

5-2007

Controversy No Matter the Colors: The Confederate Battle Flag and Southern Identity

Matthew C. Juneau

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lsu.edu/honors_etd



Part of the [History Commons](#)

INTRODUCTION

Pride accompanies any claim to identity. Professing ownership to defining characteristics, whether national, religious or ethnic, most often carries an assumption of merit with regard to these qualities. Southern identity is no different. A seemingly unorthodox conception, southern uniqueness was not just suggested by the founders and citizens of the Confederate States of America. Various writers have noted the distinctiveness of the southern region of the United States over time. A Union officer who was stationed in North Carolina during Reconstruction, Albion Tourgée observed in his novel *A Fool's Errand* that “[t]he North and South are simply convenient names for two distinct, hostile, and irreconcilable ideas, – two civilizations they are sometimes called, *especially* at the South.”¹ As Tourgée recognized, it was not only geography but also ideology that differentiated the South from its regional neighbors. C. Vann Woodward, arguably the most influential of all contemporary Southern historians, validated Tourgée’s observation over a century later, writing, “Few historians of the South would deny the region’s distinctiveness. Without it there would be little point in writing of the South separately from the rest of the nation.”²

Many of the defining traits once separating the South from the rest of the nation no longer exist. The region was set apart by the institution of slavery and the plantation culture flowing from it. After secession and defeat, the South defied traditional American myths of victory and innocence, further separating the region from the rest of the nation. Later, the culture of the Lost Cause served to sustain the distinctiveness of the South by memorializing the Confederacy and paying homage to its fallen heroes. Today, the pride in these events and movements and, perhaps more importantly, the knowledge of them no

longer exist among the vast majority of people who call themselves southern. This can be explained by fundamental shifts in southern society from 1913 to 1945.

George B. Tindall's *The Emergence of the New South* identifies this as a period of great change in the region's history. "Half a century of Southern political isolation ended with the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson on March 4, 1913."³ After 1945, as the New South had fully emerged and began its maturation, the region's association with many of its defining characteristics dissolved. The once dominant agricultural economy took a backseat to developing industrial sectors, and a growing middle class moved into the city as rural communities shrunk. In many ways, the South was emulating the Northern societal model in the areas of economics and infrastructure through the development of industry and business. Whereas the South once supplied raw materials to the North and purchased their finished products, now it gave its economy a boost through the sale of regionally produced goods. From middle of the twentieth century on, the South has become increasingly like the rest of the nation in terms of economy, infrastructure and social organization.

As formerly unique characteristics have homogenized, though, one element has stood the test of time. Ulrich B. Phillips, in "The Search for the Central Theme," sought to identify the one thing ultimately defining the South and making it distinct from the rest of the nation. Phillips first identifies the areas from which Southernism, as he terms it, was not produced, writing,

[It] did not arise from any selectiveness of migration, for the sort of people who went to Virginia, Maryland, or Carolina, were not as a group different from those who went to Pennsylvania or the West Indies. It does not lie in religion of language. It was not created by one-crop tillage, nor did agriculture in large tend to produce a Southern scheme of life and thought.⁴

Still, through its torrid history, the South has maintained a culture distinct from the rest of the nation. Phillips, in recognizing this, seeks to identify the thing responsible for this continuity:

The South has never had a focus. But without a consolidating press or pulpit or other definite apparatus the South has maintained a considerable solidarity through thick and thin, through peace and war and peace again. What is its essence?⁵

Phillips goes on to answer his question in a calculated fashion, addressing each viable response separately. He begins by testing a popular answer, writing, “Not state rights – Calhoun himself was for years a nationalist, and some advocates of independence hoped for a complete merging of the several states into a unitary Southern republic.”⁶

Continuing, he addresses the commercial and political possibilities.

[N]ot free trade – sugar and hemp growers have ever been protectionists; not slavery – in the eighteenth century this was not of continental legality, and in the twentieth it is legal nowhere; not Democracy – there were many Federalists in Washington’s day and many Whigs in Clay’s; not party predominance by any name, for Virginia, Georgia, and Mississippi were “doubtful states” from Jackson’s time to Buchanan’s.⁷

Though many have viewed the predominance of agriculture as a defining trait of the South, Phillips refutes this, claiming “it is not the land of cotton alone or of plantations alone.”⁸ After exhausting all apparent possibilities, the historian settles on a simple yet unexpected answer. He concludes:

[I]t is a land with a unity despite its diversity, with a people having common joys and common sorrows, and, above all, as to the white folk, a people with a common resolve indomitably maintained – that it shall be and remain a white man’s country. The consciousness of a function in these premises, whether expressed with the frenzy of a demagogue or maintained with a patrician’s quietude, is the cardinal test of a Southerner and the central theme of Southern history.⁹

Stated in a more representative way, the South, for better or worse, has always been characterized by strained race relations. Phillips is not alone in his emphasis on race in the context of southern identity. Historian Charles Reagan Wilson observes, “Race, of course, was of fundamental importance to Southern culture. Indeed, Southern racial traditions and practices have served as the cement for the South’s cultural cohesion, and white supremacy [has been] the primary component of Southern culture.”¹⁰ It is difficult to deny the pervasiveness of racial conflict throughout the southern past.

The relationship between the two races is an issue of concern in every definable period of the South’s history. The ante-bellum South clearly delineated the separate statuses of blacks and whites through the institution of slavery, “not merely to provide control of labor but also as a system of racial adjustment and social order.”¹¹ The formation of the Confederacy was, in large part, spurred by the regulatory role the federal government took in defining which states would be slave and which would be free. Though many contend protection of the peculiar institution was not at the fore of the decision to secede, the statements of two prominent political figures of the Confederacy proved strong evidence to the contrary. “In his farewell speech to the U.S. Senate, [soon-to-be Confederate President Jefferson] Davis blamed the crisis on the Republican Party’s refusal ‘to recognize our domestic institutions [an acknowledged euphemism for slavery] which pre-existed the formation of the Union or property which was guarded by the Constitution.’”¹² Later, Robert Barnwell Rhett, a South Carolina editor and politician as well as “Davis’ most bitter internal critic,”¹³ explained the main reason for South Carolina being the first state to secede in an address to the other slave holding states, saying, “The agitation on the subject of slavery, are the natural results of the

consolidation of the Government.”¹⁴ Though Reconstruction served to bolster the status of the freedmen, the changes affected were ephemeral at best and soon the revolution came rolling backward.¹⁵ The period of Jim Crow, Black Codes, and nightriders proved that Southerners, though content to have rejoined the Union, were not prepared to give up the fight to maintain their deferential, traditional and racially ordered society. After World War II, the Civil Rights movement shed a national spotlight on southern race relations, and, more importantly, the lengths to which white society was willing to go to maintain its supremacy. Supreme court rulings did little to deter the massive resistance Southerners engaged in to fight desegregation. Indeed, some states fought legal battles over the issue to the end of the twentieth century.

The continued existence of racial conflict throughout southern history illustrates its importance in defining the South and southern identity. The legacy of the South is inextricably linked to this racial legacy, as is the heritage of each and every southerner. This inheritance, depending on the individual, is usually viewed from one of two perspectives. David Blight, in his book *Race and Reunion*, defines these sides as the emancipationist and reconciliationist, or reunionist, schools of thought. The latter refers to an interpretation of the Civil War emphasizing the bravery of both the Confederate and Union army in order to glorify the war as an important event in national history. Reunionists focus on the relationship between North and South to foster unity between the two sections by maintaining a forgive-and-forget attitude toward the regional disputes that characterized the war. Emancipationists, on the other hand, believe that the conflict central to the Civil War, the debate over the legality and morality of slavery, should be stressed. For this group the most important result of the war was not the preservation of

the Union but the freedom gained by the South's slave population.¹⁶ Other historians have also recognized this division but have used different terminology to describe the two viewpoints. In the collection of essays *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, editors J. Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, and Ron McNinch-Su refer to the disparate groups as traditionalists, those who support the preservation of Confederate symbols in society and continue to champion the cause of the Confederacy, and reconstructionists, those who desire the removal of such emblems because of their association with a painful racial legacy. These historians explain their interpretation of the debate, writing:

Confederate symbols held a meaning in the past, but they are interpreted in light of present events; therefore, they trigger present controversies owing to their charged meanings and contexts. Moreover, Confederate symbols highlight a paradox in the Southern experience: the existence of a racially conservative Old South as well as a racially liberal New South.¹⁷

Blight also recognizes the inevitability of this conflict of interest, writing: "The bitter experiences of Reconstruction, and the impossibility of a post-war consensus on the war's causes, all but guaranteed the irresolution deep at the heart of Civil War memory."¹⁸ Thus, arguably the South's most defining event, the Civil War, is viewed in separate and conflicting ways. This creates different notions of what it means to be southern. And though the concept of identity implies collectivism, the label "Southern" can take on very different meanings depending upon the person with whom it is associated. These divergent interpretations of southern history create what can be termed a crisis of southern identity.

The Confederate battle flag symbolizes the identity crisis as it divides southerners into two groups. "Flags have become flashpoints in the contemporary South because of

current tensions that make two sharply opposed visions of a regional heritage more relevant than ever.”¹⁹ One group sees the heritage of the flag as embodying honor, tradition and values, while the other views it as representing a legacy of oppression and violence. The situation can be related both to Blight’s emancipationists and reunionists and to Martinez’s, Richardson’s, and McNinch-Su’s traditionalists and reconstructionists, though two adjustments must be made. The first is associated with the comparison to the reunionist school of thought. Blight’s terminology refers to persons who ignore the racial legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction and focus on the reconciliation of the North and South, while people who support the display of the Confederate battle flag in contemporary society are, in many ways, still waging the War Between the States. The latter group is not merely disinclined to accept reunion, but, in fact, rejects the notion all together. In order to overcome this deficiency in terminology when discussing modern debates over the Confederate battle flag, Martinez’s, Richardson’s, and McNinch-Su’s traditionalist term must be applied to defenders of the battle flag. The second necessary adjustment deals with the distinguishing between emancipationists and reconstructionists. The term reconstructionist describes a New South mentality that does not necessarily contain sensitivities toward the Civil War’s legacy of emancipation. Though Reconstruction achieved gains for African Americans, the progress of this era was short-lived. Then, emancipationist is a more apt term to characterize the viewpoint of those who protest the battle flag because it clearly defines the group’s focus on freedom and black rights as the most important legacy of the war.

While both perspectives find support in history, one cannot be discussed absent of the other. The South fought bravely to defend its society and the tradition it was built

upon; the institution of slavery shaped that society and its traditions. Slavery is inextricably linked to southern history. However, evaluating these viewpoints demands an examination not only of early but also of recent history. A distinction must be drawn between the two, indicating which has had the most weight in influencing modern southern historical memory. Blight recognizes the dominance of the theme of reconciliation in the historical legacy of the war and in popular memory. This preponderance of one point of view has created a lop-sided Civil War heritage, which shapes the identity of many southerners. “The heritage of slavery lives on...demonstrating that racial reconciliation, unlike sectional reconciliation, demanded a confrontation with the hostility rooted in rape, lynching, and racism. Bridging this chasm remained the unfinished – and for many, all but unknowable – work of the culture of reunion.”²⁰ The failure to address the racial legacy of the South and, especially, of Confederate symbols, such as the battle flag, has endowed contemporary race conflicts with a great deal of passion and hostility. In the case of the Confederate battle flag, recent historical use of the symbol has most impacted peoples’ understanding of its meaning. Its influence as an emblem of white supremacy and of resistance to segregation has had the most power in defining the flag in cultural imagination today.

The identity crisis has manifested itself in the recent controversy over the purple and gold Confederate battle flag (saltier)²¹ at LSU. Fellow southerners have clashed over the legacy the emblem represents. Flag proponents defend the display of the symbol on the basis of first amendment rights and heritage. Though the freedom of speech argument will be examined, the heritage argument has more significant bearing on this discussion of identity and, accordingly, will be afforded more attention. Not only is the history of the

flag of significance, but people's perception and understanding of that history are also important. Various groups have employed the flag for differing purposes, and this fact accounts for the divergent interpretations of the symbol today. Also, the flag's history at LSU illustrates that students' understanding of southern history has gradually changed through the years. The sense of respect and attention to historical authenticity that typified students through the fifties, sixties and seventies gave way to an interpretation often lacking in reverence. This diminished understanding of the cultural significance of history in southern culture accounts for the use of the Confederate battle flag as a tool of modern merchandisers. The flag has been transformed from an honored historical emblem to a popular culture icon, leading to situations, such as the conflict at LSU, in which the battle flag has been displayed at inappropriate venues and in historically inaccurate form. Controversy has resulted from this misuse and misrepresentation of the Confederate battle flag. Ultimately, the interpretation of the flag as a symbol of white supremacy and racial discrimination must be understood and given credence, even by proponents of the purple and gold battle flag as the history that supports this meaning cannot be erased or denied. Altering the banner in such a way detracts from the symbol's significance and creates an image that lampoons the flag's historical legacy. For the flag's history to be properly understood, an objective of adherents to the heritage argument, its presentation must be confined to proper situations and the flag must be in its authentic form.

I. Flag Culture and Heritage

An understanding of the significance of the flag debate today and its role in shaping southern identity begins with an examination of the origins of the flag and its meaning over time. The beginning of the Civil War and the formation of the Confederacy provide a good starting point to evaluate the birth and growth of southern flag culture.

The South's decision to secede was neither calculated nor organized in that the southern states made the move to rebellion separately at first. This contributed to the highly charged atmosphere of resistance in southern cities, which in turn led to the development of a flag culture. "Americans evaluated disunion not merely as a question of right or of law, but as a more personal matter involving the emotional investments that individuals had made in their country's rising glory. Accordingly, a set of abstract, though highly emotive, symbols would be among the most important guides to action."²² These symbols were the flags of the Confederacy.

The cities of the South can be credited with the creation of a swelling flag culture that grew along with the Confederacy. "The raising of resistance banners was reported by telegraph first from the cities of South Carolina, and then from one city in the deep South after another."²³ This fact attests to the attachment to locale characteristic of most southerners. The people of the South clung to the traditions and customs of their respective communities. Their sense of community led to intense enthusiasm among supporters of secession as they were prepared to defend their homes from what they perceived as an attack by the government on their way of life. State resistance flags provided symbols around which people could rally. Historian Robert Bonner notes the importance of local newspapers in propagating a fiercely loyal flag culture, which also

can be seen as indicative of the regional pride characteristic of southerners. “The visual images of a city waving with banners,” he writes, “were as important as any headlines; the formulaic descriptions of cheering, defiant crowds gave dramatic evidence that the people themselves were leading the revolt against federal authority.”²⁴ In this instance, flags are associated with pride, enthusiasm, and resistance. Newspaper coverage and its impact also indicate that secession was a popular movement encompassing all people. Thus, even in their infancy, the flags of the South carried a great deal of significance for southerners.

The first state to secede, South Carolina, was also the first to adopt a state resistance banner. Its choice for a unifying emblem recalled past exploits of southern rebels and invoked a symbol of the American Revolution. Commonly called the “Bonnie Blue flag,” South Carolina’s resistance banner consisted of a blue field emblazoned with a Palmetto tree and a crescent. “The Palmetto tree was perhaps the most common image of the secession crisis...Images of the palmetto kept a heroic past in mind, even as it kept company with contemporary secessionist symbols that clearly pointed toward the near future.”²⁵ While signaling the importance of the theme of resistance to the flag, the American Revolution imagery also illustrated the importance of history to southerners, especially regional history. South Carolinians focused on a symbol specific to their home state that represented both unity and rebellion. This meaning became attached to this particular banner and others like it across the South.

Perhaps the most important factor of all in the growth of flag culture was its accessibility. The power of these symbols was augmented by their inclusiveness; understanding the meaning of flags or feeling a part of the movement they represented

was not contingent on any special knowledge or high status. State resistance banners helped members of southern communities to form a common bond, attaching more emotion to these symbols.

Robert Bonner notes the special significance of ceremony in the presentation of these banners, which also served to add meaning to these already charged symbols:

These emblems were occasionally subjected to ritual action, such as the practice of “moistening” a resistance banner with spirits, as if christening a ship. Banners were also sanctified by grandly unfolding and presenting them at official gatherings, such as state secession conventions. More typical than either of these were those communal actions in which patriotic crowds cheered the elevation of flags, sang songs in their honor, and made toasts and pledges on their behalf. Cumulatively, activities directed toward symbols of state resistance generated much of the emotional significance that these colors would take on through a coordinated flag culture.”²⁶

The flags took on a larger than life meaning, one that merited sacrifice. Banding together for a common cause was made easier by the unifying symbol of a flag. “A popular patriotism that spread across the South...thus became one of the most important legacies of a crisis of disunion marked by both symbolic creativity and emotional intensity.”²⁷

When evaluating the theory of Southern exceptionalism vis à vis the rest of the United States, the development of a flag culture in the South supports its thesis. “With a few minor exceptions, states that remained loyal to the union did not adopt official state flags until the early twentieth century.”²⁸ Northerners did not share in the state pride endemic to most southerners. Though the American flag did have importance to Americans, most were content to be represented by this one symbol. Southerners, however, sought unique emblems reflective of their own locales. Ultimately, their loyalty was to their own communities. This sense of attachment unified southerners. Their collective enthusiasm for their own communities transferred into the formation of the

Confederate State of America. Not surprisingly, a national flag was an immediate focus for the young nation.

After the official formation of the Confederacy, it took little time for southerners to demand a flag to represent their cause. The Provisional Congress met in Montgomery, Alabama, in early February of 1861 and was charged with the creation of a Confederate National flag. The process was immediately influenced by the popular flag culture surrounding the move to rebellion as many individuals submitted their own designs. With local newspaper presses covering the steady stream of designs, dozens of patriots implicitly entered an informal contest to choose a new flag.²⁹ The importance of newspapers in publicizing the process of flag design attests further to popular nature of flag culture. The meaning the new flag would project was of special importance to southerners. In representing a movement based heavily on ideology, the banner was expected to be indicative of those ideas. The racial aspect of this ideology was brought to the fore by some of the design submissions. F. Gaston of Columbia, South Carolina, suggested a flag design with a clearly racial message. “Gaston described to ‘fellow patriots’ how the incorporation of red white and black bands on the new flag would be ‘emblematic of these three races of our people.’”³⁰ The red symbolized the native American population, a potential ally in the impending war, while the white bar was set above a black bar to depict the “superiority of the Anglo-Saxon...[This would] express the relative positions of distinct portions of the population in a political aspect”³¹ and clearly establish the Confederacy as a proslavery republic. William Porcher Miles, Chairman of the Congressional committee on flag and seal, was wary of putting forth such an image through the Confederate States’ flag, and “the silence of the Congress and

press about all...of the proslavery flags sent to Montgomery in the spring of 1861 is one example of how Confederates disassociated their new government from slavery.”³² They realized the potential such an emblem would have in fueling criticism from their enemies and alienating their potential allies in Europe. Bonner recognizes the continuing significance of omitting racial reasoning in the South’s political thought process, writing,

[T]he whitewashing of Confederate symbols would be pursued most aggressively during the postwar period, when a focus on battlefield sacrifice would cleanse battle symbols of their associations with the politics of a proslavery rebellion. These efforts would continue, as the organized efforts of today’s pro-Confederate flag heritage groups make clear. This persistent quest to avoid racial themes in Confederate symbols was an attempt to obscure the important role that slavery played in precipitating the Civil War and in shaping nearly every aspect of Confederate politics and culture.”³³

Though any racial flag imagery was avoided, the emblems of the Confederacy cannot be dissociated from the society they championed and the institution it rested upon, making white supremacy intrinsic in the ideology of secession propagated by the flag as well as a significant part of its meaning.

Most design submissions emulated the Stars and Stripes. It proved difficult for southerners to separate themselves from this powerful national symbol to which they had pledged their allegiance for so long. “The latent feelings that existed in the South for traditional American symbols perturbed [Chairman] Miles, who would use his [position] over the next year to lobby incessantly for a wholly different flag from that of the United States.”³⁴ However, popular sentiment proved too overwhelming to be subdued, and the first Confederate National Flag, the Stars and Bars, bore a striking resemblance to the Star Spangled Banner. The “desire to retain red, white, and blue as the new flag’s primary colors was nearly as popular as keeping the stars.”³⁵

The widespread interest in the design of a national flag implies that the popular nature of state resistance banners had transferred to the Confederate flag, increasing its power and its meaning. The attachment to locale represented in the crafting of state flags was channeled into regional pride as Southern communities came together under a common banner. The unity represented by the Stars and Bars was vital to southerners' involvement in and enthusiasm for their cause. The fact that choosing a flag was not seen as a trivial, governmental responsibility but as an important national issue signals the sincere belief among citizens of the new Confederate nation that their flag meant a great deal to them and that the ideals it represented were worth the ultimate sacrifice. "Flags captured the main themes of love, courage, honor and duty with far greater brevity than lengthy orations could,"³⁶ contributing to their popular appeal. People associated flags not only with their new government but also with their army. Engaged in a conflict resting heavily on the values of their new nation, the Confederate forces and their national flag were representative of the same ideals. As a result, army leaders and officials became influential members of society and used their sway to affect changes in the national flag.

For most people in the South, the Army of Northern Virginia was viewed as more vital to their cause than the government itself. After all, the legitimacy of the Confederacy was dependent upon the success of its forces in the field. Further, "approximately three-quarters of the South's white males between seventeen and forty-five served in those forces."³⁷ With this knowledge, it is not surprising that demands for a new national flag coming from within the ranks of the army were quickly heard and eventually heeded.

"Soon after the victory at Manassas in late July, General P.G.T. Beauregard of Louisiana publicly complained that the stars and bars had nearly cost him the first

major battle of the war...[D]uring a key moment in that fight, colors carried by his own troops could not be distinguished from the stars and stripes of the United States army.”³⁸

Determined to remedy the situation, Beauregard contacted William Porcher Miles, who coincidentally had served as his aide-de-camp during the summer of 1861. Not surprisingly, Miles was thrilled at the request, as he had been adamant in pushing for a national ensign less imitative of the Stars and Stripes. Miles’ proposal to the Committee on the Flag and Seal to change the flag based on the young General’s request was quickly rejected by a four-to-one vote. Beauregard, however, was undeterred.

He resolved that the Confederacy should have not one but two flags – “a peace or parade flag and a war flag to be used only on the field of battle.”³⁹ Though the Confederate Congress was adjourned, Beauregard devised a way to circumvent government bureaucracy in order to achieve his desire. He contacted the Department of War and explained his concern with using the Stars and Bars as a flag in battle. Not much later, “the high command of the Virginia army met...to adopt a new battle flag.”⁴⁰ The Confederate battle flag, then, did not become the emblem of the Confederate nation, but of its army. However, the military’s importance to southern society transformed the battle flag into a revered national symbol. “It is important to recognize that the reputation of the St. Andrews cross came more from its status as a battle flag, whose glory depended on actions on its behalf and from sacrifices it had drawn forth...In making a standard of war into a prime national symbol, Confederates were saying something important about the centrality of blood sacrifice to their collective sense of identity.”⁴¹ Indeed, sacrifice was the ultimate dedication to the cause of the Confederacy. The actual making of the flags as well as their presentation further heightened the importance of this element of

flag culture. The first Confederate Battle flags to be officially presented to soldiers were made by three women. Constance Cary and her cousins, Hetty and Jenny Cary, were emblematic of the southern tradition and virtue the troops were entrusted to protect. A general order issued by Beauregard solidified the southern woman as a symbol akin to their new battle flag, one that was to be protected at all costs.

