and Urban Development Department needed to approve any conversion of the plaza to a new use. Along these lines, the Landmarks Society noted that the statue and cannons, given to New Orleans by the government of France, were gifts intended "to celebrate the international nature of the Port of New Orleans and the historic connection between New Orleans and France."<sup>81</sup>

A hearing on January 19th had both sides warring. The *Times-Picayune* wrote of ex-mayor Moon Landrieu's testimony in federal court on the grant he used in the 1970s to create the Place de France. Landrieu claimed he believed his grant would not lead to having the plaza be

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Frank Donze. "Rivergate demolition gets final OK from city," *Times-Picayune*, January 5, 1995, Thursday edition, section B-3, accessed February 2020.

<sup>81</sup> Bill Voelker. "Joan of Arc wins court round," *Times-Picayune*, December 22, 1994, Thursday edition, B-2, accessed February 2020.

designated as a park, excluding the possibility of other development opportunities for that area.<sup>82</sup> Landrieu also indicated, moreover, that he “ would have preferred a French Quarter site for the Joan of Arc statue that is the plaza’s centerpiece.”<sup>83</sup> Landrieu went on further to testify the plaza and Joan of Arc statue were not ‘historically significant’ sites like Jackson Square or Lee Circle. By contrast, Landmarks Society President Joseph Bernard, stated the Place de France had become significant because of Joan’s statue being donated to the city by the French president De Gaulle.<sup>84</sup> Abbye Gorin, an environmental designer and planner, supported Bernard’s claim by stating the Place de France, “commemorates the relationship between the people of France and the people of Louisiana, and the relationship is historical.”<sup>85</sup>

Federal authorities continued to debate the move into 1995. U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt refrained from intervening.<sup>86</sup> U.S. District Judge A.J. McNamara would not have the Place de France demolished unless Babbitt gave consent to do so. The federal government paid half of the plaza cost and since the plaza implied historical significance then it needed Babbitt’s approval to change the site. Babbitt cited the wishes of influential former U.S. Rep. Lindy Boggs from New Orleans that Babbitt prohibit the demolition of the site and move of the statue. Babbitt remained on the fence for several months, much to the displeasure of Harrah’s casino representatives, who argued that construction costs were rising due to the legal battle. Nevertheless, casino

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<sup>82</sup> Bill Voelker, “Ex-mayor refuses to jump into fight for Place de France.” *Times Picayune*, January 20, 1995, Friday edition, section B-3, accessed February 2020.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> “U.S. must OK move of St. Joan,” *Times-Picayune*, February 1, 1995, Wednesday edition, section B-2, accessed February 2020.

construction continued in the former Rivergate area, with Harrah's reportedly making back-up plans in case decisions went against them.<sup>87</sup>

As the months passed in 1995, the *Times-Picayune* continued to report on the ongoing court battle. On Bastille Day, Joan of Arc still remained on the construction site in Place de France.<sup>88</sup> Preservationists and statue supporters continued to profess hope she would remain at the site. Homer Dupuy, from the Council of French Societies of Greater New Orleans said, "Joan of Arc won many battles. We hope she wins this battle and stays right where she is."<sup>89</sup>

However by November, it seemed that the New Orleans authorities had given up the fight, and had decided to accept the statue's move. The officials of the city apparently did so expecting approval from the federal government on the relocation of the Joan of Arc statue.<sup>90</sup> Harrah's Jazz Co. proposed to relocate the statue to the lake side of the 1100 block of Convention Center Boulevard.<sup>91</sup> Under the lease with city, Harrah's would have paid \$272,000 to change the statue's location and store it during the move. The Landmarks Society's attorney, Thomas Tucker, argued that opposition might be reduced if citizens were allowed to voice their opinions on where the Joan of Arc statue should be placed.<sup>92</sup> Kristina Ford, the Planning Commissions Di-

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<sup>87</sup> Frank Donze, "Harrah's First Steps: Harrah's pouring labor into casino," *Times-Picayune*, May 29, 1995, Monday edition, page 1 and A-10, accessed February 2020. Both go into more detail on the construction of the casino and their plans and expectations in the court rulings.

