SOUTHERN HARM: THE UDC’S EDUCATIONAL CRUSADE
PROMOTING LOST CAUSE IDEOLOGY IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA
SOUTH

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SOUTHERN HARM: THE UDC’S EDUCATIONAL CRUSADE PROMOTING LOST CAUSE IDEOLOGY IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA SOUTH

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“The past is never dead. It's not even past.”

William Faulkner
Introduction

“That is the substance of remembering—sense, sight, smell: the muscles with which we see and hear and feel not mind, not thought: there is no such thing as memory: the brain recalls just what the muscles grope for: no more, no less; and its resultant sum is usually incorrect and false and worthy only of the name of dream.” – William Faulkner

As I walked down Richmond’s Monument Avenue on a humid August afternoon I found myself standing face-to-face with Robert E. Lee, his statue that is. Instinctively, I pulled out my phone to take pictures of the Confederate monument covered in graffiti, its perimeters now closed off by a tall black fence. On my way to the Virginia state archives, I stopped to read the messages that decorated the former Confederate general. There were dozens of them piling up on top of one another. “It’s bigger than B&W.” “2nd place.” “BREONNA TAYLOR.” “Amour more.” “BLM!” “Stoney is a phoney.” “PERSIST.” These were some of the more intelligible messages written on the monument. There were messages of anger and pain beside those of unity and hope. Names of unarmed Black people killed by the police or other assailants. Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Ahmaud Arbery were among the many names written across the memorial. Here in the middle of Monument Avenue, the past and the present had collided head on, and what remained was this statue of Lee engulfed in graffiti.

This new version of the Lee monument was just over a year old when I came across it. The statue underwent its transformation during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd. The statue itself was over 130 years old. Erected 20 years after Lee’s death and 25 years after the close of the American Civil War, the memorial is among the hundreds of Confederate statues and monuments that decorate the nation. Many of these monuments were commissioned by the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). Founded in 1894, the UDC quickly emerged as the
South’s most influential Confederate heritage organization. The UDC was the second of the three major Confederate organizations that materialized in the decades following the South’s defeat in the Civil War. They formed five years after the United Confederate Veterans (UCV) was born in the South. Also referred to as the Grand Camp of Confederate Veterans, the UCV comprised of ex-Confederate soldiers who worked to support the welfare of their members and sanctify their history and heritage.

Following their success and popularity throughout the region, successor organizations including the UDC and subsequently the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) founded in 1896, took up the Confederate cause of memorializing these men in history and upholding the dignity of the South. The UDC evolved into a social and political powerhouse that shaped the new South in the image and likeness of the old. Auxiliary chapters throughout Southern states and localities arose over the next few years and membership swelled. Tens of thousands of Confederate descendants joined the Daughters in the following years. Divisions formed in the North and West, as women everywhere were drawn to the mission of the UDC. Composed almost entirely of upper-class white women, the Daughters worked diligently throughout this period to sanctify the memory of their Confederate heritage. As stated in their constitution, “the objects of the United Daughters of the Confederacy shall be memorial, historical, benevolent, educational and social.” To achieve each of these objectives the UDC engaged in a wide range of activities.

Much of their early activities included placing memorials on Confederate graves and providing relief work to aging Confederates. As the UDC grew in both size and influence, they diversified their work. Their focus shifted from memorialization to preservation. Commissioning Confederate statues became one of their predominant tactics. These statues, however, were not the only memorialization effort the Daughters committed to at the height of their efforts. Leveraging their maternal inclinations, the Daughters found a new target for their work: Southern children.

At the turn of the century UDC began their pursuit to indoctrinate a love and reverence for students’ Confederate heritage. Along with the other Confederate heritage organizations, the Daughters were appalled by the history textbooks in their white public schools. They agonized over the books’ depiction of the South, specifically its relation to slavery, how it villainized the South and its secession from the Union. Inspired by the early success the UCV had in removing some of these textbooks, the Daughters quickly assumed leadership of their cause. They were aggressive and relentless. By the turn of the twentieth century the UDC had fully committed itself to this campaign to rid their schools of these “unfit” textbooks.

The Daughters’ mission to instill a pride in the Confederacy drove the textbook crusade. Innate in this mission was the ideology of the Lost Cause. Influential wartime editor of the Richmond Examiner Edward A. Pollard first coined the term “Lost Cause” in 1866. The Lost Cause found a home within the ranks of the UDC. The Lost Cause

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mythology interprets the Civil War through a Confederate lens that romanticizes the Old South and venerates the Confederacy.\(^3\) The main tenets of the Lost Cause argued that secession caused the war, not slavery. It depicted slavery as a benevolent institution and enslaved persons as ill-equipped to live freely from their masters. The Lost Cause characterized the Confederate soldiers as heroic, canonizing Robert E. Lee as the patron saint of Southern virtue.\(^4\) White supremacy lay at the core of the Lost Cause ideology. It spewed harmful racial stereotypes and advocated for the inferiority of African Americans, justifying the violence and subjugations they faced at the turn of the century. Many of the rights endowed to them after the Civil War had been reversed and throughout this period, they were repeatedly intimidated, beaten, and lynched. For white Southerners, the Lost Cause legitimized these actions. The ideology promoted the Confederacy as heroic and brave but had detrimental reverberations for the subjugation of African Americans.

The Daughters had been ardent supporters of the Lost Cause, despite rejecting its name. They often referred to it as a “Loved Cause,” reflecting their endless devotion to Confederate memory and its preservation in future generations of Southerners. The Daughters took an active role in shaping the education of white schoolchildren, predominantly in public schools. They formed textbook and education committees that reviewed the books used in their respective schools, evaluating which were suitable and which were not. After determining which textbooks must be removed from schools and which should take their place, they sent their requests to school boards. They

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\(^3\) Caroline E. Janney, "Lost Cause, The" Encyclopedia Virginia, April 10, 1865. [https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/lost-cause-the/](https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/lost-cause-the/)

\(^4\) Janney, "Lost Cause.”
corresponded directly with superintendents, principals, teachers, textbook publishers, and authors cultivating relationships with them that they later leveraged. Some members of the UDC even went on to write their own history textbooks. The Daughters were aggressive and successful. As their work continued more and more textbooks appeared on school-approved lists containing a stronger pro-Confederate slant.

Still, the UDC remained unsatisfied. Their vision of indoctrinating students with the Lost Cause expanded in the early decades of the twentieth century as the Daughters infiltrated the classroom. Their activities coincided with the Progressive Era, and with it the many welfare and educational reforms brought on during this period. Progressivism guided the UDC’s education efforts. In this era progressivism took on a meaning different from contemporary understandings of this political philosophy. In the early-twentieth century context, progressivism defined the political and social reform movement that sought to improve American society in response to the changes brought on by modernization. Progressive reforms included minimizing government corruption, the prohibition of alcohol, child labor laws, increased social welfare, and improvements to the education system. White supremacy tainted progressivism as its reforms also included eugenics programs and disenfranchisement of African Americans.

The Daughters embraced the social welfare and educational reforms of the Progressive Era. They provided financial assistance to aging Confederates and their families, and sponsored college scholarships. Seeking to ensure the Confederate cause

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remained alive and well in the next generation of white Southerners, the Daughters employed innovative pedagogical methods in public schools. Their efforts helped place better-trained teachers in classrooms who relied on a variety of educational tools (not just textbooks) to shape children into good citizens. With the ultimate goal of indoctrinating these students in the Lost Cause, the Daughters wore the hat of progressive educators. They improved pedagogy in the region’s white public schools at a time when the South lagged behind Northern schools and faced an epidemic of illiteracy in rural areas. Characterization of these women as progressive educators remains limited, as many of their activities in schools solely advanced the Lost Cause and lacked educational value.

This thesis explores how the UDC shaped white children’s education in the South in the early decades of the twentieth century. It traces their rise as a Confederate organization that took over the textbook crusade, using their amassed social and political clout to control the selection and adoption of history textbooks. The arrival of UDC-approved textbooks in schools promoted Lost Cause narratives and expanded on white supremacist depictions of history already present in older books. The Daughters understood that the textbook fight was largely symbolic, prompting them to launch a comprehensive infiltration into public schools. They helped train better teachers, improved school facilities, and advocated for new and innovative techniques in the classroom. Pedagogical benefit remained an afterthought for the Daughters, as cultivating a love and loyalty to the Confederate cause drove the UDC’s education reforms. By improving schools and teaching methods they more easily transmitted the message of the Lost Cause to students. The Daughters were successful in resurrecting the Confederate

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past, giving it a second life in the halls of white public schools while also helping construct Confederate monuments throughout the South. Their influence in the education system mirrored their monument effort, as the Daughters constructed their version of history alongside these statues.

The ideological battle over Civil War memory commenced as soon as the last of the gun smoke had settled in 1865. Since then, historians have attempted to disentangle the narratives surrounding some of the bloodiest days in the nation’s history and how they recovered in the decades after. The history of the Lost Cause, and more specifically, the role that Southern women played in promoting it is a more recent field of study. Over the last three decades historians have greatly expanded on discussions surrounding the ways in which white Southerners fought to “win the peace” in schools after suffering defeat on the battleground. The current historiography of this topic has started to understand the prominent role of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in upholding the Lost Cause in schools, specifically through the textbook crusade. Race and class dynamics are also understood as primary factors in this preservation of Confederate history. More recently, academic work has begun to acknowledge the vital role the Progressive Era played in the success of the UDC’s activities.

David Blight’s *Race and Reunion* along with Eric Foner’s *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* were both instrumental in developing the historiography of Reconstruction and the creation of historical memory. Foner’s 1988 book does not directly address the Lost Cause or the rise of Confederate heritage groups. His work, however, remains important to this topic as it contextualized the Reconstruction period that preceded the UDC. *Reconstruction* provided important
understanding to the historical events the Daughters attempted to rewrite in later decades. Foner’s book situates the UDC in the history of the postwar South, as he argues that the Civil War “permanently redrew the economic and political map of the white South.”

Building off of Foner, Blight focused on the construction of Civil War memory, highlighting the Lost Cause and the UDC in his work. While he made no argument about the Daughters or Southern education, he emphasized the whitewashing of Civil War history by white America, detailing the process of creating a collective memory: what gets chosen to be remembered and what gets to be forgotten. This characterized the Lost Cause for Blight, who rightfully attributed its prosperity to Confederate heritage groups.

“The Textbooks of the ‘Lost Cause’” by Fred A. Bailey and “Long-Legged Yankee Lies” by James McPherson both closely examine the methods of inserting Lost Cause narratives into Southern textbooks and reveal the intensity of the censorship campaign. Bailey argued that class dynamics along with white supremacist beliefs greatly influenced the textbook campaign. McPherson’s work challenges Bailey’s assertion stating that what actually drove the textbook crusade were class anxieties. He argued that the dying off of the generation of Confederate veterans created the initial force for Confederate heritage groups to pursue veneration efforts with future generations. For McPherson, this coupled with the expansion of public education and professionalization of history led to the new emerging market for textbook publishers who were congregated in the North to send their textbooks below the Mason-Dixon line. It was the “unjust” telling of history combined with the zeal to commemorate the Confederate generation.

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into Southern youth that led the heritage groups to form the historical committees throughout the South that would slowly but surely condemn and replace the textbooks that portrayed the South unfavorably. Both Bailey and McPherson downplay the role of the UDC in the textbook crusade and largely ignore the other educational activities the Daughters initiated alongside the battle over the textbooks.

Karen Cox filled that gap in the historiography in her 2003 book *Dixie’s Daughters*. The book focuses entirely on the UDC, arguing that the Daughters amassed exceptional social and political power in the early twentieth century. Breaking off from previous historians, Cox, positioned the UDC at the center of the efforts to construct historical memory and preserve the Lost Cause. Unlike her predecessors, she also recognized the Daughters as progressives and. Cox argued that the women understood the textbook campaign as one of many components to their mission. They had a broader vision for shaping the next generation of Southerners than their brother organizations.

The historiography of the UDC and the Lost Cause significantly developed over the last few decades, emphasizing the role the Daughters played in shaping the education of children in preserving the Lost Cause. Certain aspects of this history still remain underdeveloped, however, as current historiography does not comprehensively address how the content of the textbooks developed overtime.

This thesis most significantly builds upon the work of Karen Cox. While she understands the role progressivism played in guiding the UDC, she fails to recognize the Daughters as progressive educators themselves. Their progressivism was intrinsically tied to their influence in the classroom. This thesis also aims to trace the evolution of the Southern textbook, analyzing how depictions of history in these textbooks evolved over
the years. In this analysis, Virginia and Mississippi are used as case studies as the home and adoptive home of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and Confederate President Jefferson Davis, respectively. Archival source material from the Library of Virginia, the Virginia Museum of History & Culture, and the Mississippi Department of Archives & History provided unique insight into the textbooks and the direct role the Daughters played in the state’s school curriculum.

Chapter One traces the emergence of the UDC from their founding to the early 1920s as they quickly amassed significant social and political influence in the South. It details the early textbook campaign and how the Daughters took the model of the UCV’s early successes and grew it exponentially. Chapter Two analyzes the textbooks themselves and how certain historical characterizations and themes evolved over time, especially once the Daughters came into power. The final chapter discusses how the Daughters transitioned from the textbook to the classroom, chronicling how they shaped the classroom and implemented progressive education reforms to improve education while simultaneously promoting Confederate culture in schools. It emphasizes the practical and symbolic influence the Daughters held in developing the future generation of white Southerners.