A new banner is intrusted to-day, as a battle-flag, to the safe keeping of the Army of the Potomac. Soldiers: Your mothers, your wives, and your sisters have made it. Consecrated by their hands, it must lead you to substantial victory, and the complete triumph of our cause. It can never be surrendered, save to your unspeakable dishonor, and with its consequences fraught with immeasurable evil. Under its untarnished folds beat back the invader, and find nationality, everlasting immunity from an atrocious despotism, and honor and renown for yourselves – or death.⁴²

It is apparent that this new emblem was much more than cloth. “The best way of conveying heightened solemnity was to conjure up the details of patriotic bloodshed.”⁴³ Also, women represented to a great degree the values and traditions endangered by the advancing Union forces. “The domestic prerogatives of the slaveholding South had long been a powerful link between the politics of the household and larger national disputes over slavery and states’ rights.”⁴⁴

Popular support for the St. Andrew’s cross flag design across the Confederate States moved the Confederate Congress to incorporate it into a national flag in 1863. This new national flag, dubbed the Stainless Banner, featured a battle flag design in the top left corner of a field of white. Though a red bar was later added to the far right fringe to help distinguish the new flag from a flag of surrender, this flag remained the official symbol of the Confederacy until the nation’s effective death at Appomattox.

In the years immediately following the war, sentiments regarding the display of the battle flag varied. Father Abram J. Ryan's well-known poem, "The Conquered Banner," advised southerners to "furl that banner." He wrote:

Touch it not, unfold it never,
Let it droop there, furled forever,
For its people's hopes are dead.⁴⁵

Father Ryan did not wish to dishonor the symbol, but urged his fellow southerners to accept defeat by relinquishing the battle flag as a popular symbol. The flag no longer had a place in society because the nation it embodied was no more. For Ryan, the banner's place was neither in the present nor in the future, but in history. "General Robert E. Lee's advice, after all, as he left the battlefield for the last time was 'Furl the flag, boys.'"⁴⁶ Of course, many were unwilling to admit defeat and furl their flags. Various replies were issued to Ryan's "Conquered Banner" urging southerners to "'furl it not' and proclaiming that the battle flag deserved the respect of the reunited nation."⁴⁷ For the South, gaining such respect for its revered battlefield symbol from their counterparts to the North would prove difficult.

The Confederate battle flag was not warmly received by the conquering armies present in the South during reconstruction, and understandably so. Groups seeking to maintain the Confederate flag's popular significance through its display were seen as inciting defeated rebel sentiments by the men who risked their lives and saw their friends fall to quell the forces waving the St. Andrew's Cross. Not surprisingly, such actions were met with prohibition. The federal government seized the battle flags of the beaten Confederate regiments and would not allow further use of the symbol, whether in a peaceful manner or not. Southerners realized the negative impact such actions could have

on their future as citizens of the reunited nation. “Former Confederates resisted federal Reconstruction policy, especially the enfranchisement and empowerment of freed blacks, with terrorist and paramilitary activity, but nearly all did so without unfurling their wartime flags.”⁴⁸ Even the Ku Klux Klan, the most famous of such resistance groups, did not utilize the Confederate battle flag in their ceremonies and terrorist activities, at least not during its original formation. Modern associations of the KKK with the Confederate battle flag are mainly a result of the Klan’s third incarnation in the 1940s, but the group’s founding in Pulaski, Tennessee in 1866 by prominent Confederate veterans provides the first historical link of the Confederacy to the Klan. Its origination soon after the war’s end attests to fact that many southerners, though resigned to “furl their banners,” were not yet ready to admit defeat. “The first and only Grand Wizard was Nathan Bedford Forrest, the chivalric Confederate general from Tennessee; many other former Confederate officers also participated. John B. Gordon, the popular first commander of the United Confederate Veterans in the 1890s, was the Grand Dragon of the Georgia Klan, and George W. Gordon, also a leader in veterans’ activities, was active in the Tennessee Klan.”⁴⁹ These original and high-ranking members of the KKK were revered ex-Confederates, and, thus, they imbued the Klan with the ideology of secession, which was inclusive of pro-slavery and white supremacist notions. Certainly, the Confederate battle flag was a symbol with a great deal of popular support and notoriety, “[y]et when it came to cloth, neither uniforms nor battle flags were as effective in bringing reconstruction to an end as were the hoods and masks that helped the Ku Klux Klan wage a campaign of terror against black civilians...Former rebels knew that openly waving battle flags would discredit their claims to loyalty and delay their resumption of political power.”⁵⁰ This provides strong

support for groups arguing that the Confederate battle flag does not represent racism but southern values and heritage. During the years immediately following the war, the symbol was not associated with attempts to block racial reform; however, the flag cannot be separated from the cause of the Confederacy. “The South’s theoretical distrust of a powerful central government was related directly to its real fear of what that would mean for the institution of slavery.”⁵¹ Though it is often argued that most of the Confederacy’s soldiers were not themselves slave owners, John M. Coski posits that such numbers can be easily manipulated to deceive. As he puts it, “while only 5.6 percent of whites in the southern and border states in 1860 were slaveholders, this number (384,000) represented more than 25 percent of the 1.5 million heads of household and suggests that one-quarter of white southerners lived in slave owning families...Whether or not they owned slaves, white southerners had a stake in slavery as a system of racial control and a source of identity.”⁵² Non-slaveholding whites benefited from the South’s racially structured society through the social status they enjoyed over blacks in spite of an economic standing that differed little from that of slaves.

The racial violence that took place in the years after Reconstruction shaped southern Civil War memory and further associated the Confederate cause and its symbols with a racist ideology. The compromise of 1877, which conceded the contested electoral votes of Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina to Rutherford B. Hayes in exchange for the victory of Democratic gubernatorial candidates in those states, was a crucial turning point in the lives of freed blacks. The political deal signaled the Republican, and essentially Northern, retreat from the goals of reconstruction and the resumption of Democratic power in southern state legislature. These southern Democrats were more

often than not ex-Confederates. Gunnar Myrdal, in the chapter of *An American Dilemma* titled “Memories of Reconstruction,” observed that “[t]he myth of the horrors of Reconstruction’ had become with time a set of ‘false beliefs with a purpose.’ That purpose was the American reunion, achievable in the end only through new regimes of racial subjugation...The sections needed one another, almost as polar opposites that made the center hold and kept both an industrial economy humming and a New South on the course of revival.”⁵³ It was more important for the North to resume amiable relations with the South than to ensure African Americans’ recently won rights, leaving southerners to rebuild their region’s structured, deferential, racial order that existed in the ante-bellum period through intimidation and force. “To locate the significance of Reconstruction violence in American memory, we must seek it not only in the darkness of evil, but as historian Sheldon Hackney says, ‘in the sense of grievance...at the heart of the Southern identity,’ however mythical that grievance’s origins or horrible its outcomes.”⁵⁴

Mourning the Confederacy’s defeat gave way to defiance and denial. A failure of self-examination led southerners to become even more resolute in championing the righteousness of southern traditions and values at the heart of secession’s motivation. Another facet of southern identity, then, that coalesced with its other aspects was a defiant sense of the absolute virtue along with a fierce determination to preserve them.

Although the Confederate battle flag was noticeably absent in early white supremacist movements, the symbol was eventually employed to support and perpetuate the stringent racial structure of southern society. Mourning the Confederate loss was central to southern memory of the war and to southern identity. Soon, however, grievance shifted to a more positive honoring of the Confederate dead, becoming celebratory as

opposed to funereal. As a major symbol in both grievance and celebration, the Confederate battle flag's meaning did much to shape southern identity.

The flag returned to prominence not long after the end of Reconstruction in the context of the Confederate memorial movement. The remembrance and commemoration of the Confederate dead evolved from mourning to a celebration of the Confederacy. "In most places, the ritual was initially a spiritual practice. But very soon, remembering the dead and what they died for developed partisan fault lines. The evolution of Memorial Day during its first twenty years or so became a contest between three divergent, and sometimes overlapping, groups: blacks and their white former abolitionist allies, white Northerners, and white Southerners. With time, in the North, the war's two great results – black freedom and the preservation of the Union – were rarely accorded equal space. In the South, a uniquely Confederate version of the war's meaning, rooted in resistance to Reconstruction, coalesced around Memorial Day practice."⁵⁵ During this period of Confederate celebration the battle flag waved in commemoration of the Confederacy's fallen heroes. Though the flag was not used as an overt symbol of racism or white supremacy during this period, it was associated with men who fought to perpetuate such an ideology. Through the memorial movement, the battle flag was not only honored, but it also became a central part of the war's memory and southern identity. Giving credence to this notion, historian Charles Reagan Wilson observed:

"These ceremonies reiterated what Southerners heard elsewhere – that, despite defeat, the Confederate experience proved them a noble, virtuous people. Moreover, the Confederate funeral included the display of the Confederate flag, the central symbol of the Southern identity."⁵⁶

As those who fell for the Lost Cause were vindicated by the memorial movement, so too was the cause itself. The battle flag embodied this cause and was symbolic of the

traditional, deferential southern racial order. Moreover, its celebratory use reinforced the importance and value of traditional southern society. As a result of its use in this popular movement, the Confederate battle flag became associated with these ideals.

Robert E. Lee was perhaps the most revered of all Confederate soldiers, and the unveiling of his equestrian memorial in Richmond, Virginia, on Memorial Day in 1890 drew a crowd of around one hundred thousand, many of whom carried the Confederate battle flag to the celebration. While its display was intended to honor the fallen General, one cannot forget the cause for which he fought. As Gaines Foster observed in *Ghosts of the Confederacy*, “Memorial activities did not offer a coherent historical interpretation of the war and therefore did little to define the Confederate tradition. Nevertheless, they still helped to insure that it had an influential role in southern culture.”⁵⁷ Thus the flag’s historical legacy was wrought both in incomplete and influential ways. This caused Southerners to attach significance to the Confederate battle flag without fully understanding its history, allowing for subsequent uses of the symbol to flesh out the meaning of the flag in modern southern culture. The Confederate memorial movement revitalized sentiments that should have died with the rebel nation in 1865. More importantly, people did not fully understand the history defining those sentiments and so assumed the symbol’s meaning through the context it was presented in. Confederate symbols were not solidified emblems with definite meaning in the southern memory, “[r]ather, they were phantoms called forth from time to time by various people for differing purposes.”⁵⁸ Utility was the primary concern when Confederate figures were invoked, and, as a result, the predominance of memory grew as the importance of history

diminished. The continued display of battle flags in the context of celebration assuaged the shame of defeat and justified the notions the banner represented. This shaped identity.

A key moment in the flag's history occurred in 1905 when captured Confederate battle flags were returned to the South. "Although ex-Confederates had never been shy of waving their battle flag to convey its many regional and racial messages, the U.S. government had now relinquished these last tangible 'trophy' of the war. In the name of reconciliation, Grant's lenient terms at Appomattox had transfigured in forty years into a slow surrender of a different kind. The age of Jim Crow was not only the creation of aggressive Southern legislatures, but the result of the North's long retreat from the racial legacies of the war."⁵⁹ In coinciding with the height of the Confederate memorial movement, this signaled that the North and South had put the war behind them, but more importantly it showed that the North was willing to forget what the flag had represented. In reclaiming their banners, the South also was able to truly reclaim their society, which "allowed white southerners to order racial issues that had provoked their rebellion in the first place. In this way, the fate of black southerners was bound up with the reemergence of rebel flags."⁶⁰ The generation of African Americans never having experienced slavery was coming of age. This presented new dilemmas to the traditional racial order. Even after freedom, most former slaves were still reserved in the presence of whites and maintained a level of respect. The generation of "new negroes" was not likely to adopt such a deferential attitude without forceful persuasion.

In the early twentieth century, World War I and World War II consumed the attention of the nation. Southerners had little time to devote to the Confederate celebration as they thrust their enthusiasm into the national war effort. This period

cemented the predominance of the culture of reunion, subordinating the emancipationist legacy of the Civil War in popular memory. In this climate of national patriotism there was little room for the battle flag, a symbol of regional pride.

In the Cold War era, the flag was rejoined with the cause of white supremacy when the Ku Klux Klan formed for a third time just prior to the civil rights movement. The Klan of the mid-twentieth century is largely responsible for the flag's interpretation as a modern racist symbol. This period of the Klan's history coincided with the Dixiecrat movement of 1948. Led by Senator Strom Thurmond, the faction of Democrats detached itself from a political party that increasingly linked itself to African Americans. President Harry S. Truman alienated and angered Southern Democrats who would make up the third party movement when he gave a speech at the Democratic National Convention. In it he outlined a platform for the upcoming presidential election in support of the passage of Civil Rights laws. This being the basis of the Dixiecrat Revolt linked their cause to white supremacy. "[The battle flag] became the unofficial symbol of the 'Dixiecrat Party,'"⁶¹ associating the symbol with their counter civil rights platform. And though their mascot was changed from the "Mississippi Flood" to the "Rebels" in 1935, in the same year as the Dixiecrat movement, "the rebel flag waved as the official symbol of the University of Mississippi."⁶²

The ensuing Civil Rights movement further cemented the popular understanding of the battle flag as a symbol of racism and violence. Alabama Governor George Wallace's crusade against integration was widely publicized, and he used the banner in his resistance to national reform. Images of the Ku Klux Klan and other like-minded white supremacist organizations waving the flag resonate most vividly in the collective

southern memory of this period. The violence characteristic of these groups is associated with the flag, and most peoples' understanding of the symbol is dominated by this racist interpretation. After the Civil Rights movement, the flag fell out of the political realm for the most part, but remained prominent in popular culture. The St. Andrew's cross was embossed on anything from shot glasses to bumper stickers, t-shirts to refrigerator magnets. The popular appeal of such items coupled with the most prevalent understanding of the flag as a racist symbol resulted in further division amongst southerners and an increasingly confused sense of collective identity.

A major shift in the popular understanding of the flag's meaning occurred between the latter and former halves of the twentieth century. Into the later part of the 1900s, the respect and reverence for Confederate symbols and ideology diminished. History became more distant to newer generations, and, as a result, young southerners failed to correctly interpret their legacy. Though the heritage of the South continued to shape and define southern culture and identity, improper understandings of southern history grew in prominence. This led to misuse of the Confederate battle flag, which is directly associated with its merchandising in modern times. Though the battle flag was sold in the early part of the century, it was not cheapened. The banner remained a symbol of honor and respect, to be used in its proper historical form for the right occasions, such as the unveiling of a Confederate monument or a meeting of a Confederate heritage organization. Certainly, the soldiers who fought under the St. Andrew's Cross never envisioned the image of the battle flag to be smattered on cheap, consumer trinkets. The use of the battle flag's image in such a way illustrates a shift in understanding of the flag's meaning. It was always a popular symbol, but its interpretation shifted in the

popular mind from the reverence and honor for southern traditions that it had once embodied.

In most recent history, the battle flag has been a source of social and political turmoil. Some southern states have had to grapple with the emblem's appropriateness in the realm of government. In 1962, the South Carolina legislature moved to raise the Confederate battle flag over the capitol dome in Columbia. "The purported excuse was to celebrate the Civil War centennial. Yet the flag persisted on its lofty perch long after the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the war's putative end in 1865."⁶³ The first legislative challenge to the flag's place on the lofty, capitol perch came in 1980 in the form of a bill introduced by a young, black representative from Columbia, Kay Patterson. His measure called on the house to "create a study committee to develop a policy concerning 'the furnishings, memorabilia and trappings which may be placed in the House chamber.'"⁶⁴ Patterson's proposed legislation was a polite attempt to create discussion concerning the political correctness of the battle flag; however, the ambiguity of the terms by which he framed his bill did not escape scrutiny. His purpose was apparent, and those in opposition spoke unequivocally in their rebuttals, ultimately killing the bill on the House floor. Representative Pat Harris said, "The flag is not a symbol of slavery and never was...Devotion, not slavery, sent those men off to battle under this flag...Bravery, not slavery, is what the flag symbolizes."⁶⁵ Patterson continued his efforts in 1983, attempting to insert an amendment into the original proposal that called for the appropriation of one hundred dollars of the budget of the capitol's Confederate Relic Room to finance the flag's move to be stored in that facility. Though the amendment was soundly defeated, the vote became relevant a decade later during the 1993 governor's

race. Then-Democratic Representative David Beasley's campaign for the office was confronted by claims that he had supported Patterson's amendment. "He defended himself, in a letter to *The State* newspaper, by pointing out, correctly, that his votes in 1983 had not touched on the question of whether or not to remove the flag and instead merely expressed a willingness to permit discussion of the issue to continue."⁶⁶ Still, in 1996, Governor Beasley confirmed the suspicions of those who had questioned his voting record and claimed he was "soft" in his prior defenses of the flag through his campaign to remove the it. However, like Patterson, Beasley failed to win enough support. The governor's actions were met resistance by many of his constituents, causing him to quickly flip-flop on the issue. However, his turnaround was not persuasive enough to win reelection in 1998.

In 1999, the issue grew in prominence in the public domain. "The NAACP announced a national boycott of South Carolina beginning January 2000," leading to serious economic losses for the state. Business owners lobbied legislators to remove the flag, and "forty-eight of the sixty-five surviving members of the 1962 legislature (the group that voted to place the flag over the capitol) signed a petition saying they never intended for the flag to fly beyond the end of the centennial."⁶⁷ Senator John McCain was also drawn into the fray. While on the presidential campaign trail in South Carolina, the Arizona senator was "asked by a reporter how he felt about the Confederate flag during a January 12 campaign event, McCain replied: 'Personally, I see the flag as symbol of heritage.'⁶⁸ He later recanted his position. According to an April 19, 2000 CNN report:

The Arizona senator expressed regret for that stance on Wednesday, telling the audience of Republicans: "I feared that if I answered honestly, I could not win the South Carolina primary. So I chose to compromise my principles. I promised to tell the truth always about my intentions and beliefs. I fell short of that standard in

South Carolina. While my response was factually accurate, it did not answer how I personally felt about the flag. My ancestors fought for the Confederacy...but I don't believe their service, however distinguished, needs to be commemorated in a way that offends, deeply hurts, people whose ancestors were once denied their freedom by my ancestors.”⁶⁹

McCain’s withdrawal of his first remarks is indicative of the climate of racial sensitivity that pervades the United States today. His comments created significant enough objections to impact his voter support. In this regard, the South is set apart from the rest of the nation by the majority of its peoples’ view on race relations.

Supporters of the flag also became involved, using television ads to counter the NAACP boycott. And although a compromise was reached by the legislature in July of 2000 to move the flag to the Civil War monument on capitol grounds, flag protesters remained dissatisfied. For them, “the battle flag’s new, more public, if less exalted position hardly represented a compromise, and [the NAACP] maintained their call for a boycott.”⁷⁰ Though a compromise was achieved, the issue remained unresolved.

A similar controversy occurred in Alabama. However, in that case, the flag was removed in 1993, and flag supporters engaged in protests over the next several years. On March 4th of 2000, just a few days before the thirty-fifth anniversary of “Bloody Sunday,” a protest in which six-hundred civil rights marchers were met by fire hoses and police batons on the Edmund Pettus bridge in Selma, fifteen hundred people marched up the steps of the capitol in Montgomery calling for the flag’s return.⁷¹

In 1879, Georgia adopted its first official state flag, which was a derivative of the first national flag of the Confederacy, the Stars and Bars. In 1905, the state seal was added to the upper left corner of the flag. It was in 1955, nearly one year after the 1954 Supreme Court decision *Brown V. Board of Education* and only months after the *Brown*

II decision, that Georgia state legislators first proposed the addition of the Confederate battle emblem to the state flag. Though the reason for the change was not specified, the comments of certain politicians reveal the motivation behind altering the flag. Federal imposition of integration through the *Brown* rulings was met with resistance throughout the South. Arguably, Georgia legislators chose to represent their opposition to the federal mandate by the addition of the Confederate battle flag to their state flag. During his state of the state address, Governor Marvin Griffin said, “There will be no mixing of the races in public schools, in college classrooms in Georgia as long as I am governor.”⁷² Later, at the beginning of a 1956 legislative session in which the state flag bill passed, Griffin counseled the state representatives, saying, “The rest of the nation is looking to Georgia for the lead in segregation.”⁷³ Denmark Groover, the floor leader of the House of Representatives explained that new flag design would “have deep meaning in the heart of every true southerner,”⁷⁴ relating the battle flag to traditional, southern values.

In 1980, State Senator Frank Redding made the first objection to the flag design, but it was afforded little attention. A colleague of Redding’s said that his proposal was “never taken seriously.”⁷⁵ It was not until a 1987 incident in which Civil Rights marchers and the Georgia Ku Klux Klan had a violent encounter that a legitimate challenge was made to the flag. Governor Frank Harris concluded “the presence of the battle flag emblem in the state flag exacerbated racial tensions between marchers and Klan members.”⁷⁶ Following the incident, the NAACP passed a resolution calling for a new state flag in Georgia, as well as a change to the Mississippi state flag and the removal of the Confederate battle flag from the South Carolina and Alabama state capitol domes. Georgia legislators remained reticent to change.

Then, in 1992, Governor Zell Miller sponsored legislation to change the state flag, saying, “We need to do what is right.”⁷⁷ Though Miller was genuinely concerned for the negative affect of the flag on the African American community, other factors influenced his decision to call for a new flag design. Atlanta was set to host two major sporting events that would attract international attention to the state of Georgia: the 1994 Superbowl and the 1996 Summer Olympics. Despite these image concerns, a 1992 statewide poll revealed that a majority of Georgians did not want to change the flag.⁷⁸

On January 12, 1993, Miller addressed the state legislature, setting forth his argument to change the flag. To say that this was controversial is an understatement, as his words sparked debate not only in the legislature but also amongst the citizens of Georgia. When Miller requested that the General Assembly table the bill to change the flag due to lack of requisite support, proponents of the Georgia flag sought to block any future attempts to change the design or “attack” Confederate symbols. “On February 9, 1993, 101 members of the 108-member House of Representatives signed a bill threatening to discontinue funding for any local governments that did not display the state flag. A second bill made it a crime to deface Confederate monuments.”⁷⁹ Though these initiatives failed to become law, with both of them dying in the Senate, the public was made aware of the stance of many of their governmental leaders.

The reasons for Miller’s failed measure are rooted in the fact that “the flag controversy invoked such fierce passions that it was impossible to resolve the issue in such an emotionally charged climate.”⁸⁰ In his 1996 memoir, *Corps Values*, Zell Miller clearly states his understanding of the Georgia state flag and his reasons for campaigning to change it.

