Hallowed ground and hollow victories: Reckoning with Civil War history and memory through expanded interpretation at Manassas National Battlefield Park

by

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B.A., University of South Carolina, 2017
M.S., Clemson University, 2020

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Horticulture and Natural Resources
College of Agriculture

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
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Abstract

This dissertation is a culmination of both empirical and positional chapters that aim to create positive, outcome-based discussions surrounding how Civil War heritage and history is interpreted at National Park Service (NPS) historic sites like Manassas National Battlefield Park (MANA). As such, what follows is a critical analysis of the intersection between collective memory and history, along with what role NPS onsite interpreters play in shaping current social values and morals.

Chapter one provides an overview of the literatures necessary to holistically understand the study problem and purpose. Research into collective memory and Southern heritage, the history of heritage preservation and interpretation within the National Park Service, and the histories of the Civil War battles that occurred at the study site are synthesized. Then, the chapter delves into the history currently interpreted at MANA before describing the structure of the dissertation and its main research purposes of illuminating disparities between the interpretive legacy of the site and what historic records and public histories are available that can be integrated into expanded interpretation programs and exhibits at the park.

Chapter two details an empirical exploratory study that utilized an offsite, online panel sample survey to gain insight into both visitor and non-visitor perceptions of welcomeness and belonging, their moral foundations, and their preferences for interpretive themes that were co-created with park staff to be feasible to create currently or in the future. Results suggest that non-visitors perceive themselves to be less welcome at MANA than visitors, although there were no significant differences within perceived constraints to visitation. Results also indicated that highlighting interpretive themes like the Battles of Manassas and Slavery as a Cause of the Civil

War may attract people who have higher scores on the Harm and Fairness moral foundation spectrums, who were also found to be more likely to visit the park.

Chapter three is a position paper wherein the author argues that prior NPS interpretive themes surrounding historic battlefields are no longer relevant for the current American melting-pot constituency. With this in mind, I posit that the NPS is an organization that is partially dedicated to preserving, transmitting, and stabilizing collective memories of individual units that can be combined into a master narrative of episodic historic events of which United States citizens can integrate values, morals, or symbols into individual personal identities after visiting one or more NPS units. Moreover, emphasizing narratives of heroic white masculinity as part of the American Identity can be linked to detrimental effects of predominantly white or white passing men who enact violence on other citizens perceived as threats. When utilizing a framework of repeated trauma, these narratives of heroic white masculinity at Civil War battlefields are instead traumatic experiences that are transmitted to the public without awakening to the root trauma, which is truly reckoning with the causes and consequences of the Civil War—both historic fact and collective memory.

The final chapter is a reflection on the dissertation process, the project's previous iterations, and the limitations of both the work and the author. It also utilizes a critical lens, but does so within the psychological realm of meaning making, meaningful work, and self-transcendence. While this project was initially spatially bound to a single NPS unit, the author proposes that the findings and arguments within this dissertation can be applied more broadly and within interdisciplinary avenues to better understand the intersection of protected areas, cultural landscapes, American Identity, and geotrauma through studying sites of violence.

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List of Acronyms

MANA	Manassas National Battlefield Park
MFT	Moral Foundations Theory
MIL	Meaning in Life
NPS	National Park Service
SCV	Sons of Confederate Veterans
UDC	United Daughters of the Confederacy
VUM	Visitor Use Management

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Dedication

To the gremlins: Toulouse, Berlioz, Marie, Lestat, and Akasha. For keeping me company.

This dissertation is also for anyone who has felt unwelcome at a park or protected area,

I promise that will change soon. You belong here too.

Chapter 1 – Not a zero-sum game between facts or feelings: Public historians at the crossroads of collective memory and history of the Civil War at Manassas National Battlefield Park

The wave of Confederate monument removal and the backlash it catalyzed call into question how people interpret the Civil War and its lasting impacts on U.S. history. According to historians (Blight, 2001; Brundage, 2000; Cox Richardson, 2020), the Civil War and the secession of southern states into the Confederate States of America were directly caused by Southern elites' refusal to end chattel slavery—but this is not how the war is framed within the realm of memory (Brundage, 2005). As heralded Civil War historian Gerald F. Linderman opens his seminal *Embattled Courage* historiography of the war, "Every war begins as one war and becomes two, that watched by civilians and that fought by soldiers" (Linderman, 1987, p.1). The goal for this chapter is to introduce the reader to collective memories of Civil War history, and how different governing bodies like the National Park Service (NPS) perpetuate its own interpretation of historic events through the normalization of public history that is passed down to NPS visitors. Because this dissertation is an offshoot of a federally funded Visitor Use Management (VUM) project for Manassas National Battlefield Park (MANA), this location was utilized as the study site. What I argue in the pages that follow is that MANA provides its visitors with is not a holistic, historic account of the Civil War, but of the military histories of two battles removed from their social context.

Lastly, the chapter will funnel down from collective memories of Southern Heritage and Confederate monuments and the role of the NPS as public historians (and therefore a cultural authority) before reviewing the interpretive components at Manassas National Battlefield Park

for what is and is not interpreted onsite. This will in turn set the stage for the upcoming chapters that aim to expand the interpretation on site to include more themes and components than the current emphasis on Confederate military prowess to make the site more relevant to the public who do not feel strongly attached to military history.

History of the First and Second Battles of Bull Run (Manassas)

The First and Second Battles of Bull Run, occurring largely on the grounds now known as Manassas National Battlefield Park, did not greatly shape the overall outcome of the war. However, the Confederate victories here led to its memorialization under the Southern name and molded military legacies that hold far-reaching scope within Civil War history. According to Faust (2009), the First Battle of Bull Run was the catalyst for the Civil War, setting the standard for human wreckage left after a singular battle far beyond originally imagined by Unionists and Confederates alike (Faust, 2009). The Second Battle of Bull Run led to an even greater death toll. Michael Burns explains that over 28,000 men either died, were wounded, or listed as missing from both battles combined (Burns, 2015). Although the public memory of the Civil War was crafted by civilians rather than soldiers in the decade following the war, Gerald F. Linderman explains that the magnitude of violence the common soldier witnessed was one that went beyond sectional ties, as "no one would ever comprehend the war's 623,026 deaths or 1,094,453 casualties, but soldiers were still stunned by the scale perceptible to them" (Linderman, 1987, p.125).