<sup>88</sup> Connie Jackson and Joan Treadway. "Joan of Arc stands tall amid construction rubble," *Times-Picayune*, July 15, 1995, Saturday edition, section B1, accessed February 2020.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Frank Donze. "Joan of Arc ready for new home: N.O. authorities await federal OK," *Times-Picayune*, November 24, 1995, Friday edition, section B-1, accessed February 2020.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, B-2.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, B-2.



rector, stated, “We hope people come forward if they think they have better ideas. We don’t want to represent this (the Warehouse District site) as a *fait accompli*.”<sup>93</sup> This gave New Orleans natives a chance to ensure Joan of Arc would not be left indefinitely in storage, as it had after its original arrival in New Orleans in 1958.

Two things occurred in June 1996 that would affect the reinstallation. One was the French ambassador to the United States, Francois Bujon de l’Estang, came to New Orleans for discussions with Mayor Marc Morial of New Orleans about the city’s port and its role in the European economy.<sup>94</sup> While discussing the port, their conversation apparently switched to include the fate of the statue of the Maid of Orleans. De l’Estang wanted to know what the city planned to do with the iconic statue. Morial attempted to ease the concerns of the French ambassador reporting to a *Times-Picayune* reporter, that “I said we’re certainly going to work with him to ensure that the statue is presented — displayed — in a fashion befitting the relationship between the city and France.”<sup>95</sup> He acknowledged De l’Estang’s fear that the statue would once again wind up in storage. However, Morial indicated that final decisions were in limbo due to the federal lawsuit and Harrah’s ongoing bankruptcy case.

Only a few days later the federal court reached a verdict. On June 7, 1996, the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a lower court’s work stoppage order regarding demolition of

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, B-2.

<sup>94</sup> Mark Schleifstein. “French envoy urges care for statue,” *Times-Picayune*, June 5, 1996, Wednesday edition, section B-1, accessed January 2020.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

the Place de France.<sup>96</sup> In addition, the court approved the moving of the statue of Joan. The court ruled that the Louisiana Landmarks Society did not have power over the state's open-space land program.<sup>97</sup> However, as a result of the ruling Harrah's had to assume the expenses for moving, storing, and relocating the Joan of Arc statue.

Joan of Arc's statue thus entered another period of storage away from the public's eye. In 1999, Mayor Morial of New Orleans and the French Market Corp. proposed a reinstallation of the Joan of Arc statue at a small walk-in park in the French Quarter.<sup>98</sup> The new Place de France would be at the intersection of three streets: Decatur, North Peters, and St. Philip at the border of the French Market. Joan's statue would also be accompanied by four flags, including those of France, the United States, Louisiana and New Orleans, along with the two nineteenth century cannons. Plaques would also be included to memorialize the connection between France and New Orleans. "I would see no reason why anyone would be opposed to it. It would surprise me. I'm excited. I love public art and I love monuments that reflect an important piece of the city's history," Morial said when discussing the plans moving the Joan of Arc statue.<sup>99</sup> Harrah's casino would pay the estimated \$380,000 in costs for moving and upgrading the park, which officials hoped would focus new light on the Quarter and the French Market in particular. Mayor Morial

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<sup>96</sup> From staff and wire reports, "Statue may be evicted after all," *Times-Picayune*, June 8, 1996, Saturday edition, front page section, accessed January 2020.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. For more information on the court case regarding the final decision of the statue see <https://caselaw.findlaw.com/us-5th-circuit/1264678.html> or <https://casetext.com/case/louisiana-landmarks-v-city-of-new-orleans>.

<sup>98</sup> Coleman Warner. "Harrah's would pay for new home," *Times-Picayune*, March 1, 1999, Monday edition, section B, accessed February 2020.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., page B-2.

indicated he had chosen the site based on discussions with the French ambassador to the United States, François Bujon de l'Estang. De l'Estang had reportedly expressed his approval of the site on a visit two years previously for the dedication of a new park for the Bienville statue.

However, not everyone was happy with this particular plan. In the opinions section of the *Times-Picayune*, there was a clear split on whether the Joan of Arc statue's move was actually good or not. A few people believed that the statue along with Place de France should stay where it was in front of the casino instead of moving it somewhere else. Betty L. Moss, a citizen from New Orleans, wanted the statue to reside in front of the casino because she believed the casino, "...needs the Place de France and the statue of Joan of Arc. What other casino has the statue of a bonafide saint in its front yard?"<sup>100</sup> Another writer, Michael Rouchell, argued that "The city of New Orleans will have a net loss of one public urban open space."<sup>101</sup> Others voiced satisfaction with the choice. Anthony G. Tassin thought the new move for the statue would, "...be a delight for locals and tourists alike to stand back and view the fine statue at leisure, perhaps even have their picture taken there."<sup>102</sup> Robert Desmarais Sullivan pointedly wrote, "...it seems that a golden equestrian would enhance the appearance of the structures that line the streets. Perhaps she

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<sup>100</sup> Betty L. Moss. "Keep statue where it is," *Times-Picayune*, March 5, 1999, Friday edition, section B-6, accessed February 2020.