The UDC no longer wields the same political and social clout it once did. But understanding their strategies that shaped generations of Southerners holds importance to understanding contemporary issues. Today, critical race theory has reignited the debates over the role and responsibility of teaching history in America. The intensity and anger felt in these disputes resonate with those that the Daughters had over a century ago. The history of the UDC helps contextualize the current battles over education and the
presence of critical race theory in the classroom. In telling that story, this thesis aims to expand on current understandings of the UDC and the role they played in promoting the Lost Cause. The Daughters were active participants in the shaping of Southern history, intent on instilling pride in young children for their heritage. They embodied the principles of progressive education, weaponizing reforms as a mechanism of promoting Confederate culture in schools across the South and the nation. Understanding the impact of their work as both practically and symbolically influential provides key insight into the current battles over history in our classrooms today.
Robert E. Lee Monument (Richmond, Virginia)
August 2021
Chapter 1
A Loved Cause: How the Daughters Gained Control of the Textbook

“In every battle there comes a time when both sides consider themselves beaten, then he who continues the attack wins.” – Ulysses S. Grant

In the decades after General Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomattox in 1865, a new war emerged, battling over the control of the memory of the U.S. Civil War in public schools. The debate over how to teach history to schoolchildren arose as the South worked to improve its public education system. Prior to the Civil War public education in the South was decentralized and unsystematic.10 The state of Virginia, for example, lacked compulsory attendance laws, standards for schoolteachers, and a required curriculum. Until the 1880s the Southern classroom mixed students from all ages and abilities, textbooks went largely unused, and formal tests rarely appeared.11 Near the close of the century, Southern education underwent a massive transformation as Progressive era reforms swept over the nation. Gradually, public education throughout the Southern states became centralized and regulated. State boards of education and teachers’ associations formed. Resolutions regarding curriculum and length of terms standardized public education, as the teachers earned certification and the school system expanded throughout the region.12 For white children, public education expanded and improved significantly but African American children watched white public schools progress at the cost of their own education.13

12 “Education in Virginia"
13 Leloudis, Schooling the New South.
Since Southern states lagged behind their Northern neighbors in terms of formalizing their educational systems, states below the Mason-Dixon line relied solely on Northern publishers to supply their schools with textbooks.\textsuperscript{14} The Southern education bureaucracy remained underdeveloped well into the 1890s with little to no Southern-written textbooks taught in schools. Most textbooks schools used came from publishing houses in Northern cities. This created issues for Southerners for two reasons. First, textbooks that had to be shipped from Northern cities like Boston or New York proved more expensive. As reported in articles from the \textit{Richmond Dispatch} in Virginia there was a “great hue and cry throughout the South over the exorbitant prices which [Southern] children were required to pay for their schoolbooks.”\textsuperscript{15} By the end of the nineteenth century the Southern states were still recovering from the economic devastation caused by the war and transformation out of the plantation-style economy. With this devastation still very present in the lives of Southern parents, the higher cost of importing Northern textbooks created tensions not only within households but in the very system itself.

While Southern citizens took issue with the cost of textbooks (which covered all school subjects), the second, and more prominent source of outrage concerned the content of these textbooks. Although not always specific, their complaints were logged with history textbooks, specifically in the portrayal of American history. Many cited how these Northern produced textbooks were “utterly unsuitable” for their presentation of the

\textsuperscript{14} Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, \textit{The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture} (University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

American South, chattel slavery, and, most important, the Civil War. Complaints emerged from individuals across the region, but the primary accuser were specific groups of Southerners who had a vested interest in upholding and defending their version of Southern history: Confederate veteran and heritage groups.

The United Confederate Veterans (UCV) was the first of these groups to emerge and take issue with public school textbooks. The group formed in 1889, following the death of their beloved leader and the singular president of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis. Their stated purpose focused around fostering benevolent, historical, literary, and social activities. In less than ten years after its founding, the UCV had over 150,000 members in over 1,800 camps. As veterans of the war began to die off by the 1890s, their descendants established new heritage groups and expanded the initial goals of the UCV. The Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) formed in 1896, two years after the formation of the South’s most robust and influential Confederate heritage group, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC).

The UDC started locally, spreading its mission with provincial groups of female descendants of Confederate soldiers. Their early work consisted of assisting widowed wives of Confederate soldiers and their children, as well as memorialization efforts for the Confederate dead. As they merged into a national organization the scope of their work grew alongside their influence. Throughout the latter half of the 1890s and into the

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16 Richmond dispatch. (Richmond, Va.), Jan. 1,1903.
18 Ainsworth, Political Groups.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
early twentieth century, the UDC transformed itself from an organization that placed memorials on Confederate graves to a network of women responsible for the reshaping of American history in public education and the advancement of Lost Cause narratives in the next generations of Southerners.

This chapter seeks to demonstrate how the UDC made this transformation and ultimately became the central group to lead the textbook crusade. It traces early textbook debates and victories on behalf of Confederate heritage groups and observes how the UDC took over the efforts after 1900, expanding on this initial success. By analyzing both their operations on a national scale and a state one, specifically using Virginia and Mississippi as case studies, this chapter will demonstrate the successful strategies the Daughters used in the textbook campaign.

Before the Daughters became the main arbiters in the fight over textbooks, the UCV and other unaffiliated Southerners led initial efforts to condemn, remove, and replace many Northern-published books in public schools. Their early success in these battles would provide a model that the UDC would adopt and expand on in the following decades. By the mid 1890s newspapers throughout the South reported on intense opposition to many of the history textbooks being used in Southern schools. They described the complaints regarding the cost of the books, but focused mostly on the supposed unjust treatment of the South, especially in its description of the Civil War. Articles in *The Richmond Times* reported on how the minds of Southern children were being poisoned by these books to “create in the minds of the pupils a suspicion that their fathers who fought for Southern rights were rebels and traitors.”21 The articles reflected a

defensiveness on behalf of the Confederacy, most prominently in its justification for secession and defense that slavery was not the cause of the Civil War. One report from *The Richmond Times* summed up the animosity for these textbooks, arguing:

> The children were made to believe that their fathers went to war in order to keep the negroes enslaved and treat them as brutes, while the Northerners were pictured as patriotic supports of the flag and noble liberators of the slaves. There was a generous exploitation of the noble and heroic achievements of the Northern soldiers, while the Southern rag-tag and bob-tail were ridiculed and denounced.²²

Many in the South criticized textbooks not only for what they included, but what they felt was omitted or brushed over. If history textbooks spoke of Abraham Lincoln in great detail but did not give Confederate figures such as Lee or Davis similar recognition, they labeled it unjust to the South and unsuitable for school children. In an 1895 report from the UCV Historical Committee, it included intense criticism of the American history textbook *Our Country*, for neglecting Confederate leaders: “[the authors] deprived the school children of Virginia of the inestimable benefit of studying the noble lives of Lee and Jackson.”²³

In the early years of the backlash against these textbooks, the complaints largely derived from Confederate veteran groups. Additionally, much of the organized fight to remove and replace these textbooks concentrated in Virginia, the state home to General Lee and the former capital of the Confederacy. The Confederate veteran camps in the state were the first to take significant action over the textbooks taught in public schools. While the issue of Southern history was a central concern to the UCV from the organization’s founding, it was not until 1894 that the group created both a historical

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²² *The times. Chronicling America.*  
²³ Report of the UCV History Committee, 1895, BC-5633548, Box 7, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.
committee and an additional committee to focus on remedying Southern school history in public schools throughout the South.\textsuperscript{24} The intention of these committees focused on formulating a plan to “secure a true and reliable history of the late Civil War, and to select proper and truthful histories of the United States to recommend for use in public and private schools of the South.”\textsuperscript{25} The report went on to criticize Northern written histories as unfair and filled with sectional bias.\textsuperscript{26} They criticized any books which stated or merely implied that Confederates were rebellious traitors to the Union or if it explained slavery as the central cause of the war. Placing the South as the misunderstood victim of these biased histories, the report calls for a “renaissance” of history throughout the South.\textsuperscript{27} The veterans tapped Southern universities as the agency to produce and expand this historical work. In the interim, the veterans expressed a commitment to remove many of the current history textbooks in public schools throughout the South. They called upon fellow Southerners to endorse a “correct” history in schools that will “vindicate them” from the “one-sided indictment” they saw in the histories at that moment.\textsuperscript{28}

Desperate to have textbooks written and produced by Southerners in public schools, a group of impassioned Confederate veterans in Richmond, Virginia turned to the B.F. Johnson Publishing Co. for help. A leading subscription book publishing house,

\textsuperscript{24} Report of the UCV Historical Committee, 25 April 1894, BC-5633550, Box 8, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{28} Report of the UCV History Committee, 1895, BC-5633548, Box 7, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.
the Johnson Company had never produced a school textbook. But in 1897, when a group of Southern men approached the company’s president and begged for his help, the publishing company obliged. In the following months the B.F. Johnson Publishing Co. “turned in the direction of championing the right of Southern children to books peculiarly suited to their needs” as described in an issue of The Richmond Dispatch.

The Johnson Company quickly produced textbooks, ranging from mathematics to reading comprehension, but it focused on history textbooks. The company was praised both for its low prices and for its treatment of the South. One of B.F. Johnson’s first and most widely used U.S. history textbooks was Lee’s Primary School History, written by Susan Pendleton Lee in 1897. The book, intended for school children ages eight to ten years old, devotes a significant amount of text to upholding the main tenets of the Lost Cause, a common thread in these new textbooks that will be discussed further in the following chapter. Included in Lee’s treatment of history is her praise of the slave plantation society and the institution of slavery, defense of the right of the Southern states to secede from the Union, and exaltation of Confederate soldiers and generals as heroes.

The B.F. Johnson Publishing Co. enjoyed its initial success with Lee and expanded its efforts in the following years. The company published more textbooks that schools across states and localities adopted in their classrooms. Southerners sympathetic to the preservation of the Confederate cause praised them for their work. “The B.F. Johnson Publishing Company, of Richmond, Va., is also doing a great service to the

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30 Richmond Dispatch, (Richmond, Va.), Jan. 1, 1903. Chronicling America
Southland by their active interest in, and publication of all that pertains to the uplifting and advancement of the South” applauded one Daughter of the Mississippi division in 1900.\textsuperscript{32} The success of the B.F. Johnson Publishing Co. in manufacturing textbooks celebrated by Confederate veterans and heritage groups indicated that with collective organizing and public pressure on targeted stakeholders, the groups could wield immense influence over the textbooks and curriculum implemented in schools across the South. Once they had succeeded in publishing cheaper textbooks from Southern authors, their next step was to remove the books they saw as unsuitable for school children in the South.

Across the South, but in Virginia specifically, one book stirred significant backlash almost unanimously amongst Confederate veterans and those sympathetic to the Confederate cause: John Fiske’s \textit{History of the United States for Schools}. The UCV’s successful attempt to eliminate Fiske’s widely used textbook from nearly all public schools in the South proved that with enough pressure on school boards and book publishers, they could greatly influence which textbooks appear on state-approved lists and inside classrooms. By 1898 opposition to the book grew, especially in Virginia where the chairman of the History Committee of the Grand Camp of Confederate Veterans had sent multiple reports to the state superintendent and school board. The reports, written by chairman William L. Royall, pleaded with the board to remove Fiske’s book from the list of approved textbooks in Virginia. Royall argued that as a Northern man, Prof. Fiske

\textsuperscript{32} Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, 1 May 1900, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
drew on innate bias when writing the history of the Civil War, which resulted in a history characterized as “pernicious and unfit for use by children” of the South.\textsuperscript{33}

Articles from an 1898 issue of *The Richmond Dispatch*, revealed initial pushback from the school board as the secretary of the board, F.P. Brent defended Fiske’s textbook as fair and appropriate for children.\textsuperscript{34} Teachers had also expressed approval of Fiske’s book as an effective educational tool. The book’s publisher Houghton, Mifflin & Co. even went so far as to take out a newspaper ad in the *Dispatch* in 1898 in response to anonymous pamphlets that had been circulating in Virginia, attacking Fiske’s book.\textsuperscript{35} Criticism of Fiske’s textbook only increased in the following years by the UCV, and soon the newly formed UDC and SCV supported and further advocated for the removal of Fiske’s textbook. In Virginia, historical committees from these organizations sent reports and letters to state legislatures, the Board of Education, and superintendents pressuring them to eliminate Fiske’s textbook from school lists. Written correspondence from 1899 between these committees and Virginia’s Superintendent of Public Instruction revealed how the former were able to create close relationships with educational administrators and win their favor when it came to book selection.\textsuperscript{36} The personal relationships the UCV leveraged would later on become a tactic the Daughters employed and expanded on when they took over the textbook fight.

\textsuperscript{33} Report of the UCV History Committee, 1895, BC-5633548, Box 7, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.
\textsuperscript{34} Richmond dispatch, (Richmond, Va.), Sept. 17 1898, Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers (Lib. of Congress), https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85038614/1898-09-17/ed-1/seq-6/.
\textsuperscript{36} Correspondence between Virginia Superintendent of Public Instruction and Historical Committees, 1899, BC-5633548, Box 7, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.
Their tactics proved successful and by 1903 Fiske’s textbook had disappeared from nearly every state-approved list both in Virginia and throughout the South. Textbook adoption reports from the Virginia State Board of Education reveal that by 1904 Susan Lee’s U.S. history textbook had been placed on lists in every county within the state. The early success achieved primarily through the work of the UCV provided a model on how to remove unwanted textbooks viewed as unjust to the South. At the turn of the twentieth century, the torch was passed from the Confederate veterans to the UDC who breathed new life into the cause, expanding their reach past state lines.

The UDC experienced rapid growth in membership soon after its founding in 1894. UDC historian Karen Cox attributed this to the organization’s conservative mission that allowed these white, largely upper-class women a vehicle to safeguard their conservative values and exert control and influence over the future of the South, most importantly children’s education. In 1907 UDC President-General Lizzie George Henderson ascribed the meteoric expansion of the organization to the use of ever-growing membership rolls and chapters which laid the foundation for years of success. By the one-year anniversary of the group’s founding 20 chapters had already been chartered in states across the South. The next year saw even more growth, with 89 chapters, which soon grew to 138 chapters by the third year. Within the first ten years of the UDC’s existence, its membership had increased to almost 30,000. Cox noted that by the end of the first World War, nearly 100,000 women had joined the UDC and “were

38 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 45.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
actively pursuing the organization’s goals,” with children’s education being at the forefront of their mission.41

With growth in membership came growth in influence, especially as higher membership rolls meant that the organization became more financially secure. Annual convention reports from both Virginia and Mississippi revealed how these states collected membership dues from local chapters, amassing greater wealth over the years, and expanding the group’s potential. Increased financial support expanded the scope of the UDC’s mission, as seen in the convention reports. Over the years the sub-committees of these branches increased, and reports showed that the work conducted throughout the year expanded significantly. Many of these committees were oriented around the textbook question. State chapters had historical committees, educational committees, textbook committees, and committees of endorsement of books. Local chapters even took it upon themselves to draft resolutions and reports on the status of textbooks in their school districts and report back to the state convention on their progress.

To understand how the UDC sought control over the selection of textbooks in Southern schools in the first place, it is necessary to understand how the educational system in these states operated. Alongside the almost exponential growth of the UDC (in terms of both its members and its efforts) was the expansion of the public education system throughout the South. The educational system in Southern states, starting in Virginia and spreading through the region, grew more formalized and structured around the turn of the century. Following the intense fight to remove Prof’s Fiske history book in 1902 and 1903, Virginia adopted uniform textbook laws, which other states would soon

41 Ibid.
follow. In Virginia the Board of Education consisted of the governor, state attorney general, the state superintendent, the College of William & Mary’s president, and various professors in the state.\footnote{Virginia Board of Education Uniform Textbook Law, 31755, RG-27, Minutes of the Virginia State Board of Education 1810-2003, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.}

In 1904 the board voted that it had the sole constitutional authority to adopt textbooks in schools, making it clear that only they had the jurisdiction to compile a list of acceptable and satisfactory books.\footnote{Ibid.} While the board did assert that it had the final say, it permitted groups like the UDC an opportunity to provide their input. Aware of the Confederate veteran and heritage group’s internal textbook committees and reports, the board knew that they needed a mechanism for these groups to express their opinions without allowing them to take over the textbook selection process. The resulting Virginia policy allowed local textbook committees to send their own reports to the state superintendent, which would then be taken into consideration by the board in their deliberations on textbooks.