As Ethan S. Rafuse simply states in the introduction of *A Single Grand Victory: The First Campaign and Battle of Manassas*, "its status as the first major battle of the war makes it a subject of undeniable importance" (Rafuse, 2002, p.xiii). General Robert E. Lee had accepted "an appointment as commander in chief of the Virginia Provisional Army with the rank of Major

General” before his resignation from the U.S. Army was official (Johnson, 2013, p.8). Within the first two weeks in his new position as Major General, Lee dispatched troops to Manassas Junction to guard Richmond from potential Union troops moving down from Washington D.C. (Johnson, 2013). On May 31st, Pierre G. T. Beauregard was officially appointed as a general and arrived near Bull Run the next day “still wearing an old United States Army uniform coat, he rode here and there throughout the command, eyeing places for batteries, looking for positions for earthworks, testing the morale and condition of his troops” (Davis, 1977, p.51). Confederate generals leading their troops in their blue Union uniforms is an infamous story from the First Battle of Bull Run, although Edward C. Cooper clarifies that some of the Confederate generals like Longstreet and Beauregard were traitors to the United States because they were on active duty during the secession period (Cooper, 2008). A painting by Don Troiani of these Confederate generals in their blue Union uniforms graces the cover of the Manassas National Battlefield Park brochure (Fig. 1.1 below).

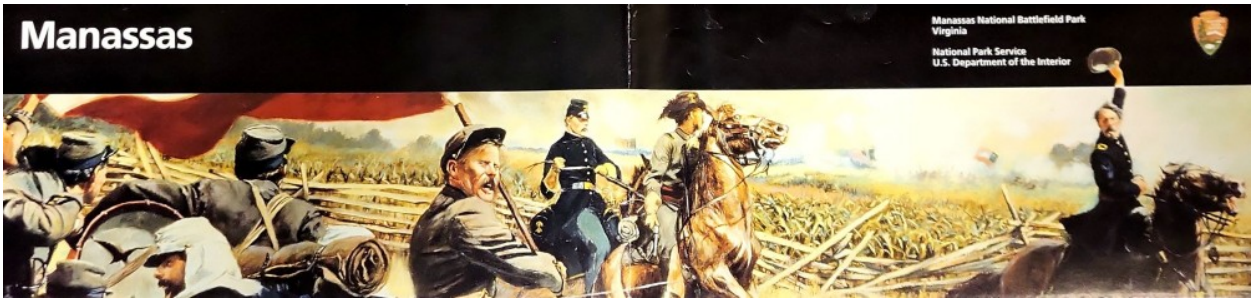

Figure 1.1 Cover of the Park Brochure for MANA

Although the Union knew that a battle at Manassas Junction was inevitable, General Scott “still wanted nothing to do with an attack on Manassas, regardless of what the public, press, or President Lincoln wanted” (Rafuse, 2002, p.72). General Scott knew that his troops were unprepared for war and therefore was wary of launching an attack at Manassas, ordering

General Irvin McDowell to move toward Leesburg to buy time before the public grew anxious for war to erupt. The plan to head to Leesburg was almost immediately nullified as General Scott asked General McDowell to estimate Confederate General Beauregard's command, which he assumed totaled 35,000 men. McDowell suggested organizing 40,000 men divided into three columns and an extra reserve of men to cut off Confederate troops around Fairfax Courthouse before "uniting these three columns north of Bull Run, McDowell then proposed attacking the main Confederate position at Manassas" (Rafuse, 2002, p.73).

After the battle, three major facets of the Civil War began. First, although ecstatic about the victory along Henry Hill, General Beauregard did not pursue McDowell's Union troops, which became common throughout the Civil War to allow the losing side to metaphorically "lick its wounds" and tend to the dead (Davis, 1977, p. 251). Second, General Jackson's initial nickname was replaced by the infamous Stonewall moniker, "the most famous words that would be uttered on any Civil War Battlefield" (Rafuse, 2002, p.165). Thirdly, the six hours of combat resulted in 5,000 casualties overall, "the largest number in a single battle in American history to date" which would be surpassed by every upcoming campaign (Burns, 2015, p. 142).

Only thirteen months passed between the first and second battles of Bull Run, yet the cavalier spirits of the green soldiers of the first battle soured into desperate beliefs of manliness and a sense of duty to their cause and their commanders (Hennessy, 1999; McPherson, 1997). The second campaign at Bull Run was a spectacular showing of Confederate military decisions and an equally appalling show of ego from General John Pope that almost cost him the ruin of the Union Army by erroneously assuming that he knew the positioning of General Longstreet's troops better than multiple reports of their actual locations (Spruill III & Spruill IV, 2018). Heralded as Lee's greatest operation, by deploying Jackson to conduct a turning movement, "this

decision and successful implementation reversed all the previous Union gains in Virginia and set the stage for one of Lee's greatest battles" (Spruill III & Spruill IV, 2013, p.23-24). Another component of the Stonewall Jackson mythos arose when his divisions took cover within the unfinished railroad bed, where they threw rocks at Union troops when they ran out of ammunition (Hippensteel, 2019). William C. Davis described Jackson as being as devout a Calvinist as he was to his orders, "himself gave blind, unthinking obedience and he expected the same from his men" (Davis, 1996, p.170), marching his troops over fifty miles to get to Manassas for the second battle (Walsh, 2002).