<sup>101</sup> Michael Rouchell. "Don't relocate Joan statue," *Times-Picayune*, March 22, 1999, Monday edition, section B-4, accessed February 2020.

<sup>102</sup> Anthony G. Tassin. "Joan's better off in Quarter," *Times-Picayune*, March 10, 1999, Wednesday edition, section B-6, accessed February 2020.

could remind some of the good souls who tend to loiter there that the only way to create meaning in life is to choose with passion a desirable purpose.”<sup>103</sup>

After some continued debate, in September, the move became finalized.<sup>104</sup> The French Consul General Nicole Lenoir-Bertrand expressed satisfaction with the new site, noting how the old site, “...was kind of crushed or diminished by the casino, which is a big structure.”<sup>105</sup>

On November 14, 1999 officials gathered to rededicate the Maid of Orléans statue.<sup>106</sup> French ambassador to the United States, De l’Estang, participated alongside Mayor Marc Morial and several other officials.<sup>107</sup> In the new site, the Joan of Arc statue and Place de France would come to play a changed public role, as New Orleans’ citizens used the site of memory in a new way.

### **Joan's Krewe: Statue Joan’s influence in New Orleans today**

Since her re-dedication, the Joan of Arc statue remains a vital part of not just tourism in New Orleans, but also a part of the city’s cultural life. The Joan of Arc statue resides at the Place de France in the French Quarter adjacent to the busy French Market. The location of the statue allows for tourists to see a part of history and begin to connect the city to its original founder, the

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<sup>103</sup> Robert Desmarais Sullivan, “Of a statue and an avenue,” *Times-Picayune*, March 23, 1999, Tuesday edition, section B-4, accessed February 2020.

<sup>104</sup> Bruce Egger, “Maid of New Orleans to reappear in the French Quarter,” *Times-Picayune*, September 26, 1999, Sunday edition, section B-1, accessed February 2020.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, section B-2.

<sup>106</sup> Stephanie Grace. “Maid of Honor: French ambassador, Morial rededicate Joan of Arc statue,” *Times-Picayune*, November 15, 1999, Monday edition, section B-1, accessed February 2020.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, section B-2.

country of France. Now in the heart of the French Quarter, the statue of Joan has become increasingly integrated into New Orleans cultural life, particularly into parading and carnival traditions.

In 2008, the Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc, or the Joan of Arc Krewe, was founded with the intention of holding a Joan of Arc parade every year on January 6, Joan's birthday. The date also marks Twelfth Night, which falls twelve nights after Christmas. The Krewe follows a walking route with a medieval and theatrical parade depicting when Joan's life and exploits. In addition, the parade celebrates the city's French cultural background.<sup>108</sup> The route usually starts at the corner of Bienville and North Front Streets near Harrah's Jazz Casino, includes a champagne toast at the Historic New Orleans Collection by the Consul General of France from the balcony at 400 Chartres Street, followed by a stop at the Saint Louis Cathedral with a blessing of Joan's sword. Parade members then gather at the Place de France to sing Happy Birthday to the Joan of Arc statue and continue on to Jackson Square for the coronation of the king and the cutting of a cake at the Washington Artillery Park.<sup>109</sup>

As in past years, the 2020 parade again featured a king and queen with connections to France. The king, the artist Simon Hardeveld, known more widely simply as Simon of New Orleans, said, "They asked me if I wanted to be king of the parade...it was so great I didn't believe it was for me. It's a big honor for me."<sup>110</sup> He described Joan's story when he first heard it in

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<sup>108</sup> The Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc has a website promoting Joan of Arc, how to get involved with their Krewe along with photos, merchandise, an explanation of who they are, and finally an on-line library devoted solely to the spreading of information of Joan of Arc. See <https://joanofarcparade.org/>.