While reports do not explicitly reveal that the board took into account the committee reports, the books the UDC pushed often found their way onto approved textbook lists shortly thereafter. The Daughters often found sympathetic voices to their cause within members of the school board’s textbook commission. In Virginia the superintendent of public instruction Joseph W. Southall who took office in the late 1890s was a veteran of the Confederacy himself.\footnote{Special to The Washington Post, "DR. JOS. W, SOUTHALL DEAD.: FORMER SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT OF VIRGINIA AND CONFEDERATE VETERAN," The Washington Post (1877-1922), Aug 3, 1909, https://proxy.library.upenn.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/dr-jos-w-southall-dead/docview/144928236/se-2?accountid=14707.} In some correspondence with the chairman
of the Richmond UCV’s History Committee he assured the chairman that the school board would cooperate with the committee “in every endeavor” to bring about a result that the UCV and UDC would be satisfied with.

Mississippi soon followed Virginia’s reorganization of its educational system. Under the tenure of state superintendent Henry Whitfield better teachers were hired with increased salaries.\(^\text{45}\) School facilities improved, and the school year lengthened by fifty percent, resulting in a significant decline of illiteracy rates.\(^\text{46}\) And just like Virginia, Mississippi also adopted a statewide textbook commission and uniform laws surrounding the process of selecting textbooks. In 1900, the Mississippi legislature created a uniform textbook bill. In it, a committee to select the textbooks was initiated with its structure and goals outlined.\(^\text{47}\) Just as with Virginia, the Mississippi law granted the textbook commission the sole authority to select and adopt textbooks for the state’s public schools.

In both Virginia and Mississippi, and many other states, the textbook commission met every five years to update the approved lists as they saw necessary. For the UDC this meant that they had a small window to get their way within the commissions. It also made their work constant, as these lists would be continuously updated. This pushed the UDC to organize and standardize their efforts across states and localities to ensure that the textbook commissions selected books that the UDC approved of, and that often promoted the Lost Cause.

\(^{45}\) Written copy of the biography of Henry Whitfield, 201.7:198501, Brief Biographies of Mississippi’s State Superintendent Education 1876-1984, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.

\(^{46}\) Ibid.

\(^{47}\) Uniform text-book adopted, 1900, School Laws of Mississippi, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
The rise of textbooks laws across the South aligned with the UDC’s growing power and attempts to influence the commission. A change to Mississippi’s 1900 textbook law reflected this. In 1906 the state issued an updated version of the original resolution, calling attention to the selection of history textbooks and specifying the Civil War. The law stated “that no history in relation to the late civil war between the states shall be used in schools of this state, unless it be fair and impartial” and “that none of said textbooks so selected or adopted shall contain anything of a partisan or sectarian character.” This language directly reflects the sentiments of the UDC, who often asked in their committee reports for history textbooks that taught the Civil War to be free of sectional bias. But for the Daughters, that meant for the South to be venerated rather than labeled as traitors or rebels. For Mississippi’s state laws to regurgitate the language of the Daughters provided a strong signifier to their increasing influence in the selection of and attitude towards the teaching of Southern history that was favorable to the Confederacy and its memory.

The rise of educational bureaucracies in states throughout the South and formation of textbook commissions were in reaction to the work of the UDC and the Confederate veteran groups, whether state officials consciously recognized it or not. It regulated the system of selection and adoption of textbooks to give the state official control over this process but opened avenues for the UDC to exert its influence, which they did with unmatched energy and force.

With the state’s new rules and regulations for adopting textbooks, the Daughters had to operate within the confines of the education bureaucracy. While they could not

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48 Uniform textbook adopted, 1906, School Laws of Mississippi, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
directly put their preferred textbooks on the shelves of these schools, they could organize themselves into committees, write reports, and place continuous pressure on school boards’ textbook commission to select the books they most approved of. Although the textbooks commissions and regulations around the selection of textbooks remained similar across the South, each state operated differently, making it necessary for each state’s UDC to tailor their approach and methods to their respective state. With the national UDC giving guidance to its smaller chapters, the organization created a structure that allowed each state to control their operations while remaining united under one cause: to have textbooks reflect the history of the South that venerates it and upholds the integrity of the Confederacy.

The national UDC had a Historian General that instructed the state and local chapters with the organization’s central mission. While the work and guidance of the Historian General and national UDC remained important to sustaining their work, the real work was done by the women at the state and local chapters. They were the ground soldiers in the textbook crusade, whose work was instrumental in determining the success of the UDC’s textbook campaign. And as with all of its other activities, the women of the Virginia UDC were the exemplary chapter. They set the standard for other auxiliary chapters on how to employ these methods and exert their influence over the selection of textbooks for their state’s public schools.49

49 Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, 1 May 1900, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss. In the minutes from the 1900 Miss. UDC Convention the State Historian Josie Cappleman remarked that “Virginia and Virginia’s women have done and are still doing a noble work in this line, and we hope that Mississippi’s equally as noble and zealous women will soon take foremost rank in the performance of this sacred.”
Much of their early work consisted of following the model set by the UCV. The Virginia chapter created educational and historical committees that wrote reports on the lists of textbooks in their respective districts, evaluating them on their “fairness” to the South. They sent their reports and recommendations for which books they deemed appropriate and which were biased and unfit for schools to the school board and members of the Virginia textbook commission. Both U.S. and Virginia state history textbooks came under their watchful eye. In the late 1890s, they achieved a major milestone in their crusade when Susan Lee’s history as well as Royall B. Smithey’s and Mary Tucker McGill’s textbooks were added to state-approved lists.50

Other states, including Mississippi, looked at the success of the Virginia UDC and drew inspiration from their methods on influencing the selection of textbooks in schools. A report from the Mississippi UDC noted that “it was due to the influence of the Virginia [UDC] … that the Commission of that State avoided adopting an eminently unfair history.”51 The leaders of the Mississippi UDC rallied around the achievements of their sister state and used it to fuel their own efforts in the textbook crusade. Their convention minutes from 1898 until the mid 1920s reveal how the auxiliary chapters operated as the foot-soldiers of this battle to insert pro-Confederate narratives into textbooks for school children.

By 1899, the Mississippi UDC lacked a formalized historical committee but identified the work they adamantly supported in examining textbooks in the state for their

51 Report of Historical Committee, 6 May 1915, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II, 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
treatment of the South. The women of this chapter declared that Mississippi’s children must learn the South had “good reasons for the Civil War” and that their ancestors “who fought and died in that struggle were neither traitors nor rebels.” They saw themselves as agents of this cause and responsible to carry out the mission of instilling Southern pride in the next generation, by having their textbooks venerate the Confederacy and the moral integrity of the South, omitting the atrocities endured by enslaved persons as a result. Just as with Virginia, the historical committee of the Mississippi UDC as well as local chapters evaluated the state histories being used in schools and sent written reports on them to the state’s textbook commission, either approving or condemning the textbooks. The Winnie Davis Chapter of Meridian pushed the Mississippi division as a whole to more aggressively fight for pro-Confederate textbooks, even advocating for the censorship of any speech by President Lincoln. The work that these local chapters and committees conducted over the years showed how this battle had to be continually fought. Committee reports from state and local chapters acknowledged their successes, failures, and always advocated for further work to be done in the following year. In nearly every committee report Daughters flagged various textbooks, described their issues, and advocated for unbiased and fair histories to replace them.

At the start of a new century, the Daughters continued their work, expanding it beyond sending reports to textbook commissions. As their ranks grew so did the breadth of their endeavors to promote the Lost Cause and white supremacist narratives in schools,

52 Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, 1 May 1900, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
all done in the name of fairness to the South and unbiased history. The UDC employed strategies that leveraged their interpersonal relationships with publishing companies, educators, and the authors of these textbooks themselves. Soon their work crossed the Mason-Dixon line, as they sought to implement their version of history taught not only to their children but children everywhere. They even began to infiltrate the curriculum of private schools and colleges in the South.

One of the key relationships that the Daughters cultivated across their auxiliary chapters was with textbook publishers. Virginia Board of Education records from the early 1900s reveal a significant amount of correspondence between the Board, who selected the textbooks, and publishing companies. The two set prices and negotiated contracts, making this relationship an important one for the Daughters to intercept. As they attempted to expand their efforts in the early twentieth century, the Daughters of various states began to deepen relationships with publishing houses. UDC minutes from the Virginia chapter in 1916 hinted at the close relationship they created with the B.F. Johnson Company. In these minutes the Historian General thanked them for their work in publishing history textbooks such as Susan Lee’s that aligned with their version of Southern history. This continued well into the twentieth century. In the convention minutes from a 1925 Mississippi UDC meeting, the chair of the historical committee had every member of her committee write to the state’s book commissioners with a list of

their book endorsements. Creating and fostering these close relationships with the publishers allowed the UDC to have a greater voice in the selection process as the years went on. By teaming up with publishers to push for their desired textbooks, it allowed them to cut out the middleman and enhance their efforts.

Beyond working with publishing companies, the UDC worked diligently to foster close-knit relationships with educators and members of the education bureaucracy. Like the UCV, the UDCs spent their early years engaged in this work and sent their resolutions to members of their respective state’s textbook commissions, as that was the body given the sole authority to select books. But as they grew in membership, so did their efforts to work with educators and the individual members of the textbook commissions. Their attempts to cultivate these relationships went from the bottom of the educational system, the teachers, all the way to the top: the governor who often oversaw the textbook commission and the state board of education. In Mississippi, they worked with the State Teachers Association, sending their resolutions to members and working with them to promote their approved textbooks and lesson plans to be implemented in the classroom. They understood that all of their efforts were in vain without the support of teachers. The Historian-General of the Mississippi UDC remarked in 1916 that “securing the

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57 Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1925, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. IV: 1923-1938, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
58 Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1904, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
59 Ibid.
cooperation of our teachers, who can assist us by using our subjects and literature as supplementary work” was vital to their success.60

Additionally, the minutes from these UDC conventions further revealed that educators were not only open to working with the Daughters but genuinely excited to engage in this work with them. In the early 1900s, the Winnie Davis chapter of the Mississippi UDC led the state’s efforts in the textbook fight. In addition to writing principals and superintendents, these women invited education administrators to UDC events, including Confederate memorial services. At this event in 1904, the women reported that “superintendent of our various city public schools having under his guiding hand between two and three thousand children, assured us that he was in ardent sympathy with our work, requested that members of his schools be always included in our program.”61

The enthusiasm from state administrators continued. In 1908 the Winnie Davis chapter reported that they received letters from the State Superintendent of Education as well as principals from the district's schools “expressing enthusiastic interest in and compliance with request that the study [of the life of Jefferson Davis] should be taken up in their respective institutions.”62 The same year, the Mississippi UDC’s education committee gained the assurance of multiple superintendents and the superintendent of

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60 Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1916, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. III: 1916-1922, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
61 Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1904, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
62 Winnie Davis Report, Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1906, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
public schools in the state that they would aid the Daughters in every way possible.\textsuperscript{63} These efforts and mutual agreement between both parties continued well into the 1920s, as reflected in convention reports.\textsuperscript{64} The enthusiasm shown to the Daughters in chapters across the South provides evidence of the effectiveness of their crusade. By expanding the work of their early years, the Daughters gained further influence over the education bureaucracy, and with that the selection of textbooks in schools.

In addition to working with publishers and educators, the Daughters also worked alongside individual authors to push their history textbooks into schools. The strongest example lies with the case of Matthew Page Andrews’ history textbook. Beginning in 1914 Andrews began correspondence with Mrs. Randolph, the president of Richmond’s UDC chapter. Acknowledging her influence in education in the South and members of the textbook commissions, Andrews wrote letters over the next five years asking Randolph to help get his textbook into schools.\textsuperscript{65} By 1916, Virginia UDC minutes revealed that the chapter “used its influence towards having Andrew’s History … adopted by the State Board Education.”\textsuperscript{66} The case of Andrew’s textbook and correspondence with Mrs. Randolph showcases how the Daughters became advocates for these authors. Recognizing their political power and influence when it came to whether or not an author would be successful in the education space, authors began to turn to these women for

\textsuperscript{63} Report from Education Committee, Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1906, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.

\textsuperscript{64} Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1925, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. IV: 1923-1938, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.

\textsuperscript{65} Correspondence letters of Mrs. Randolph, 31 December 1914, Folder 1, MSS 1, R15513, Randolph Papers, Virginia Museum of History & Culture, Richmond, Va.

\textsuperscript{66} Report of Richmond Division, Minutes of the Twenty-First Annual Convention, October 1916, 483, V5, 1918-1920 Minutes, Virginia Museum of History & Culture, Richmond, Va.
help by the 1910s. This is a sign of the success of the Daughters and how they diversified their efforts and really took control in the new century to implement Lost Cause narratives in schools across the South.

With decades of work dedicated to promoting their version of history, it was only a matter of time before the Daughters themselves began to pick up the pen. Just as authors like Andrews leveraged the power and influence of the UDC, so did members within the organization who sought to use their membership to get their own textbooks into schools. The strongest example can be seen in S.E.F. Rose and her book glorifying the Ku Klux Klan. Rose became one of the most prominent members of the UDC, first as the Historian-General of the Mississippi UDC, then as President of her chapter, and finally as Historian-General of the national UDC in the 1910s.67 She utilized her power and status within the organization to promote her own work, which she described “[gave] evidence that the memory of the Ku-Klux Klan was honored in Dixie, and that those noble men, the Ku-Klux, were being given their rightful place in history.”68 By 1914 the UDC had officially endorsed Rose’s book and presidents of UDC divisions across the country were told to make “every effort … to have it introduced into public schools as a supplementary textbook of history.”69 The following year, Rose’s book venerating the

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68 Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Mississippi Division, May 1910, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II: 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
69 Minutes of the Eighteenth Annual Convention of the Mississippi Division, May 1914, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II: 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
Klan appeared in schools throughout the South, cementing its role in shaping future generations’ perception of the Klan.

The 1920s marked a new era for the UDC and their fight in the textbook crusade. Mildred Rutherford, Historian-General of the UDC from 1911 until 1916, had just published her manifesto on testing textbooks in schools, *A Measuring Rod.* It provided a guidebook to measure textbooks ensuring that they upheld the Lost Cause narrative the UDC worked so hard to implement. *Measuring Rod* and its subsequent publication *Truths of History* helped further solidify the UDC’s presence as the main agent of this fight.

Their tactics proved incredibly successful. A prime example of this success can be seen in Mississippi elementary school curriculum from 1926 as it mirrors the rhetoric of the Daughters when it came to talking about the Civil War.