Although a few years remained until the savagery of trench warfare that would dominant battlefields after Gettysburg, the battles at Bull Run were arguably more gruesome for many of the soldiers who joined their respective armies due to Victorian notions of duty and manhood (McPherson, 1997; Spielvogel, 2013). Almost one fifth of both Confederate and Union troops were cited as casualties, totaling 16,054 killed, wounded, or missing from the Union side and 9,197 killed, wounded, or missing from the Confederacy during the Second Battle of Bull Run (Schroeder-Lein, 2008). Other sources cite that the casualties were closer to fifteen percent for both Lee and John Pope, even though both Union and Confederate troops were triple their sizes from the First Battle of Bull Run (Hippensteel, 2019). The aftermath of the battles was indeed gruesome. Linderman quotes Father Sheeran as describing the remnants of soldiers as "some with their brains oozing out; some with faces shot off; others with their bowels protruding; others with shattered limbs" (Linderman, 1987, p.125).

Within one 90-minute period during the First Battle of Bull Run, over 2,000 men from both Stonewall's and Gibbon's Iron Brigades were killed near the Brawner Farm site, averaging over 25 people per minute killed, wounded, or missing (Potter et al., 2000). The aftermath of the

Second Battle of Bull Run left soldiers on both armies bereft as "never in this war had there been a battle so big, so bloody" (Hennessy, 1999, p.441). One man from the 19th Indiana was left to die after being wounded in action near the Brawner Farm during the second battle, "from the evening of August 28 until the following Thursday—seven days" (Potter et al., 2000, p.12). A young boy named Charley died in his father's arms from a broken leg and fell atop a yellow jackets nest, the latter which he described for the reason for his tears (Walsh, 2002). Almost 2,000 soldiers' remains were moved from the battlefields of Bull Run to Section 26 within the Arlington Cemetery, within the Tomb of the Civil War Unknowns (Arlington National Cemetery, n.pag.). Other remains were interred at the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, within six acres at the north end of the grounds as early as August 3, 1861 (NPS, n.d.). Yet prior to their removal from the battlefields, looting of dead bodies occurred throughout both armies. The Union formed the Committee on the Conduct of the War in 1861 after a particularly grisly indictment of Confederate troops' treatment of Union dead, including the charred and headless remains of former speaker of Rhode Island, Major Sullivan Ballou and others "stripped and left naked on the fields" (Spielvogel, 2013, p. 56).

Collective Memories and Southern Heritage

Often studied under the lens of social representation theory in psychology, research on collective memory seeks to understand how social representation and collective attitudes influence what memories are kept within groups (Hirst et al., 2018; Roediger et al., 2009). Collective memory differs from individual memories because they contain a social component that is often connected to something 'in the world,' like objects, symbols, or memorials that are shaped by—and in turn shape—the communities that maintain them (Hirst & Manier, 2008). Whereas history is often analyzed through positivistic paradigms (I.E., a framework or model

that details how a researcher views the world and their work, a positivistic paradigm is predominantly built upon structured knowledge; Babbie, 2008) to create modernist historic narratives, collective memories are formed and maintained through powerful group members who reconstruct the past, which is then interpreted through the lens of present cultural, social, and political worldviews (Hirst & Manier, 2008). Roediger and colleagues (2009) state that there are three major components to collective memory: "a body of knowledge, an attribute, and a process" (p. 30). For example, a body of knowledge for the Civil War could stem from multiple places like personal journals or oral histories from civilians and soldiers from the era, an attribute would be the themes presented within those stories like heroism and bravery, and the process would be the transfer of those attributes from the personal journal to a new reader over time or from a relative telling war stories to the children.

Moreover, there is often a political component within memory making, wherein perceptions of shame over a group's past actions could be forgotten through the collective reconciliation of only positive aspects (Hirst et al., 2018). This collective forgetting is half of the process of collective memory making, decreasing accessibility to certain memories while reinforcing others within conversational remembering, especially if what is selectively forgotten competes with the memories already reified in their remembrance (Hirst & Conman, 2018). This is not to imply that what is forgotten is always done to further an agenda, instead it often arises through the reconstruction of memory instead of memorizing in verbatim what had occurred, creating a warped memory through distortion or altering information that is shared between two or more people (Maswood & Rajaram, 2019). As such, collective memories should not be considered accurate or objective records of history, but rather narratives that help a group or community understand their past using current social context (Cordonnier et al., 2022).

The body of knowledge about the Civil War was largely cultivated by women's associations like the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) or the Ladies' Confederate Monument Association, since grieving and tending to the dead after the war were viewed as womanly work (Brundage, 2005). These women were often the wives or widows of the Southern elite, and their positions allowed them to become "architects of white historical memory," as they memorialized the Confederate dead via headstones, memorials, and especially monuments (Brundage, 2005, p. 15; Chamberlain & Yanus, 2021; Cox, 2019). Some groups, like the UDC, did more than simply fundraise to build monuments and hold ceremonies to honor Confederate veterans and their dead comrades, the UDC created multiple catechisms to teach southern youth in their Children of the Confederacy program, where they "actively sought to hinder the lovefest [reconciliation] promoted by veterans"(Heyse, 2008; Janney, 2013, p.7), like the sesquicentennial events held by the National Park Service at Gettysburg, where soldiers from both sides met to shake hands instead of shoot weapons at their opposition as they had during the war (Blight, 2001). Within these catechisms the main four postwar Southern myths are defined, which include the Solid South, the New South, the Old South, and the Lost Cause (Heyse, 2008). The UDC favored the latter two myths of the Old South and the Lost Cause, the former stemming from the Southern aristocracy of the antebellum era that romanticized elites as chivalrous gentlemen who cared for and protected both their enslaved workers and white women, also known as the moonlight-and-magnolia mythos (Brundage, 2005; Cox, 2019; Heyse, 2008; Janney, 2013).