[A]s governor I owe loyalty to all citizens of my state. And as a historian I owe loyalty to the truth. And the truth is, the Confederate battle flag under which my ancestors fought with honor was shamefully hijacked by segregationists nearly a century after Appomattox. Hatemongers added the symbol to our flag to show contempt for the court rulings that called for an end to segregation. They took a noble symbol and perverted it, using it to intimidate the powerless and divide Georgians...I saw my fight to restore our flag as keeping faith with our true history, restoring the dignity of our past, ending the division of the present, and working toward unity in the future.⁸¹

Unlike the South Carolina conflict, Georgia achieved meaningful compromise. They adopted a new state flag with the state seal as its central image. Below the seal, Georgia's previous three state flags are depicted between the thirteen-star United States flag and the fifty-star U.S. flag.

Political debates on the display of the battle flag are indicative of a general concern over the place of Confederate relics in the New South. They also provide perspective on the localized purple and gold Confederate battle flag controversy at LSU. The battle flag's supporters and its opponents rarely give ground on the issue, and compromise tends to have little meaning due the people's deeply set beliefs. Further, the flag's history provides perspective on its impact in defining southern identity. Its various appearances and uses through time have endowed the flag with several meanings, leading southerners to interpret it differently. This results in a clash of ideas charged with conviction and emotion that manifests in contemporary flag conflicts. Ultimately, these are debates centered on the defining elements of southern identity.

II. LSU and the Battle Flag in History

The flag occupies a visible place in United States history as a result of its legacy, making it a familiar symbol for most Americans. The historical contexts in which the flag has appeared were often characterized by highly charged and often conflicting viewpoints, causing people to associate it with emotion, passion, and discord. Along with its general past, the flag has had more localized stories attached to it, as is evidenced by recent state disputes over the emblem. Louisiana State University's own Confederate battle flag conflict is also an instance in which the symbol's display has led to ideological disputes and heated debates. The strong convictions of both flag opponents and supporters imply a degree of understanding of the banner amongst these groups. Difficulty arises, however, in interpreting the content of peoples' perceptions of and beliefs about the Confederate battle flag.

The flag's place in LSU history has shaped these different understandings. By examining the appearance of the flag at LSU over the years, the difficulty of interpretation can be mitigated. The history of the banner at LSU and the different contexts in which it appears provide a window into the minds of people associated with its display as well as those against it. The story of the flag at LSU cannot be fully traced, as a complete record of the general use of such a common symbol is not available; however, student publications provide a source by which instances of its display can be identified and interpreted. Present understandings of the flag can be compared with those of the past by examining the appearance of the flag in the student yearbook, *The Gumbo*, and the University's daily newspaper, *The Reveille*, and the student-produced magazine,

Legacy. The origins of current viewpoints on the flag can also be evaluated vis à vis past use of the symbol.

The history of the battle flag at LSU is representative of its general history, especially in the twentieth century. Students who displayed the battle flag during the fifties and sixties showed reverence and respect for the symbol. However, over time, such feelings diminished, as the flag remained a part of tradition yet was presented absent of its historical significance. The changing interpretations of the battle flag over time has led to a modern southern identity that is not as heavily informed by history as it was in the past. Those who find the flag offensive and those who interpret it otherwise have difficulty achieving any agreement with regard to the emblem. The polarized nature of disputes concerning the battle flag is a direct result of the diminished significance and understanding of history from which the various, conflicting interpretations of the flag emanate.

Not only are specific instances of the battle flag's use at LSU important in evaluating the flag's perceived meanings and the roles these different understandings had and continue to have in defining southern identity, but the University's historical ties to the Confederacy are also significant factors influencing conclusions drawn from this discussion. Originating through three land grants by the United States government in 1806, 1811, and 1827, the Louisiana State University was first a military establishment. The cadets of the Ole War Skule made up the student body, and the drilling grounds were as much a part of everyday life as was the classroom. In 1853, the Louisiana General Assembly established the Seminary of Learning of the State of Louisiana near Pineville, Louisiana.⁸² The first superintendent of the University was then Colonel William

Tecumseh Sherman, who later achieved renown as a Union Army General. He took up the post of superintendent when the school opened January 2, 1860. Not surprisingly, the Civil War interrupted the operation of the college, and the losses sustained by the institution were heavy.⁸³ The seminary reopened October 2, 1865, only to be burned October 15, 1869. On November 1, 1869, the institution resumed its operations in Baton Rouge, where it has since remained. In 1870, the name was changed to Louisiana State University.⁸⁴ Thus, LSU's early history was very much defined by the war and one of the most significant actors in it. Many of the original students were no doubt casualties of the Confederate war effort. It can also be assumed that the students of the post-war era were affected by the war. As a former slave state relying heavily on agriculture, Louisiana experienced great economic losses to go along with the loss of life. Unfortunately, painting a clear picture of student sentiment during this time period is difficult. The first issues of *The Reveille*, LSU's student periodical, were not in circulation until 1897, and the student yearbook, *Gumbo*, was first issued only in 1900. However, there are other indicators of opinion that provide perspective on this period in the school's history.

LSU's tradition of athletic enthusiasm is potentially helpful in gaining a sense of the importance of the Confederate memorial movement at the university during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dr. Charles E. Coates organized the first football team in 1893, and, though the early going was rough, the 1896 team finished their season undefeated and co-champions of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association. After this early success, enthused students sought a name for their beloved "gridders." "As Coates related it, the name 'Tigers' was logical if only because it was custom to name university teams after animals."⁸⁵ Coates' simple explanation may belie

another reason behind choosing the tiger as the team's mascot. Many have interpreted the Tiger as signifying much more than just a ferocious beast.

David F. Boyd, the university's president at the time, had served during the Civil War as a member of the Ninth Louisiana Volunteers. This regiment fought along with other soldiers from Louisiana, including a battalion under the leadership of Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat called the Tiger Rifles. Assigned to Brigadier General Richard Taylor's Louisiana brigade along with the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth regiments of Louisiana volunteers, Wheat's Tigers borrowed the name from one of the first companies of the Confederate army, which was organized in Louisiana. Over time the term "tiger" was used to refer to any soldier from Louisiana. Louisiana infantry in Lee's army of Northern Virginia were given the nickname "Lee's Tigers" and fought from First Manassas to the very last Confederate charge of the war near Appomattox Courthouse on April 9, 1865. The Tigers' reputation of ferocity in the field was bolstered by their staggering twenty-three percent death rate. General Clement Anselm Evans, in addressing the brigade of Colonel Eugene Waggaman after Appomattox, testified to the worth of the Louisiana soldiers:

Tell Louisiana, when you reach her shores, that her sons in the army of Northern Virginia have made her illustrious upon every battleground, from first Manassas to the last desperate blow struck by your command on the hills of Appomattox, and tell her, too, that as in the first, so in the last, the enemy fled before the valor of your charging lines.⁸⁶

During the Valley campaign of Brigadier General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, Major Boyd and Major Wheat developed a great deal of respect for one another, which was made evident by Boyd's fulfillment of Wheat's dying request to be buried in the spot

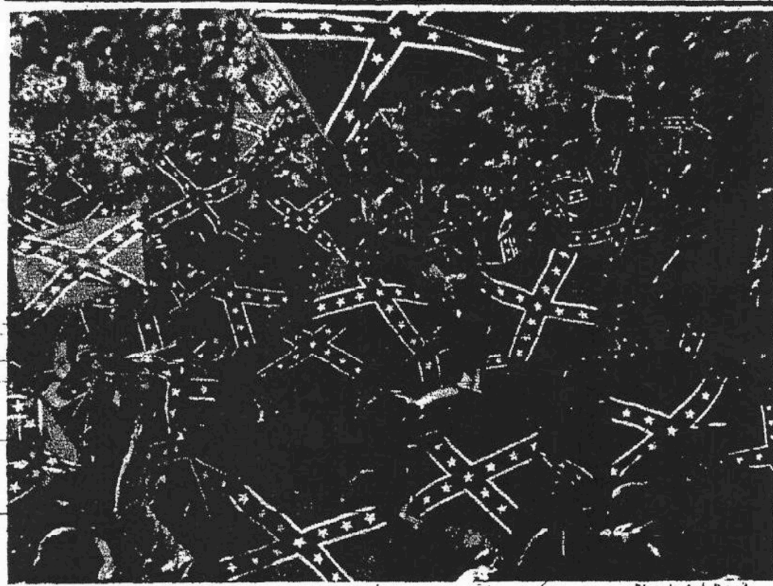
where he had fallen in battle. It is quite possible that it was Boyd, in memory of his fallen comrade and his Tiger Rifles, who suggested the mascot.⁸⁷

Other Universities in the South also chose mascots reminiscent of the Civil War. The University of Tennessee honors Confederate army volunteers of the state as the “Vols.” The University of Virginia pays homage to both Confederate soldiers and southern manners through their mascot the “Cavalier.” The University of Mississippi’s choice of the “Rebel” as their mascot needs no explanation. Adopted as a mascot in 1892, Auburn University’s “War Eagle” is a tribute to a celebrated story of a Civil war survivor from Alabama. Legend has it that the sole survivor of a battle, an Alabaman, rescued an injured eagle while on retreat. It was said that this person later became a faculty member at Auburn, and at the University’s first ever football game the eagle got loose, circling the stadium and enlivening the spectators. At the games end, the eagle fell to the ground, dead, with Auburn victorious.⁸⁸ The elaborate explanation for this particular school’s mascot is as striking as its symbolism. Though the soldier was defeated, like the eagle he was able to survive. And though the eagle eventually fell, the tradition of victory and the Confederate spirit it represented were to be carried on by the University’s football team.

Pride in the Confederate war effort manifested itself in a school’s gridiron exploits. Both Auburn and LSU named their football team in the 1890s. During this period, the Confederate memorial movement had not reached its peak, and people were more reserved in remembering the war. As such, the flag used in the context of the memorial movement presented the symbol as one of mourning and reserved reverence. The incorporation of Confederate imagery into the raucous world of University athletics imbued these symbols with a more charged meaning than ever before. Historian John M.

Coski posits “[c]ollege football and college campus life in general were the means by which the battle flag evolved from a symbol of Confederate memorial organizations into a popular-culture symbol.”⁸⁹ Coski goes on to point out instances in history that associate the Confederate battle flag with University life, athletics in particular. The Kappa Alpha Order, founded at Washington College in 1865 when Robert E. Lee was the institution’s president, arguably is most responsible for popularizing the battle flag. The tradition of the “Old South Ball” began in the late 1920s. These elaborate events often included parades displaying men on horseback in full Confederate regalia, women in buggies donning hoop skirts and sun bonnets, and, of course, the Confederate battle flag. The popularity of this Greek organization and its power in influencing opinion as a respected social group resulted in increased visibility of Confederate symbols, including the flag. In 1926, after the University of Alabama beat the University of Washington at the Rose Bowl game in Pasadena, California, “Crimson Tide” supporters brought out the red and blue, adorning lampposts in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, with Confederate battle flags. Thus, the victory of their football team was associated with victory for the South and, perhaps more importantly, the southern values and ideals that the flag represented. Alabama and Washington’s gridiron battle on the West Coast was “one of the first major intersectional sports event.”⁹⁰ Pride in the local institution was channeled into regional pride in this case, much the same way as the passion attached to state resistance banners had transferred to the national flags of the Confederacy. In later years, sporting contests pitting Northern and Southern schools against one another were more frequent; not coincidentally, so too was the “use of the flag as a symbol of Southern sporting spirit.”⁹¹ Other successful sports programs whose fans used the flag to cheer on their teams

included the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. UNC fans claimed to have waved the battle flag to cheer on their “Tar Heels” before spectators at UVA had done it.⁹² An image from the 1971 *Reveille* of the Ole Miss student section during a football game against LSU illustrates the prominent place the flag occupied in southern collegiate sports.



REBEL YELL.—Waving flags and cheers marked the Ole Miss student section at the Ole Miss-Tiger fray Saturday afternoon in Jackson. But the situation was not so jubilant for the Tiger side in Memorial Stadium. Thousands held their collective breaths as the Tigers rallied at last in the final few seconds of the 24-22 upset. Many charged alleged favoritism on the part of the referees and the final insult was perpetrated when an Ole Miss fan decked Mike the mascot of his tail. 93

(All images in Chapter II appear courtesy of Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State University)

The arena of college athletics provided a less traditional yet still symbolic outlet for honoring the southern effort in the Civil War. Further, the South’s denial of their defeat may have made winning contests, especially those against northern foes, even more culturally important. Football was an especially apt game for channeling frustrations with the Confederate defeat and projecting them as victory. Moreover, the popular and informal nature of such events allowed people to attach more emotion to the Confederate

celebration, recalling the intense flag culture of the South before and during the Civil War.

Along with understanding the Confederate legacy at the university and its influence defining southern identity, it is important to isolate instances in which Confederate symbols, especially the battle flag, have appeared. Of foremost concern are the ways in which such images were displayed and the meaning attached to them in each context. Examining the different uses of the flag helps to assess the importance of student's understanding of it as well as its role in defining southern identity. Student publications provide the best means to accomplish this.

This history of the flag begins at the midway point of the twentieth century.⁹⁴ A 1950 *Reveille* features an article concerning a student protest over a new compulsory room and board program. A picture was printed along with the feature on the demonstration: the image of a lone flagpole. Though it is difficult to make out, the caption identifies the banner at the top to be the Confederate battle flag:

One person who probably didn't appreciate the Confederate flag being placed at the top of the [flag] pole yesterday was steeplejack Donald Pate shown making an effort to reach the symbol of student opposition to the compulsory board plan.⁹⁵

In this particular situation, the flag is not being presented with any racial undertones but is being used as a symbol of resistance. The article described the actions of a "Secretive Students Rights committee" that chartered ten buses to carry protesting students to the capitol. Students voiced their opposition at the legislative session in which the compulsory room and board bill came up and succeeded in having it rescinded. The interpretation of the battle flag as a symbol of resistance has historical support. Indeed, many interpret the heritage of the Confederacy and the Lost Cause to be chiefly that of

the championing of individual rights and the opposition to central control. The Confederates were fighting to protect their states' sovereign rights. The use of the flag by students in this manner is evidence that this interpretation both existed amongst students and was well enough understood to be put to use.

Another appearance of the flag comes in the 1951 *Gumbo*. An image depicts four ROTC students, two men and two women, standing at attention on either side of a Confederate battle flag.⁹⁶



The caption "Whose army? Which war?" indicates that the editors of the yearbook were poking fun at some southerners' lingering dedication to the Confederacy. Whether playful or not, this picture reveals that Confederate heritage was an important part of student life at this time. The fact that the allegiance of these ROTC members to the United States Army is being questioned at all attests to the existence of pride in the Confederacy. Years

later, a letter to the editor co-authored by four students appeared in the 1969 *Reveille* titled “The Confederate Air Force.” In it the students expressed concern over the ROTC keeping a Confederate Flag in its office. The letter read:

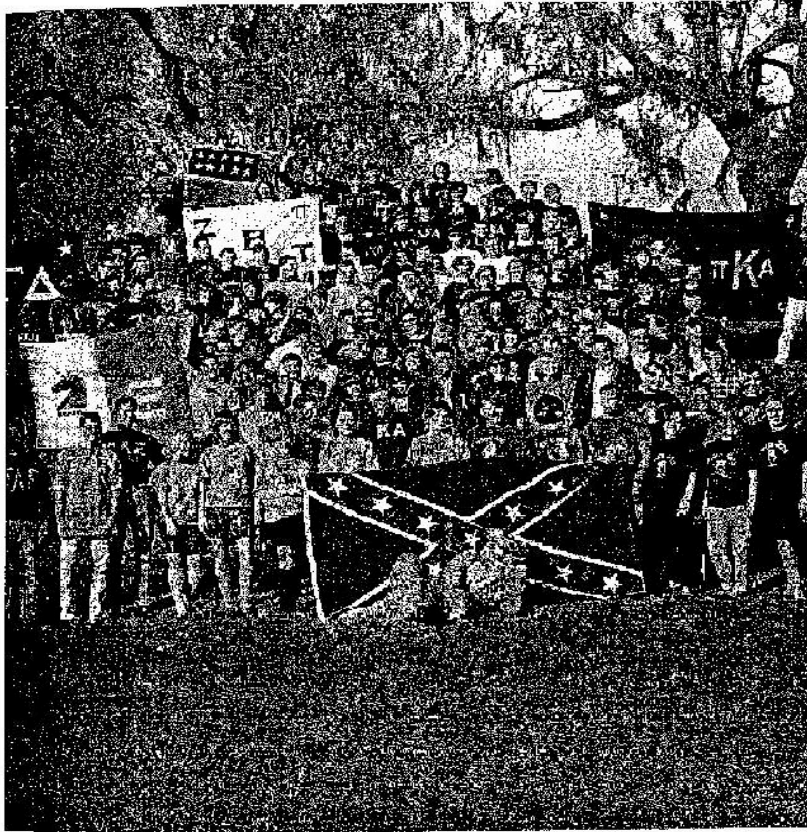
It seems both incongruent and inane that the squadron deems it necessary to have a confederate flag in their office. We were under the assumption that ROTC was to prepare men for the future, not glorify the defeated past.⁹⁷

Both the banner’s historical legacy and the meaning associated with that legacy made the symbol objectionable to some students. An article voicing such opinions supports the assumption that concern over the flag was at least marginally significant. Student opinion was not benign regarding the display of the battle flag, and this opposition shows that some students’ understood the symbol as having a meaning including a controversial facet. These objections to it were undoubtedly tied to race relations. It is also important to note that the use of the flag in opposition to the compulsory room and board plan was informed by an accurate historical interpretation and its display in the ROTC office was out of honor and respect. And though there was some concern over the flag, it was absent of the emotion that has characterized contemporary flag disputes.

Through the fifties and sixties, the appearance of the flag was confined to athletics and Greek life. The *Gumbo* mostly features photos of the banner at Kappa Alpha events, the Old South Ball being the most prominent, and at football games against the University of Mississippi. While these instances are mostly pedestrian, a few images appear to be of more significance than the rest.

The 1966 *Gumbo* contains a picture of a group of Greeks from various sororities and fraternities. Standing in groups with other members of their respective organizations, the students are displaying banners depicting Greek letters. A large Confederate battle

flag, one corner held by a male from Kappa Alpha the other by a female from Kappa Alpha Theta, is presented along with the various Greek banners. A Mike the Tiger mascot is reclining in front of the flag.⁹⁸



It is difficult to make inferences from this, as it is impossible to know whose flag this was or their reason for its display. The Kappa Alpha's around it lead one to conclude that the fraternity's members were solely responsible for its display. However, the organization of such a large group, with this particular symbol at the fore, supports the assumption that there was general assent to the emblem's display. The meaning of the emblem in this context is difficult to determine. The all white group could arguably associate the flag in this context with racist undertones. Perhaps the students were attempting to convey a sense of youthful independence and defiance. Notwithstanding

such ambiguities, the use of the flag in this picture is a definite indication of a degree of identification amongst these students with the symbol, and the tiger lying before it illustrates that they supposed a correlation between their institution and the flag. In this case, the flag is being presented outside of its proper historical context, detracting from the reverence that traditional southern culture attaches to the symbol.

In the context of athletics, the flag appeared in the stands and outside the stadium along with the well-known saying, “Go to Hell Ole Miss.” A picture from the 1971 *Gumbo* is illustrative of such instances.⁹⁹



In these particular cases, the flag is associated with the University’s football rival and used by fans in a negative connotation to root against the Rebels. The alteration of the flag in this way and its use outside of historical parameters contributed to ambiguity and fluidity of its meaning. Two photos also appearing in the 1969 and 1971 *Gumbos* are especially significant because of the specific use of the flag. In each image a Confederate flag is being displayed at a football game against the University of Mississippi. These

photos are set apart from others depicting the flag because in these particular instances the banner is in flames. The image below appeared in the 1971 *Gumbo*.¹⁰⁰



This particular cheerleader burned the flag to cheer against Ole Miss. During pep rallies before LSU-Ole Miss games, it was also customary to burn an effigy of the Rebel mascot,¹⁰¹ an action that was clearly unconcerned with honoring the exploits of the Confederate soldier. The immediate impression one gets is that of a bizarre and somewhat dangerous display of spirit. Further analysis allows for interesting conclusions to be drawn. The Confederate battle flag, a supposed revered symbol in the South, being defaced by young southerners would doubtless be cause for concern amongst those who viewed the flag as an important symbol of heritage. Not only was this female student burning the flag, but she was also doing so from a highly visible position. This coupled with her status as cheerleader, a position usually associated with popularity and social

influence, augmented the impact of the display. The other image, appearing in the 1969 yearbook, includes one student waving a large St. Andrew's cross banner set above a smaller picture containing a burning battle flag. In the top picture the student appears to be waving the flag with pride, his eyes fixed steadily on the camera. Either he was a Rebel fan braving the LSU student section or was yelling "Go to Hell Ole Miss" in the midst of his demonstration. The bottom image features a Confederate Battle flag engulfed in flames in the foreground and several bystanders on the field in the background. One man, standing alone and near the center of the frame, is clearly watching the flag burn. To the right of the frame, one can make out at least two other men with their gaze fixed intently on the blazing banner.



The use of the flag in such a manner must have meant different things to those of older generations and the youth of LSU. While it is difficult to say whether or not these older

bystanders were looking on this display with disapproval or merely with curiosity, the picture does shed light on the meaning of the flag for the students involved. Obviously, for them, its significance was not as an historical and cultural symbol, but as an emblem representing their football rival. Reverence was not a part of their interpretation of the flag. These students employed the banner for their own specific purposes and attached their desired meaning to it. This unique use of the flag is in accord with its history, as different groups throughout time have employed the symbol for a variety of purposes. These images juxtaposed with that of the ROTC cadets saluting the battle flag illustrates the shift in interpretation of the symbol during the latter half of the twentieth century. This change has influenced contemporary understanding of the flag. In defense of the purple and gold battle flag many cite southern heritage as the motivation behind its display, yet the symbol itself is misrepresentative of the battle flag's historical legacy. Its alteration does not honor or commemorate its past. Instead, the purple and gold battle flag creates new meanings and interpretations for a symbol already imbued with several meanings. This misuse and the various interpretations of the flag have resulted in the contentious nature of the Confederate battle flag today.