<sup>109</sup> Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc, "Joan of Arc Parade Route," Krewe De Jeanne D'Arc, last modified December 26, 2019, <https://joanofarcparade.org/who-we-are/parade-route/>. For more information on the Krewe and their library, please visit their website: <https://joanofarcparade.org/>.

<sup>110</sup> Simon Hardeveld, Interview by author, French Quarter, January 6, 2020.

France as a kid. “It was a sad and scary story for me as a kid, and when you are a kid you need a scary story.”<sup>111</sup> Simon’s iconic and colorful work, like the artist himself, has been deeply integrated into New Orleans’ popular culture since his arrival from Cannes, France in 1994.<sup>112</sup> The queen, Margarita Bergen, said, “I always wanted to be the queen since they first started. It is always special.”<sup>113</sup> Bergen has visited four of the existing Joan of Arc statues in the United States and in Europe. Bergen was impressed by the humble girl. She said that Joan was, “a liberate and a feminist.”<sup>114</sup> Margarita Bergen is originally from the Dominican Republic, a patron of the arts and a cultural advocate who helped to build the Roundtable Luncheons.<sup>115</sup> Zoe Kanga, a seventeen year old senior at Lusher Charter School who completed the school’s French program, took on the central role of Joan of Arc herself. Kanga witnessed the Joan of Arc parade when she moved to New Orleans when she was nine years old, and had wanted to play the role Joan of Arc ever since. After her selection, Kanga said, “I felt like a local celebrity for a while.”<sup>116</sup> To Kanga,

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<sup>111</sup> Hardeveld, Interview.

<sup>112</sup> Fritz Esker, "Signs of the Times with Simon of New Orleans," NewOrleans.Me, last modified September 27, 2016, <https://www.neworleans.me/journal/detail/1347/Signs-of-the-Times-with-Simon-of-New-Orleans>. For more information about Simon and how he got himself up and running please go here for the interview he did: <https://www.whereyat.com/simons-signs> or go to <https://simonofneworleans.com/> to look at his merchandise or also <https://joanofarcparade.org/honorary-characters/#King> to find out more about him.

<sup>113</sup> Margarita Bergen, Personal Interview, French Quarter, January 6, 2020.

<sup>114</sup> Bergen, Interview.

<sup>115</sup> Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc, "Honorary Characters," Krewe De Jeanne D'Arc, accessed January 7, 2020, <https://joanofarcparade.org/honorary-characters/#Queen>. For more information on Ms. Bergen go to: [https://www.nola.com/entertainment\\_life/article\\_158fc66a-b7af-11e9-b7a1-8b-d673542d5c.html](https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/article_158fc66a-b7af-11e9-b7a1-8b-d673542d5c.html), <http://www.livingneworleans.com/?p=10852>, or <https://vivanolamag.com/index.php/home/k2-categories/cover-story/margarita-bergen-social-butterfly>.

<sup>116</sup> Zoe Kanga, Personal Interview, Chateau Café New Orleans, LA, January 20, 2020.

becoming Joan of Arc was about, “preserving French here in New Orleans. The French culture here is so unique...it’s important to encourage students to keep pursuing French.”<sup>117</sup> The deputy mayor of Orléans, France attended this year to do a media segment based on Kanga. For Kanga, her participation was the realization of something else too, for she had learned of Joan of Arc through her grandmother who has always been interested in saints, and would send her books on Joan of Arc.

The Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc has been a fierce supporter and caretaker of the Joan of Arc statue. On the Krewe’s homepage they have a donation option to help with their partners, New Orleans’ Monumental Task Committee, in re-gilding the Joan of Arc statue. The Krewe desires to keep the statue in top-form because she is “the unofficial patron saint of New Orleans”.<sup>118</sup>

In 2018, the Krewe was invited by the Mayor of Orléans, Olivier Carré, to be a part of the the Joan of Arc parade in Orléans, France. In this way the Krewe was integrated into the ten-day festival called “Fête de Jeanne d’Arc”, which celebrates Joan’s victory against the British.<sup>119</sup> This occasion has been celebrated since Joan won in the fifteenth century. Krewe Captain and Founder, Amy Kirk Duvoisin, said, “It’s a true honor to participate in what I consider our ‘big sister’ parade.”<sup>120</sup> The parade in Orléans, France was the five-hundred and eighty-ninth time since its creation.

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<sup>117</sup> Kanga, Interview.