The Lost Cause mythos, on the other hand, pertains more to what caused the Civil War. According to the Lost Cause mythos, the Old South was an innocent victim of Northern aggression intent on stealing their property (i.e., people that were enslaved) and infringing on

their states' rights[1] (Heyse, 2008; Klein, 2021). Using this body of knowledge that actively remembered the valor and glory of the Confederate cause against Northern aggression while with equal deliberation forgetting that the property itself that Southern elites fought to keep were enslaved African Americans, the attributes of the Lost Cause mythos could then be reified through erecting monuments to Confederate figureheads, which legitimized and normalized symbols of the Confederacy as public memory of the Civil War and why it occurred (Bishir, 2005; O'Connell, 2022; Savage, 2018). Southern Poverty Law Center found that there are over 700 Confederate monuments within the nation that are widespread their locations, ranging from private property to state or federally owned land (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2022). The research presented within the third chapter of this dissertation delves into Confederate monuments on federal property like those which exist within National Parks, particularly those at Manassas National Battlefield Park.

How the National Park Service Became a Cultural Authority

Before detailing the history of how the NPS became a cultural authority for the entire nation and not simply Southern heritage, some context is needed to help establish what authority was granted. Two of the components within psychological approaches to collective memory are that a transmission must occur, like the one from NPS site interpreter to individual visitors, and that stability often ties to the preservation of cultural artifacts in archives, museums, or historic sites (Stone & Jay, 2019). Furthering the notion of transmission, Cordonnier and colleagues present an hourglass as an extended metaphor for collective memories: "with the collective and the individual at opposite ends and the sand of memories passing from one to another, depending on the way it has been turned (2022, p. 4). In the context of National Parks, these narratives of

[1] Those rights were primarily the ability to enslave black people. As William C. Davis detailed in *The Cause Lost: Myths and Realities of the Confederacy*, "No one at the time complained that the federal government was interfering in state taxation, road building, external trade, or anything else" (180).

specific historic episodes often provided moral guidance, becoming master narratives that detailed how visitors could internalize certain values like civic engagement and patriotism into their personal identities; alternative narratives may arise when these principles do not align with personal narratives (McLean & Syed, 2015). Within the studies of organizational memory, mnemonic communities are described as viewing the past as seminal to the community, whether it be a singular family or a nation state, who then either collect individual experiences that can be shared later or provide frameworks for remembering pasts that have been deemed valuable (Coraiola et al., 2023). With this in mind, I posit that the NPS is an organization that is partially dedicated to preserving, transmitting, and stabilizing collective memories of individual units that can be combined into a master narrative of episodic historic events of which United States citizens can integrate values, morals, or symbols into individual personal identities after visiting one or more NPS units.

It was not until 1933 that the NPS acquired their first battlefields from the War Department, which "drastically altered the way current battlefields were managed and the way new ones were developed" (Smith, 2017; p.109). Horace Albright, the director of the National Park Service at this time, was keenly interested in creating a nationalistic narrative to inspire civic patriotism in U.S. citizens (Albright, 1971; Bodnar, 1992). As historian John Bodnar explains, "for policymakers at the NPS education and inspiration could be best achieved through a selective or symbolic preservation of the past. Thus, each site within the system would have to carry an important thematic burden if visitors were to be properly impressed" (Bodnar, 1992, p.177). The newly created Park Service History division contained some of the first public historians who were also federal employees, interpreting the nation's history in ways that connected to American citizens' current values and emotional attachments to the past

(Meringolo, 2012). Particularly within the postwar years, historians moved toward interpreting consensus history, funneling "American" national character into one narrative of cultural unity, similar to Verne Chatelain's original notions of one overarching interpretive theme of American identity that could be partially seen at individual historic sites but bled into an overarching master narrative (Bodnar, 1992; Fitzpatrick, 2002). Thus, NPS historians do more than interpret the past for the current public, they also control what historic narratives are interpreted, and how[2].

Yet a major critique of consensus history remains: that it falsely analyzes the American past as one narrative, smoothing "away the 'gradations' and subtleties of postwar historiography" and emphasized notions of American exceptionalism (Fitzpatrick, 2002, p.190-191). Yet there are myriad histories of people viewed outside this narrow scope of reference that could be understood. Within the NPS, efforts to expand the interpretation of the Civil War at battlefields and other historic sites was spearheaded largely by former chief historian Dwight T. Pitcaithley and Civil War site superintendents to include the causes of consequences of the war beyond the traditional interpretation of military actions (Pitcaithley, 2006; Sutton, 2008). Pitcaithley mentioned that the interpretation of painful memories, as well as prideful ones, occurred prior to the 1998 call for Civil War interpretive expansion, and without the backlash that surrounds today's Confederate heritage preservation (2006).

Outside of Civil War history, this process exists concomitantly. For example, the Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, "attempts to replace the historically dominant, simplistic narrative of the Washita battle by representing events from Cheyenne perspectives through oral histories and a balanced historical narrative appear to be successful" (Hurt, 2010, p. 388). Rose

[2] The NPS define interpretation as helping visitors make meaningful and significant connections with park resources, hoping to inspire conservations efforts so that more people protect park resources, building upon the research of Freeman Tilden, William J. Lewis, Larry Beck, Ted Cable, and Sam Ham (see Bacher et al., 2007).

and colleagues also highlight that “some NPS units acknowledge histories of exclusion and White supremacy” like Tule Lake National Monument and Wind Cave National Park (Rose et al., 2022, p. 50). And this trend occurs at Civil War sites as well. Historian Timothy B. Smith concludes his analysis of Civil War battlefield preservation on a hopeful note about the Civil War Trust implementing similar Civil War interpretive expansions, mentioning Monocacy National Battlefield and Harpers Ferry in particular as successful sites (Smith, 2017).