It has been widely acknowledged that by this time the Daughters had won the textbook fight in Southern public schools. But winning over these schools was just the beginning for them. From their founding, the UDC expressed that while the schools in the South were their primary target in the fight over textbooks, they wanted their version of history instilled in classrooms throughout the country. At the 1895 UDC convention, one of the Daughters emphasized this sentiment: “A true history is not only needed for the youth of the South, but for the whole world.” They began pushing publishers to send Southern-written textbooks North, and soon books published by the likes of the B.F.

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71 Mississippi History Curriculum, 1926, 201.3:192601, Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum: Grades I-VII, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
73 Minutes from the UDC Annual Convention, 21 October 1895, Box 1, BBC-7431920, Convention Minutes 1895, United Daughters of the Confederacy Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.
Johnson Publishing Co. appeared in cities like Boston and New York. Their work not only crossed the Mason-Dixon line, but infiltrated private schools and universities. Their success in the early years prompted the Daughters to think about how best to expand the reach of their work beyond the altering of the selection and adoption of textbooks throughout the South. “We feel that what is true in Mississippi is true in Maine” announced Mississippi UDC historian Mrs. T.B. Holloman. They did not just want this history to be taught to children of the South, but children across the country.

Building off of the model from the United Confederate Veterans, the UDC became the primary agents of the textbook crusade in the twentieth century, broadening and diversifying their tactics to maximize their impact. The next chapter will take an in-depth look at the textbooks themselves and how the treatment over slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction drastically changed once the Daughters began implementing their approved textbooks to further their own political agenda.

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74 Minutes from the Conventions, 1915, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II, 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
75 Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1925, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. IV: 1923-1938, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
Chapter 2
“Monuments Between Covers:” The Evolution of the Southern Textbook

“Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”
– George Orwell

From their founding, the United Daughters of the Confederacy dedicated themselves to the preservation of the Old South. After only a decade after their founding, the UDC had emerged as one of the South’s most politically and socially successful organizations. Their membership had skyrocketed as chapters formed throughout the South, even spreading to Northern cities. As the previous chapter demonstrated, they took over the textbook crusade after expanding on the model of the United Confederate Veterans to control the selection and adoption of history textbooks. “In the pro-Confederate textbook campaign, as in other Lost Cause activities, women assumed a leadership role,” writes Karen Cox in Dixie’s Daughters. Controlling the textbooks chosen for schools remained a top priority for the Daughters because they knew if they could control the textbooks, they could continue to preserve the Lost Cause narrative.

Inherent in that effort was upholding the main tenets of the Lost Cause. It maintained the belief that slavery was a benevolent institution, purporting a care and loyalty between the masters and enslaved persons. This tenet often included the “happy slave” narrative that effaced the brutal realities of bondage. The Lost Cause also contested that the South had no interest in preserving slavery and that it succeeded from the Union over states’ rights not the preservation of slavery. Building off of that, the ideology upholds the constitutional right of secession, leading Lost Cause sympathizers

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76 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters 84.
77 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters 125.
to claim that the Confederates were never rebels or traitors to the nation. The North
started the war according to the Lost Cause and Reconstruction efforts led by the
vindictive North sought to punish the Southern states after the war ended. By labeling
Reconstruction efforts corrupt and harmful to the white South, proponents of the Lost
Cause delegitimized the rights of African Americans legally granted to them after the
war. They argued that granting them social and political rights was foolish and dangerous
to the white South, justifying the ideology of the Ku Klux Klan.78

While they often called it a “Loved Cause” the UDC remained ardent supporters
of its central tenets. Having textbooks that aligned with the Lost Cause was paramount
for the Daughters. Any textbook that challenged the tenets of the Lost Cause received
harsh condemnation from the UDC and related Confederate organizations. They could
not stand the idea of their children reading that the South were traitors to the nation who
fought a war to preserve the institution of slavery. Through their strategic and aggressive
tactics, the Daughters removed many of the books they viewed as “biased” and “unjust”
to the South. In their place, they campaigned for textbooks written by Southerners who
upheld the glory of the Confederacy and other principles of the Lost Cause.

This chapter will seek to demonstrate the evolution of the history textbook in the
South, as the UDC entered the textbook campaign. It surveys books produced in both the
North and South, written by historians, professors, and public-school educators.
Accompanied with the approved-UDC books on school lists was the increase of white
supremacist narratives that promoted false and harmful stereotypes of African
Americans. This chapter will show that while these narratives increased in intensity with

78 Ihh, "Lost Cause Myth," The Inclusive Historian's Handbook, May 13, 2020,
the onset of UDC-approved textbooks, they existed in schoolbooks before the Daughters or other Confederate groups intervened. The UDC was not directly responsible for the existence of textbooks that supported white supremacy, but they did play an important role in expanding white supremacist histories in white public schools throughout the South.

The chapter traces the development of American history in textbooks from the 1880s until the mid 1920s. It reveals the strong response Southern textbook writers had to the condemned books from the North. Included in this analysis is the treatment of the South’s role in slavery and the institution itself. It also observes how these textbooks characterized the South’s legitimacy to secede from the Union, the life of the Confederacy, and the depiction of the Reconstruction period. While treatment of the Civil War in these textbooks began to drift from the Lost Cause by the 1920s, characterization of the Reconstruction period remained consistent. All of the authors, deriving from various professional and regional backgrounds promoted white supremacist history when describing the postwar South, making almost no mention of the violence and oppression endured by African Americans. These historical accounts intended for a young and impressionable readership inoculated them with harmful and untrue characterizations of African Americans. It justified not only the actions of their grandfathers but of their fathers, as African Americans in the South faced immeasurable violence and intimidation coupled with the restriction on their social and political rights.

In spite of this, it remains impossible to measure the actual impact that these textbooks had on students. It is fair to assume that these books shaped their understanding of Southern history and possibly ignited pride in their Confederate ancestry. These
textbooks, however, are also symbols of the Lost Cause and the Confederate past of which the Daughters sought to preserve for decades. Alongside the construction of actual Confederate monuments, these textbooks were monuments themselves, immortalizing the Lost Cause and the Daughters commitment to upholding for future generations of the South.

Before the United Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy infiltrated the textbook selection and adoption process throughout the South, Professor John Fiske’s 1894 *History of the United States for Schools* was the preliminary textbook used in public schools across the South. His textbook appeared on nearly every list prior to 1900. Fiske was an esteemed historian and philosopher who lectured at elite universities in both the U.S. and Britain. Articles from Southern newspapers reported that the book remained incredibly popular and well-liked amongst Southern school teachers who expressed its pedagogical value in the classroom. The Boston-published textbook, however, quickly became the target of the UCV as described in chapter one. The UCV, soon followed by the growing UDC chapters, lamented Fiske’s book, labeling it “antagonistic to the South” for its depictions of the Confederacy.

While Fiske’s book did not depict a glorification of the South, it neither upheld the intense Northern-biases the Confederate heritage groups claimed it did. Fiske’s textbook, while not a glorification of the South, remained not as pro-Northern as the UCV, and similar groups protested. Concerning slavery, Fiske wrote in an impersonal tone without defensiveness on the institution. His writings, however, did indicate a slight

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Northern perspective. When discussing the Civil War, Fiske used phrases like “our armies” and “our navies” when referring to the Union army, implying this history comes from a Union-perspective.\(^81\) Despite positioning the Union as the triumphant protagonists in this historical telling, Fiske’s writing held an admiration for Confederate military valor as it faced defeat,

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\text{After Gettysburg and Vicksburg, it became clear to all open-minded observers that the South was playing a desperate losing game. But its capacity for heroic resistance was not yet at an end.}\(^82\)
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His praise of the South was limited, and much of the chapters about the Civil War praised the Union for its military strength and ability to reunite the nation after this bloody conflict. In discussion of Southern secession, of which the Confederate veteran and heritage would take up issue with, Fiske positioned the South as the main agitators wholly responsible for causing the war, labeling it a rebellion.\(^83\) While the book emphasized the role of slavery in creating tensions for between the North and the South, Fiske never stated that slavery caused the war. The textbook does imply that with the capture of Fort Sumter by the South, they consciously chose to start a war, while the North had tried instead to avoid bloodshed.\(^84\) This implication would again spark intense protests from the UCV and UDC following the book’s adoption in public schools.

Fiske’s textbook may have not placed slavery as the primary cause of the war, but it did cement the institution as a foundational role in the creation of the Confederacy. In his description of England refusing to militarily support the Confederacy he wrote,

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England had for years been suppressing the slave trade wherever her fleet would reach it; and she could not be persuaded to go to war in support of a government whose own vice-president, Alexander Stephens, had publicly declared it to be founded upon slavery as its corner-stone. 85

Fiske’s account calls back to Confederate Vice President Stephen’s famous “Cornerstone Speech” given in March of 1861, just weeks before Confederate troops fired on Fort Sumter, inaugurating the start of the war. The speech asserted the inferiority of enslaved persons and that the new Confederate government based itself on that truth and the institution of slavery itself. 86 The reference to the cornerstone speech in Fiske’s text directly clashed with one of the main tenets of the Lost Cause narrative, which perpetuated the notion that the institution of slavery was not only benevolent but did not cause the Civil War. Contesting this central principle to the Lost Cause did not sit well with the Confederate veterans and the UDC, fanning the flames these groups had with Fiske’s book already.

Although Fiske’s textbook directly challenged some of the main principles of the Lost Cause, it was not as deeply biased or condemning to the South as its adversaries claimed it to have been. As the textbook neared the end of the Civil War retelling, Fiske promoted a reconciliationist interpretation of the war, admitting that both sides fought for a cause they saw as righteous.

The war had been an honest and honorable contest, in which each side had been true to its convictions, and after making allowance for a certain amount of wrongful suffering inevitable in all wars, neither side had anything to be ashamed

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86 “Cornerstone Speech,” American Battlefield Trust, https://www.battlefields.org/learn/primary-sources/cornerstone-speech: “Our new government is founded upon exactly the opposite idea; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests, upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery subordination to the superior race is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth.”
of. The war had proven that our Federal Union is indestructible, and it had rid it of the curse of slavery.\textsuperscript{87}

Fiske venerated the Union, without belittling the South. And while his recounting of the Civil War came under scrutiny from the likes of the UCV and UDC, his description of the Reconstruction period held up many of their core beliefs and central pillars of the Lost Cause.

In his chapter “The Era of Reconstruction” Fiske detailed the passing of the Thirteenth Amendment, along with the formation of new state governments. He included the implementation of the “Ironclad Oath” in these new state governments. These oaths required civil servants, including those running for office, to swear an oath of loyalty to the Union, and confirm no previous disloyalty, subsequently excluding former Confederates from civil service.\textsuperscript{88} Fiske argued that “the ironclad oath kept nearly all respectable people out of office, and a swarm of greedy Northern adventures, known as ‘carpet-baggers,’ settled down upon the Southern states and set up governments supported largely by negro votes.”\textsuperscript{89} The textbook continued by describing that these Reconstruction-era governments, largely occupied by freedmen and Northerners, “further burdened” the South, claiming ill-governance and corruption.\textsuperscript{90} Conditions only improved once the “better class of Southern citizens came back into power,” Fiske claimed.\textsuperscript{91} For Fiske this “better class” was white people. This depiction promoted white supremacist narratives that envisioned African Americans as naturally inferior, proving

\textsuperscript{87} Fiske, \textit{A History of the United States}, 393.
\textsuperscript{88} “Lawmakers, Loyalty and the ‘Ironclad Oath,’ 1864,” U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, 
\textsuperscript{89} Fiske, \textit{A History of the United States}, 394.
\textsuperscript{90} Fiske, \textit{A History of the United States}, 399.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
that white supremacy existed in history textbooks long before the UCV and UDC intervened. While the book’s opposers took no offense to the treatment of the Reconstruction era, its characterization of the Confederate cause as a rebellious one gave Confederate veterans and the emerging UDC enough cause to fight for the removal of Fiske’s textbook in Southern public schools.

Following the ultimate elimination of Fiske’s textbook from many state-approved lists, Susan P. Lee’s *Primary School History* emerged as the paramount history textbook for public schools. Published by the B.F. Johnson Publishing Co. in 1897, the book already appeared on textbooks lists while the debates over Fiske’s book occurred. Once the Confederate veterans succeeded in removing Fiske, however, Lee’s book quickly emerged as the model history textbook, with an overwhelming majority of public schools using her book from the turn of the century up until 1913.\(^{92}\) The Confederate veterans highly praised her work, and in the 1900 convention minutes from the Mississippi UDC, the Daughters certified her contribution to “cancel the false impressions hitherto made upon the younger generations, by Northern version of Southern history.”\(^{93}\) The admiration won by the UDC reflected how, whether consciously or not, Lee’s book stood in stark contrast to Fiske’s, as if responding to his often ambivalent and defenseless tone. Unlike Fiske, Lee was not an accredited academic, but was the daughter of a Confederate general. Her simpler, more personalized tone reflected that difference. She spoke directly

\(^{92}\) Report of the UCV History Committee, 1895, BC-5633548, Box 7, Records 1890-1903, United Confederate Veterans Virginia Division, Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va.

\(^{93}\) Minutes of the Fourth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, 1 May 1900, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
to her audience of elementary-school-aged children, attempting to appeal to them emotionally to incite pride for their Southern heritage.

The overarching themes of her history included the self-victimization of the South, removing them from any blame. Lee’s book was unquestionably defensive when it came to the institution of slavery. Similar to Fiske, Lee’s textbook mentioned that in the beginning slavery was universal in the colonies. When discussing the Constitutional Convention and debates on the continuation of the slave trade Lee wrote,

Virginia and some other States wished to stop the African slave trade at once. New England and South Carolina opposed this. Carolina wanted the Africans to work her crops, and New England made a great deal of money by stealing the blacks from Africa and selling them in America. So, they carried their point that the slave trade should go on for twenty years longer.94

Lee’s framing of this event to readers was tactical and strategic. By specifying Virginia as one of the states that opposed the slave trade, it as well as the South at large appeared less responsible for the institution and its expansion. The following statement then spends more time shifting the responsibility of the slave trade’s continuation on Northern states and reducing the South’s role in the perpetuation of the institution. In addition to the defensive tone of Lee’s book regarding the responsibility of slavery in colonies and early republic, the textbook made a direct argument for the benefits of the institution itself. It upheld one of the core tenets of the Lost Cause; the belief that slavery was a benevolent institution and that slave masters treated enslaved persons with dignity rather than cruelty. Lee embeds this Lost Cause pillar in what would be her most transparent declaration of white supremacy of the textbook. In the section titled “Benefits and Evils of Slavery,” Lee’s attempted to construct her defense of the institution writing,

94 Lee, *Lee’s Primary School History*, 132.
The ignorant, heathen Africans had been greatly benefited by their two hundred and fifty years of slavery. Thousands and thousands of them had become civilized and Christianized as they could not have been in any other way. They were the happiest and best cared for working people in the world. Their owners could not therefore pity them, as the Northern Abolitionists professed to do.  