<sup>118</sup> Krewe de Jeanne d'Arc, "Donate to Re-Gild Joan," Krewe De Jeanne D'Arc, accessed December 12, 2019, <https://joanofarcparade.org/donate-re-gild-joan/>.

<sup>119</sup> Devorah Levy-Pearlman, "Krewe De Jeanne D'Arc Invited To Parade In Orléans, France," *OffBeat Magazine*, last modified April 30, 2018, <https://www.offbeat.com/news/krewe-de-jeanne-darc-invited-parade-orleans-france/>.

<sup>120</sup> Levy-Pearlman, “Krewe de Jeanne d’Arc.”

The Joan of Arc statue not only became part of a Krewe but also part of an unlikely team, the New Orleans' Saints football team. Her statue became a mascot and a patron, by public opinion, over the Saints football team. On January 18, 2019 she donned the Saints' colors. Rhonda Findley, who owned the Pop City shop at the time near Decatur Street, said she got permission from the French Market Corporation to plant a black flag with the sentence: "I'M NO ANGEL, I'M A SAINT," along with a fleur-de-lis shield and a Saints T-shirt.<sup>121</sup> Towards the end of the year 2019, Joan of Arc was once again dressed in the Saints' colors. The Joan of Arc statue was seen as once again leading the fray to raise the morale of her fellow comrades while charging into battle of football.<sup>122</sup> The statue of Joan post Katrina became a symbol for the Saints' football team. The Joan of Arc statue would not only be dressed up in Saints' gear, but also represent home game victories when other football teams came to play against the Saints. The next day, January 1, 2020, there was more coverage on the Joan of Arc statue wearing the Saints' gear once more in encouragement of the football team.<sup>123</sup> Press accounts focused on the tourists and locals who came to be photographed with the striking statue.

This year, 2020, marks the hundred year anniversary of Joan's canonization in 1920. This hundred-year anniversary served as an important remembrance of Joan of Arc and in New Or-

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<sup>121</sup> Doug MacCash, "Saints Flag Appears on Statue of Joan of Arc. Who Did Dat?," NOLA.com, last modified January 18, 2019, [https://www.nola.com/entertainment\\_life/arts/article\\_3692b267-3bed-5a78-b83b-9dff9f042047.html](https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/arts/article_3692b267-3bed-5a78-b83b-9dff9f042047.html).

<sup>122</sup> Heath Allen, "Joan of Arc Statue in French Quarter Sports New Armor Ahead of NFC Wild Card Game," WDSU, last modified December 31, 2019, <https://www.wdsu.com/article/joan-of-arc-statue-in-french-quarter-sports-new-armor-ahead-of-nfc-wild-card-game/30370603>.

<sup>123</sup> WWL Staff, "Joan of Arc Statue 'leads the Charge' for Saints Post-season," WWL, last modified January 1, 2020, <https://www.wwltv.com/article/news/local/orleans/joan-of-arc-statue-leads-the-charge-for-saints-post-season/289-999693e2-331f-4d61-85c7-14a854042030>.



leans celebrations have included a new rendition of Tchaikovsky's *Joan of Arc*, a Russian opera piece on Joan's rise and fall as the Maid of Orléans. The opera was translated from Russian into English by a Tulane graduate from 1964, Richard Balthazar, and the opera provided an informational pamphlet on not just the opera but who Joan was and why she still mattered to the city of New Orleans. The opera was split into two parts, one part about Joan's ascension into her military fame and triumph, the second part her downfall and death. However, the conductor, Robert Lyall, exercised creative license and portrayed Joan's downfall as due to romantic love. Lyall's reason for this artistic turn was, "what's an opera without a good love duet?"<sup>124</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In 2017, French Quarter residents awoke to find the base of the gilded Joan of Arc statue spray painted with the phrase "Tear it Down." The sprayed message was wiped clean that same week in May, but the defacing of the statue seemed to place it within the larger controversy that has gripped New Orleans since 2017. As the city became closely associated with a national movement to remove statues that celebrate the Civil War and Confederacy, spurred locally by the group Take 'Em Down NOLA. Statues of Robert E. Lee and General Beauregard, among others, have been taken down and placed in storage as a result in the midst of great debate and controversy. These monuments celebrate a fictional, sanitized Confederacy, ignoring the death, enslavement, and terror that it actually stood for."<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Dean M. Shapiro, "Tchaikovsky Opera Sings the Life of Joan of Arc -- with a Little Artistic License," NOLA.com, last modified February 4, 2020, [https://www.nola.com/entertainment\\_life/music/article\\_f5f88054-463c-11ea-8faf-531da95ddc6a.html](https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/music/article_f5f88054-463c-11ea-8faf-531da95ddc6a.html).