Efforts to expand the lens of interpretation at Civil War sites within the NPS has come a long way in the past decades. NPS units can refer to individual exhibits, interpretive documents, or online articles that situate the Civil War within larger contexts that illuminate the institution of slavery as part and parcel of the overall ‘Big Picture’ of American history, yet vocal dissenters to these changes still remain. Robert K. Sutton details some of the repercussions that have occurred during the expansion of interpretative programing, stating that “one of our superintendents… reported that he gave a speech in which he mentioned that slavery “might” have been a cause of the Civil War, and within a few weeks, 1,100 cards and letters were sent to the secretary of the interior demanding that he either resign or be fired” (Sutton, 2008, p.51). Similarly, Pitcaithley mentions that after news of the shift in interpretation grew, national interest led to disparaging remarks, such as any mention of slavery was outright conspiratorial propaganda to degrade southern heritage in general and insulted the honor of the Confederate dead in particular (Pitcaithley, 2006). It is unclear whether the mere inclusion of multiple narratives surrounding the Civil War will lessen the fear of collective memory erasure, but both Sutton and Pitcaithley claimed to be hopeful around the start of the Twenty-first Century.

Current Interpretation at Manassas National Battlefield Park

Major Sullivan Ballou's own article within the NPS Manassas National Battlefield Park website exists under the Stories tab. Although the extent of desecration done to his body is not described, it mentions that it is assumed that Confederates mistakenly took Ballou's body for Colonel John Slocum (and that is why they desecrated his body) before firmly pivoting into transcribing the text of his last letter to his wife Sarah Ballou (NPS, 2015). The softening of wartime savagery aligns with MANA's core component of "Commemorative Atmosphere" as listed within the 2014 Foundation Document, with the park's Fundamental Resources and Values listed in Table 1.1 (NPS, 2014). The commemoration of Confederate military prowess, on the other hand, stems from the park's establishment, with the grounds originally being preserved by the Sons of the Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy who had specific stipulations for the NPS's interpretation of the site, like the creation of a monument to General Thomas 'Stonewall' Jackson and "passages [within the transferal document] that supported the existing Lost Cause emphasis of the two battles" (Burns, 2015, p.159). Although within the NPS, "By 1998, it became apparent to most managers of Civil War battlefields that change was not only necessary but unavoidable," the interpretative focus at MANA has remained largely unchanged since its unveiling in 1940 (Pitcaithley, 2006, p. 173). Understanding how organizational histories influence their identities may shed light on this peculiar irregularity.

Table 1.1 Fundamental Resources and Values of MANA

Battlefield Landscape	Commemorative Atmosphere
Historic Structures	Solemnity
Archeological Resources	Natural Communities
Museum Collection	Appropriate Recreation*

Note: *Appropriate Recreation is considered as an "Other Important Resource and Value," as long as it respects the solemnity of the battlefields. Appropriate activities are listed as hiking, horseback riding, birding, fishing, dog walking, wildlife viewing, and photography. The Foundation Document for MANA was published in October 2014.

Organizational memory research about family businesses found that employees' sense of belonging and connectedness to their work stemmed from intradiegetic foundational storytelling that was filled with adoration for the past, as well as a sense of intergenerational reciprocity (Hoon et al., 2023). Although not explicitly a family business, the close-knit and relatively small staff of a unit like MANA could be considered a work family, with narratives of adoration of the past linking to current interpretive themes listed within the Foundation Document. Furthermore, "organizational members revisit history in the light of present-day concerns to inspire or legitimize future courses of action" (Ravasi et al., 2019, p.1523). Thus, it is possible that staff at a historic site would prefer past interpretations and ways of doing over new, novel means.

MANA is not the only Civil War site that predominantly interprets onsite military maneuvers and not the wider context of the Civil War; in fact, this was the traditional way of NPS interpretation until the 1990s (Pitcaithley, 2006). Indeed, this was the initial interpretation provided for many of the Civil War sites, including MANA, wherein a "Herculean" General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson monument casts its shadow on the Visitor Center (Adams, 2011). J. Christian Spielvogel argues within *Interpreting Sacred Ground: The Rhetoric of National Civil War Parks and Battlefields* that the NPS interprets and promotes public memories of heroic

white masculinity and reconciliation through military strategist narratives at sites like Gettysburg National Military Park and Cold Harbor within Richmond National Battlefield Park; moreover, this interpretive programming "upholds war as a morally desirable activity" (Spielvogel, 2013, p.4). Since the NPS's main interpretive mission was to inspire patriotism for a people ravaged by the Great Depression and terrified about a looming world war, it did not matter that Stonewall Jackson fought for the Confederate States of America, what mattered was that he held great military prowess—which was codified into the statue's closer likeness to Superman than to General Thomas Jackson himself (Adams, 2011).

Myriad reports and journal articles exist and are freely accessible through the NPS Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA) Portal that highlight other historic resources and cultural landscapes that are monitored and preserved at MANA (see Bedell et al., 2023; Wood & Rabinowitz, 2003). Beyond internal reports are also history scholarship that detail the Battles of Manassas and the park's preservation within the wider context of Civil War memory (see Burns, 2015; Janey, 2013; Smith, 2017). In sum, there is no shortage of resources for the public historians of MANA to pull from to expand onsite interpretation. Chapters within this dissertation aim to inspire action to expand interpretation utilizing these sources in order for MANA to remain relevant to an increasingly diverse general public.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this dissertation is to catalyze discourse on the connectivity between NPS interpretive themes, especially of Civil War history and heritage, and the greater United States constituency. As such, what follows is a critical view of one NPS site and how collective memory and history are interpreted onsite. Findings from a review of historic and current documents detailing the interpretive legacy of the site, as well as comparisons to wider NPS

interpretive guidelines highlight a disconnect between how the Civil War is interpreted locally at MANA compared to nationally. The following chapters aim to redress this disparity through actionable items like expanding interpretation onsite or recommending integrating cultural interpretation into recreational activities, as was found in previous Civil War battlefield preservation literature (Taff et al., 2017; Zajchowski et al., 2023).