Lee’s historically inaccurate characterization of the conditions of slavery and propaganda remained in school-approved lists for over fifteen years. Her textbook contained some of the most transparent examples of racism and unabashedly pro-Southern language amongst popular history textbooks earning praise and admiration from the Daughters and other Confederate groups. This blatant misrepresentation of history and abhorrent characterization of enslaved persons reflected the bigotry white Southerners held at the time of the book’s publication, foreshadowing the inhumane treatment African Americans would face in the future. Lee, unlike Fiske, refuses to label slavery a sin, marking a significant break from earlier history texts. The profound effect this characterization potentially had on schoolchildren cannot be understated. Through this Lee erased feelings of guilt her young readers may have felt over their own ancestors’ involvement in slavery.

The book’s defensive tone is consistent throughout as Lee recounts the rise of the Confederacy and the events of the Civil War. Unlike Fiske who used the attack on Fort Sumter as evidence that the South caused the war, Lee argued that Confederate forces were compelled to bombard the fort, “the firing upon Fort Sumter was in self-defense, and the war really began when ships of war with troops and arms on board approached Charleston,” placing blame for the war with the Union. Her book continued to spew out

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95 Lee, *Lee’s Primary School History*, 179.
Lost Cause cliches. Among these included the argument that the South seceded to preserve their states’ rights, instead of the truth which was so they could keep their slaves.97 Today, almost every historian views slavery as the underlying cause of the war.98 By positioning the South as the victim of the North’s infringement on states’ rights, Lee appealed to the desires of the UDC, to venerate the South and disassociate with slavery.

In Lee’s textbook, her defense of the South was matched by her glorification of the Confederate troops during the war. Even in admitting military defeat, the textbook was still able to valorize the Confederacy in a way that elevated the concessions made in earlier textbooks. “With her great territory, her small population, and her limited resources, she accomplished enough to make the whole world wonder,” Lee wrote.99 She went on to argue that the Confederate soldier had made the “most gallant resistance the world ever saw.”100 The textbooks of this time elevated those of previous eras in the glorification of the Confederate army despite their defeat. Lee’s book reflected the wishes of the UDC in their fight to have their preferred version of history taught throughout all Southern schools. Lee’s emotional and personal language and framing of events was intended to stir pride in children over their Southern heritage and the plight of their fathers and grandfathers. The intense rhetoric she used to elevate the South as superior states throughout the textbook was met with praise by the UDC and the older generation.

97 Lee, Lee’s Primary School History, 166.: “Neither did the South secede to maintain slavery. The Constitution of the Southern Confederacy forbade the African slave-trade to be renewed.”
99 Lee, Lee’s Primary School History, 186.
100 Lee, Lee’s Primary School History, 228.
of Southerners who were pleased to see their values and perceived greatness of the Old South were being upheld.

Lee’s portrayal of the South as the North’s victim is a common theme in her retelling of the events that followed the war. Her textbook makes it very clear to her young readers that the war left the South devastated with “poverty and ruin” while the North remained prosperous “in every way.”\textsuperscript{101} While the North recovered from the war more quickly and did not endure the same level of economic hardship as the South, it suffered after the war, despite Lee’s claims.\textsuperscript{102} Reconstruction, in Lee’s text, is the Congress’s way of further punishing the former Confederate states. This is where her personal resentment towards Reconstruction floods the pages of these chapters. Lee quickly summarized the Reconstruction amendments, including the abolition of slavery and granting of rights to former enslaved persons, trying her best to gloss over its importance. Instead, she characterized the Reconstruction era by detailing further punishment of the South through the Ironclad Oaths, where “every respectable white man in the South” could not hold office, and state and local governments came under the control of “the lowest characters” including freedmen she labeled as “ignorant” and “unprincipled Northern adventurers.”\textsuperscript{103} Following this, her lament over the Reconstruction period quickly spiraled into a racist rant against the newly freed African Americans recently endowed with both social and political rights. Her depiction of

\textsuperscript{101} Lee, \textit{Lee’s Primary School History}, 228.
\textsuperscript{102} Lumen Learning, "US History II (American Yawp)," \url{https://courses.lumenlearning.com/ushistory2av/chapter/economic-development-during-the-civil-war-and-reconstruction-2/}.
\textsuperscript{103} Lee, \textit{Lee’s Primary School History}, 231.
African Americans at this time promoted deeply racist falsehoods, that implied African Americans had a better life under enslavement:

Left to themselves, the blacks were lazy, unprincipled, and vicious, but not often spiteful or malicious toward the white. The Freedmen’s Bureau gave to the negroes, in many cases, land of their former owners, and encouraged them in every way to be rude and insolent and idle.\textsuperscript{104}

Lee’s description of African Americans at this time dehumanizes them to something animal-like, incapable of taking care of themselves outside of the plantation. One could draw a very clear parallel between Lee’s portrayal of African Americans in her textbook to the violence they faced, and the repression of the rights granted in the Reconstruction amendments and the Civil Rights Act of 1875.\textsuperscript{105}

Not only were her characterizations of African Americans incredibly racist and degrading, they were also historically inaccurate. The Freedmen’s Bureau established right after the war helped newly freedpeople transition out of slavery and into their new lives. Today, historians acknowledge the relative success of the organization. The Bureau fed millions of individuals, built hospitals and schools, aided African American veterans, and helped ex-slaves negotiate labor contracts.\textsuperscript{106} Historians today additionally contest the characterization of African Americans as idle and lazy, emphasizing their efforts to access and education and economically advance.\textsuperscript{107} To the delight of the UDC, Lee’s textbook failed to acknowledge any of that, instead it promoted narratives of African American inferiority that confirmed the implementation of Black Codes, vagrancy laws,

\textsuperscript{104} Lee, \textit{Lee’s Primary School History}, 232.
\textsuperscript{105} "The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow.. Civil Rights Act of 1875: PBS," The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow, PBS, \url{https://www.thirteen.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_civil.html}. The Civil Rights Act was rarely enforced and eventually declared unconstitutional in 1883.
\textsuperscript{106} History.com Editors, "Freedmen's Bureau," History.com, June 1, 2010, \url{https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/freedmens-bureau#section_3}.
\textsuperscript{107} Foner, \textit{Reconstruction}, 167-169.
suppression of political and social rights. Her textbook added more fuel to an already burning fire of racial violence that African Americans faced in the South during this period.

Lee’s charged rhetoric that filled the pages of her book consisted of many baseless claims about African Americans and helped the South appear as the victim, a portrayal that is in stark contrast to Fiske. While Fiske’s book gained praise from educators for its pedagogical utility, Lee’s textbook garnered approval from the UDC for its veneration of the South. Her textbook was a marker of their initial success in the textbook crusade, as its predominance on textbook lists increased concurrent with the blacklisting of Fiske’s book. Alongside their efforts in the battle over textbooks was their work to erect Confederate monuments across the South.108 Installed during the same period as African American rights were under attack, these statues did not merely memorialize Confederate soldiers, but served as symbols of white supremacy strung up for all to see. In a similar vein, Lee’s textbook, lacking significantly in pedagogical value, was a symbol of white supremacy itself upheld by the UDC as they garnered more and more influence over the selection and adoption of textbooks in public schools. This was the model for the “unbiased” and “fair” history that the Daughters wanted for their children and their children’s children so that their version of history would become fact not fiction.

Lee’s book remained in school-approved lists for over fifteen years.109 It was only removed in 1913 because it had not been updated, due to her death in 1911. The books

that made their way onto textbook lists in the early 1910s continued to reflect the UDC’s work and the growth of education professionalism throughout the Progressive Era. The next set of textbooks adopted by schools were primarily authored by credited historians and college professors. This resulted in a drastic change of tone with the treatment of history, as opposed to the charged and intensely defensive one that Lee wrote with. Despite the relaxed tone, the books continued to uphold the main tenets of the Lost Cause, although with much more subtlety than their predecessor. If anything, the language around the Civil War intensified. The treatment of Reconstruction and the conditions of African Americans, however, continued to demonstrate how these textbooks were more than educational tools, but monuments of white supremacy erected by the UDC, whose membership and influence flourished in the early decades of the twentieth century, as proved in the previous chapter.

When textbook commissions removed Lee’s book from circulation in 1913, *Our Republic: A History of the United States for Grammar Grades* immediately replaced it.110 Written by two college professors and a former Virginia school superintendent in 1910, *Our Republic* became one of the most widely used U.S. history textbooks throughout the South up until the mid-1920s (at the earliest).111 Like all of the books being adopted at this time, *Our Republic* treated Southern history with much less intensity than Lee. It did, however, keep the sentiments of her book. One example of this is seen in the description of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, the Harriet Beecher Stowe novel that historians credited to have “helped lay the groundwork for the Civil War.”112 The 1852 novel provided readers with

110 Ibid.
a slightly more harsh and accurate depiction of slavery in the U.S. In the textbooks’ analysis of the groundbreaking novel, the authors minimize the atrocious nature of chattel slavery in America. They argued the novel “pictured possible abuses that might arise under the slavery system, but the incidents related were exceptional.”\textsuperscript{113} The language being used here is key in understanding how powerful the UDC really was at this time. By using words like “possible,” “might,” and “exceptional” the authors effectively undermine the severity of violence and brutality enslaved persons endured under their masters, planting seeds of doubt and discrediting an entire race’s experience.

Matthew Page Andrews’s 1914 textbook \textit{History of the United States} perpetuated this depiction of slavery. Andrews, whose book was sponsored by the Richmond chapter of the UDC (as explained in the previous chapter) made its way onto textbook lists around the same time as \textit{Our Republic}. It also promulgated the happy slave narrative, calling enslaved persons “a people that bore their bondage lightly and were happily and more fortunate under its tutelage than they had ever been in the heathen regions of Africa.”\textsuperscript{114} Both textbooks perpetuated the narrative that minimized the brutality of slavery in an effort to purify the antebellum South from its sins and association with such institution.

\textit{Our Republic} doubled down on this effort as seen in the following section where the abolition of slavery is described. Understanding how impressionable their audience was, the authors spoke directly to the students,

\begin{quote}
Let no child who studies American history be ashamed of the part that his ancestors may have played in this memorable struggle. If he is a Southerner, let
\end{quote}


him be proud of his country. Let him feel that his ancestors were not traitors; for
they fought for the Constitution as they understood it, and for State sovereignty as
it was generally accepted at the time of the formation of the Union. They fought
for a principle which they believed to be right, and which was finally destroyed
by the power of armies.\textsuperscript{115}

Here we see how the authors speak directly to Southern school children. This passage
directly echoed the rhetoric of the UCV and UDC in the early years of the textbook
campaign, arguing that Northern-written textbooks “[created] in the minds of the pupils a
suspicion that their fathers who fought for Southern rights were rebels and traitors” who
fought to keep slavery intact.\textsuperscript{116} Textbooks that appeared on school lists in the mid-1920s
relaxed this tone. Johns Hopkins history professor John Latane’s \textit{A History of the United
States} appeared on some textbook lists in Virginia and Mississippi.\textsuperscript{117} He depicted
slavery initially driven by economic interest and subsequently transformed into a moral
issue in the mid-nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{118} Latane’s book appeared as an exception to the
other textbooks at the time that diminished the brutal nature of slavery.

The treatment of the Civil War remained the most prominent change from Lee’s
textbook to the textbooks of the 1910s and 1920s. Latane’s book even recognizes the role
of slavery when depicting the cause of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{119} While not a complete reversal of
Lost Cause rhetoric, it marked an important exception to most history textbooks of this
era. Andrews, while giving a much more nuanced account of the war than his
predecessors, still called it “The War of Secession” rather than the Civil War. The very

\textsuperscript{115} Riley et. al, \textit{Our Republic}. 403.
\textsuperscript{116} \textit{The times}, (Richmond, Va.), 13 Jan. 13 1900, \textit{Chronicaling America: Historic American Newspapers},
(Lib. of Congress) \url{https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85034438/1900-01-13/ed-1/seq-6/}.
\textsuperscript{117} High and Elementary Textbook List: 1923-1924, April 1923, Box 15, Accession 28142, Mary-Cooke
\textsuperscript{118} John Holladay Latané, \textit{A History of the United States}, (Allyn and Bacon, 1918) 12.
\textsuperscript{119} Latané, \textit{A History of the United States}, 353.
name was a reflection yet again of the UDC. In 1913 UDC Historian-General Mildred Rutherford addressed the Mississippi Children of the Confederacy, an auxiliary group of the UDC, saying “promise me that you will never call the war of ‘61-65 the ‘Civil War’”\textsuperscript{120} The victimization of the Southerner also continued in the textbooks of this era. In the Mace-Petrie textbook published in 1919, the authors wrote that “no person lost more” in the war than the Southern planter whose “field laborers and house servants had been set free.”\textsuperscript{121} The authors omitted the facts that these laborers and servants were actually enslaved persons, once again whitewashing the cruel realities of the institution. The textbooks that replaced Lee toned down their language when it came to slavery and the Civil War, writing without the defensive and aggressive nature Lee included. Despite this, these academics still upheld the major doctrines of the Lost Cause, echoing the rhetoric of the UDC.

While the depictions of the Civil War in these textbooks, circulated throughout the 1910s and 1920s diverged from those of the previous decades, their portrayals of the postwar South upheld many of the same racist falsehoods that Lee and Fiske established in their texts. They detailed the supposed corruption of new Southern legislatures, necessity for vagrancy laws, and the formation of the Ku Klux Klan. They failed, however, to include any significant mention of acts of the suppression of civil rights and the rampant racial violence that ran out of control in this period, including the lynching of dozens of African Americans.

\textsuperscript{120} Address of UDC Historian-General Mildred Rutherford, May 1913, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II, 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.

\textsuperscript{121} George Petrie and William H. Mace, \textit{American School History}, (Rand McNally & Co., 1919), 269.
All of the textbooks of this era remained critical of the Freedmen’s Bureau and expressed resistance to the laws intended to expand the social and political equality of the freedpeople. In *Our Republic* the authors reacted harshly to the presence of African Americans in state legislatures in the South: “they were utterly unfit to vote and entirely of making proper laws, the results were not only disgusting, but tragic for the downtrodden South.” These baseless remarks, with no evidence, promoted racist narrative about freedmen in the South, justifying the violence actions white Southerners took to drive them out of office. Current characterization of African American office holders overturns these previous depictions, instead describing these politicians as educated and adequate for public office. In accordance with *Our Republic*, Andrews’s textbook and Latane's further depictions, that were both dangerous and inaccurate. Andrews labeled the Freedmen’s Bureau as corrupt and intent on controlling the African American vote in the South. The Mace-Petrie textbook takes these characterizations even further, claiming African Americans “were without education, and had little or no experience in caring for themselves, or in the duties of citizenship. The southern people naturally feared that without control they would become idle and dangerous.” By situating African American social and political power as dangerous to Southern prosperity, the authors justify their claims that suppressing those newly granted rights was not only acceptable but necessary.