Throughout the *Reveilles* of the fifties, sixties, and seventies, issues involving racism crop up frequently. For the most part, this is of little concern to a discussion of the appearance and meaning of Confederate symbols as well as their impact on defining southern identity. However, a 1971 letter to the editor from Lenora L. Champagne titled "Ghosts of Blue and Grey" addresses both racism and emblems of the Confederacy in the LSU community. She discusses discrimination of blacks at downtown bars and claims

that a statue of a Confederate Soldier near the bar gives her a clue as to the sentiment in the area. She writes:

It seems the good citizens could have saved their money. The fellow in grey is still alive and healthy. Only now he has become more stylish and wears a purple and gold blazer.¹⁰³

Letters followed in response and in opposition to Champagne's views. An article a week later by reveille columnist C.S. Hillyer titled "Racial Harmony is a Long Way Off"¹⁰⁴ addressed the climate of race relations at the University. He said that the back-and-forth racial debate occurring between students was lacking in understanding. People were more eager to defend a side than to work to bring those sides together, illustrating the polarizing nature of racial debate. Of course, it is not surprising that racial conflict existed within the LSU community at this time, though. The South was and remains characterized by this reality. What is at issue is the association of the Confederate Soldier with the colors of the university. Certainly, this association leads one to assume both the prominence of Confederate symbols amongst some students and their interpretation by others as offensive, racist emblems.

A purple and gold Confederate battle flag appears in the 1981 *Gumbo*. It is the only image of the controversial emblem to make the year book's pages in any volume. The photo itself shows a man and, presumably, his son at a home football game. Propped up by his father, the young boy is waving a purple-and-gold battle flag bearing the name of the university above and below the familiar tiger face, which is set at the center.¹⁰⁵ This picture is indicative of three things. First, it illustrates that the display of Confederate symbols in and around campus was not solely carried out by students. Second, it shows the passing down of a culture first hand. The boy is being stood up as he holds the flag

and was probably cognizant of this. At a young age he is learning to have pride in a highly charged symbol of which he knows and would likely understand very little. Lastly, the fact that both the father and son are wearing cowboy hats shows how modern interpretations of the battle flag have departed from its traditional context. Through history, the Confederate battle flag has evolved from a strictly historical emblem to a popular culture icon. This has led to confusion with regard to its meaning, resulting in contemporary flag debates. It appears that at least three fans have their gaze fixed on the boy.



One wonders what others in the crowd must have thought, though the question is a difficult one to gauge. This study thus far suggests that Confederate symbols were not major components in the lives of most students, as their appearance has been confined to Greek life and athletic events. However, the power these two areas possess in influencing campus life cannot be ignored. While it is often downplayed, Greeks make up much of the social scene around campus and, with their numbers, have the ability to shift opinion.

Also, athletics, specifically football, need little discussion in support of its contended importance to the university and surrounding community. One must only step foot within a half mile of the campus gates on a Saturday before a home game to witness the importance of Tiger football to the majority of the campus community. So, while these displays of the flag seem isolated and infrequent, their appearance in such influential contexts gives them a power that they would not otherwise have. The various meanings people associate with the symbol created a divisive atmosphere when the flag was seen. It was only a matter of time before open debate over the emblems display would break out. After the flag's appearance in the 1980 yearbook, the symbol appears sporadically and only on the pages dedicated to the Kappa Alpha fraternity.

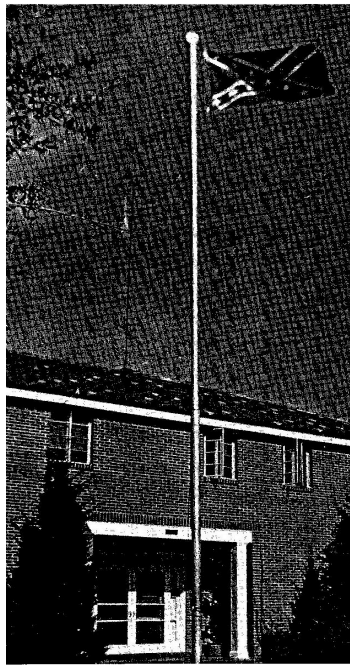
The Kappa Alpha Order's history is closely associated with the Confederacy. A Confederate War Veteran, James Ward Wood, founded the fraternal organization at Washington University. At this same time, Robert E. Lee was serving as the University's president. Still, image was a concern to the leaders of the Kappa Alpha Order. At a 1951 meeting a statement concerning the flag was drafted and released. It read,

We are aware of and deplore the indiscriminate misuse and abuse of the battle flag...As we were largely responsible for popularizing its display today so we can help to restore respect for it by promptly disassociating ourselves from all manner of cheap, tawdry and vulgar exhibitions; and by limiting its use among us to such places and occasions as are fit and becoming.¹⁰⁶

Though the authors of this statement were mainly referring to the flag's display on articles of clothing and memorabilia, they likely would see a battle flag in the colors of a sports team as detracting from the emblems revered that they wish to maintain. The statement illustrates their cognizance of the flag's negative associations as a result of popular uses and attests to the awareness others had of the controversial nature of the symbol. If the

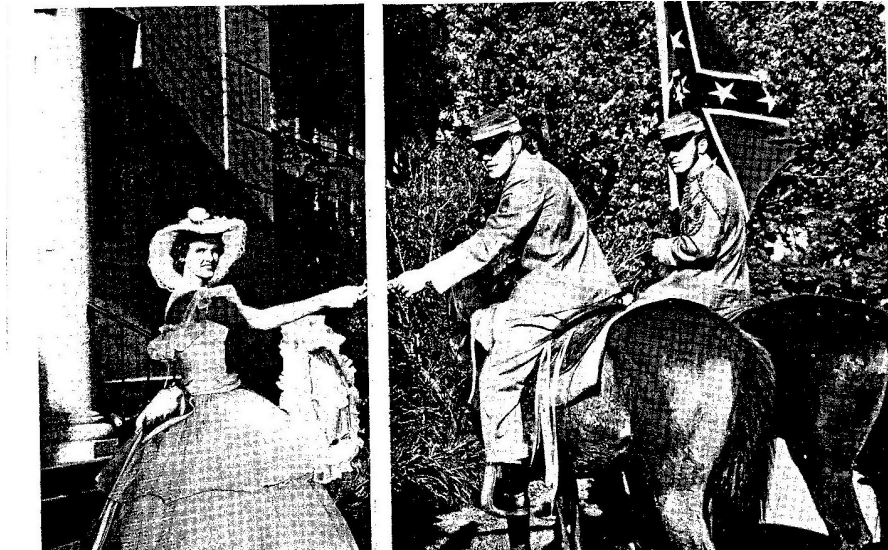
members of the Kappa Alpha Order were wary of the divisive effect of the flag then it can be surmised that they must have had at least some understanding of the symbol as representative of contentious meanings. Certainly, those who are completely convinced that the flag solely embodies a southern tradition and heritage absent of racial elements would not take the time to set guidelines for its use.

As the flag appears most frequently in conjunction with this organization, it is best to review the use of the flag by the Kappa Alpha Order separately from the previous instances of the flag's display. In 1956, a picture of the front of the KA house appears on the page opposite the member photos.¹⁰⁷



It depicts a large flagpole centered at the front of the fraternity house, atop of which is a large Confederate battle flag. The flag is the focal point of the image, which is the only picture, aside from those of KA members, on the pages dedicated to the fraternity. Also, the flag, blown taught in the wind, is presented with honor and reverence. This attests to the strong associations the fraternity had with the flag and the importance it played in

defining its collective identity. A picture of Kappa Alpha “Old South” festivities is featured in the 1958 *Gumbo*.¹⁰⁸



Outside the pages of the *Gumbo*, it could easily be mistaken as a period image of a southern belle standing before the front columns of her plantation home being greeted by soldiers prior to a Confederate rally or gala. The attention to detail and special care undertaken by these individuals in assembling their outfits shows the importance of tradition and authenticity to the members of fraternal order, which is indicative of an understanding of Confederate symbols as things commanding respect and historical accuracy. The importance of historical legacy and heritage to southerners has long been recognized as one of the characteristics distinguishing the South from the rest of the nation. This peculiar fascination with history is evidenced by the authenticity of “Old South” events.

These previous images of the battle flag on campus and of male and female students in full Confederate regalia at “Old South” festivities suggest certain understandings of Confederate symbols. However, these images are not necessarily

indicative racial interpretations of these symbols. Despite this, racist undertones come through clearly in a picture of the “Old South” in the 1980 *Gumbo*.



The girl in blackface is reminiscent of the caricatures of African Americans in old minstrel shows or vaudeville productions that grew in the popular imagination through the entertainment mediums of radio and television. Along with the black face, a common black stereotype is represented in this image: that of the black mammy, in this case, with broom in hand. The white male, though obviously in jest, is dragging the female in black face along, his arm fastened tightly around her neck. Incidental or not, this indicates the understanding those had participating in “Old South” events of the social order of the society they were remembering and recreating. And though this manifestation of white supremacy recalled the past, its occurrence in more modern times suggests that such beliefs lingered on. In some case they persisted more strongly than in others, but

remained existent all the same Pride in Confederate symbols, especially the battle flag, is the impression that resonates most from these pictures. It is presented first and foremost as a symbol to be revered and properly displayed. Attention to detail and commitment to the authenticity of “Old South” events attests to this respect. But beneath this surface interpretation, a more subtle understanding emerges. These students were clearly aware of the history attached to such displays. There is little doubt that these students, who paid such attention to historical detail and accuracy, understood the racial aspect of the Confederate symbols they bore.

Images of later Kappa Alpha “Old South” functions depict a diminished sense of respect for the history the organization was representing. Their uniforms were less authentic and the way in which they presented themselves indicates a lack of reverence for the period they were representing. Images from the *Gumbos* of the nineties best illustrate this interpretive departure. From the 1990 and 1997 *Gumbos*, the images are of Kappa Alpha brothers at “Old South” festivities.





111

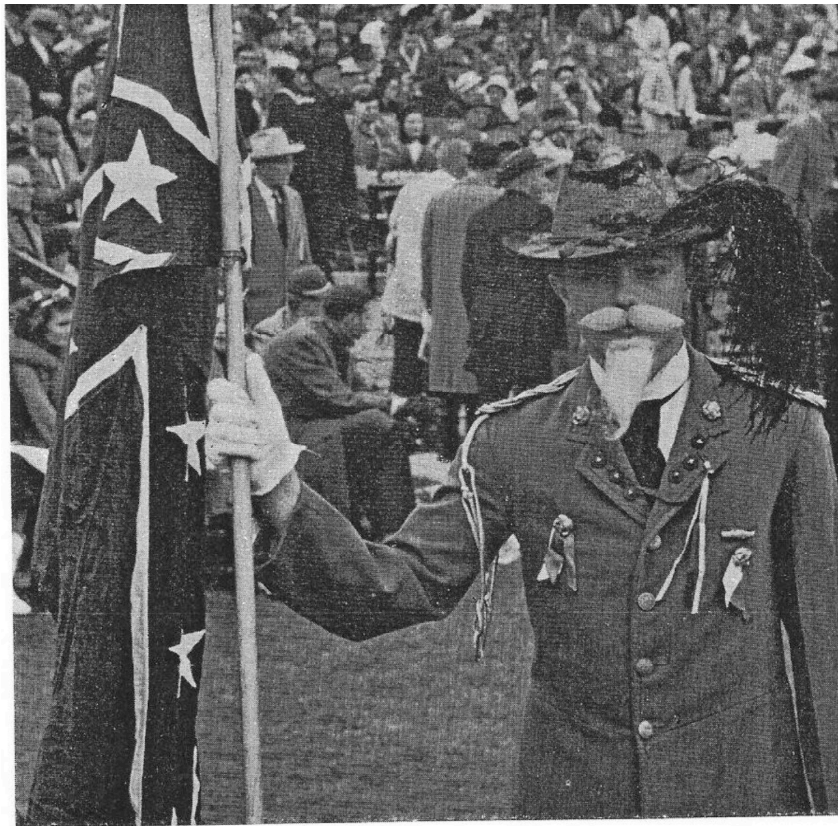


112

These contemporary portrayals of Confederate garb are clearly less concerned with authenticity or reverence than earlier ones. Their grey coats are unbuttoned and tussled and several of the individuals are wearing sunglasses and bandanas, belying the historical accuracy of the uniforms. This is in stark contrast to the images from the fifties and sixties, indicating a lessening of the perceived significance of the history being reenacted. This is not to say that intent to disrespect the Confederate legacy characterized later “Old South” events. However, this does indicate that the original purpose of Kappa Alpha’s “Old South,” to pay homage to Southern values and traditions as well as, and most

importantly, those who fought to protect them, was gradually losing hold with younger generations of southerners over time. “Old South” changed from an event focused on history to a good excuse for a party.

While these images focus only on the Kappa Alpha order, the same trend can be attributed to southerners in general. This greater trend can be viewed in microcosm through examination of the portrayal of Ole Miss’ Rebel mascot through the years. The first image comes from the 1960 *Gumbo*.



Ah, say, suh, thuh battle wall be in ouh faih city next yeah.

113

There is a definite attention to detail in this portrayal. Further the uniform is presented with a sense of honor and dignity, adorned with medals and other regalia. The individual stands at attention, projecting a sense of respect for the symbols he carried and the history

they represented. Thirty years later, Ole Miss' "Johnny Reb" had significantly changed, as illustrated by a picture in the 1991 *Gumbo*.



114

The modern mascot was a caricature of the Confederate soldier. This cartoonish figure is absent of the reverence projected by the earlier Ole Miss Rebel, providing further evidence for the diminished sense of the importance history to modern day southerners. This led to historical legacy playing a minimal role in the interpretation of Confederate symbols, such as the battle flag, for most people. Thus, modern understanding of the flag was influenced most by its contemporary uses, which most often involved racist aspects.

Whether display of Confederate symbols in the eighties and nineties evidenced the existence of a race problem at LSU or not, members of the University community seemed aware that racial issues were prevalent in the LSU community. In the fall of

1994, a class on race relations was proposed to the LSU Course and Curriculum Committee that would bring together LSU and Southern University students. The class had already been offered at Southern for two semesters prior to proposal for LSU's adoption of the course. Its purpose, described in the proposal, was "to explore the presence of racism, and not just black-white relations, but all aspects of life – the media, academics, government, etc. through guest speakers who are experts in the fields being discussed."¹¹⁵ Richard Webb, the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Southern, organized the course, though he credited William Moore, SU's Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, with its conception. Webb noted the popularity of the course at Southern, saying, "We haven't solicited for the class and we have been able to fully populate it [both semesters]."¹¹⁶ Though the class had not incorporated LSU students at this point, it had employed the expertise of LSU faculty, including Gaines Foster, associate professor of history, and Tom Durant, associate professor of sociology. Webb also described the goal of the course. "We want to promote the considerations of race relations from an objective view point without lots of emotion throughout the community."¹¹⁷ This particular statement is important to the discussion of contemporary racial conflict. Passions consistently cloud the logic of any racial debate. Clashing viewpoints are so opposed that difficulty arises in either side gaining any level of understanding from the other. Instead of promoting debate, this course pushed for an honest and scholarly investigation into the realities of southern race relations in order to identify problems and how to resolve them.

In early September of 1996, the Confederate battle flag made news once again. *The Reveille* reported on Baton Rouge Senate Secretary Mike Baer and House Clerk

Alfred Speer's decision "to remove the battle flag from Memorial Hall in the Capitol." Interestingly, the flag was to be replaced by the "Stars and Bars," the original National flag of the Confederacy.¹¹⁸ David Madden, then the Director of the United States Civil War Center at LSU, was asked to comment on the battle flag and the recent action by the Baton Rouge Legislature to remove it from the Capitol. Madden said, "If you're saying we want to fly over a building all flags that have flown over the state, it is not historically accurate to fly this flag because it has never flown over any capitol as the official state flag."¹¹⁹ Madden went on to note the difference in public perception of the battle flag and the original and lesser-known Confederate National flag. "I can say objectively that black organizations have not found [the] 'Stars and Bars' as offensive."¹²⁰ By this statement, Madden highlights the significance and power of the battle flag. He also indicates the relative resonance of distant and recent history amongst the public. Before its design was incorporated into the second National flag of the Confederate States of America, the battle flag was only used in combat during the Civil War, while the Stars and Bars served as the Confederacy's political banner. Presumably, the latter symbol was associated equally if not more with the ideology of the Rebel nation. In other words, the flag which people found innocuous is as equally linked to white supremacy and slavery as the battle flag. However, it is not distant history but recent history that is most significant in shaping peoples' understanding of the battle flag. In the middle of the twentieth century, various white supremacist groups and counter civil rights organizations employed the St. Andrew's cross banner. This legacy has had the most cultural influence in forming contemporary ideas regarding the symbol. Though this is seemingly obvious, its recognition is vital in this investigation into the flag's perceived meaning. The flag's true

legacy, its original history, has been far less important in defining it than modern events. Thus for most people, the flag was cemented as a symbol of bigotry, oppression, and racial violence, as opposed to an emblem of southern values and heritage. This supported by the displays of the battle flag at LSU, which have shown a diminished understanding and reverence for history amongst students. The significance of history as a southern cultural component has waned over the years, accounting, in part, for the misuse and misrepresentation of the battle flag in the contemporary South.

The article also featured comments by a member of Delta Chi fraternity, a Greek organization on campus that displayed the flag from the balcony of its house. Mike Deshotel said, “It’s not meant to be a racial sign. [I’m not sure why we don’t fly] the ‘Stars and Bars.’ I don’t know why we chose [the battle flag], but it’s been here longer than any of us have and now it’s a tradition to keep it.”¹²¹ Deshotel’s comments help in understanding modern interpretations of the battle flag. For many, the flag’s meaning was of insignificance. Its display was a result of tradition, clung to for one reason or another, though often it was not fully understood. For contemporary southerners, the flag was not a revered historical symbol but a modern, popular culture icon that was gravitated to not because of the values, ideology, or history it represented but because of the nostalgia associated with it. Meaning was less important than the physical appearance of the symbol. However, many were aware of the flag’s historical significance and sought to erase the racist legacy they believed it represented.

The existence of racial unrest is evidenced by an administrative controversy at the University that same year. On October 11, 1996, *The Reveille* reported on an NAACP meeting in which Chancellor William Bud Davis and his special assistant, David

“Sonny” Devillier, were confronted with regard to the misappropriation of minority scholarships. “An internal audit found Devillier was doling out funds from the Chancellor’s Incentive Awards Program to unqualified students. Many of those receiving money were members of Lambda Chi Alpha, a fraternity whose local and national organizations Devillier belongs to.”¹²² Certainly, the situation did not look favorable for the two University officials entrenched in it. Both maintained that the mistakes were unintentional; however, NAACP members were dissatisfied and called for Devillier’s resignation. He immediately complied with these requests. Around two weeks after the fiasco, Chancellor Davis also resigned his post after seven years of service to the University in that capacity. The errors in handling minority scholarships resonated too deeply within that community for their opinions to be quelled by apologies and claims of unintentional errors. Issues of racial discrimination struck chords creating overtones of emotion and passion. Calm could not prevail in such an atmosphere and appeasement could not be achieved without significant action. Though Davis’ resignation somewhat marred his tenure as Chancellor, it is important not to allow this one event to characterize his impact on the university. After all, he was responsible for creating the fund from which the scholarship money was mistakenly awarded. Davis’ special concern for diversity at LSU is also evidenced by his involvement in the establishment of the African American Cultural Center and Black Caucus at LSU.¹²³ Character issues aside, the importance of this incident lies in the campus community’s response to it. The calm, collected dialogue that was sought by those proposing the race relations course in 1994 was not achieved in this case. It is clear from this particular situation that the passion and emotion tied to issues of race ran too high at the University to deal with them peacefully

when they mattered most. Open discussion of racial problems requires honesty and understanding from both sides.

These past instances of the flag's display at LSU have culminated in the most recent battles concerning the use of the purple and gold Confederate battle flag. Indeed, this conflict is both important in understanding the place of the flag in the southern memory and identity as well as the factors motivating the flags supporters and detractors.

III. The Purple and Gold Confederate Flag Controversy

Though teens are often seen as apathetic, college students often defy this label. The passion of collegians may derive from a number of sources. Whether the cause of such emotion is love for their academic discipline, deep involvement in a student organization, or enthusiasm for an athletic team, students often devote some of their free time to an issue or cause. Even those who are personally uninvolved can remain abreast of campus issues through student publications. Certainly, LSU has been a part of the tradition of collegiate activism. The LSU Student Union officially opened in 1964 and Free Speech Alley came along with this new campus landmark. A 1985 *Reveille* report on the Alley recounted the story of the alley's beginning. "On a cool October day in 1964 a black man rose from the small, hushed crowd huddled together at the foot of the Student Union Building and began reciting a Civil Rights poem. The brief reading marked the first LSU Free Speech Alley."¹²⁴ The open forum could not have originated at a more charged time, as soon after its construction the U.S. became embroiled in a controversial war in Asia. Vietnam was the first catalyst for debate in the alley, providing the origin for the tradition of activism at LSU today.

Though Free Speech Alley continues to be the scene of heated debate, the dynamic in the 1970s and 1980s differed considerably from that of today's alley. Unlike the current chaotic atmosphere created by evangelists and students, the Alley of the seventies and eighties was a more organized affair. The speakers were billed, and the debates were scheduled. The issues to be discussed at each meeting were outlined roughly, the speakers were given their due, and the students openly engaged in the dialogue. A student moderator was elected to ensure the discussions were focused. While

government, communism, and religion were recurring issues, concerns regarding race relations were common causes for debate at Free Speech Alley.

Given the university's legacy of activism, it is not surprising that students have become very involved in the debate over the purple and gold Confederate battle flag. While the altered emblem may have been sold as early as 1970 and the first image of it to appear in any student publication came in 1980, students did not take issue with the altered historical symbol until the late nineties.

In August of 1997 a tragic event occurred within the campus community that, while not directly related to the controversy at issue, has some bearing on the development of student concern over display of the purple and gold Confederate flag. That fall, during fraternity bid-day festivities, Ben Wynne, a transfer student from Southeastern University and a new Sigma Alpha Epsilon pledge, died of acute alcohol poisoning. "Initial reports from the coroner's office listed Wynne's blood alcohol level at 0.588 percent. This is six times the legal limit for an adult, and thirty times the limit for an underage drinker. Wynne and three other SAE members were taken to the hospital and treated for alcohol-related injuries after Emergency Medical Services were called to the house."¹²⁵ The SAE bid day tragedy came just one week after the Princeton Review's release of their collegiate rankings in which LSU was listed as the number ten party school in the nation. After Wynne's death, there was an outpouring of concern regarding student alcohol consumption as well as the image of the university. With the party school reputation being projected nationally along with the Benjamin Wynne incident being broadcast by major news outlets, student awareness grew. Not only were members of the LSU community mourning the loss of Wynne, but they were also becoming more

cognizant of the negative effects of the publicity surrounding his death and the party school ranking. In this atmosphere of image reform, students looked to other aspects of campus life creating negative connotations for the University's image and sought to improve them. The display of the Confederate battle flag garnered attention amongst reform-minded individuals. On October 9, 1997, *The Reveille* published an article titled, "Officials discourage use of Confederate flag," that focused on efforts by officials at LSU and the University of Mississippi to stop display of the symbol during football games.