Figure 1.2 Visitors experiencing an interpretive tour near the Stonewall Jackson Statue. (Photograph used with permission from Brady Wolken, 2023).

Structure of Dissertation

As the foundation of this dissertation is from a critical realism paradigm or worldview (Babbie, 2011), the following chapters are empirical and positional. Chapter Two details an empirical study that utilized an offsite survey data collection method to gather information on both visitor and non-visitor perceptions of MANA as well as their preferences for interpretive themes, feelings of welcomeness and belonging at the site, and moral foundations. Chapter Three is a position paper that aims to catalyze discourse on the importance of relevant interpretation at NPS sites and how perpetuating outdated narratives, especially that of heroic white masculinity,

can foster negative consequences for the nation borne through reenacting racialized violence. The final chapter is a critical reflection on both the dissertation process as well as its previous ties to a larger VUM study. I intend for the structure of this dissertation to create a holistic understanding of both the research presented and the dissertation process experience within readers. Confederate heritage commemoration is a contentious, messy topic. Although this dissertation does not provide answers that can 'solve' Civil War cultural debates, I hope that it inspires in its readers a quiet reckoning within themselves to question their understandings of Civil War history and heritage.

Chapter 2 – Moral Foundations, welcomeness and belonging, and visitation to Manassas National Battlefield Park: The necessity of nuance for understanding interpretive theme preferences

Abstract

Greenspaces, such as National Park Service Civil War battlefields, recently experienced increased recreational use, which can be viewed as oppositional to the purpose of historic value that these sites were originally created to preserve. Additionally, one of the increasing concerns within the relevancy of National Park Service sites revolves around interpretation that does not evolve to cater to the public's needs, especially for historically underrepresented, nonwhite communities. This study focuses on Manassas National Battlefield Park as one such site. Because the park was originally dedicated as a site to preserve Confederate heritage, the general public may not be receptive to interpretive themes that only focus on the victorious military strategies of Confederate troops, particularly after tragedies like the Charleston Massacre (2015) and the Charlottesville Riots (2017) or the Black Lives Matter Movement (2013-present). To investigate this potential disconnect, an online panel sample survey (n = 793) was disseminated to investigate perceptions of welcomeness and belonging among diverse park visitors, and in what ways interpretive theme preferences related to visitors' moral foundations. Results suggest that non-visitors feel less welcome onsite, but none of the perceived barriers found significantly affected feelings of being unwelcome. Results also indicated that highlighting interpretive themes built on multiple moral foundations could be an important component for expanding interpretation at Manassas to be relevant for an increasingly diverse American public.

Introduction

One of the unexpected consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic was the outdoor recreation boom it inspired in many people who had not actively utilized greenspaces (i.e., parks and public areas) to the same degree prior (Berdejo-Espinola et al., 2020; Venter et al., 2020). This is especially true for urban greenspaces, which became essential for many worldwide (Ugolini et al., 2020). Urban park visitation became crucial to maintaining mental and physical health (Scruggs et al., 2022), especially within natural areas that also held recreation opportunities (Zhao et al., 2023). Yet the mental and physical benefits of utilizing greenspaces were not ubiquitously shared, with access to these places being difficult for college students (Larsen et al., 2022) and park-poor neighborhoods that house communities who are aging, have low socioeconomic status, are in rural areas, or are historically nonwhite (Gao et al., 2023). Compounding issues of access, not all greenspaces were designed with recreation in mind. Recreation at Civil War military parks—which were created to preserve and interpret historic battlefields— is an increasing concern for site managers (Sharp et al., 2015; Taff et al., 2017; Zajchowski et al., 2023). This is especially true for Manassas National Battlefield Park (MANA) in northern Virginia.

As historian John Bodnar explains about the National Park Service's (NPS) role in shaping public memory, the NPS became a cultural authority in the 1930s when it initially acquired battlefields, national cemeteries, military parks, and the like from the War Department (1992). Across these sites, the initial plan of the NPS to was create an overarching historic narrative that reveled in American exceptionalism, which in turn was meant to inspire patriotic sentiments and citizens worthy of completing their civic duties (Albright, 1971; Bodnar, 1992; Linenthal, 2008). At MANA, the expected visitor experience is one of respect and honor for both

the sacred grounds and the men who fought and died at the site within the First and Second Battles of Bull Run (or rather, the battles of First and Second Manassas—the Confederate names). MANA was initially preserved by the Sons of the Confederate Veterans (SCV) and the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) in the 1920s to memorialize the site as 'historic and sacred to the South' with their establishment of the Manassas Confederate Park (Burns, 2015, p.151). Before donating the park to the NPS, the SCV made multiple demands through the clauses added or omitted to the deed prior to transfer, explains historian Michael Burns: 1) that included its name forever be Manassas Battlefield to celebrate the Confederate victories, 2) that "the NPS specifically instituted aspects of the Lost Cause as part of its master plan for the park," and 3) the creation of a 'Herculean' General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson (Figure 2.1) to welcome visitors to the park (Burns, 2015, p.160; Adams, 2011). In keeping with this original master plan, the current MANA interpretation focuses on the military history from the two battles, with little of their broader social implications included (Burns, 2015). This programming, it is of importance to note, does not align with NPS *Director's Order #6: Interpretation and Education*, specifically with the sections that dictate programming and requirements for services. Section 8.4 on Research states that "the content of interpretive and educational services must be accurate, inclusive, respect multiple points of view, and free of cultural, ethnic, and personal biases…[and] are accurate and reflect current scholarship" (Mainella, 2005, p.13). Nor does it align with the 2011 Call to Action strategic vision to create multiple avenues of interpreting and honoring the nation's complex heritage for ethnically diverse communities (Schultz et al., 2019).