In an attempt to curtail the social, political, and economic progress of African Americans in the South, many states enacted vagrancy laws, often labeled as “Black

122 Riley et. al, *Our Republic*. 444.
Codes.” Historians now characterize the Black Codes today as a massive hindrance to Reconstruction that unfairly discriminated against African Americans and limited their opportunities to advance themselves.\(^{126}\) Textbooks of the early twentieth century portray the Black Codes differently, arguing for their necessity rather than as a tool of white supremacy and unlawful suppression of African American rights. *Our Republic* relied on the narrative that freedmen remained incapable of supporting themselves, “for they had never had any opportunity to learn how to take care of themselves. In many cases they refused to work and were becoming burdensome to the white people.”\(^{127}\) (434). Vagrancy laws, these textbooks argued, were not intended to unfairly punish African Americans, but to encourage them to find employment. Today, it is widely recognized by historians that these laws were detrimental to African Americans and allowed the convict leasing system to force them into unpaid labor.\(^{128}\)

This generation of textbooks was also the first to really dig into the history of the Ku Klux Klan. Founded in 1865 by Confederate Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Klan was a vigilante group that fought against the progress of Reconstruction through terror and violence that primarily targeted African Americans who voted and held a political office.\(^{129}\) Just as the textbooks justified the implementation of vagrancy laws and suppression of African American rights to “protect” the South, they did so with the Klan, arguing that the terrorist organization formed out of necessity. *Our Republic* argued that things had grown so destitute in the South that the “white people of the South were driven

\(^{126}\) Foner, *Reconstruction*, 302.  
\(^{127}\) Riley et. al, *Our Republic*, 434.  
in self-defense to take some decided steps to regain control.”¹³⁰ Using self-defense as a justification for the Klan’s formation continues the theme throughout all of these textbooks that the South, the white South that is, was always the victim. The textbooks claimed that the Klan’s emerged to “[protect] against violence” and “deter evildoers from further crime.”¹³¹ These “evildoers” primarily included African Americans, especially those that sat in state legislatures, who the Klan would target in their infamous midnight raids.

The violent reality of these raids did not appear in the textbooks. Historians today recognize the sheer number of unwarranted beatings and killings the Klan committed in its intimidation campaign against the advancement of African Americans.¹³² The violence and murder enacted by members of the Klan rarely appeared in the textbooks and were mentioned briefly and with minimal detail of the scale of these terrors. Instead, they provided vague characterizations of the Klan’s actions. In Our Republic, the authors wrote,

They would suddenly appear and throw the negroes into agony of superstitious terror. They visited evil-doers, white as well as black, with certain and severe punishment. Night after night they rode, seeking for those they had condemned, and carrying out their decisions even to administering at times the death penalty. By these means they did much to check the wrongs that the South was enduring.¹³³

Depicted as arbiters of justice, rather than terrorists, the authors venerated the memory of the Klan just as previous authors had done with Confederate figures like Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Any inclusion of violence quickly followed a vindication for these

¹³⁰ Riley et. al, Our Republic, 445.
¹³¹ Andrews, History of the United States, 332.
¹³² Foner, Reconstruction, 593.
¹³³ Riley et. al, Our Republic, 434.
acts or said that any murders committed were rare and done by reckless men that had joined the Klan and soiled its original intentions. None of the authors even used the words “murder” and “killing” instead opting for phrases like “death was visited upon offenders” or “administering at times the death penalty” creating a distance between the Klan and the violence they enacted. Instead of the textbooks depicting the Ku Klux Klan as terrorists and murders, they were instead portrayed with qualities that closely resembled heroism for administering justice where the courts had failed to.

The depictions of the Klan aligned succinctly with the sentiments of the UDC. The president of Mississippi’s UDC division and eventual Historian-General of the national UDC, S.E.F. Rose wrote a booklet and textbook glorifying the Klan, as mentioned in the previous chapter. While her descriptions portrayed the midnight riders with a tone akin to Susan Lee, the content aligned with these authors, all of whom were academics and credited historians. Some of these textbooks were even produced by Northern publishing houses. This both demonstrated the success of the UDC’s work, influencing the books produced by these Northern companies, and also showed that white supremacist narratives did not solely exist within the sphere of the UDC.

The fight over history textbooks also included state history textbooks in addition to overall U.S. history. With auxiliary chapters of the UDC doing most of the groundwork in the textbook crusade, the implementation of their desired state histories gave equal, if not more, importance to their efforts. Virginia and Mississippi textbooks as case studies provide key insight to how these state histories were an integral aspect of the textbook crusade. The two states also yield interesting examples as the home, and adoptive home of the two most important Confederate figures: General Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Both men took on a sort of mysticism since the war with their god-like
characterizations embedded in the Lost Cause. In both Virginia and Mississippi textbooks, each state's history provided a more personal defense of their state and direct attempt to stir up pride in their students for their respective state.

In Virginia, *Magill’s First Book in Virginia History* and Royall B. Smithey’s *History of Virginia* demonstrated this vindication of their state’s history. The former was written by Mary Tucker Magill, a Virginia schoolteacher who wrote this textbook in 1873, and revised through the early 1900s. The state used her book for over four decades, shaping the education of multiple generations of Southern schoolchildren.\(^\text{134}\) The Virginia school board even wrote a recommendation that Magill’s history be a required reading for all of Virginia’s schoolchildren. Contingent with U.S. history textbooks, Magill’s defended Virginia’s participation in chattel slavery. She wrote that “Virginia never liked” slavery but that England forced it continually upon the colonies.\(^\text{135}\) This statement further promotes the victimization narrative, attempting to remove culpability from the South for the existence and expansion of slavery. The victimization narrative continued in Smithey’s textbook originally published in 1898 but revised up until 1917.\(^\text{136}\) A key take away from Smithey was the idea that Virginia never desired slavery and had often attempted to rid itself of the institution.\(^\text{137}\) The efforts to write a history that purified the South of its horrific past remained successful as long as these texts were continuously taught.

\(^\text{135}\) Mary Tucker Magill, *Magill’s First Book in Virginia History*, (J.P. Bell, 1908), 153.
\(^\text{136}\) Reports of Standing Committees, October 1916, 483, V5, 1918-1920 Minutes, Virginia Museum of History & Culture, Richmond, Va. Smithey’s textbook received recommendation from the Virginia Division of the UDC up until at least 1916.
\(^\text{137}\) Royall Bacon Smithey, *History of Virginia*, (American, 1898), 175.
Both books, intended for fourth and fifth grade students, further promoted deeply racist characterizations of enslaved person. Magill included that enslavement “was not bad for the slaves. In their own country they were cannibals, or man-eaters, and very degraded in every way. They were much better off in this country, where they were taught to know about God and about other things which were good to them.”\textsuperscript{138} Smithey, on the other hand, promoted the happy slave narrative, concurrent with a central tenet of the Lost Cause. Speaking of the “genuine affection” that existed between masters and enslaved persons he wrote,

As a rule, the negroes were well fed and well clothed; and it cannot be said that they were an unhappy race. Free from all the responsibilities of life, they brought up large families, and enjoyed to the fullest extent such blessing as came to them.\textsuperscript{139}

Like many of these characterizations seen in previous textbooks, these depictions were baseless, intended on exonerating their ancestors, justifying actions of white supremacy both at this time and through the time that these children read these narratives. Without any concession to the sins of their forefathers, Smithey and Magill continued the mission of the UDC and the Lost Cause, venerating their history for the new generation of Southerners.

Like the Virginia textbooks, Mississippi state histories visibly attempted to establish pride in its readers for their state and its history. Unlike Virginia, Mississippi achieved statehood after the seeds of slavery had been planted in the nation. Mary Duval’s \textit{The Students’ History of Mississippi} includes this history, also justifying her state’s participation in the institution. Duval, like Magill, was a former schoolteacher in

\textsuperscript{138} Magill, \textit{Magill's First Book}, 153.
\textsuperscript{139} Smithey, \textit{History of Virginia}, 113.
the state’s public schools. Also, like Duval, her book garnered widespread approval from
the school superintendents in Mississippi and of the UDC. Most of her book reads
concurrently with the histories already analyzed, just told through the Mississippian
perspective. Similar to the other textbooks, Duval remained critical of the Reconstruction
era. She wrote of how freedmen were led to believe that land and property of former
masters was to be distributed to them and that when these promises remained unfulfilled,
they “caused the most violent demonstrations against the white to be made in many
localities.”

Duval gave no specific instance of these demonstrations, but again
positioned the white Southerners as the victims of this period, further justifying the acts
of suppression and violence committed against African Americans. Between 1880 and
1940 Mississippi had the highest per capita rates of lynching of the African American
population.

For the most part these state histories followed the same characterizations of the
South that the national histories did and operated to uphold white supremacy narratives
including the main tenets of the Lost Cause, especially when it came to the institution of
slavery and Reconstruction era. The attempts to establish pride for one’s state that more
specifically defended the actions of the state distinguished these books from the general
U.S. history ones. They furthered the central mission of the UDC of glorifying the
histories of these states and their heroes such as Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. These
textbooks served as monuments to the mission of the UDC and the work conducted by

140 Mary V. Duval, The Student's History of Mississippi: From Its Earliest Discoveries and Settlements to
the End of the Year 1886, (Courier-Journal Job Print., 1887), 175.

141 "Lynching in America: Confronting the Legacy of Racial Terror," Lynching in America: Confronting
individual state and local chapters whose members were the foot soldiers in the battle over textbooks.

The authors were never shy about their intentions. Each included a short preface, outlining the goals of the textbook and what they hoped to instill in their young readers. Directly responding to the outcry against Northern-biased textbooks, Susan Lee began her text with her intention that, “No Southern child need remain in ignorance of the origin, growth and progress of the United States, or be taught their history in a one-sided manner.”142 Her preface was a direct response to the complaints of the Confederate veterans and the Daughters, fulfilling their wishes to what they believed was fair and unbiased history in Southern schools. The preface of *Our Republic* purports the same message, writing “the children of the present must learn to view without prejudice this era of our history.”143 Presenting their version of an unbiased history proved as the paramount intention, echoing the sentiments of the Daughters throughout the early years of the textbook campaign.

Alongside the enlightening aspect of their work, existed a direct appeal to patriotism that read more as propaganda. The preface of *Our Republic* continued past initial remarks to plainly state that the book was intended to “foster patriotism and a sense of civic duty” in its young readers.144 This enunciation, in a way, provided a foreshadowing to the mechanism in which Southern history was presented to its audience. If the goal was to stoke patriotism and pride in a student’s Southern heritage,

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142 Lee, *Lee’s Primary School History*, 5.
143 Riley et. al, *Our Republic*, v.
144 Ibid.
the authors could not detail the atrocities of chattel slavery upheld by their fathers and grandfathers. Smithey reinvigorates that sentiment in his preface,

> Of all the emotions that stir the human soul, love of country is one of the noblest; and near akin to it is reverence for one’s ancestors. If this little book shall have the happy effect of creating the patriotism of young people, and of causing them to appreciate more highly the deeds of their forefathers, the author will feel amply repaid for his labor.\(^{145}\)

Once the UDC had won the battle, they decided to take on the war: the schools. They would need to expand their fight past the textbook if they were going to mold the next generation of Southerners and that’s exactly what they did.

\(^{145}\) Smithey, *History of Virginia* iv.
Chapter 3
The Daughters Invade the Classroom: Progressivism & the Confederate Cause

“Everyone should do all in his power to collect and disseminate the truth in the hope that it may find a place in history, and descend to posterity” – Robert E. Lee

In the hands of the Daughters, the textbook campaign had proven incredibly successful in implementing pro-Southern history. “I have been firmly convinced of the right of the Southern States… and feel that I can now break down the arguments of any Yankee on the subject of the American war of secession” wrote one Virginian high schooler in his test on *Virginia’s Attitude Toward Slavery and Secession*. The book by Virginian lawyer and social reformer Beverly B. Munford was a required parallel (a supplemental textbook to the primary book) in most Virginia high schools throughout the early twentieth century. The students’ answers to the test questions on Munford’s text demonstrated how the books promoted and approved by the UDC were more than just monuments of the Lost Cause. Rather, they provided tools for the new generation of Southerners, indoctrinated in the Lost Cause, to believe in and defend its core principles.

The test questions and answers of *Virginia’s Attitude* perpetuated the many dangerous racial stereotypes that characterized African Americans as inherently inferior to white people. In response to a question regarding the condition of free African Americans prior to the war, one student wrote, “The free negroes were as a rule worse off both physically and socially in Virginia and elsewhere than the slaves. They were a totally despised class and none of the Northern States wanted them within their

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Antagonizing the North and exonerating Virginia for blame in the institution of slavery, the students’ examination answers provide tangible evidence on the effect that the UDC’s chosen textbooks had on students. While the textbooks existed as monuments to the Lost Cause just as the erected status of Lee and Davis did, they also indicated the impact the Daughters had in shaping the views of Southern students in the UDC’s crusade of Confederate vindication and memory.

Curriculum throughout the South further reflected the impact of the work of the UDC by the 1920s. By then Mildred Rutherford, the headstrong former Historian-General of the organization had published her two most significant works, *A Measuring Rod* and *Truths of History* in 1920. Both works provided guidelines for educators on which textbooks aligned with their approved version of history. With her committee, Rutherford detailed the major eras of American history, mostly from the Southern perspective. She provided documents, speeches, laws, and other resources to back up many of her claims exonerating the South from “injustices” perpetrated by Northern-written textbooks. The North’s responsibility for the Civil War, the benevolence of slavery, and the necessity of the Ku Klux Klan were just a few amongst the many arguments made in her guidebooks.148

The impact of her work, along with the rest of the UDC’s textbook campaign, was evident in the school curricula in states across the South. Mississippi’s 1926 elementary school curriculum reflected the rhetoric used by the Daughters in the battle over pro-Southern textbooks. The state department of education’s manual to schools and educators

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spewed much of the Lost Cause language used by the Daughters and the books that they promoted. The curriculum instructed that the teaching of Reconstruction be omitted since it was “only destruction to 1890.” The manual justified this decision, arguing “omission of these pages will be better than having children try to learn them. They will not get the significance of Reconstruction when it is only a period of destruction. After study of Civil War, explain to children why we are not going to study Reconstruction.”

Exclusion of the Reconstruction period allowed the state to prevent seeing the advancement made by former enslaved persons and the rights guaranteed to them that were subsequently and violently taken in later decades. This omission paired with instructions on teaching the Civil War, further regurgitating Lost Cause narratives. Included in this was the purported “faithfulness” of enslaved persons to their masters during the war, advancing the narrative that slavery was a benevolent institution where enslaved persons remained happy and benefitted from their status.