The article reported:

As University students prepare for the football game against Ole Miss, attention is drawn to the Rebels' coach's recent statement discouraging the flying of the Confederate flag. Head football coach Tommy Tuberville issued a written statement on Sept. 25 asking Rebel fans to discontinue waving the Confederate battle flag at games. Tuberville said, "It's time to support our teams physically, mentally and morally with enthusiasm and not symbols."¹²⁶ The use of the flag, which was officially disassociated from the university in 1983, has increased on Ole Miss' campus recently, said Langston Rogers of Ole Miss Sports Information. Tuberville voiced his concerns over the negative impact the Confederate flag has on the student body and recruitment.¹²⁷

Though the article's focus was on the developments at the University of Mississippi, the writer related these concerns to a version of the Confederate battle flag that had been prevalent at LSU during football festivities. "LSU students have been seen displaying the rebel flag at various places on campus. Some students fly LSU-colored variations of the Confederate flag at games, a purple and gold flag with the "X" and a tiger face in the middle. The actual flag is displayed at some Greek houses and dormitory rooms on campus."¹²⁸ Interviews with some members of the LSU administration were featured in the article, outlining official policy regarding display of the symbol.

"Though the flags are being displayed, LSU administration does not condone nor recognize the Confederate flag in its official flag policy. 'Nothing indicates that we should or shouldn't be flying it [the rebel flag],' said Executive Director of

Public Safety Gary Durham. The flag has nothing to do with the University, so the policy is totally mute on the subject, Durham continued. Durham has worked at LSU for twenty years and he says he has only seen the rebel flag in excess at Ole Miss games. In response to Tuberville's plea and Ole Miss's policy, Herb Vincent, associate athletic director in Sports Information, said, 'I don't think it's necessary here.' Vincent explained the situations at the two schools are different. 'We don't have the image problem that Ole Miss does. The rebel flag is one small part of that image. They are actively trying to get away from the Old South image.'"¹²⁹

Both Durham and Vincent were of the opinion that the battle flag and LSU were not linked in the way the symbol was to the University of Mississippi. However, as evidenced in the prior chapter, history does support linkages between Confederate symbols and Louisiana State University. As it would turn out, many members of the LSU community disagreed with Durham and Vincent's stance. The connection between the Confederate battle flag and universities in the South is debatable. While assessing the strengths of both sides in the debate is important to this discussion, what is more important to note from contemporary flag concerns is the climate of racial sensitivity that developed in the latter half of the twentieth century. This sensitivity, along with the push for university image reform, led to heated debate over the display of the purple and gold Confederate flag.

Though not immediately, students did respond to the flag issue outlined in the article on Ole Miss's discouragement of the display of the emblem. The first student response came from *Reveille* editorial assistant Angela Bergeron in an opinion column titled, "Rebel flag wavers should lower their reminder of slavery and treason." The headline explains Bergeron's stance clearly. She chose to speak against display of the flag. "Just as much as I believe in First Amendment rights, I also support self-censorship and social responsibility. I believe we must weigh the consequences of our actions and

not do things simply because we can or have the right to do so. Respect for other people is essential in a civilized society and, in my opinion, flying the rebel flag is nothing but disrespectful.”¹³⁰ Bergeron’s major concern was for the image of the University and the way display of the battle flag damaged it. In her opinion, the harm created by the purple and gold Confederate battle flag far outweighed any reasons in support of its display.

Her editorial elicited the opinion of flag supporters amongst the student body. In his letter titled, “Student proud of ‘good and bad’ aspects of Old South heritage,” computer engineering senior Jon Stokes said:

“Slavery is a terrible thing, but I refuse to believe that slavery is the only thing that the Old South’s about. I will continue to be exceedingly proud of my southern heritage, the good and the bad. Those who fly the confederate flag may be insensitive, but they’re not concerned with ‘preserving the confederacy’s efforts’ with regard to slavery. They want to identify themselves with the things that made the Old South great. The Old South stands for a lot more than just slavery and bigotry. It means different things to different people.”¹³¹

Stokes’ letter highlights an important characteristic amongst supporters of the purple and gold battle flag that seems to be borrowed from the Confederate memorial movement.

Though he claims to proud of the good and bad aspects of southern heritage, he also says that those who display the flag only want to identify themselves with the things that made the South great. Slavery, racial violence, and anything of the like are eliminated from the discussion of the legacy of the South. The reconciliationist concentration of the Confederate memorial movement directly parallels Stokes’ stance; by forgetting the emancipationist legacy of the South and the racial strife that followed the war and reconstruction, defending the battle flag becomes easy. Unfortunately, the good and the bad aspects of southern heritage are undeniably linked. One does not come without the other. Stokes also gives credence to existence of various viewpoints regarding the South,

implying differing understandings of southern identity. Identity can be defined as “the collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known.”¹³² Thus, southerners, though they share geography and regional history, have a weakened sense of collective identity because of disputed interpretations of these shared aspects.

Other concerns over racial sensitivity were raised at this time. An Student Government proposal to change the name of the Plantation Room restaurant in the Union was passed because of the perception of some students that the name associated it with slavery. *The Reveille* did a survey revealing that students, for the most part, did not perceive the name to have racist connotations. Five student responses were published to the question, “Do you find the name of the Plantation Room restaurant offensive?” Three of the students were white; their responses are as follows. Senior Allain Rochel said, “No. I don’t think that’s the way it was meant. I never gave much thought to it until I read about it. I think there are a lot of better things to think about.” Freshman Amanda Hagin said, “I don’t think it’s discriminatory. I think that Louisiana is known as a plantation state. When I think of plantations I think of beautiful houses. We should be proud of them.” A law student, Kevin Kilbert, said, “No, I don’t find it offensive. I don’t think they should change it, but I don’t think it would hurt anything if they did change it.” Two of the responses were from black students. Sophomore Jarrod Collins said, “I think it’s kind of offensive. It doesn’t bother me because I don’t think they meant it that way. But because some people could be offended, the people that want to change it have a reasonable claim.” Sophomore Jessica Richardson said, “I don’t find it offensive. I think it’s fine like it is.”¹³³ The responses of Kilbert and Collins indicate an interesting

approach to racial conflict. They both contend that if something offends anyone, and it is not an essential part of the University, then it should be eliminated. This stance is illustrative of the culture of image reform created by the Wynne incident. The issue then arises if others would be offended by the name “Plantation Room” being changed, similar to groups that would be offended by the suggestion of a ban of the purple and gold Confederate flag. Arguments to retain these things almost always include this facet. It seems that no matter what is done one group or the other will take offense. This is the difficulty inherent in the flag controversy.

The debate over the display of the flag continued into 1998. In a *Reveille Sports* column titled, “I might be wrong, but I don’t care,” David Locke issued his personal opinion on display of the Confederate flag at LSU sporting events. “The fine citizens of Oxford, Miss., need to join the rest of us in the 20th century. Maybe they have not realized that the South lost the war. Why anyone would choose to associate themselves with a flag advocating racism is insane.”¹³⁴ Locke’s bold assertions drew forth a quick counter from Junior Andre Young. In his letter, titled, “Rebel flag symbolizes southern pride,” he engaged in a spirited defense of the symbol and its associations with southern heritage. “I will keep waving my Confederate flag when and where I want because I can! You can make them take the flag down from schools, courthouses, and wherever. But if you want to take my Rebel flag away, you’ll have to pry it out of my cold dead hands.”¹³⁵ Young represented the group of students that clung to the flag because the tradition they interpreted it to represent. Further, Young’s response shows the emotion elicited by attempts to prevent people from doing something they perceive as their right. In the case

of the purple and gold battle flag, the push for the symbol's ban caused its supporters to display it with even more frequency and emotion.

In the early fall of 1999, students and faculty continued to voice their concerns over the visibility of purple and gold Confederate flags at football tailgates. *The Reveille* first reported the issue on September 29 in an article, "Flag stirs controversy on campus: Legality of purple-and-gold Confederate banners have [*sic*] recently come into question."¹³⁶ The author of the piece observed that the modified, tiger-themed emblem had been "popping up around campus, especially during football games."¹³⁷ Several faculty members were quoted on their opinion of the growing phenomenon. Then the Associated Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administrative Services, Ralph Gossard addressed the flag issue saying, "I've heard of the flag, but I've never actually seen it."¹³⁸ Gossard stated the University's stance on the symbol and discussed the potential for legal action. "If I saw one and felt it were actionable I would ask my attorney to second guess that and then contact the manufacturer...The colors purple and gold are not necessarily trademarked by themselves, but when the elements are combined in such a way as an average person would perceive it as representing LSU, we would have a concern."¹³⁹ The article further explored the legality of the flag, referencing Director of Purchasing Lyn Taylor comments that "the University does not authorize the purple and gold confederate [*sic*] flags." She went on to say, "We would never license it. We want to see if we can find out who is bringing them on campus."¹⁴⁰ According to the article, the University had a licensing agent, the Collegiate Licensing Company, which was hired to seek out products infringing on LSU trademarks. Michael Drucker, associate counsel for the CLC, pointed out that "[i]f it doesn't have any marks the University protects as part of its

licensing program, we wouldn't have much power to do anything."¹⁴¹ LaGarrett King, Assistant Director of Minority Affairs was one faculty member who was very concerned. He said, "It disturbs me because of what the original Confederate flag was used for.... If someone wants to fly a red and blue confederate [*sic*] flag, that is personal, but when it's [the purple and gold Confederate flag] blatantly put out there at games, I think the University should take a stand."¹⁴² History instructor Leonard Moore, who is currently an associate professor of history, took a more accepting stance vis à vis King's position, stating, "On some levels it bothers me, but I'm a defender of free speech and I respect that person's right to fly [the flag]."¹⁴³ As Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Gregory Vincent, who was also a practicing attorney, appropriately issued a response to the controversy, acknowledging the applicability of the freedom of speech argument while noting the harmful effects the symbol may have on the University. He also observed the potential positive results of the polarizing issue.

It doesn't make me feel very welcome. If I'm recruiting a top faculty member and I take that person to the Union and across the street there's a huge confederate [*sic*] flag flying...that's what my thoughts are. You can't diminish if someone's forefathers fought in a war, but at the same time, it's been at every Ku Klux Klan rally I've ever seen. We can use this as an opportunity to get groups together to talk, which is what diversity is all about: beginning to talk about issues.¹⁴⁴

Vincent's prediction came to fruition later that semester when students and faculty members gathered for constructive dialogue.

As the Assistant Director of Minority Affairs, LaGarrett King took it upon himself to organize a forum to address the issue. The event was scheduled for Wednesday, October 27, the week before the LSU-Ole Miss game. The timing of the forum was significant because of the two schools' history on the gridiron and the prevalence of the controversial symbol on any occasion they met. On October 29, *The*

Reveille reported on the event in the article, “Panel Hears Debate on Controversial Banner: No Solutions Forthcoming on Purple-and-Gold Confederate Flag Issue.”¹⁴⁵ The forum, called “A Confederate Flag Forum: Why Southerners love it and African-Americans despise it,” took place in the Union’s Atchafalaya Room, and “[t]he panel was composed of Gaines Foster, an associate professor in history who teaches a course on the New South; Guy Brody, a radio disc jockey; Sterling Foster, Student Government president; and Terrance Tucker, president of the NAACP on campus.” Each had strong opinions regarding the issue. Gaines Foster stressed that a major part of the southern tradition is manners, observing that the negative effects of the flag go against that tradition. In support of students who expressed no offense to the historically accurate Confederate battle flag but did take exception with the purple and gold design, Professor Foster said, “The purple-and-gold flag is sacrilege to LSU.” Tucker reminded those present that “[y]ou can have pride in the South without the flag,” saying, “I cannot...understand how Southerners [*sic*] came to associate such a symbol with pride.” Tucker understood southern identity as not being dependant upon the flag. Based on his views, then, a collective southern identity can exist absent of agreement on the meaning and place of the flag in southern society. Students present at the discussion voiced opposition to this contention. A transfer student from University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, Laura Wooters countered Tucker, stating, “The flag represents where I come from. If we forget the Confederate flag we leave a part of us behind.” Despite this, she opposed the disputed LSU themed battle flag. “The flag is being horribly misrepresented. I wouldn’t want to see the American flag in purple and gold.” Brody questioned the rationale of those flying the flag. “We wouldn’t walk around with a swastika in front of a

synagogue. At the risk of hurting a race I don't think it's worth it." SG president Sterling Foster resolved that discussion should turn into action, saying, "We need to take what we get here tonight and change things." The forum's title, as well as the opinions expressed within it, expose a great deal about associations of the flag with southern identity. By proclaiming, "African Americans hate it," the title excludes the group from those Southerners who love it. This implies that southern identity is contingent upon someone's opinion of the Confederate battle flag. This supports the appraisal of the flag controversy as a crisis of southern identity. Both the groups in opposition and in support of the flag, a banner that has been referred to by some historians as the central symbol of southern identity, identify themselves as southern, yet they are diametrically opposed in interpreting it. Within two weeks, Student Government heeded the advice of its executive officer, Sterling Foster, and addressed the purple and gold Confederate battle flag issue.

The debate was brought to the floor of the student senate. On November 18, 1999, the *Reveille* published an article titled "Confederate Flag Bill: Senate Fails to Act,"¹⁴⁶ describing a resolution, co-authored by SG senators Matthew Ardoin, Angie Pelligrin, and Karen Rader that completely denounced the purple and gold Confederate flag. The resolution was tabled by a nineteen to thirteen vote. The authors of the bill said their actions were based on discussions with students who attended the flag forum on October 27, most of whom opposed the symbol. Those senators in opposition felt that the sample was not large enough to be definitively representative of the general student opinion. Senator Barry Rogé said, "It's not been proven that the majority of the student body feels this way therefore the bill is wrong. The amount of people polled in no way represents the 32,000 students who exist on this campus." Some felt it was not the place of the

student governing body to pass moral judgment on those who chose to use the symbol. Senator Michael Cooper was quoted, saying, “We don’t have the power or the obligation to say, ‘You can’t fly this flag, we disapprove.’” Another student senator, Natalie Arbour, felt that passing the resolution may lead to more harm than good. “I think this might make discord instead of harmony.” After the motion to table the bill was passed, Ardoin, Rader, Pelligrin, LaGarret King, who was also present at the session, and several other senators “stormed out of the meeting and expressed their unhappiness in the hallway.” King was especially upset over the failure to pass the bill, asserting, “Student Senate is officially a joke. These are real issues...If you do not want to tackle serious issues, you shouldn’t be a part of Student Government.” SG president Sterling Foster also expressed disappointment as he made plans for a special session to discuss the resolution. “You’ve got six days. We need to act on this soon. It should have been acted on tonight.” Despite the evident feeling of frustration, it is unsurprising that the Senate was not prepared to make a final decision. The different reasons aired in support of and in opposition to the flag indicate that various interpretations of the symbol were behind the logic of the student senators. While some felt no connection to the flag, others perhaps identified with the symbol or could at least empathize with others who did.

The next day, *the Reveille* reported that the campus chapter of the NAACP became involved in lobbying SG members to support the resolution. The article “NAACP Demands SG Decision on Flag Bill,”¹⁴⁷ described the concerns of NAACP members and their support of the tabled resolution. Five of the nineteen senators who voted to table the bill were present to explain their position. From the outset, emotions ran high. NAACP members balked at Senator Craig Cancienne’s explanation that “the Student Senate...was

not prepared to make a decision. I think another week or even longer would allow us to hear our constituents.” Those present felt talking about the issue more was redundant in light of the amount of attention that had been paid to it as well as the recent forum. Most were adamant that the resolution be passed at the upcoming special session.

Just two days later, well before the scheduled special session, SG tackled the resolution once again. A *Reveille* article, titled “Senate amends, passes controversial purple-and-gold confederate flag bill,”¹⁴⁸ reported that, after three hours of debate and several amendments, a modified resolution passed by a twenty-six to nine vote. The altered resolution aligned SG with the university, stating that the senate “supports the administration’s decision not to endorse the display of the purple-and-gold Confederate battle flag.” While Ardoin was pleased that the student senate had taken action, LaGarrett King and NAACP leaders criticized the resolution as “weak and watered down.” Senator Dominick Impastato, who cast a dissenting vote, argued that his decision was based on his perception that the purple and gold battle flag was unrelated to racism and had more to do with freedom of speech. He said, “If somebody wants to bring up a bill that Student Senate is against racism, I’ll be the author. I am totally opposed to that.” The Senate’s failure to unequivocally denounce the flag evidences the variety of meanings people attach to the symbol. The battle flag appeared at different times in history and in different contexts. This legacy characterizes people’s interpretation of the symbol today. It is difficult for someone to denounce something they view differently than the person calling for that denunciation. Without agreement on some general level of what the flag represented, no definitive action could be taken.

The flag became a contentious issue with students only in the fall semesters of 1997, 1998, and 1999, coinciding directly with football season. As it is today, the purple and gold Confederate battle flag is directly linked to LSU football. The evidence suggests that display of the flag was confined to home football events. Its display during a short period of time on infrequent occasions leads to the assumption of minimal visibility and a minority of people choosing to present the symbol in the school's colors. At the same time, the popularity of LSU football augmented the visibility of such sporadic use of the flag. The debate on the flag through the fall of 1999 permeated campus, not just Student Government. This is indicative of the issue's prevalence at this time. So, while the infrequent display of the flag might suggest a low level of concern, its impact supports that the majority of students were involved, either directly or indirectly, in the debate over the issue.

The flag persisted as a cause for student concern into 2000. On September 20, four students engaged in a controversial display that sparked discussion in the campus community about the battle flag. In an article titled, "Confederate symbol burning provokes opinions, reactions,"¹⁴⁹ chief staff writer Kristen Meyer reported:

At approximately 12:30p.m. four men entered the Quad from the side of Middleton Library, carrying a Confederate battle flag with the words "Pride" and "Shame" spray-painted in yellow across the front. The men encouraged students to follow them to the fountain in front of Dodson auditorium, where they cut the flag into four strips, doused each strip with lighter fluid and set them on fire, as they stood on the rim of the fountain. The men held the burning flag in the air, dropped it to the ground and then left the Quad, without saying a word or giving a reason.

A small crowd of around fifty students watched the display. Some cheered, while most spectators appeared somewhat indifferent. Brandon Haynes a mass communication senior

said, “I think they’re making a statement that last year student government wouldn’t make.”

The *Reveille*’s opinion pages in the next few days were littered with letters and Op-ed pieces on the flag burning. In his editorial “Flag burners highlight ambiguity of pride,”¹⁵⁰ Columnist Michael Henderson questioned the heritage argument common amongst purple and gold battle flag supporters. He could not dissociate the positive aspects of that legacy from its negative connotations. He stressed that history could not be denied and left it up to his fellow southerners to move forward with regard to the flag controversy. “I am not denying history. Rather, I am owning up to its impact on the present. I am looking to the future. This is southern pride – an acknowledgement of what the South can be through the efforts of those who care.” In acknowledging those negative aspects of Southern history, Henderson hoped to move past them in order to improve the South. All three published letters to the editor were in response to the flag burning and appeared just below Henderson’s column.¹⁵¹ Two of the three letters denounced the acts of the four men who burned the flag and were clearly in support of students’ right to display the flag. In the third letter, Junior Mario Juves took a different approach in addressing the flag controversy. He said that after talking with friends about the issue, he realized how many different and strong viewpoints existed regarding the battle flag. In response, he appealed to students to place understanding above argument in order of importance, writing, “No matter what your opinion is, we definitely cannot ignore the division it is causing. To those of you who really believe the flag is inclusive to all, then start educating others. To those who believe it is a symbol of division and prejudice, do the same. Only through discussion can you truly understand the other points of view.”

For Juves, The divisive effects of the flag debate overshadowed individual concerns about its meaning and appropriateness, hearkening back to student concerns over the image of the University a few years earlier.

On Tuesday the opinion section was once again filled with letters regarding the flag. Clearly, this outpouring of student opinion indicated that a great deal of passion and emotion existed within the campus community concerning the flag issue. However, a resolution to the flag conflict seemed a far off, if not unreachable, outcome. Perhaps such a charged atmosphere surrounding the conflict can be attributed to the feelings usually associated with issues of race. Calls to ban the flag along with the flag burning in the quad had excited tensions over the subject. As historian Melvin Patrick Ely has observed, “Censorship of anything that might stir painful memories too often prevents any deep discussion of the realities of race – a subject so full of historic wrongs and agonies that no honest dialogue about it can be painless or antiseptic.”¹⁵² The students who burned the flag were attempting to provoke a deeper discussion, one that encompassed the realities of race relations to which most people perceived the symbol pertained. To them, the flag was not just a symbol of southern heritage and slavery, but it was also representative of the state of contemporary race relations.

The 1999-2000 *Gumbo* did feature an article on the flag conflict; however, only two pages, absent of any images, covered the contentious issue. This is surprising considering the stir the battle flag created amongst students in the late nineties. The article focused on the Confederate flag forum held in the fall of 1999 and the student opinion that emerged from it.

Most people who attended the forum felt the problem was not the flag itself so long as it was not a flag to represent the whole student body...One student

remarked, “[T]he flag stands for institutionalized slavery.” NAACP president of LSU Terence Tucker said, “We cannot move forward into the new south [sic] until we can express our feelings about the old south [sic] and the present.” Sophomore Misty Landor seemed very adamant about the removal of the flag from LSU campus. “The purple and gold flag has no place on LSU campus. If we can give two grand to LSU each semester, I feel I have the right to demand you take it away.”...When asked how he felt about the Confederate flag controversy, micro biology/pre-med major Daniel Druilhert said, “In life we make choices that may either directly or indirectly affect the lives of those around us. The symbols we use give credence to who we are as a people.”¹⁵³

Druilhert’s point is well taken. Those things that people associate themselves with most frequently define who they are to some degree. Certainly, then, display of the Confederate battle flag indicates personal association of some members of the campus community with the banner. It is then a part of these individuals’ sense of identity. The difficulty arises in determining how representative the flag is of a collective sense of southern identity. One campus publication attempted to resolve this dilemma.

Legacy, a student produced magazine that began as an offshoot of the *Gumbo* during the 1992-1993 school year, printed as its feature article in the third issue of the 1999-2000 school year an examination of the flag’s history, meaning, and impact at LSU.¹⁵⁴



For the piece, the magazine conducted a survey to gauge student opinion regarding the flag controversy. The study is helpful in assessing the role the flag had in defining the

identity of students at this particular time. Out of the ninety-four-person sample, thirty were African Americans and forty-six were Caucasians. Patrick McCune, the author of the article, claimed the group was “a fairly representative segment of the campus population.” Though ninety-four is a very small sample considering the large undergraduate population of LSU, the racial balance of the group is significant in understanding the degree to which the flag controversy was defined along racial lines. Considering the relatively lopsided ratio of whites to blacks at LSU, including thirty African-Americans in the survey is actually non-representative of the student body, in contradiction to the article’s assessment of the sample group. This consideration greatly effects interpretation of the data. The survey’s results were as follows:

1. In your opinion is the Confederate flag an important part of our history? (out of 93 responses)
 - a. 48 – Yes
 - b. 34 – No
 - c. 11 – No opinion
2. Do you feel it is inappropriate for the Confederate flag to be flown on campus? (out of 93 responses)
 - a. 53 – Yes
 - b. 31 – No
 - c. 9 – No opinion
3. Do you find the Confederate flag offensive to you personally? (out of 94 responses)
 - a. 32 – Yes
 - b. 53 – No
 - c. 7 – No opinion
4. What do you think the Confederate flag represents? (out of 93 responses)
 - a. 39 – Racist attitudes
 - b. 32 – Southern pride and heritage
 - c. 18 – Only history
 - d. 3 – Nothing
 - e. 9 – Other

5. If the University took any action hindering the display of the Confederate flag do you feel your constitutional right to expression and freedom of speech would be unjustly regulated? (out of 88 responses)
 - a. 48 – Yes
 - b. 22 – No
 - c. 18 – No opinion

The immediate impression received from the data is that of a fairly balanced view of the battle flag controversy amongst students; however, when the ratio of white to black subjects is considered, the survey's results must be reinterpreted. When viewed from this light, the survey shows that, among students, the battle flag dispute was clearly a black and white issue. Still, further analysis is necessary.