Figure 2.3 The General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson statute (Photograph used with permission from Brady Wolken, 2023).

Creating interpretive programming and exhibits within the NPS that are inclusive of myriad American lived experiences are vital because the NPS is one of the largest shapers of public history and collective memory within the United States (Meringolo, 2012). Collective memory is not historical fact, but rather an active remembering (and forgetting) of certain elements of the past within the current value systems based on social needs (Brundage, 2005; McDowell, 2008). This is not to say that collective memory is less important, but rather it explains *why* certain facts are remembered or forgotten so that the present may understand how

their relation to the past is constructed. This, in turn, is why the NPS is powerful within the role of an interpreter and preserver of memories within cultural landscapes (Meringolo, 2012). And, at sites the NPS stewards, it is through connecting memory to people and place that cultural landscapes hold value beyond mere preservation of landscapes; it is here where the American people can connect to their past—so long that it is interpreted for their inclusion.

Retired NPS Superintendent and Regional Director for both the Pacific West and Mid-Atlantic areas John J. Reynolds, when reflecting upon what the NPS means for the current public, stated that "the Park Service's concept of relevancy, the definition of who the parks exist for, must adapt if the vitality and strength of the national park idea, and the parks themselves, are to survive as an iconic part of the American psyche" (Reynolds, 2010, p. 130). This notion of "be relevant or become a relic" was also brought forth by Larsen (2002), who suggests the first step to inspiring people to support tangible resources like parks is to first provide effective interpretation that sparks visitors to care about how those tangible resources contribute to personal significance (p. 23). As he shares, "central to effective interpretation is the understanding that resources possess a plurality of meanings" (Larsen, 2002, p. 19). Returning once more to MANA, expanding the site's interpretation beyond traditional military history may be an avenue for bridging the gap between the present and history by connecting visitors more deeply to the place through other lived histories from the site.

The research presented here is an exploration to understand the visitor experience at MANA, inclusive of insight into non-visitors. Online panel sample surveys have been used in protected area research to understand the potential barriers and constraints to park visitation, and this study follows their lead as a means of understanding visitors through offsite sampling means while also highlighting potential pathways to decrease barriers for non-visitors (Perry et al.,

2015; Xiao et al., 2018). Psychological barriers like perceptions of welcomeness and belonging have been shown to correlate with intergroup contact at urban parks (Powers et al., 2022a), which in turn can support other desirable outcomes for Visitor Use Management, like inclusive public engagement and better understanding of a site's intended purpose and myriad uses (Franchina et al., 2022). Moreover, this research was heavily inspired by Britt and colleagues (2020) findings that governmental endorsement of Confederate monuments negatively impacted Black residents sense of belonging at the state-level of government. Although Klein posits that 'officially sanctioned' Confederate monuments at Civil War battlefields-turned-national parks create the ideal environment to transmit Lost Cause ideology to Northerners (2021), this phenomenon has not been empirically studied. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to gain insight into visitor and non-visitor perceptions of potential interpretive themes, and whether or not perceptions of welcomeness and belonging influenced interpretation preferences at MANA. The following pages detail current literature on battlefield preservation and how it relates to Dark Tourism, perceptions of welcomeness and belonging in public parks and sense of place research, before delving into moral foundations theory and research.

Literature Review

Dark Tourism and Battlefield Preservation

Dark tourism, which arose in the 1990s as a niche tourism cultural market, is generally viewed today as "an umbrella term for any form of tourism that is somehow related to death, suffering, atrocity, tragedy or crime" (Light, 2017, p. 277). 'Shades' or subgenres of dark tourism arose based on the authenticity of the site (Miles, 2002), with Sharpley's (2005) typology including forms of 'grey tourism' to sites that were explicitly established to 'exploit death' but also attract visitors who may not view that as their main motivator. However, more

recent critical analysis of dark tourism posits that it may not be its own motivational tourism niche, but something that could be studied at all tourism or heritage sites because death has likely occurred at all historical sites at some point in time (Ashworth & Isaac, 2015; Iliev, 2021). Other means of framing dark tourism studies include interdisciplinary approaches that pull from political anthropology to geographies of affect to better understand the visitor experience at places that deal in part with death (Martini & Buda, 2020; Stevens, 2023).

Ethical discourse surrounding what sites to interpret, how, and why occurs within both dark tourism and dissonant heritage studies (Ashworth, 1996; Light, 2017). Indeed, questions about crossing the line between education and entertainment still occur at MANA—especially when it comes to anniversary events (Daniels et al., 2013; Rudy, 2011)—which speaks to larger concerns about the management and interpretation of dark tourism sites (Iliev, 2021; Qian et al., 2022). What is the correct way to commemorate a battlefield? How can commemorative events balance honoring the dead while providing a festive atmosphere that will entice visitors? Are festive atmospheres appropriate at battlefields, which can be viewed similarly to mass graves? This line exists within the larger balance of supply and demand within the commercialized consumption of war and other dark tourism sites like cemeteries or holocaust memorials that depend on site visitation but their somber themes and extensive connection to death and tragedy are not viewed as traditionally enticing to the general public (Farmaki, 2013; Iliev, 2021).

Although not technically exploiting death but still considered a form of ‘grey tourism,’ the federal preservation of Civil War battlefields initially arose to commemorate those who died onsite (Bodnar, 1992); however, within changing interpretive themes at these sites, the main motivator to battlefields may be military history shown through tales of honor and bravery of soldiers or to visit places of national reconciliation, which are not inherently pessimistic topics

(Janney, 2013; Klein, 2021; Spielvogel, 2013). Indeed, Qian and colleagues (2022) found that the tourism destination image of a natural disaster site was not wholly negative, but included positively viewed educational and leisure places within that destination (Qian et al., 2022). As recreational use continues to increase at MANA (i.e., picnicking, hiking, dog walking), there will be a growing need to understand how those visitor experiences intersect with the larger themes present like violence, national upheaval, and death that are built into the preservation and memorialization of the site.