This curriculum revealed more than simply the success of the Daughters in the textbook campaign. The Mississippi curriculum indicated the aggressive tactics the UDC took in furthering the Confederate cause in the new generations of Southerners. Schools were instructed to teach songs like “Old Black Joe” and “Dixie.” The department of education dedicated an entire month to the study of Confederate figures Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson. The teaching of Southern hymns and veneration of figures like Lee revealed the full scope of the UDC’s work in shaping children’s education in the

149 Mississippi History Curriculum, 1926, 201.3:192601, Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum: Grades I-VII, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
150 Ibid.
151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
early decades of the twentieth century. The Daughters, historian Karen Cox recognized, “had a broader vision for training future generations of the South’s citizens” that included more than just pro-Confederate textbooks.\textsuperscript{153} It expanded to a full-blown infiltration into the white public school system. The height of their involvement coincided with the Progressive Era, and progressive reforms and ideals shaped their work across the South. The UDC’s efforts reflected Southern progressivism that was primarily enforced by women who aggressively worked to reform the education system. Their progressivism, however, was driven by Lost Cause ideals and the hopes of instilling a love and loyalty to the Confederate memory in these young Southerners.

This chapter will demonstrate how the efforts of the UDC expanded far beyond their campaign for textbooks sympathetic to the Confederate cause. The Daughters, aggressive in their tactics, maintained a constant presence in schools, with both teachers and students. They were progressive Confederates, as Cox labels them, who implemented social reforms throughout the South with the mission of advancing the Lost Cause narratives.\textsuperscript{154} Although they remained internally fractured on social welfare programs for poor Southern women, the UDC created college scholarship programs for these women. Some members of auxiliary chapters had intended on financially supporting these women further but were ultimately met with resistance due to the classism deeply embedded in the UDC. This chapter also seeks to characterize the Daughters as progressive educators. Their hand in shaping the education of these schoolchildren promoted reform methods aligned with the Progressive Movement of the early twentieth century. This characterization, however, remains limited as many of their actions in schools were

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\textsuperscript{153} Cox, \textit{Dixie's Daughters}, 137.
\textsuperscript{154} Cox, \textit{Dixie's Daughters}, 84.
\end{flushright}
mostly focused on upholding the Lost Cause to future generations, absent progressive educational reforms.

With the Progressive Era overlapping with the rise of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the reform movement impacted the mission and activities of the Daughters. Progressivism, as it is understood in the early twentieth century context, included social welfare programs that assisted the poor. Across the country, women played a major role in the Progressive Movement, and the South was no exception. As the UDC grew, the impact of progressivism guided many of the organization's endeavors. With progressivism sweeping the nation, the UDC oriented their endeavors to aiding the impoverished members of the descendants of the Confederate generation, especially women. This was done primarily through the establishment of college scholarships, and opportunities that oriented them towards a career in public education. The Daughters used educational assistance as a mechanism to both provide these women with greater opportunities and uphold pro-Confederate values in the classroom. Due to the classist nature of the UDC, the progressive impulse remained limited in its size and scope throughout this era.

The UDC provided educational assistance to white Confederate descendants primarily through its scholarship program. Like many of the UDC’s initiatives, the scholarship program operated on both a state and national level. States sponsored scholarships to young Confederate descendants to attend colleges within that state. The Virginia Division as of 1916 supported four scholarships, and reports from the state’s education committee reveal that most of these were awarded to young women of
Virginia.\textsuperscript{155} In addition to the state-sponsored scholarships, local chapters also supported scholarships within their given jurisdiction, often covering the cost of admission and textbooks for the selected students.\textsuperscript{156}

Following the lead of their state divisions, the national UDC implemented a college scholarship program that became more coveted than the state-sponsored ones, as it awarded students much more money than the state and local scholarships did. The national UDC scholarship first granted most of its scholarships to prominent schools throughout the South, but as the program evolved, it ventured above the Mason-Dixon line. This was in part due to the fact that UDC divisions had emerged in cities like Washington D.C., New York, and Philadelphia.\textsuperscript{157} Students attending schools including the University of Chicago, Columbia Teachers’ College, and even the University of Pennsylvania received scholarships sponsored by the UDC.\textsuperscript{158} The funding of higher education, especially for poorer white women in the South, demonstrated the influence of progressivism on the UDC in the early twentieth century.

The Daughters not only helped finance the educational pursuits of many Confederate descendants, but they also sought to improve their educational facilities. Once again, the focus on these efforts remained with the women of the South who pursued higher education. The women of state divisions often fought for financial support for improving the living conditions of these women as they entered college. The UDC in Tennessee launched a campaign in 1903 to construct a women’s dormitory at the

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{157} Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 103.
\textsuperscript{158} Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 115.
Peabody Normal College.\textsuperscript{159} In 1916, the Virginia Divisions of the UDC supported a bill to establish a Coordinate College for Women at Charlottesville that would be affiliated with the University of Virginia.\textsuperscript{160}

By focusing their efforts on improving facilities for women’s colleges and even supporting the establishment of women’s colleges, the UDC expressed immense interest in providing greater education opportunities for white women. Although many young men gained scholarships from the Daughters, the focus remained on promoting higher education for white women. As they saw it, white women were the key to upholding the Lost Cause in subsequent Southern generations. Most of these women attended normal schools, or teaching colleges, as they were focused on training these young women to become educators. The UDC hoped that in sponsoring their education and teacher training, these women would continue to indoctrinate future generations of Southerners the principles of the Confederacy and Confederate culture. As Karen Cox argued, by “providing young white women with the means to receive an education at an institution of higher learning in the South served the higher purpose of preserving the Confederate past.”\textsuperscript{161} Lost Cause ideals drove their progressivism. Their social welfare inclinations to uplift these women and support their education remained dependent on their effort in promoting Confederate patriotism and pride in their Southern heritage.

Calls to improve educational infrastructure existed outside of higher education. In the same year that the Virginia state legislature defeated the bill to establish a women’s college, a local chapter in Virginia highlighted the poor quality of facilities existing in

\textsuperscript{159} Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 98.
\textsuperscript{161} Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 98.
rural schools of the state. At this time rural areas in the South had incredibly high illiteracy rates amongst its white population.\textsuperscript{162} The plea for investment in these schools provides key insight into what the Daughters hoped to achieve by improving the access to education and conditions of school facilities. In the report committee chair Mrs. Cabell Smith wrote,

The superintendent [of these rural schools] sends some inexperienced girl (with an unmentionable salary) to cope with conditions which would appall the intellect and the ingenuity of Solomon himself. The schoolhouse is worse than any cabin Mrs. Stowe’s imagination could conceive, with all the grades of the best equipped school in any city to teach. Can this condition be improved? Badly lighted, poorly heated, no ventilation, no sanitation, and under all these unfavorable conditions she must teach that the principles Lee and Jackson upheld were wrong and that Abraham Lincoln is the greatest hero the South has ever produced.\textsuperscript{163}

The need to improve schools linked the Daughters campaign to insert pro-Confederate textbooks in the classroom with their efforts to improve the education for poorer students in these rural areas. As the UDC imagined it, the lack of improved facilities and qualified teachers kept students even more vulnerable to the pernicious Northern-biased textbooks. They had to cure both ailments if they hoped to instill a loyalty to the Confederate cause in the new generation of white Southerners.

Although calls to improve the quality of impoverished rural schools of the South were present amongst members of the UDC, the Daughters’ progressivism rarely expanded beyond the scholarship program and financial assistance given to build and improve dormitories. Even the establishment of the education committee in the national UDC did not occur until over a decade after the organization’s founding.\textsuperscript{164} Resistance to

\textsuperscript{162} Cox, \textit{Dixie's Daughters}, 94.
\textsuperscript{164} Cox, \textit{Dixie's Daughters}, 92.
more extensive welfare programs for poor white women was not a result of financial incapability. The UDC had exploded in membership in its early years but gave financial precedence to its Confederate monument project. Members of the UDC, the majority of whom derived from wealthy upper-class families, did not view uplifting poor Confederate descendants as a priority in the organization’s activities.  

The UDC’s progressivism increased, however, once the issue was racialized. Appeals to white supremacy ignited support from members to endow these scholarships and promote the education of poorer white girls of the South. In *Dixie’s Daughters*, Karen Cox highlights how Becca Felton, a member of the Georgia Division, made speeches to the UDC at large and to auxiliary groups about the importance of educating the South’s poor white women. She argued that as descendants of Confederate men, the UDC should help them gain higher education. Felton’s Confederate progressivism was colored with appeals to white supremacy. As Cox points out, Felton highlighted “the money northern philanthropists had given to educate African Americans in the region” and feared that they would soon politically and socially surpass poor white Southerners. Other members of the UDC emphasized this appeal to white supremacy in order to encourage scholarship programs. Recognizing that many Daughters wanted their money spent on Confederate statues, one member asked, “what good will monuments to our ancestors be if our Southland is to become the land of educated blacks and uneducated whites?” This tactic proved somewhat successful. Money for uplifting and educating these poor white women was relegated to scholarships, a less progressive

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165 Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 96.
166 Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 93.
167 Ibid.
168 Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 95.
vision than some of these members had hoped, hinting at the classicism inherent in the UDC.

The UDC’s intentions for sponsoring the education of these poorer women also indicated the limits to their progressivism. Sending many of these young women to college to become educators, the Daughters financially supported them to ensure that as teachers, they would uphold the ideals of the Lost Cause to the next generation. The UDC’s progressivism may have been influenced by the wave of the welfare movement of the South during the Progressive Era, but they were always driven by their mission of instilling a love and loyalty to the Confederate cause in Southern schoolchildren. Paired with the textbook campaign that occurred alongside their benevolent endeavors, the Daughters were able to more aggressively influence the education system throughout the South at this time.

Although Lost Cause ideals drove the UDC’s progressivism, the organization’s inherent classist nature ultimately limited its progressivism. Their aid to educating poorer white women in the South, however, was not the extent of their progressive impulses in the early twentieth century. In addition to being the Confederate progressives that Karen Cox describes them as, they were also progressive educators. Like Cox’s characterization, this depiction of the Daughters remains limited, as progressive education reform methods do not fully explain the activities sponsored by the UDC in white public schools. Many of their efforts within schools in the early twentieth century to support that mission existed outside of the realm of progressive education. Despite this, their role in promoting progressive education reforms in the classroom remains an integral aspect of their influence in the educational system of the white South.
Progressive education in the U.S. took shape at the end of the nineteenth century, along with other Progressive Era reforms. From around 1880 to the mid-1920s reformers in the South made concerted efforts to better public education as a mechanism of making a “New South.” Reformers envisioned the classroom as the source of this new era and made significant changes in hopes of improving the South overall. At the heart of the progressive education movement was the shift in focus from the teacher to the child. Reformers argued that children learned best by experience, advocating for diverse and innovative teaching tools, not simply textbook instruction. They emphasized the importance of hands-on learning and collaboration. Improvement in the training of teachers as well as evaluation-based learning also took precedent. Finally, progressive reformers envisioned the classroom as a tool to shape the child, not just as a student but as an individual. A key aspect of this principle saw the development of good citizenship and character as the goal of education. As the Daughters entered the classroom they implemented many of the core reforms of the progressive education movement.

While the textbook campaign remained at the heart of the efforts to influence children’s education and indoctrinate them into the tenets of the Lost Cause, the Daughters understood that to achieve their goal they had to do more than ensure pro-Confederate textbooks were in circulation. They had a much wider vision for educating the South’s next generation of citizens. To an extent, they recognized the limitations of textbooks in shaping the minds of Southern children, that they were these “monuments

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169 Leloudis, *Schooling the New South*, 23.
170 Ibid.
172 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 137.
between covers” which could not guarantee that students’ attitudes towards the Confederate cause would be influenced by what these books were. The Daughters had to enter the classroom themselves, and in doing so they implemented progressive reforms that expanded and in their minds improved the way that these children learned. Their intentions, however, remained on promoting the tenets of the Lost Cause and instilling a loyalty to their Confederate heritage.

The curriculum from Mississippi state records demonstrate the drastic changes that took place in Southern schools in the early twentieth century. The manual encouraged blending the teaching of history with a wide-ranging set of methods that would aid in the students’ learning more than simple instruction would. These methods included having the children debate each other on historical subjects, creating scrapbooks, and pairing lessons with songs related to that historical topic.\(^{173}\) The Daughters were major proponents of teaching Southern songs to students, as they saw it as a method to incite excitement in learning about their Southern heritage and cultivate a pride and love for their ancestral land. In the Mississippi curriculum, the songs taught included “Old Black Joe” and “Dixie.”\(^{174}\) The former was a hymn written by Stephen Foster, describing the pain the singer felt about losing a friend in the cotton fields.\(^{175}\) The later song, initially a famous tune from blackface minstrelsy, took on a new life during

\(^{173}\) Mississippi History Curriculum, 1926, 201.3:192601, Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum: Grades I-VII, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.

\(^{174}\) Ibid.

the Civil War, when “Dixie” became the unofficial anthem of the Confederacy.\textsuperscript{176}

“Dixie” tells the tale of a freed enslaved person nostalgic for the plantation life,

\begin{verbatim}
  I wish I was in the land of cotton,
  Old times there are not forgotten;
  Look away! Look away! Look away! Dixie Land.\textsuperscript{177}
\end{verbatim}

Consistent with many of the textbooks describing the institution of slavery, the lyrics expressed slavery as a benevolent institution, perpetuating the happy slave narrative, a central tenet to the Lost Cause. The Daughters sought for the implementation of these pro-Confederate songs in schools enhanced, intent on enhancing students’ understanding of slavery as a positive institution absent of the cruelties that \textit{Uncle Tom’s Cabin} depicts in its story.

The Mississippi curriculum from 1931 reemphasized the messages in the 1926 manual, doubling down on the importance of cultivating “good citizenship” in students through the study of history.\textsuperscript{178} Paramount to the progressive reform movement in schools was the holistic development of the child in the classroom. “The ultimate purpose of school is to develop character,” the state curriculum ordained. The Daughters were emphatic about this idea. In her 1913 address to the UDC, Historian-General Mildred Rutherford instructed the Daughters to focus their work in schools to foster patriotism, the “love and loyalty to home and country” specifically implying Southern heritage as the central focus of cultivating these feelings.\textsuperscript{179}

\textsuperscript{177} "Civil War Lyrics Dixie."
\textsuperscript{178} Mississippi History Curriculum, 1931, 201.3:193101, Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum: Grades I-VII, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
\textsuperscript{179} Address Delivered by Miss Mildred Lewis Rutherford, 13 November 1913, F-209, Mildred Lewis Rutherford Collection, Virginia Museum of History & Culture, Richmond, Va.
Progressive education reforms highlighted the teacher’s role in shaping the child as a well-rounded individual and citizen. State curriculum reflected this by the 1930s. Discussing the duty of the teacher, the 1931 Mississippi board of education explained, “the teacher’s responsibility is to inculcate attitudes and habits of response in all social contracts which make the child a helpful member of society.”\(^\text{180}\) It saw the teaching of history as the main mechanism to achieving this, emphasizing the importance of the teacher’s role. The UDC understood the importance of leveraging the teacher as a vessel of the Lost Cause to the future generations of white Southerners. This understanding guided their early described progressivism to sponsor the education of young women as teachers in white public schools who would teach a Southern history that aligned with the wishes of the UDC.