Question one had thirty-four responses saying that the flag was not an important part of southern history. If it is assumed that all thirty African American subjects answered the question in this way, then at least four non-black students responded in the negative. Also, eleven subjects had no opinion. The responses to this question support the contention that the perceived importance of history to southern culture and southern identity among younger generations was declining. Question two reveals that a majority of students felt the flag was inappropriate. This is supportive of the contention that the flag was displayed by a small group of people relative to the campus community.

Question three's results showed that thirty-two students found the flag personally offensive. Only thirty African Americans being surveyed may support the purely racial nature of the situation; however, the fact that two non-black students would find the flag offensive is somewhat contradictory of this. Though two is a very small number, only ninety-four were surveyed. Then, even small variations can be seen as significant. Also, question four's result showing that most people felt the flag represented either racism or southern pride and heritage lends more support to the conclusion that the flag debate was

clearly being waged along racial lines. Finally, the fact that the majority of those responding to the question five felt that University action to restrict display of the flag would violate their rights shows that though disagreement over the meaning of the flag existed, most could put ideological qualms aside in order to preserve their freedoms.

McCune further examined the results of the survey, referencing some questions not included in the article's breakdown, and providing information on the responses of blacks and whites to the survey questions.

“The two most predominant races on campus voted very strongly for certain questions. Out of thirty African Americans surveyed, twenty-six felt that the flag's display on University property was inappropriate. Thirty of the forty-six Caucasians felt that their first amendment rights would be unjustly restricted if the University took any action hindering the display of the Confederate flag...The largest point of agreement in the survey was found in question nine. When asked whether or not the student body would adhere to and respect a ban on the flag, 60 of the 88 who answered the question said ‘No.’”¹⁵⁵

Most felt that no matter what was done to alleviate the tension the flag controversy had created people would continue to act as they pleased. Then, in the minds of most students, a ban would have been ineffective in solving the flag conflict.

On April 27, 2001, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) announced that it would no longer consider for championship sites those schools where the Confederate Battle flag continued to have a prominent presence.¹⁵⁶ This threat of discontinued athletic opportunities elicited an official University response. Ralph Gossard, then associate vice chancellor for administrative services, sent a letter to local retailers selling the purple and gold flag, cautioning that the University did not license the use of its colors on a Confederate battle flag and that legal consequences could result from its continued sale, stating:

During this past football season, we received a number of inquiries and complaints about a 'Confederate' flag, presumably the Naval Battle Jack flag, printed in the LSU school colors...LSU has not and will not license the use of its colors for this use and will take necessary legal action to prevent any unlicensed use.¹⁵⁷

The potential for lost athletic opportunities, and lost revenues, proved influential enough to warrant a strong university response. Though LaGarrett King, the Assistant Director of Minority Affairs in 1999, sponsored a forum on the flag, university administration did not position themselves on either side of the debate at that time. Administrators may have felt that student protest and action was not significant enough to warrant a response. Perhaps they feared an official response would only polarize sides further. Whatever their reason for not addressing the controversy in 1999 during student government dialogues, it is telling that NCAA threats drew official action. Racial discord is seen as the norm in the South, so student discussion over the display of the purple and gold confederate battle flag was in line with what was perceived as the status quo. Regardless of any action university officials may have taken in 1999, whether it was to censor the flag or support the rights of those who flew it, pro-flag and anti-flag factions would have remained steadfast in their opinions. The fact then remains that the possibility of NCAA sanctions was a more powerful force of persuasion than student discord and concern over the state of race relations at the university. Quiet over the issue supports the existence of a racial malaise throughout the South; problems regarding race relations were ignored because of their perceived normalcy. As U.B. Phillips found, this is the central theme of the southern history.

The Campus remained relatively quiet in regard to the purple and gold battle flag for some time after Gossard's letter. And though it was not prevalent in student dialogue,

it certainly was on display. On April 1, 2004, the *Reveille* published an article titled “Campus Divided Over Confederate Flag”¹⁵⁸ that focused on continued student concern over display of the purple and gold Confederate battle flag. Writer Lauren Wilbert discussed the spectrum of opinion existing on campus, interviewing various students, athletes and faculty members. Amongst those athletes interviewed were high profile football players. Former LSU defensive line standout Marcus Spears, who currently plays with the Dallas Cowboys, said:

I'm not too fond of it because I know what it stands for. You start thinking about it sometimes, but it never bothers me to the point that I get mad. Some people do it because they're representing LSU, but I think it's something that goes with the individual. I don't like to get into racial discussions, but, if it offends people, it should be addressed.

Spears comments are a reminder of the battle flag’s inherent conflict. The chief issue under scrutiny is the meaning of the flag, and he could only express what he believed it to symbolize. The flag has been used to represent various movements and ideologies, so much so that it is difficult to definitively know what it represents. Spears remarks are a reminder of this.

Wide out and return-specialist Skyler Green, who is also a professional football player, was unaffected by the turmoil surrounding the flag controversy. He claimed to see it as “something of the past,” and he was unconcerned with it as a result of this view. “It's all in what they believe, and if that makes them more excited about LSU, then let them do it.” Green articulated what seems a minority view with regard to the flag issue. However, his comments lead to an important point. The fascination with history that had once characterized and distinguished the South has eroded over time. Modern, mass culture has in many cases caused southerners to forget their historical legacies that were once a

major source of pride. Increasingly, southerners see themselves as less regional and more a part of the national culture. This has led to the display of Confederate symbols, especially the battle flag, outside of their proper historical context. As a result, the purple and gold battle flag is more offensive than one in its historical colors. Such an altered emblem links the Confederacy to persons and institutions that have no historical connection. The purple and gold battle flag, then, is not necessarily offensive because of design but because of its colors and the association to LSU that results from them.

Among those faculty members expressing their thoughts on the flag were professors Leonard Moore and Stanley Hilton. *The Reveille* questioned Moore, an associate professor of history and African American studies, on the flag issue in 1999. On that occasion he said, ““On some levels it bothers me, but I’m a defender of free speech and I respect that person’s right to fly it [the flag].” In 2004, Moore remained consistent in that he did not call for a ban of the flag, but his perspective on the situation had changed with the altered context. He said:

The majority of players on the football team are African-American. Then we have these white boosters cheering them on when they're flying the Confederate flag. It's disrespectful and for the fans who do (fly the flag), it shows they could care less about those players. When people say, 'It's my heritage, it's what I'm proud of,' what do they mean? Pride in what? A majority of folks flying it probably don't have any connection to the Civil War. People are taking pride who have no investment in that...To me, it's letting people know, 'Let's get back to the way it used to be. What I want to know is, what do white Southerners get out of it?

Moore’s shifted tone in addressing the flag controversy in 2004 vis à vis his 1999 statement is indicative of the many emotional chords the flag can strike. In different contexts, interpretations of the battle flag differ. Moore’s opinion was subject to this fact. In 1999, when students first began to publicly take issue with the purple and gold battle flag, outcry had not reached the level it did in 2004. In addition, increased protest led to

increased display, which created even greater exposure of the flag and of campus community member's thoughts on it through student media outlets. Increases in both the flag's visibility and student concern over its display had caused Professor Moore to interpret the flag controversy differently in this case than he had in 1999.

Hilton, a professor of history, recognized the dichotomy of meaning that the battle flag represents, saying, "To African Americans, it conjures up something heinous, and that's slavery. But, to Southerners that take pride in that flag, they don't think slavery" However, the heritage of the flag that southerners take pride in undeniably encompasses slavery and racism to some degree. The Confederacy was fighting for the right of its states to maintain an institution of human bondage and to remain unmolested by the federal government. While the southern tradition is also made up of other facets, this racial aspect cannot be escaped.

All students interviewed supported the rights of those who fly the flag. Tony Marks, a mass communication senior said, "I understand it offends some people, and I respect their feelings. I just think they've been misguided and misunderstand the history. It's a very bad part of our history, but it symbolizes a way of life. It's more about Southern traditions, and to a lot of people who fly it, it's not done with an intent to be racist." In voicing his support for the rights of those who fly the flag, Marks reveals the conflict of interest inherent in the display of the symbol. He admits that the part of history it represents has negative associations. This calls into questions the motives of those who fly it. Then display of the flag can be interpreted to represent an implicit endorsement of that "bad part" of the southern past. Chad Waldrup, a history senior claimed, "People are proud of the South, but it doesn't mean everyone's racist. Symbols change. It probably

means the same thing as it used to, but perceptions change. I'm not asking [people] to change their views, I'm just asking them to respect mine.” In this case, the student cannot say with any certainty what the flag means. Though he asks for respect of his views, he cannot definitively identify what those views are. Further, Waldrup fails to recognize that perception creates meaning. In this student’s case, it seems that the motive for flying the flag simply rests on a personal choice, an individual gravitation toward the flag. This supports the transformation of the flag from a revered historical symbol to a popular culture icon. Amongst many of those who display the symbol, it seems that what the flag represents does not influence their choice to fly it. There is a great deal of danger involved in casually flying a flag imbued with so much emotion and history, charged with so many different meanings. The heritage of the flag must be understood and respected by all those involved in order for a resolution to ever be reached.

Michael Silva, a chemical engineering freshman and Filipino student, in comparing the emblem to the Philippines’ flag bumper sticker on his car, said, “In that way I think it's Southern pride. I don't think we have a race problem on campus, and if people cared less, it wouldn't be a problem.” Silva’s point is well taken. Though the issue of living wages has come up at the university recently, it was not so much a minority issue as it was a purely social issue. It can be argued that the climate of LSU today is very accepting of all students, no matter their ethnicity, religion, or orientation. The fact that the majority of students are white is not necessarily a cause for concern as whites make up the majority of the nation’s population and the student population can be seen as representative of a larger state and even national demographic. Indeed, LSU boasts a very diverse student body, with students hailing from all over the globe.

The last person to comment in Wilbert's article was Leah Jewett, director of the University Civil War Center. She said:

The facts tell us that various flags were used throughout the Civil War to represent the Confederacy in battle and as a political nation. But, the battle flag controversy cannot be clarified by researching the Civil War and stopping there. The post-war years were crucial to understanding the issue. Really listening to opposing viewpoints, and considering all facets of American history as 'our' history would go a long way toward achieving mutual respect and understanding.

Jewett acknowledges the significance of all of history, especially recent history, in shaping perceptions of the flag. Certainly, it is recent history that has been most powerful in defining the flag's contemporary meaning.

Nearly one year after Wilbert's investigation into the issue, student government members took up the flag debate once again. In March of 2005, *The Reveille* reported that Brandon Smith, speaker of the student senate and former Black Student Union President, proposed legislation in opposition to the display of the flag.¹⁵⁹ His move to form a coalition for opposition was inspired by the fact that, though the flag could not be banned due to constitutional rights, opposition might have similar power in achieving change. Smith said that he was "considering proposing legislation in the Student Senate or forming a campus coalition to oppose it." Smith also recognized that football season created more tension with regard to the purple and gold battle flag, saying, "[Football season] conjures up the most emotion." Smith and Black Student Union President Jennifer Grace joined together to promote discussion between students and the University on the flag, meeting with administrators to voice their concerns. "Grace said the problem is 'insensitivity,' which she said stems from ignorance. Grace said that is why the University and BSU must begin an education and awareness campaign." The article also contained statements by two white students, who "said [that] they have never noticed

purple and gold-colored Confederate flags on campus and did not know the flag is an issue.” The fact that *The Reveille* explicitly identifies the two students as white shows the issue to have been clearly divided along the color line in the eyes of the campus community. It was almost a given that the flag controversy was a black-white issue. This indicates that *The Reveille* immediately associated the flag with a racial meaning. Also, the two students claimed to have not even been aware of the issue. This is reminiscent of Skyler Green’s previously noted view regarding the flag, one that received little publicity because of its banality. It is impossible to know how many were unaffected by the flag controversy, but it can certainly be said that the group existed. This view was uncontroversial and, thus, uninteresting. However, the fact that it existed at all further evidences the diminished interest in history as well as the various understandings of the flag amongst students.

One month later, University Chancellor Sean O’Keefe posted his thoughts on the purple and gold Confederate battle flag on the “Issues and Answers” section of his Web site.¹⁶⁰ O’Keefe openly opposed the use of the flag, but said that he would not attempt to ban it because of the implications such an action would have for people’s first amendment rights. The Chancellor also said the University would do everything to ensure that the sale of such flags with University trademarks and symbols would be met with legal action. Jason Droddy, executive assistant to the chancellor, was quoted on the issue as saying:

“We’re not going to drive through parking lots on game days telling people to take a flag down,” Droddy said. “But if we find out that someone is producing Confederate flags with one of our logos, they will be subject to legal actions.”

Though O’Keefe’s stance was not as firm as some protesters would have liked, Brandon Smith recognized the significance of the top University official coming out against the flag. “Having the Chancellor say something against the flag is a sign that we have gotten farther than ever before,” Smith said. “The administration hasn’t said anything about the issue before.” Such unprecedented action signaled a major victory for those opposing the flag.

The actions by Smith and O’Keefe were indicative of a greater awareness of the flag issue on campus and in the surrounding community than ever before. This is evidenced by the cancellation of an event planned to take place on May 3, 2005 at Parrot Beach, a downtown Baton Rouge bar.¹⁶¹ The party was intended to raise money for a University student Emerson Baty, who was in need of medical procedures to treat a heart condition. The event was cancelled as a result of concern caused by the flier that was circulated to promote it that featured a purple and gold Confederate battle flag as its background. “In addition to the flag, the fliers feature black and white clasped hands and the photos of University basketball players Seimone Augustus and Tack Minor, who were scheduled to face off in a freestyle [rap] contest.” Eric Broussard, manager of the host site, cancelled the event after he learned about the flier in order to prevent further negative publicity and to avoid the possibility of protests. Broussard said he “did not approve the use of the controversial flag on fliers and that he did not want a mob showing up in negative response to the advertisements.” While Broussard was responsible for the cancellation, he neither designed nor distributed the flier. The organizer of the event, Charleston Wilson, reportedly requested that the controversial symbol be included on the fliers when he contracted Vivid Images Company to produce them. Wilson said “the flier

was not meant to offend anyone and that there were even plans to burn a Confederate flag at the party...[T]he point of the flier was to bring light to recent issues between Southern University and LSU.” Wilson was referring to a prior incident that had also resulted in the cancellation of a Southern-LSU event. The gathering in question was a part of a series of SU-LSU Greek exchanges and parties called “Salt ‘N’ Pepper.” The cancellation occurred after Southern students expressed apprehension over LSUPD Maj. Mark Shaw’s statement to the events organizers that “Southern students might cause security problems.” Joy Harbor, the Vivid Images employee who designed the flier, said she was surprised at Wilson’s request because he was black. Harbor commented, “The first thing that popped up in my mind was that it’s a racist flier.” The situation is a source of information regarding contemporary historical awareness. If Wilson saw the battle flag as offensive he would not have included it in the flier. Yet, Harbor’s immediate interpretation of the battle flag was dominated by a racial understanding. The use of the symbol in this particular situation is consistent with the banner’s history as a symbol with a variety of meanings. Wilson perceived the flag differently both from those who supported and opposed it. A symbol of racial harmony, the two hands, and an emblem synonymous with racial discord, the Confederate battle flag, being employed simultaneously suggests that Wilson had a unique understanding of the flag. He saw it as non-, or at least less, controversial than others. Unlike Wilson, Joy Harbor felt the flag was clearly racist. The past has been important in defining the flag today not as a symbol with a single meaning, but as an emblem with no unified identity. In turn, this has created a southern identity crisis, the battle over which is being waged through conflicts like LSU’s purple and gold battle flag dispute.

In the fall of 2005, the controversy remained at the fore of student concern. *The Reveille* reported that on October 14 a diverse group of student leaders and university administrators met at the African American Cultural Center to discuss plans to remove the flag from campus events.¹⁶² Members of the NAACP chapter at the University called for a complete ban, while other NAACP members, university administrators, and student government representatives supported a more measured approach. The *Reveille* described the two plans as follows:

The first plan, a collaborative effort among some NAACP members, SG members and administrators, is to start conversations with tailgaters flying the flag and encourage them to take it down and fly an LSU flag instead. The other plan, supported only by some NAACP members, will call for an official ban by campus administrators in addition to conversations with the tailgaters.

University NAACP chapter president Alicia Calvin pushed for an immediate ban, saying, “We’re calling for a policy change about the flag. We want a policy to ensure the flag cannot be flown on campus.” Amongst the supporters of the first, more moderate plan was Collins Phillips, NAACP and student government executive board member. Phillips stated, “You can’t make people just stop doing something. You can make people stop doing something by understanding why they shouldn’t. Changing people’s minds about the flag is a long process. I think it’s necessary to start small instead of trying institute a ban.” This meeting marked the beginning of Phillips’ involvement in efforts to remove the flag from campus, and his importance in the movement grew from this point.

Despite the aforementioned meeting, tailgaters continued to fly the flag. If some were undeterred, others still were emboldened by the news of university administrators and student leaders gathering to discuss a campus-wide ban of the flag. On October 17, *Reveille* writer Ginger Gibson reported, “Many tailgaters told *The Daily Reveille* before

Saturday's game that they would still fly the flag even if it were banned. Some tailgaters became hostile at the mere suggestion of a ban."¹⁶³ This defensive stance is consistent with a long-standing aspect of southern identity. Southerners have engaged in a rabid defense of their traditions since the Civil war. The tradition of flying a purple and gold flag at tailgates is no different. Gibson referenced a particular fan in addressing the tradition of flying the flag, writing:

Chris Macinyre, a fan from Toronto who was visiting campus for the weekend, said he did not think the flag was racist but about maintaining a tradition. Macinyre said many tailgaters flew the flag while they were students and fly it now to remember past years at the University. "You take away our tradition and you take away our livelihood," he said.⁸³

Gibson continued describing the reaction of various fans at tailgates displaying the flag to recent protests.

Jessica Paul said "It might be offensive to some people. At the same time, it's a heritage to us." Blake Cado while tailgating with the flag, said "We don't have it to make a racial statement." ...Jan Hadrus, an LSU fan from Hammond, told *the Reveille* "that if a rule were made, she said she would take the flag down but insisted she has a right to fly the flag." She said, "I like anything purple and gold, and I like that flag." ...One tailgater said he did not see how the flag could be offensive but that if black people find it offensive, they need to stop playing rap music containing profanities - which he finds offensive - before they complain about the flag. Another woman said she was not concerned about waving the flag because black people were allowed to be more racist than she. She insisted that as long as black people had a Black Miss America and Black Entertainment Television, she should be permitted to wave the flag on campus

The comments about rap music and other elements of black culture indicate a degree of dislike for these things. This distaste can be interpreted as racially motivated. Whether the flag was representative of such racist sentiments or not, the fact that they existed at all shows that race played a role in shaping peoples' views on the controversy. Certainly, such comments can be interpreted to support the understanding of the purple and gold Confederate battle flag as a racist symbol. Also, the two comments relating the perceived

offensiveness of elements of black culture came from non-students. Tensions about the flag controversy may have been even higher amongst adults who identified with battle flag and chose to fly the purple and gold derivation at their tailgates. This strong stance by adults is indicative of the changing perception of the significance of history in the contemporary South as well as the differences in beliefs regarding race relations across generational lines. Certainly, acceptance and understanding in the context of racial conflict has grown, and continues to grow, through time.

On October 22, the movement became a public protest. *The Reveille* reported that students protested on campus against flying the purple and gold Confederate flag before and during LSU's win over Auburn. Beginning at the African American Cultural Center, the marchers demonstrated on their way to Tiger Stadium, while waving anti-Confederate flag signs and chanting 'ban the flag.'¹⁶⁴ The protest march ended in the student section where participants continued to display their signs. Though the march did elicit some response from tailgaters, the group did not create much stir amongst those present on campus. Protests continued with a march the following Monday, October 24. *A Reveille* staff report described the scene:

Students gathered Monday morning to demand the banning of the Confederate flag on campus. About 200 students marched from the Union to Chancellor Sean O'Keefe's office to protest the flag they say is racist. Chancellor O'Keefe came out from his office upon the request of the students and said he agreed that the flag was offensive but would not ban the flag on campus because of the right to free speech.¹⁶⁵

Collins Phillips, who had endorsed the moderate approach to removing the flag, shifted his stance on this march. He was informally recognized as the leader of the group, and he and a few other students participating in that day's march attempted to enter Thomas Boyd Hall to speak directly with the Chancellor's. LSUPD Major Ricky Adams

prevented the group from doing so and informed them that the Chancellor was coming out to meet them. O’Keefe encouraged the continuation of constructive dialogue, but Phillips “said students were tired of sitting in meetings and the issue was straight and simple - the flag should be banned.”

On October 27, the Wednesday of that same week, “the Student Senate voted...to send to committee a resolution that officially announce[d] Student Government's disapproval of the purple and gold Confederate flag.”¹⁶⁶ This SG action is similar to the response to the flag issued by the 1999 student government, evidencing the complexity the issue poses for individuals in the public eye. Though it is difficult to straddle the middle ground, taking one stance over the other is equally so for anyone representing the community. The sides are simply too opposed. It was not in the interest of anyone involved in student politics or, for that matter, politics on a larger scale to take a firm stance in opposition of or in support of the flag.

Chancellor O’Keefe found it necessary to issue a statement in *The Reveille* on the subject of the flag due to the increase in protests. His article illustrates the diplomacy involved in dealing with such a polarizing issue for those in the public eye.

LSU does not consider the use of University colors on this flag to be appropriate. Use of the colors implies an endorsement of this symbol by the University to many members of the LSU family who find the flag to be offensive. Indeed, this has become a symbol of divisiveness.

Last spring, LSU made this position known to businesses that sell LSU items or engage in the authorized promotion of the University. We are gratified that it appears that such businesses have avoided or discontinued stocking this item.

While LSU has advanced this policy, the University and all Americans believe that the First Amendment and the right of free speech are sacrosanct. As such, the University cannot and will not ban or prohibit the flag. To do so would inhibit the constitutional right of free expression. But with this constitutional right, Americans have come to expect responsibility, sensitivity and accountability as each of us exercises this right of expression.