<sup>125</sup> Jenny Jarvie, "New Orleans removes a statue of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee from its perch of 133 years," *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 2017, <https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-new-orleans-general-lee-20170519-story.html>.

The controversy pitted government officials against each other. Mayor Mitch Landrieu of New Orleans sided with those who would remove the statues, noting “They are not just innocent remembrances of a benign history,” while others, like Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, argued for keeping the statues in place because of their supposed historic value. “Some of it is unpleasant,” Nungesser was quoted as saying, “but it is history. You’re not going to right a wrong by taking down a monument.”<sup>126</sup> Preservationists entered the fray too, as the public became embroiled in a debate about the significance of statues and history. In this context, Joan of Arc statue supporters expressed confusion regarding Joan’s defacing. “Surely,” said Amy Kirk Duvoisin, founder of the annual Joan of Arc parade, “people realize she’s not related to American history.”<sup>127</sup> Duvoisin, reassured by a leader of the Take ‘Em Down NOLA organization that Joan did not figure on their list of offending statues, argued that the vandalism of the Joan of Arc statue could be used as a teachable moment to discuss who Joan was in the 1400s.

The debate over statues in New Orleans, however, shines a light on how a physical representation of a legend can be subject to multiple meanings depending on the time in history, the circumstances surrounding it, and how people who view it impose their own vision on it. The Joan of Arc statue in New Orleans stands far from the politics surrounding the image of Joan of Arc in France, where her statue in Paris is still used by the far-right National Front party as a site

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Doug MacCash, "Joan of Arc statue in French Quarter tagged with 'Tear It Down' graffiti," *Times-Picayune*, May 4, 2017, [https://www.nola.com/news/politics/article\\_884834b6-e988-5c68-b03d-6a6639a078c4.html](https://www.nola.com/news/politics/article_884834b6-e988-5c68-b03d-6a6639a078c4.html).

to stage rallies and remembrances every May Day.<sup>128</sup> Instead, in New Orleans, Joan of Arc stands as a reminder that New Orleans prizes its trans-Atlantic ties and is continuing to reimagine its ties across the ocean through Joan and what she fought for centuries ago.

The Joan of Arc statue in New Orleans has represented many things as time has passed. The visit of Charles de Gaulle and his visit being the catalyst for the statue being where it is today. The statue also silently commemorates the legal battle over Harrah's Casino. Its reinstallation and celebration by the Krewe of Jeanne d'Arc point to the statue's continued relevance to the city's identity and perceived connections to France. Over time the statue of Joan of Arc has grown to become part of New Orleans' image, photographed by visitors and locals. Indeed, the Joan of Arc statue in New Orleans is proof of the relationship between popular memory and the role of statues in a city's identity.

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<sup>128</sup>Pascal Brocard, "POLITIQUE. Photos. Marine Le Pen Dépose Une Gerbe Devant La Statue De Jeanne D'Arc De Montigny-lès-Metz," À La Une - Républicain Lorrain, last modified May 1, 2019, <https://www.republicain-lorrain.fr/edition-de-metz-agglo-et-orne/2019/05/01/photos-marine-le-pen-depose-une-gerbe-devant-la-statue-de-jeanne-d-arc-de-montigny-les-metz>. For more information on Joan and the National Front go to: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-600-year-struggle-for-the-soul-of-joan-of-arc-6284992.html>

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## **Vita**

Megan Miller was born and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana. She moved to New Orleans to attend the University of Orleans immediately after her high school graduation. She graduated from UNO with her BA in International Studies with a concentration in European Studies and a minor in French. She loves to learn about languages when she has the time. She speaks, writes and reads French competently. Her mother is from Belgium and is a French immersion teacher at an elementary school in Lake Charles. Megan's interest for languages and traveling stems from her familial connections to her mother's side of the family. Her maternal family sparked her interest in traveling and in reading to expand her horizons. Right now, she is attending UNO for her master's in History with a concentration in International and Global Studies.