The Daughters did not stop there, however, as they sought to ensure teachers in Southern schools “were toeing the Lost Cause line” as Cox described.\(^\text{181}\) Members of the UDC often visited schools to assist the teachers and monitor how they taught the Civil War. Many Daughters were themselves teachers in these schools. Lessons on the “War Between the States” as one Mississippi student recalled, included students detailing the lives of their own Confederate ancestors.\(^\text{182}\) The use of personal narratives to enhance the understanding of history draws on progressive reforms methods in education weaponized by the Daughters to indoctrinate their students in the Lost Cause and preservation of the Confederate past.

\(^\text{180}\) Mississippi History Curriculum, 1931.
\(^\text{181}\) Cox, *Dixie’s Daughters*, 128.
\(^\text{182}\) Ibid.
The most effective and popular progressive reform tactic used by the UDC was their prize-essay contests. Initiated and managed by state chapters, the Daughters gave students prompts to respond to, awarding the best essays with medals or cash prizes. The prompts ranged in topics related to the South or the Confederacy, from more general ones like “Heroic Women of the Confederacy” and “Rights of Secession” to niche prompts about a specific Civil War battle or local Confederate hero. Cox argued the dual purpose of the UDC-sponsored essay contests: “to encourage students to respond favorably to the Confederate cause, as well as provoke further interest in the study of the South and Civil War.” The essay contests, in addition to Cox’s characterizations, held a pedagogical value as well. These contests presented an innovative method to enhance children’s understanding of history.

Local chapters utilized the essay contests to further cultivate a pride and respect for their state’s history and role in the Civil War. The Mississippi chair of the historical committee assigned a niche and relatively unknown topic for the state’s 1915 essay contest. It concerned the Mississippi regiment's role in the battle of Gettysburg. “The youth of our land know nothing of the courageous charge by the […] Mississippi Regiments under Barksdale in this famous battle,” lamented UDC historian Virginia Reddit Price. “I wanted the children of Mississippi to know the place in Gettysburg history” that this brigade held, she continued. Instilling pride for students’ Confederate

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184 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 128.
185 Report of the Historical Committee, Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Mississippi Division, May 1915, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II: 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
186 Ibid.
heritage remained the paramount influence for these contests. The pedagogical value they provided was an afterthought for the Daughters, yet the importance of their actions as progressive educators cannot be dismissed. That year 25 public school students sent in their essays to the historical committee. By 1928, the Mississippi UDC collected over 200 essays written by school children on the chosen topics.

By awarding the prizes publicly, the Daughters turned the essay contests into a spectacle commemorating the Confederate past. The UDC sponsored public assemblies in local high schools that presented the prize for the winning essay to the student. In 1916, the prize for the best paper on “Priorities of Virginia” was awarded to Craig Patterson, a student at John Marshall High School.187 Patterson received his prize at a public assembly at his school which was attended by the Virginia lieutenant-governor, the mayor of Richmond, and the city’s school superintendent. Richmond division president Mrs. Randolph also attended, and along with the men, made “inspiring speeches” to students, their parents, and Daughters present at the assembly.188 This event demonstrated the popularity of the essay contests and confirmed the education bureaucracy’s support of the Daughters' influence over the education of the state’s white children. These essays provided an innovative and creative mechanism of engaging students with historical material. For the UDC it served a second purpose of promoting South’s history in students and cultivating interest in their Confederate heritage.

These assemblies marked some of the many ways the Daughters themselves infiltrated schools. For white public school students in the early twentieth century, the

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188 Ibid.
presence of the UDC in their schools was constant. The Daughters frequently visited
schools themselves, speaking directly to students. In 1928, members of the Mississippi
UDC made over 30 talks in schools, addressing nearly 4,000 students.\footnote{Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1928, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. IV: 1923-1938, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.} They welcomed
the Daughters favorably into their schools, often inviting them to speak in their
classrooms. In \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, Cox includes an anecdote from Annie Allison, a
member of the North Carolina Division. One of the state’s schools sent Allison a personal
invitation to lecture in front of third-grade students on Confederate history.\footnote{Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 128.} The
Daughters also brought Confederate veterans into schools to give speeches to the young
students and ignite their passions for the cause.\footnote{Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Session of the Mississippi Division.} They had students engage in
Confederate commemorative activities celebrating the birthdays of Lee and Davis.\footnote{Cox, \textit{Dixie’s Daughters}, 129.}

These ceremonial projects as well as the talks given by Daughters and
Confederate veterans veered the UDC’s influence in school away from the pedagogical
value carried by their other activities. The comprehensive infiltration of schools that the
UDC launched in the early twentieth century demonstrates the limitations of their role as
progressive educators in the South. A significant portion of their undertakings in white
public schools consisted of symbolic measures purely focused on submerging students in
Confederate culture, absent any pedagogical merit.

The Daughters’ tactics in schools were aggressive and expansive. The presence of
the Confederacy was inescapable in white public schools. Textbooks remained a priority
for the Daughters, but that effort consisted of a drawn-out campaign where the UDC
could only have indirect influence on the selection and adoption of textbooks, as argued in chapter one. The Daughters were aware that textbooks were not just educational tools, but “monuments between covers” as historian David Tyack put it and as the second chapter of this thesis demonstrated. They understood the power the textbooks held even as symbols and allocated a significant amount of their effort to filling schools with Confederate imagery.

The Confederate flag, often known as the “Stars and Bars,” has remained the most visible symbol to the short-lived Confederate States of America. The Daughters undertook the task of placing these in Southern schools alongside their respective state’s flag and the American flag. Historical reports from UDC division chapters included the number of Confederate flags they placed in schools each year. The Daughters ardently defended the value of having Confederate flags in schools. Mississippi division historian Virginia Reddit Price argued in 1914 that the flag provided students with an important symbol of the South’s heroism and patriotism.

Lining school hallways, the “Stars and Bars” were accompanied by another symbol of the Confederacy. Pictures of Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, and other Confederate figures stood proudly in schools throughout the South. Alongside the battle for their presence in textbooks, was the fight for their physical presence in public schools. The UDC presented life-size pictures of their Confederate heroes to local chapters for

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194 Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Session of the Mississippi Division.
195 Cox, Dixie’s Daughters, 132.
placement in their schools.\textsuperscript{196} Local chapters often placed portraits in schools of prominent Confederates home to their respective states. Pictures of Virginia natives J.E.B. Stuart and Stonewall Jackson could be found alongside Lee and Davis in many of the state’s schools.\textsuperscript{197} The presence of these physical symbols in schools was important to the Daughters in their mission to foster an appreciation and admiration for the Confederate past in the hearts of those they saw as the Confederate future. The past was very much alive in these schools. It had been continually resurrected by the UDC who ensured the Old South was held in admiration by the children of its newest generation.

Although the Daughters succeeded in immortalizing these men in hallways across the South, the symbolic presence of Lee especially was not enough for them. They wanted every student to appreciate his military achievements and loyalty to the South. The UDC pressured schools into giving Lee the same attention in the classroom that Lincoln or Washington received. With little to no pushback, schools appeared receptive to this request from the Daughters. In the 1926 Mississippi school curriculum, the state’s board of education dedicated the entire month of January to the study of Lee and Confederate general Stonewall Jackson.\textsuperscript{198} Teachers were instructed to “leave [students] with a true love and admiration for [these heroes].”\textsuperscript{199} Many textbook lists also included

\textsuperscript{196} Minutes of the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Mississippi Division, May 1910, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. II: 1909-1915, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
\textsuperscript{198} Mississippi History Curriculum, 1926, 201.3:192601, Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum: Grades I-VII, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.
\textsuperscript{199} Ibid.
biographies of Lee’s life as supplementary texts to the history curriculum throughout the South, especially in his home state of Virginia.  

As the adopted home of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, the Mississippi division emphatically fought for increased lessons dedicated to studying his life. The Winnie Davis chapter of Meridian continued as the most active and zealous chapter of the Mississippi division when it came to Confederate education of their students. The study of Davis was no exception. Leading the efforts to celebrate the centennial of his birthday in 1908, the Winnie Davis chapter also passed resolutions petitioning the state’s superintendent to “introduce the supplementary study of the life of Jefferson Davis” in schools. The state division adopted this resolution and helped implement the proposal.  

In a similar persistence to the study of Confederate heroes, local chapters also sought to implement more Confederate history within their libraries. State divisions worked to fill school libraries with pro-Confederate books. The Virginia division placed nearly 300 of their approved books in libraries both in and out of schools in 1917. In Mississippi, historian Mary Ratliff instructed local chapters to establish Confederate Department sections in school libraries they the UDC could fill with books promoting the Lost Cause. Ratliff imagined this project as a supplementary step to teach children the “correct” history.

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201 Winnie Davis Report, Minutes of the Sixth Annual Session of the Mississippi Division, May 1908, M-69, Minutes of the Mississippi Division United Daughters of the Confederacy Vol. 1: 1897-1908, Mississippi Department of Archives & History, Jackson, Miss.


203 Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Session of the Mississippi Division.

204 Ibid.
Their efforts extended beyond filling libraries with their preferred books. The UDC, like most things they did, took this fight one step further and established their own libraries in public schools. “The young need these libraries” pleaded Historian-General Mrs. J. Enders Robinson in her 1911 report.205 Robinson demanded that these libraries remain “guarded from spurious publications and malicious statements on Confederate history.”206 Local chapters followed her request. The Richmond chapter expressed their intentions to establish a library of Southern Literature for students.207 In 1915 another Virginia auxiliary chapter successfully raised money for a school library and created a committee of Daughters to oversee the selection of its books.208

The establishment of these libraries expanded educational opportunities for students, nodding to the UDC’s progressive traits, but ultimately proved to be yet another mechanism of promoting the Lost Cause, indoctrinating white public school students in its main tenets. By placing themselves in charge of building these libraries and filling their shelves, the Daughters gained control of the material students could access at school and in their communities. For the UDC, libraries were just another piece in the Confederate puzzle. They were representative of the wholesale infiltration the Daughters launched in white public schools, with their extensive tactics to keep the Confederate cause alive and present in the lives of these schoolchildren. With Confederate veterans

206 Ibid.
dying off in the early decades of the twentieth century, the UDC felt the urgency of passing on the Lost Cause and veneration for the Confederate past to their descendants.

Their inclination to take control over the education of children overlapped with the larger national patterns of Progressive Era, both as a welfare initiative and through education reforms. The Daughters actively participated in these reforms, largely responsible for their success in the South. The effort to sponsor higher education for the region’s poor white women demonstrated their progressivism through a Confederate lens. The benevolence granted to these women was both limited and conditional. The UDC mostly aided the higher education of women as a means of training them as public-school educators who would go on to teach a history sympathetic to the Confederate cause and depict the South as the Daughters saw fit.

Their progressivism was equally limited. The classist roots of the UDC remained firm, and the Daughters provided financial assistance to poor Southerners in the form of college scholarships, a much less expansive effort than some members had advocated for. The existence of this limited aid rested on the appeals towards white supremacy. Many of the Daughters feared that if they did not step in to improve illiteracy rates among poor white folks and help them gain a higher degree, African Americans would eventually surpass them socially and politically. For an organization that vocally supported the Klan and suppression of African Americans rights, the Daughters felt compelled to intervene. Consistent with the rest of their activities, white supremacy and the need to promote the Lost Cause drove the progressive efforts of the UDC.

Central to the Progressive Era was the transformation of the education system and approaches to teaching. Emphasizing hands-on learning, diversifying learning resources,
and shaping the child as a well-rounded individual and good citizen were hallmarks of progressive education at this time. The UDC, intent on indoctrinating the Confederate cause in students, became progressive educators and had a lasting impact on the school curriculum and teaching methods. After the height of the UDC’s infiltration, better-trained teachers filled classrooms. Teachers used music, art, scrapbooks, and debate as pedagogical tools. Greater emphasis was placed on using history as a means of cultivating good citizenship and a developed character. While it is presumptuous to credit the Daughters entirely to these advances, their role as promoting progressive reforms in schools cannot be ignored. Their characterization as progressive educators remain limited, as many of their actions in schools often had little to no pedagogical value, instead focusing on methods to promote the Lost Cause in schools. These efforts, including the placement of Confederate flags and portraits, were symbolic and intended to keep the Confederacy alive in schools, as veterans of the war diminished over the years.

Around the turn of the century the Daughters had committed themselves to monument building. Across the South, and even north of the Mason-Dixon line, Confederate statues popped up left and right, as the UDC dug up the past for its permanent preservation. The previous chapter argued that the same could be said for textbooks. While textbooks remained instrumental in shaping conceptions of American history, they also held a symbolic importance, as “monuments between covers” as Tyack labeled them. As the Daughters expanded their efforts beyond the textbook crusade, they turned towards the education of their children. In their efforts, the Daughters initiated this third form of monument building. By successfully infiltrating the public schools of white
students, indoctrinating them in Lost Cause teachings, the UDC had molded the youngest generation of white children into “living monuments” to the Confederacy.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{209} Confederate Veteran Magazine 17: (1909) 171.
Conclusion

The importance of how we choose to teach our own history cannot be overlooked. Our treatment of the past reflects our understanding of the present. The Daughters exemplified this. Alongside the suppression and intimidation of African Americans were history textbooks teaching students that granting rights to African Americans threatened the South’s. This history purported baseless and harmful racist tropes at a time of massive violence and disenfranchisement that occurred across the South. While it is a stretch to imply that these textbooks and distorted histories directly led to increased racial violence, their linkage to one another is clear. The political ramifications of teaching history were understood and utilized by the Daughters.

The relationship between historical education and the politics of the present ring true today. Well over a century after the Daughters launched the textbook crusade, debates over historical memory in the classroom have continued with the heated reaction against Nikole Hannah-Jones’ 1619 Project. The Project “aims to reframe the country’s history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of our national narrative” and has incited immense backlash and controversy. Parents and teachers today reacted against the 1619 Project mirror similar rhetoric and intensity over their children’s education that the Daughters expressed. There is a direct through-line from the ideological battles happening in classrooms in the 1900s to those currently taking place in schools across the nation. Discourse over critical race theory in classrooms confronts the same fight over historical preservation and memory. It

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forces us to reckon with the legacy of slavery, a brutal and complicated history that the Daughters whitewashed, cleansing the South of its role in the institution.

The Daughters distorted history to vindicate the South and the Confederacy, promoting white supremacist history as a means to justify the subjugations of African Americans. Inserted in the education of students, the Lost Cause shaped their understanding of the past and informed the politics of the present. “The Lost Cause narrative provided more than lessons on the past,” Karen Cox argued, “it served as a political and social road map for the future.” By preserving the past, the Daughters gained influence over the next generation of Southerners. The UDC weaponized history to achieve its goals, underscoring the importance of history: depicting the past and shaping the future.
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