As such, we ask all who demonstrate pride in and allegiance to LSU to be sensitive and refrain from displaying these symbols that many among our LSU family find offensive. We are all united in our pride in LSU, which is best shown by flying the LSU flag - a symbol on which we can all agree.

This University is committed to creating an environment that is inclusive of all the members of the LSU family, and I encourage all fans, alumni and supporters to conduct themselves in a way that supports this commitment. Indeed, this is an appeal for sensitivity, civility and a display of the "better angels of our nature" with respect for all members of our LSU family.¹⁶⁷

Despite O'Keefe's response, protesters remained dissatisfied, and Collins Phillips was their figurehead. Phillips formed a new student organization to deal with diversity issues, specifically the purple and gold Confederate flag controversy, called the Student Equality Commission (SEC). Phillips claimed O'Keefe met only half of his group's demands when he renounced the flag yet failed to ban it. In response, Phillips and the SEC would honor their agreement with O'Keefe to cease marching only partially by holding a rally before the North Texas game. *The Daily Reveille* reported:

Phillips said the rally on Saturday in front of the African American Cultural Center will be themed "Unite LSU." Students of all races are welcome to come and discuss symbols they find offensive and express concerns about other campus issues, he said.¹⁶⁸

O'Keefe characterized the marches organized by Phillips as divisive displays of expression, and, though no formal deal was made between the chancellor and Phillips, he encouraged the SEC leader to discontinue engaging in such activities, which only served to broaden the divide between students on either side of the issue.

Despite the initial decision not to march at the North Texas game on October 29, Phillips led a march through campus in protest of the purple and gold Confederate battle flag for the third time in two weeks. And while the first game day march had only garnered modest attention, this particular action was characterized by a great deal of enthusiasm on both sides. At approximately two o'clock in the afternoon, students

congregated at the African American Cultural Center for an SEC organized rally. The flag was the focal point of the meeting, and Chancellor O'Keefe was present to reiterate his position on the issue. "Phillips then asked the students if they were ready to go 'meet the athletes?' Students carried bed sheets reading 'LSUnite' and 'Unity,' as well as posters asking 'Heritage or Hate?' A few signs questioned whether the purple and gold Confederate flag was the same as a purple and gold swastika."¹⁶⁹ On this occasion, tailgaters did not ignore the protesters, and some greeted the protesters with hostility.

As the protesters moved past those tailgating in the Tureaud area, some yelled back at the group and a few tailgaters took the purple and gold Confederate flags off their tents and began to flap them in the air.

One older man told the group to "get on the boat and go back to the motherland" and then "tiger bait." Another older man told the protesters to "go back to New Orleans." [Yet another] older man wearing a straw hat yelled, "Go to Southern," followed by racial expletives. A student-age tailgater yelled, "Why are you ruining my University?" When the group passed the student-section entrance, several students waiting for the gates to open held Confederate flags at the protesters.¹⁷⁰

The flag's proponents countered the displays of the SEC and clearly set themselves at odds with the protest group. In a debate such as this, with two diametrically opposed sides, both fully convinced of the righteousness of their stance, unity is a distant possibility. While intending to raise awareness and promote unity, the SEC marches had sparked action from flag supporters. Instead of coming closer together, students were further polarized. As protests intensified so did responses to them. During the first marches, tailgaters flying the flag only felt the need to defend it verbally. This particular protest was met with an offensive from supporters, as tailgaters and students acted out when marchers passed by. The goal of dialogue and awareness was abandoned, and hopes for an amicable resolution were quickly diminishing.

The possibility for a calm and quiet end to the controversy was even further gone after the Senate's flag resolution was struck down. Reveille staff writer Marissa DeCuir reported:

The senate, like most of campus, stood divided Wednesday night during an almost two-hour debate over the issue of flying the flag. Some members said the resolution discriminated against those who fly the flag, while others argued it would help unite campus because the flag causes hostility.¹⁷¹

The resolution was defeated by a convincing margin, with thirteen votes for, twenty-three against, and five abstentions. The article detailed the opinions of various student representatives. The bill's author was adamant in asserting the importance of the measure:

Eric Melancon was the arts and sciences senator who authored the flag resolution. A number of senators asked Melancon to withdraw the resolution so he would have time to submit one the whole senate could agree on. But Melancon refused the other senators' requests, saying the flag is a pressing issue and causes discord on campus. "It's here. It's now," Melancon said. "We need to follow the chancellor and executive staff's path. It's important to stand by something that's good." ... The resolution said the flag "fosters an environment of hostility and discrimination throughout the LSU community." Melancon said its passage would create unity, something other senators found contradictory.

The opinions of dissenting student senators were also covered in the article.

Graduate school Sen. Patrick Virgadamo spoke in opposition to the resolution because he said it was in no way an effective piece of legislation. "It says something but does nothing," said Virgadamo. "We recognize a problem but give no solution." ... Mass communication Sen. Josh Britton said the resolution discriminates against those who fly the flag. "It discriminates because it discourages something," Britton said. "If we want to speak with a unified voice then we will have to think of a different way to do it." Basic sciences Sen. Kenneth Habetz said the resolution's motive was obvious. "This is the clear first step to ban the flag. If this was a movie there would be a sequel," Habetz said. "Are we moving toward unity or creating more issues to divide us?" Senators were reluctant to vote down the resolution for fear the campus would view them in a negative light. "If they think anything less of us because we exercise free speech then shame on them, not shame on us," Habetz said.

It is evident that a great deal of conflict existed amongst student representatives. Senators referencing ideas like discrimination, division, and unity support an understanding of the flag conflict as a problem of race relations. Certainly, the fact that some senators were reluctant to vote against the bill because of the potential negative affect it might have on their image indicates that at least these individuals saw the flag as representative of racism, as they realized their vote against a resolution opposing it would cast them in a negative light. However, this also illustrates that student representatives were sensitive to the concerns of their constituents regardless of race and to issues involving racism. Such sympathy provided encouragement for those seeking to unify students and promote awareness about the negative effects of the flag on the African American community. Still, the Senate's position was aligned with that of the chancellor, a diplomatic and somewhat ambiguous stance in the midst of a polarizing debate.

Phillips remained undeterred, organizing a third protest for the coming Saturday, November 5. The response from tailgaters intensified, as three people were arrested for heckling the crowd. "LSUPD Chief Ricky Adams said these were the first arrests connected to the student protests."¹⁷² Following these unprecedented developments, the flag debate reached further into the Baton Rouge community, as the Metro Council considered a proposal in support of Chancellor Sean O'Keefe's stance on the flag on November 9. The resolution, introduced by District 3 Councilman Pat Culbertson, proposed the elected body formally agree with the University's position on the issue.¹⁷³ Approval would have signaled that Metro Council also opposed and discouraged the use of the flag, though they too were unable to issue any type of ban because of first amendment considerations. In its support, the resolution's author said, "Chancellor

O'Keefe has had a difficult time navigating through this situation. We can't sit idly by during such an important issue. I believe his position is a sound one for the University, and I think we should stand by it." Despite Culbertson's enthusiasm, the majority of Metro Council members were not prepared to openly support O'Keefe. The most common opinion was that the flag was a University issue and, thus, had no place in Metro Council discussions. District 10 Councilwoman Lorri Burgess commiserated with the O'Keefe's position but could not cast her vote for the resolution. "This isn't the arena for this. Yes, it's a difficult problem for the chancellor, but that's what he gets paid for." The difficulty inherent in dealing with such divisive issues is illustrated by the Metro-Council's voting down the resolution. Certainly, politicians had more to lose than gain by openly supporting the chancellor. As is customary in the South, racial issues were ignored rather than addressed. Though each member of the council doubtless had personal opinions, airing those ideas was avoided to avert controversy. Perhaps the council members voting against the resolution felt that even with their support the University would not gain any leverage in resolving the conflict. Whether their approach was indifferent or activist, the reality of the South's difficulty in race relations would still remain.

A November 9, 2005 *Reveille* editorial brought to light student concern over the negative effects the flag controversy was having on outside perception of the University and the student community. In an article titled, "Image is everything," *The Reveille* Editorial board discussed such ramifications:

If image is everything, we are losing that war at home. Recent protests of the purple and gold Confederate flag have brought to light the uncomfortable notion of racial disharmony to our campus. As we've written before, we support the First Amendment, which includes the right to protest the flag and the right to free

speech. Perhaps we were wrong in not pointing out the possible repercussions of the act itself.¹⁷⁴

In the course of student protests, little had been made about the nature of such actions and their consequences. Though student awareness of such a problem may have been low, University officials were cognizant of the flag controversy's negative outcomes.

Football season was over and with it so was the display of the purple and gold battle flag at tailgates, yet Collins Phillips III and the SEC continued their efforts in the spring. On January 25, 2006, Phillips addressed a crowd of around one hundred in the quad.¹⁷⁵ He used the flag controversy as a tipping point to discuss other issues regarding equality and diversity. However, Phillip's attempts to continue his momentum were stifled. He was charged with violating the Student Code of Conduct while organizing and carrying out the protests in the fall. These accusations were met with outcry from Phillips' student supporters. He planned to fight the charges, and his cause was helped by an exposé published in the February 2, 2006 issue of *The Reveille*. Ginger Gibson, who had followed the flag protests through the fall, investigated email correspondence regarding Phillips between Katrice Albert, the vice provost for equity and diversity, and other members of the university community, including SG president Michelle Gieg, Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs Chaunda Allen, and Chancellor Sean O'Keefe.¹⁷⁶ Albert requested Gieg's help in silencing Phillips. On Nov. 11, 2005, Albert wrote to Gieg:

I just need help convincing [Phillips] that enough is enough. And that working within the system with people who are paid to fight for his cause can be more effective. I am hopeful that he will listen to you.

The Reveille spoke to Gieg about the emails she received from Albert in a Feb. 1 phone interview. With regard to Albert's request, Gieg said, "That ties into a lot of actions that I

don't understand. [SG is] trying to understand how we've gotten to where we are. I didn't encourage him to stop as a result of that e-mail, but I'm not sure what [Albert] wanted.”

Despite Gieg’s confusion, Albert’s intentions seem clear. She wanted to silence Phillips, as he was bringing more attention to an already widely publicized issue that reflected negatively on the University. Understandably, the administration’s main concern was not student sentiment but the University’s image. Albert also sought the aid of Chaunda Allen. She wrote that she needed to “corral” Alicia Calvin, president of the University chapter of the NAACP.

Before the start of the protests, several meetings were held by members of the campus chapter of the NAACP to develop ideas for opposing the purple and gold Confederate flag. Chapter President Alicia Calvin spoke at several of the meetings about the importance of opposing the flag. In an e-mail from Albert to Chaunda Allen, director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Albert said someone needed to discuss Calvin's demand for a press conference. "Alicia 'Coco' Calvin is on the loose," Albert said in the e-mail. "She must be corralled. She has requested a meeting with the Chancellor, demanding that University Relations do a press conference to denounce the flag." In an interview with *The Daily Reveille*, Calvin said she believes no student should be silenced. "I am appalled that the vice provost of equity and diversity is not on board with the NAACP as we are trying to remedy inequities.”

Albert’s view of Calvin as “on the loose” further indicates that her main concern was the negative attention that flag protests were attracting to the University. Understandably, Albert, as a University Administrator, desired to protect the image of LSU, and she sought to do so by calming the emotions of protesters through others whom she enlisted to encourage them to be less vocal and less visible.

O’Keefe and other administrators were also in correspondence with Albert regarding Phillips.

In an e-mail from Albert to Michael Ruffner, vice chancellor for the Office of Communications and University Relations, on Oct. 27, 2005, Albert said she was "extremely concerned" about the protests and said she warned the students about

possible safety concerns. In a reply, Ruffner said, "Katrice. Marching to the stadium not necessarily a bad outcome." In e-mail correspondence between Albert, O'Keefe, Gieg, Ruffner and Kristine Calongne, director of media relations for the Office of Public Affairs, O'Keefe clarified who would be speaking at the Oct. 27 press conference and outlined his statement on banning the flag. At the press conference, O'Keefe told students and media that the University could not ban the flag, but discouraged its use on campus. In the e-mail O'Keefe said to Gieg, "you turn it to Collins, and he says they're satisfied, no march Sat."

This series of emails makes it clear that the University administration was trying to reign in Phillips and snuff out the flames that his protest movement had fanned. They also espouse motives behind the accusations against Phillips of violating University disciplinary policy.

Gibson's article hit hard, and many students were outraged that a university official would attempt to inhibit Phillips from exercising his first amendment rights. On February 5, Phillips emerged triumphant from his disciplinary hearing in Johnston Hall. A raucous crowd of supporters greeted him. Gibson wrote:

Phillips and his lawyer met with Rosemary Blum, Judicial Affairs associate director, and Jerrel Wade, Greek Affairs assistant director, to discuss the basis of the allegations and to hear Phillips' defense. Phillips said University officials dropped the charges because "it would be best for both sides." He said he was told the charges were officially dropped because "no progress was being made on the current situation with the amount of attention it was receiving."¹⁷⁷

The immediate acquittal of Phillips indicates that the charges were being used as a way of silencing the student leader. Students continued to voice their concern. Senior Eron Roussel began a petition calling for Albert's resignation that collected momentum quickly.¹⁷⁸ Such student actions signaled that the intensity of the previous fall's protests had not faded. Phillips and the SEC remained determined to champion their cause and discourage the use of the flag.

Prior to the start of the fall 2006 semester, the University achieved a legal victory having serious implications for the future of the purple and gold Confederate battle flag. On July 18, 2006, U.S. District Judge Mary Ann Vial Lemmon of the Eastern District of Louisiana issued a summary judgment in favor of the Plaintiffs in the case of *Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana State University, et al v. Smack Apparel Company, et al*, No. 04-1593 (E.D. (La.) 2006). The winning party did not only include Louisiana State University officials, but was also comprised of representatives from the Ohio State University, the University of Oklahoma and the University of Southern California. The legal conflict at issue involved Smack Apparel's production of t-shirts designed in these universities' colors that contained references to university events or the university locale. This unfairly associated these institutions with the company's products. Judge Lemmon found the case to be a simple one. In concluding her seventeen-page decision, she wrote:

"There is no question that a color scheme may be protectable as a trademark...It is undisputed that the universities have used their color combinations for lengthy periods of time. [They] market scores of items bearing their color schemes. Logos, and designs, and sales of those items exceed tens of millions of dollars."¹⁷⁹

With regard to the flag, this decision cannot inhibit those who possess the purple and gold banner and who still wish to fly it, but it can prohibit any companies from manufacturing or selling it. And though the long-term effects are yet to be seen, Lemmon's judgment will doubtless result in the symbol gradually fading from visibility as it is no longer legal to produce it, pending any Appellate Court decisions having potential to reverse the ruling. Along with the legal effects of the case, the decision augmented the prominence of the purple and gold battle flag conflict in the public consciousness.

Other developments in the Baton Rouge community also raised awareness. The August 2006 issue of *225 Magazine*, a relatively new local publication, included a feature

on Collins Phillips as well as a question-and-answer with the student leader.¹⁸⁰ The article provided some background on the conflict but was mainly concerned with its future.

Writer Jeff Roedel wrote:

Phillips is gearing up for the fight of his life. He will attempt to add a diversity statement to the student code of conduct, garner more university funding for campus minority programs and plan the most shocking protest of the Confederate flag LSU has ever seen.

Phillips also spoke about his plans for the future, saying:

I want them to tell us we can't do what we plan to do. Its definitely going to be an eye-opener...Everybody has a symbol they don't like – lets put it that way. The minority community has its symbols too. So now I have to play their game? OK, but I'm going to play it better. And I'm going to show them how...Every time I find myself taking about this, I think "Man, it sounds like I'm talking about a war." But it is. It's just [a war] nobody wants to talk about. But we're going to make them talk about it.

An equally daring photo of the student leader accompanied Phillips bold words. A resolute Phillips stood with arms crossed as a purple and gold Confederate battle flag hung over him in flames. From all indications, the coming fall would overshadow the protests of the past year. However, Phillips rethought the aggressive approach he outlined in *225 Magazine* as later in August an Associated Press article was published titled "No More Protests, but Confederate Flag Issue Persists at LSU." The piece reported that Phillips was to adopt a different strategy for future flag protests by organizing tailgates instead of marches. Phillips was quoted as saying, "If we were to march again this year, I think it would be a little redundant. People would say, 'There they go, marching about that flag again.'"¹⁸¹ Phillips' change in strategy was a brilliant leadership move. He realized the difficulty of achieving the goal of unity through divisive actions. By marching, he and his group had set themselves apart from and at odds with other students. The Student Equality Commission's "Tailgate for Diversity" did just the

opposite. By engaging in the longstanding campus tradition of tailgating before home football games, Phillips and his group was able to put themselves on the level of tailgaters flying the flag and meet them on their own ground. Unlike the marches, the tailgates were not about protest but were centered on the idea of unifying the campus community in order to engage in an open and respectful dialogue on the flag issue. On September 3, 2006, the SEC held its first tailgate before the football season opener against the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Around one hundred and fifty students gathered for food, drinks and discussion. Along with the SEC, the LSU chapter of College Democrats and members of Student Government, including newly elected president Chris Odinet, also took part in the event.¹⁸² The SEC held a second tailgate before the next weekend's home game against the University of Arizona. The turnout was considerably diminished from the first event.¹⁸³

Not coincidentally, student interest in the Confederate flag issue faded as the fall semester wore on. Though it seemed progress was made, it is impossible to gauge the long-term results of the various efforts to protest the flag and to increase awareness of the conflict. It is reasonable to assume that the flag will not disappear, and that it will be on display next football season, and the next, and so on. Continuing to beat the issue, however, will certainly not diminish displays of the flag. As evidenced by increased sales of the flag during the movement against it as well as counter protests engaged in by supporters of the flag, passions were augmented along with increased exposure of the issue. Southerners will always be cognizant of racial issues, but controversies such as the one involving the purple and gold Confederate flag illustrate either the unwillingness or

the inability of opposing groups to empathize with one another. The racial issues at the heart of the debate are tied up in the history of the South and in the southern identity.

Though groups of blacks and whites are at odds regarding the flag, they are bound together by the racial legacy of the South. Paradoxically, this central theme of southern history both divides and unites the people of the South. It is a shared history interpreted by different people in different ways. Though this sets southerners apart, it also is a source of unity. With continued conflict, comes debate, and while most tend to be contentious, other discussions are characterized by calm and civility. Indeed, the Southern legacy of manners is a heritage all southerners can share pride in unequivocally. The region will be judged in the future by the way in which its people handle these racial issues that continue to be a major part of southern society, whether their results are viewed detrimentally or complimentary to it. Southerners can offset the negative legacy of the region's race relations with a better future, one of understanding, tolerance and empathy. This involves understanding the historical meaning of Confederate symbols, confining their display to the proper arenas, and acting accordingly.

CONCLUSION

The compromise reached by the Georgia legislature in their state flag conflict provides a hope that an amicable resolution can result from LSU's debate over the Confederate battle flag. The flag adopted in 2001, which included a small Confederate battle flag along with the two other past state flags, has been replaced. The current flag has the state seal in the top right corner and features three bars, similar to the first national flag of the Confederacy, the Stars and Bars. Now Georgia's flag is totally absent of the battle flag. By leaving that part of their state's past behind, Georgians were able to look to the future with a unified vision and create a new flag that could be accepted by all their state's citizens.

Though division characterized much of the LSU flag controversy and accompanying protests, like Collins Phillips, students, faculty, and administrators did not lose touch with the goal of unity. In the spring of 2006, *Legacy* magazine published a feature on the purple and gold Confederate flag conflict.¹⁸⁴ The author chose to focus her article not on the opposing viewpoints of past debates but on future unity. She called for students to design a new banner that would be representative of all students.

Let's make our own school flag; one that represents the best of LSU, Louisiana and our people. It can show history but it should also mark our current life, our triumphs and our pride for what we are and who we have become.¹⁸⁵

This meant a cessation of discussion of the past and a beginning of planning for the future. Certainly, students would desire that their legacy not be dominated by unrest. In designing a flag representative of unity, students might end the purple and gold flag controversy positively. The University also sought to foster unity amongst students through the freshman summer reading program. For the 2006-2007 year, the book *Life on*

the Color Line: the True Story of a White Boy Who Discovered He was Black was chosen to promote awareness and understanding of racial issues. Through understanding, members of the campus community could more easily unite. In doing so, problems that were once solely viewed as minority issues would become University and community issues. A speaker series accompanied this effort by University officials to promote awareness and unity. Topics ranged from the dynamic of race relations over time in Baton Rouge to the history and meaning of the Confederate battle flag. The goal of unity relates directly to a shared sense of identity, and regardless of one's feelings about the battle flag, southerners share the symbol as a part of their history.

Though history, a defining aspect of southern identity, has been subject to changing interpretations over time, it remains major a part of the culture of the South. Still, a correct understanding of southern history is often lacking. This stems from the presentation of the battle flag, and other traditionally southern symbols, outside of historical context and in altered form. The purple and gold battle flag is offensive because it associates the University today with the Confederacy. Further, the LSU-themed battle flag is an affront to the preservation of southern heritage as well as the image of the university. If the Confederate battle flag is a symbol of heritage, then it should only be presented in its historically accurate form. Much like white supremacist organizations that employed the symbol during their counter-Civil Rights movement, those who fly the purple and gold battle flag are attaching meaning to an historical relic that is both unsupported and unfair. Such uses of the emblem have resulted in the common interpretation of the flag as a racist symbol. Purple and gold are colors that unite

members of the LSU community. The imposition of these colors on a symbol associated with an exclusive and divisive culture contradicts their meaning.

Perhaps the most difficult question, whether the purple and gold Confederate battle flag is racist, does not even require an answer for an argument to be made against its display. Whether racist or not, the purple and gold battle flag is a perversion of the LSU standard as well as the heritage of the South. For both to be preserved in their original forms, their meanings must be clear. The Confederate battle flag can only receive the honor and reverence that heritage preservationists believe it deserves if it is displayed in the correct historical context and in such way that its meaning is concrete. Whether it is a symbol of southern tradition and heritage, states' or individuals' rights, or white supremacy, none of these things relate to LSU football or the University in general. Southern heritage has little to do with the legacy of LSU football. Though the game was of great significance during the post-Civil War years and many may have related their team's performance to Southern pride, the purpose of LSU football has always been to promote the University. Certainly, the conflict and division that the purple and gold battle flag controversy created has resulted in anything but the glorification of LSU. The image of the university has suffered due to the flag conflict. This may provide the best reason of all for the discontinuation of its use. In order to have pride for the University, the football team and all other things LSU, it is imperative that all members of the university community can share that pride. In doing so, heritage will not be erased but future bonds will be strengthened, which will result in a common tradition. It is the decision of all members of the LSU community whether this tradition will be one of pride or shame.

The flag cannot only be discussed in the context of the meaning that people attach to it now because of its past use. The fact is that many southerners used the Confederate battle flag as an emblem of racism and white supremacy. The history responsible for the creation of this facet of the flag's legacy can never be erased, and, for contemporary southerners, this recent history has more resonance than the flag's origins. The flag's Civil War history also associates it to some degree with the subjugation of African Americans. The armies that took it into battle were fighting to preserve a nation that relied on the institution of slavery for its prosperity. Certainly their use of the symbol as their battle emblem is recognition that the flag represented the culture and mores of the society they were defending.

It is unlikely that emancipationist and traditionalist groups will ever agree on a single interpretation of the Civil War or the Confederate battle flag. However, accord in these areas is secondary in importance to another crucial aspect of southern identity. As historian James C. Cobb noted, "[r]econciliation depends 'less on their [blacks' and whites'] ability to agree than on their willingness to tolerate disagreement about an identity that, to preserve, they must first learn to share.'"¹⁸⁶ Though interpretations differ, the history that these views are based on is undeniably the same. For Cobb, the opposing groups' mutual characteristics should be the emphasis of southern identity. Indeed, disagreements exist, but southerners possess more commonalities than disparities. And though the most discord exists when it comes to race relations, this, according to U.B. Phillips, is the central theme of southern history and, thus, will always be a part of southern identity.

APPENDIX A: The Georgia State Flag Saga¹⁸⁷**Georgia State Flag***1956-2001*

Having two fields, one of deep blue and the other dark red, the Georgia flag showcases the Battle Flag of the Confederacy and the state seal. On the state seal is the year 1776, the date of the Declaration of Independence. The three pillars stand for the three branches of government Legislative, Executive and the Courts. The arch above the pillars stands for the constitution. A ribbon expresses the ideals of the constitution "wisdom", "justice" and "moderation".

2001-2003

On a blue field the Georgia flag showcases the state seal, a ribbon expresses Georgia's flag history and the words "In God We Trust". Thirteen stars surrounding the seal denotes Georgia's position as one of the original thirteen colonies. On the seal three pillars supporting an arch represent the three branches of government; legislative, judicial and executive. A man with sword drawn is defending the Constitution, whose principles are wisdom, justice and moderation. The date 1776 represents the signing of the Declaration of Independence. A ribbon displays the thirteen star U.S. flag (1777-1795), Georgia's first

flag (1879), Georgia's 1920-1956 flag, Georgia's 1956 flag and the 50 star U.S. flag.
Adopted January 30, 2001

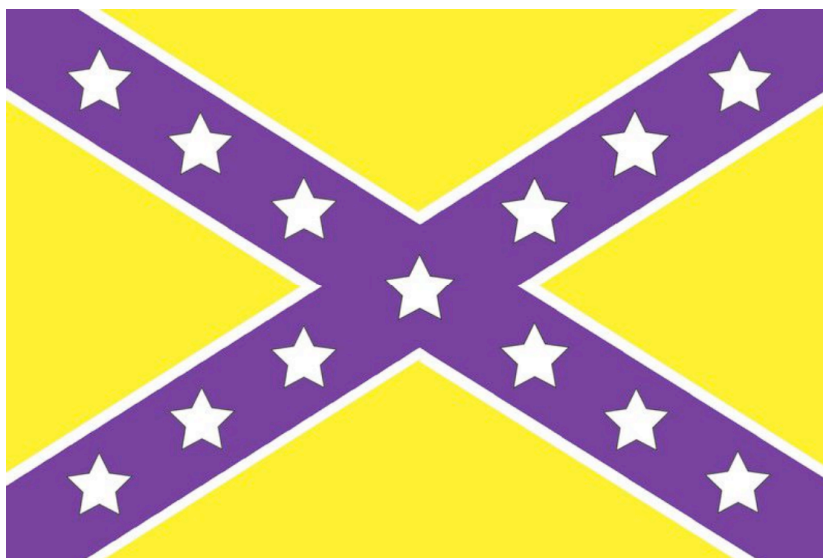
2003-Present



The Georgia flag has three red and white stripes and the state coat of arms on a blue field in the upper left corner. Thirteen stars surrounding the seal denotes Georgia's position as one of the original thirteen colonies. On the seal three pillars supporting an arch represent the three branches of government; legislative, judicial and executive. A man with sword drawn is defending the Constitution, whose principles are wisdom, justice and moderation. The date 1776 represents the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Flag adopted May 8, 2003.

APPENDIX B: *Reveille* Chronicle of the Purple and Gold Flag Protest¹⁸⁸

The Purple and Gold Confederate Battle Flag



The object of so much contention among students in the late nineties and in recent years.

“Campus divided over Confederate flag,” by Lauren Wilbert, In-depth Team Writer.
Issue date: 4/1/04, Section: Investigative.



Many different styles of the Confederate flag hang in The Flag Shop. The most popular flag, the Confederate battle flag, is causing controversy on campus.

“Event cancelled, flier called 'racist': Confederate flag center of concern,” by Ginger Gibson, Staff Writer. Issue date: 5/3/05, Section: News.



The use of the Confederate flag in this advertisement for a party led to the cancelation of the event. Media Credit: MICHAEL MOHR / The Daily Reveille

“Students march for ban on Confederate flag,” by Ginger Gibson, Staff Writer. Issue date: 10/24/05, Section: News.



Fans sit Saturday in the student section and hold signs protesting the purple-and-gold Confederate flag. Many tailgaters fly the flag before LSU football games. Media Credit: JOEY BORDELON / The Daily Reveille

“Students take flag protest to chancellor's office: O'Keefe said he will not issue ban,” by Staff Report. Issue date: 10/24/05, Section: News.



Media Credit: Jolie Duhon/The Daily Reveille. Chancellor Sean O'Keefe on Monday morning addresses the purple and gold Confederate flag. Next to him stands protest leader Collins Phillips.

“Protesters lead peaceful tailgating march: Demonstrators met with booing, slurs,” by Ginger Gibson. Staff Writer. Issue date: 10/31/05, Section: News.



Students participating in an organized protest against the purple and gold Confederate flag march in front of the LSU Student Union on their way to the student entrance of Tiger Stadium Saturday afternoon before the game. Media Credit: LUCAS HALEY / The Daily Reveille.

“SEC continues to push for action: More than 100 meet in quad,” by Rebekah Allen.
Issue date: 1/26/06, Section: News.



WILL HARRIS / The Daily Reveille SEC leader and general studies senior Collins Phillips III spoke to more than 100 students Wednesday in the Quad, telling them to address what he called the University's problems with priorities

“University drops charges against Phillips: Student thinks he's still being censored,” by Rebekah Allen. Issue date: 2/7/06, Section: News.



WILL HARRIS / The Daily Reveille General studies senior Collins Phillips III (left) emerges from Johnston Hall after a successful hearing. All the charges filed against Phillips were dropped Monday afternoon.

NOTES
Introduction:

¹ Albion Tourgee, *A Fool's Errand*, John Hope Franklin, ed., (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961) 381.

² C. Vann Woodward, *Thinking Back: The Perils of Writing History*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986) 76.

³ George Brown Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, (Baton Rouge: The Louisiana State University Press, 1967) 1.

⁴ Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," *The American Historical Review*, (34: October 1928), 30.

⁵ Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," 30.

⁶ Ibid, 31.

⁷ Ibid, 31.

⁸ Ibid, 30.

⁹ Ibid, 31.

¹⁰ Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1980) 11.

¹¹ Phillips, "The Search for the Central Theme," 31.

¹² John M. Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2005) 23.

¹³ Ibid, 23.

¹⁴ Ibid, 23.

¹⁵ Willie Lee Rose, *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*, (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1964), 254. In reference to a statement made by Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, commander of the all-black 51st Massachusetts regiment, in reference to Reconstruction on the tendency of revolutions to roll backward.

¹⁶ David Blight, *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2001) 2.

¹⁷ J. Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, Ron McNinch-Su, eds., *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, (Gainesville: The University of Florida Press, 2000) 4.

¹⁸ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 107.

¹⁹ Robert Bonner, *Colors and Blood: Flag Passions of the Confederate South*, (Princeton: The Princeton University Press, 2002) 1.

²⁰ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 254.

²¹ The cross-pattern design featured in the battle flag can also be referred to as a saltier.

Chapter I:

²² Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 9.

²³ Ibid, 22.

²⁴ Ibid, 23.

²⁵ Ibid, 25.

²⁶ Ibid, 30.

²⁷ Ibid, 38.

²⁸ Ibid, 35.

²⁹ Ibid, 43.

³⁰ Ibid, 48.

³¹ Ibid, 48.

³² Ibid, 49.

³³ Ibid, 49.

³⁴ Ibid, 42.

³⁵ Ibid, 52.

³⁶ Ibid, 76.

³⁷ John M. Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem*, (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2005) 6.

³⁸ Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 82.

³⁹ Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, 8.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 8.

⁴¹ Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 95.

⁴² Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, 10.

⁴³ Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 79.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 79.

⁴⁵ Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, 45.

⁴⁶ David Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and Southern History*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002) 314.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 46.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 49.

⁴⁹ Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 112.

⁵⁰ Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 170.

⁵¹ Coski, *The Confederate Battle Flag*, 23.

⁵² Ibid, 24.

⁵³ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 139.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 110-111.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 65.

⁵⁶ Wilson, *Baptized in Blood*, 28.

⁵⁷ Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913*, (Oxford University Press, 1987) 46.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 198.

⁵⁹ Blight, *Race and Reunion*, 356.

⁶⁰ Bonner, *Colors and Blood*, 174.

⁶¹ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 312.

⁶² Ibid, 312.

⁶³ Ibid, 312.

⁶⁴ K. Michael Prince, *Rally Round the Flag, Boys!: South Carolina and the Confederate Flag*, (Columbia: The University of South Carolina Press, 2004) 131.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 132.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 133.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 313.

⁶⁸ <http://archives.cnn.com/2000/ALLPOLITICS/stories/04/19/mccain.sc/index.html>

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 314.

⁷¹ <http://archives.cnn.com/2000/US/03/04/confederate.rally/>

⁷² Ron McNinch-Su, William D. Richardson, & J. Michael Martinez, "Traditionalists versus Reconstructionists," McNinch-Su, Richardson, & Martinez, ed., (Gainesville: The University of Florida Press, 2000) 305.

⁷³ Ibid, 305.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 305.

⁷⁵ Ibid, 306.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 306.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 307.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 308.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 310.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 311.

⁸¹ Ibid, 311.

Chapter II:

⁸² http://www.lsu.edu/about_ht.htm.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Peter Finney, *The Fighting Tigers: Seventy-five Years of LSU Football*, (Baton Rouge: The Louisiana State University Press, 1968) 13.

⁸⁶ David G. Baker, W. Sheldon Bivin, *Mike the Tiger: The Roar of LSU*, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003) 3.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 1-5.

⁸⁸ http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/auburn_life/a_battle_cry.html. War Eagle I's story dates back to the Civil War. According to the legend, a soldier from Alabama was the sole Confederate survivor of a bloody battle. Stumbling across the battlefield, he came across a wounded young eagle. The bird was named Anvre, and was cared for and nursed back to health by the soldier. Several years later the soldier, a former Auburn student, returned to college as a faculty member, bringing the bird with him. For years both were a familiar sight on campus and at events. On the day of Auburn's first football game in 1892 against the University of Georgia, the aged eagle broke away from his master during the game and began to circle the field, exciting the fans. But at the end of the game, with Auburn victorious, the eagle fell to the ground and died.

⁸⁹ Martinez, Richardson, McNinch-Su, eds., *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, 107.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 107.

⁹¹ Ibid, 107.

⁹² Ibid, 107-108.

⁹³ *The Reveille*, Vol. 76, No. 36, November 2, 1971, 1.

⁹⁴ The research conducted spanned every volume of the *Gumbos* (1900-present), and from 1950-present of *The Reveille*.

⁹⁵ *The Reveille*, Vol. 54, No. 135, 1.

⁹⁶ *Gumbo*, Vol. 50, 1951, 76.

⁹⁷ *The Reveille*, Vol. 73, No. 103, 2.

⁹⁸ *Gumbo*, Vol. 65, 1966, 11.

⁹⁹ *Gumbo*, Vol. 68, 1969, 141, Vol. 70, 1971, 180.

¹⁰⁰ *Gumbo*, Vol. 70, 1971, 181.

¹⁰¹ Randy Gurie, personal interview, 3/22/2007.

¹⁰² *Gumbo*, Vol. 68, 1969, 140-141.

¹⁰³ *The Reveille*, Vol. 75, no. 13, 2.

¹⁰⁴ *The Reveille*, Vol. 75, no. 21, 2.

¹⁰⁵ *Gumbo*, Vol. 80, 1981, 80-81.

¹⁰⁶ *Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*, 113.

¹⁰⁷ *Gumbo*, Vol. 55, 1956.

¹⁰⁸ *Gumbo*, Vol. 57, 1958.

¹⁰⁹ *Gumbo*, Vol. 79, 1980, 377.

¹¹⁰ *Gumbo*, Vol. 89, 1990, 326-327.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 326-327.

¹¹² *Gumbo*, Vol. 96, 1997, 173.

¹¹³ *Gumbo*, Vol. 59, 1960, 295.

¹¹⁴ *Gumbo*, Vol. 90, 1991, 63.

¹¹⁵ *The Reveille*, “Race relations course proposed for spring,” November 3, 1994.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ *The Reveille*, “‘Stars and Bars’ replaces flag,” September 7, 1996.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² *The Reveille*, October 11, 1996. Issue 29, Misappropriation of minority scholarship funds to Lamda Chi Alpha frat members by special assistant to the chancellor leads to NAACP outcry and eventual resignation of the Chancellor, Bud Davis (Fri, Nov. 1, 1996).

¹²³ Randy Gurie, personal interview, 3/22/2007.

Chapter III:

¹²⁴ *The Reveille*, “Religion steals alley talk shows,” Thursday, August 29, 1985.

¹²⁵ *The Reveille*, “Bid Day Tragedy: Student dies after fraternity celebration,” August 27, 1997, Vol. 102, No. 4.

¹²⁶ *The Reveille*, “Officials discourage use of the Confederate Flag,” October 9, 1997.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Angela Bergeron, “Rebel flag wavers should lower their reminder of slavery and treason,” *The Reveille*, Vol. 102, No. 35, October 1997.

¹³¹ Jon Stokes, Letter to the Editor, “Student proud of ‘good and bad’ aspects of Old South heritage,” *The Reveille*, Vol. 102, No. 38, October 1997.

¹³² identity.Dictionary.com., *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/identity> (accessed: April 11, 2007).

¹³³ *The Reveille*, Vol. 102, No. 44, Student Opinion Survey, November 11, 1997.

¹³⁴ David Locke, "Extra Points: I may be wrong, but I don't care," *The Reveille*, Vol. 103, No. 9, September 3, 1998.

¹³⁵ Andre Young, Letter to the Editor, "Rebel flag symbolizes southern pride," *The Reveille*, Vol. 103, No. 17, September 18, 1998.

¹³⁶ Jenny Heil, "Flag stirs controversy on campus: Legality of purple-and-gold Confederate banner have [*sic*] recently come into question," *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, No. 26, September 29, 1999.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, "Panel Hears Debate on Controversial Banner: No Solutions Forthcoming on Purple-and-Gold Confederate Flag Issue," October 28, 1999.

¹⁴⁶ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, No. 53, "Confederate Flag Bill: Senate Fails to Act," November 18, 1999.

¹⁴⁷ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, No. 54, "NAACP Demands SG Decision on Flag Bill," November 19, 1999.

¹⁴⁸ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, No. 56, "Senate amends, passes controversial purple-and-gold confederate flag bill," November 24, 1999.

¹⁴⁹ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, "Confederate symbol burning provokes opinions, reactions," September 21, 2000.

¹⁵⁰ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, "Flag burners highlight ambiguity of pride," September 22, 1999.

¹⁵¹ *The Reveille*, Vol. 104, Letters to the editor, September 22, 1999.

¹⁵² Melvin Patrick Ely, *The Adventures of Amos 'N' Andy: A Social History of an American Phenomenon*, (New York: Maxwell MacMillan International, 1991) xi.

¹⁵³ *Gumbo*, Vol. 99, 2000, 135.

¹⁵⁴ *Legacy Magazine*, Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge, La.), Office of Student Media, Spring 2000, Issue 03.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Lauren Wilbert, "Controversial Symbol: Campus Divided Over Confederate Flag," *The Reveille*, 4/1/2004.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Jennifer Mayeux, "Controversial Colors: The purple and gold confederate flag invokes concern among some," *The Reveille*, 3/7/05.

¹⁶⁰ Jeff Jeffrey, "O'Keefe comments on battle flag Chancellor opposes Confederate symbol," *The Reveille*, 4/1/05.

¹⁶¹ Ginger Gibson, "Event cancelled, flier called 'racist': Confederate flag center of concern," *The Reveille*, 5/3/05.

¹⁶² Ginger Gibson, "Groups seek rebel flag removal Student leaders clash on method," *The Reveille*, 10/14/05.

¹⁶³ Ginger Gibson, "Fans continue to fly Rebel flag, Tailgaters ignore NAACP campaign," *The Reveille*, 10/17/05.

¹⁶⁴ Ginger Gibson, "Students march for ban on Confederate flag," *The Reveille*, 10/24/05.

¹⁶⁵ Staff Report, "Students take flag protest to chancellor's office: O'Keefe said he will not issue ban," *The Reveille*, 10/24/05.

¹⁶⁶ Marissa DeCuir, "Senate refers flag resolution to committee Calvin: 'collective goal is unity,'" *The Reveille*, 10/27/05.

¹⁶⁷ Sean O'Keefe, "Chancellor weighs in on the flag First Amendment, students' rights mix," *The Reveille*, 10/27/05.

¹⁶⁸ Ginger Gibson, "Students say O'Keefe met half of demands: Unity rally planned at AACC on Sat.," *The Reveille*, 10/28/05.

¹⁶⁹ Ginger Gibson, "Protesters lead peaceful tailgating march: Demonstrators met with booing, slurs," *The Reveille*, 10/31/05.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Marissa DeCuir, "Senate votes down flag resolution," *The Reveille*, 11/4/05.

¹⁷² Ginger Gibson, "Three arrested during protest: Tailgaters arrested for heckling crowd," *The Reveille*, 1/7/05.

¹⁷³ Jeff Jeffrey, "Metro Council rejects flag proposal: Failed resolution supported O'Keefe," *The Reveille*, 11/10/05.

¹⁷⁴ Editorial Board, "Image is everything," *The Reveille*, November 9, 2005.

¹⁷⁵ Rebekah Allen, "SEC continues to push for action: More than 100 meet in quad," *The Reveille*, 1/26/06.

¹⁷⁶ Ginger Gibson, "E-mails may reveal intentions: Albert requested help to stop protests," *The Reveille*, 2/2/06.

¹⁷⁷ Rebekah Allen, "University drops charges against Phillips: Student thinks he's still being censored," *The Reveille*, 2/7/06.

¹⁷⁸ Ginger Gibson, "Students petition for Albert's resignation: First day results in nearly 100 signatures," *The Reveille*, 2/7/06.

¹⁷⁹ Greg Land, "Colorful T-Shirt Seller Loses Trademark Fight," *Fulton County Daily Report*, August 3, 2006, www.law.com.

¹⁸⁰ Jeff Roedel, "Last Semester, Last Stand," *225 Magazine*, August 2006, 25-27.

¹⁸¹ Associated Press, "No More Protests, but Confederate Flag Issue Persists at LSU," www.sports.espn.go.com.

¹⁸² Nathan Trifone, "Tailgating Together: Confederate flag issue addressed," *The Reveille*, 9/5/06.

¹⁸³ Keith Lorio, "SEC attempts to bring students together: Students discuss diversity, equality," *The Reveille*, 9/11/06.

Conclusion

¹⁸⁴ *Legacy Magazine*, Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge, La.), Office of Student Media, Fall 2006, Issue 01.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War*, 314.

Appendices

¹⁸⁷ <http://www.50states.com>.

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.lsureveille.com/>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

225 Magazine. August 2006.

Gumbo, Student Yearbook at Louisiana State University, Accessed through Hill Memorial Library. Research of the *Gumbos* covered the complete history of the publication, from the first volume issued in 1900 to the 106th volume issued in 2006.

Gurie, Randy. Personal Interview. 3/22/2007.

Legacy Magazine. Louisiana State University (Baton Rouge, La.). Office of Student Media. The two issues cited from this publication were the only ones that contained articles concerning the purple and gold Confederate battle flag.

The Reveille. Student Newspaper at Louisiana State University. Records accessed through Hill Memorial Library (microfiche) and via the internet through www.lsureveille.com. Research of *The Reveille* spanned every issue from 1950 to present. Two considerations guided this decision. First, the initial image of the Confederate battle flag found in the *Gumbos* appeared in the fifties. Second, the volume of material made time a major factor. It was decided that the most recent *Reveilles* were more important the study, and this along with time constraints as well as the *Gumbo* research led to the focus on half of *The Reveille's* issues.

Internet Sources

<http://www.50states.com>.

<http://www.archives.cnn.com/>

http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/auburn_life/a_battle_cry.html.

<http://www.law.com>. *Fulton County Daily Report*. "Colorful T-Shirt Seller Loses Trademark Fight." Greg Land. August 3, 2006,

http://www.lsu.edu/about_ht.htm.

<http://www.lsureveille.edu>

Secondary Sources

- Baker, David G., Bivin, W. Sheldon. *Mike the Tiger: The Roar of LSU*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2003.
- Blight, David. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press, 2001.
- Bonner, Robert. *Colors and Blood: Flag Passions of the Confederate South*. Princeton, The Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Confederate Symbols in the Contemporary South*. J. Michael Martinez, William D. Richardson, Ron McNinch-Su, eds. Gainesville, The Univ. of Florida Press, 2000.
- Coski, John M. *The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem*. Cambridge, The Belknap Press, 2005.
- Dictionary.com. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004
- Ely, Melvin Patrick. *The Adventures of Amos 'N' Andy: A Social History of an American Phenomenon*. New York, Maxwell MacMillan International, 1991.
- Finney, Peter. *The Fighting Tigers: Seventy-five Years of LSU Football*. Baton Rouge, The Louisiana State University Press, 1968.
- Foster, Gaines M. *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause and the Emergence of the New South, 1865-1913*. Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Goldfield, David. *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and Southern History*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2002.
- Horwitz, Tony. *Confederate in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*. New York, Pantheon Books, 1998.
- Phillips, Ulrich Bonnel. "The Central Theme of Southern History." *The American Historical Review*. Vol. 34, No. 1 (October 1928), 30.
- Rose, Willie Lee. *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*. Athens, The University of Georgia Press, 1964.
- Tindall, George Brown. *The Emergence of the New South*. Baton Rouge, The Louisiana State University Press, 1967.

Tourgée, Albion. *A Fool's Errand*, John Hope Franklin, ed. Cambridge, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1961.

Wilson, Charles Reagan. *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*. Athens, The University of Georgia Press, 1980.

Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1971.

Woodward, C. Vann. *Thinking Back: The Perils of Writing History*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1986.