Welcomeness and Belonging

Visitor experiences related to outdoor recreational use includes subjective variables like feelings of being welcome onsite. The literature surrounding perceptions of welcomeness and belonging largely focuses on urban parks or urban visitors to public spaces and largely revolves around racial or cultural constraints or perceptions of being unwelcome (Powers et al., 2022a; Powers et al., 2022b; Powers et al., 2022c; Powers et al., 2022d; Powers et al., 2023). Beyond parks, perceptions of welcomeness and belonging are important variables for people living within larger spaces like the academic communities (Trawalter et al., 2021) or southern states (Britt et al., 2020). Included within a sense of welcome and belonging is perceived safety, wherein a lack thereof was found to greatly deter non-visitors to visit NPS sites, especially for people of color (Martin et al., 2023; Xiao et al., 2022). However, not all barriers to park visitation relate to ethnic differences, but more often stem from a lack of awareness or knowledge about the parks (Rushing et al., 2022; Xiao et al., 2022). Unfortunately, research into welcomeness and belonging has not occurred at the federal level for NPS sites. Indeed, there is little information at all about general military park NPS visitors, with much of the information stemming from individual locations and not wider regions (e.g., Morgan, 2005; Taff et al., 2017;

Zajchowski et al., 2023). This study aims to fill some of this gap by focusing on perceptions of welcomeness and belonging, as well as general sociodemographics of MANA visitors.

Sense of place

Tangential to welcomeness and belonging is the relation between psychological ownership of a site and its sense of belonging at a place. Sense of belonging is an early facet of place identity, which is often shaped locally (Hakkarainen et al., 2022; McDowell, 2008). Sense of place can also motivate people to preserve social-ecological systems (Masterson et al., 2019) however, sense of place can vary dramatically between the community (bottom-up) and the place owners (top-down) (Akbar & Edelenbos, 2021). Place is also constructed through power dynamics and privilege. For example, when Smith (2021) analyzed the rhetoric surrounding the Bundy family arguments about public lands during their takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in 2016, he unearthed themes about aggressive control over public lands that mirrored settler colonialism ideology. As such, public spaces like the national refuge can be viewed as spaces for whiteness when "to be able to violently occupy federal property for more than a month, within little to no consequence, is a mark of inherent white privilege (Smith, 2021, pp. 6). This can be especially true in locations where the naming of place is tied to a dominant social group's demands (Nash et al., 2010). However, when sense of place is co-created with diverse stakeholders, it can foster community engagement and place attachment (Meetiyagoda et al., 2024).

Another framing for sense of place is within the essentialist/anti-essentialist place meaning, which relates to how crystalized and rigid place meanings are viewed, with places that are perceived to be anti-essentialist are found to be more open to outgroup identities and more fluid or flexible to social changes in place meanings (Lewicka et al., 2023; Roszczynska-

Kurasinska et al., 2021; Wnuk et al., 2021). With an increase of over 140% of recreation visits between March of 2024 compared to March 2023 at MANA (NPS, 2024) the public perception of the site may be shifting from an essentialist view of a historic site to an anti-essentialist view of a multi-use greenspace.

From these summaries of predominant themes within Welcomeness and Belonging and Sense of Place literatures, the current research posits the following questions:

RQ1: How do perceptions of welcomeness and belonging vary whether or not participants have visited MANA?

RQ1a: Based on a modified perceived barriers scale by Rushing and colleagues (2022), what are the most common perceived barriers to Manassas National Battlefield Park visitation?

Moral Foundations Theory

Morality-laden values are deeply embedded into the means in which natural and historic sites are preserved and interpreted in the United States (Albright, 1971; Bodnar, 1992). Parks do not exist within vacuums; for national parks to remain relevant they need to be personal *and* political in order to inspire visitors to care about the resources preserved onsite (Reynolds, 2010). As a politically contentious topic, empathy and understanding are largely absent from public discourse surrounding the causes of the Civil War and therefore how they are interpreted via the NPS (Carmichael, 2011; Sutton, 2008). This section delves into research focused on moral foundations and moral reframing, with the goal of suggesting it a pathway for creating open dialogues between historic fact and collective memories of the war.

Jonathan Haidt synthesized Moral Foundations Theory (MFT) that he co-created with Jesse Graham in the seminal *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and*

Religion, a collection of essays and previously published research that can be used by researcher, practitioner, and layperson alike who is curious about why people think the way they do. Haidt explains that to understand morality as a means of moral reasoning, one must understand the context of the culture of the individual in question, and moreover, moral reasoning is often a post-hoc creation of 'gut feelings' relating to different morals or their associated values (Haidt, 2012). The six moral foundations are spectrums between Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, Loyalty/Betrayal (or Ingroup, as is titled in the data analysis), Authority/Subversion, Sanctity/Degradation (i.e., Purity), and Liberty/Oppression (i.e., Progressivism) (Haidt 2012; Stern, 2018). Since MFT was initially created to understand North American political partisanship differences (Graham et al., 2023), utilizing MFT in situations that involve public or political communication—for example within negotiation or conflict resolution—benefits all parties involved by creating more meaningful communication between groups (Trayner, 2017; Stern, 2018).

There are myriad benefits for including morality in social science research beyond political science. Not all of politics is moralized, however, exposure to some emotional framing leads to polarizing moral attitudes, especially if those emotional frames elicit disgust or anger (Clifford, 2019). Moreover, anxious individuals are more likely to empathize with victims of moral judgements based on desires for ingroup belonging than people with avoidant attachment types when making utilitarian decisions (Robinson et al., 2015). Heightened affective polarization occurs more often for people who tend to moralize politics, leading to more partisan bias and animosity in both evaluations of political candidates and general interactions like social media discourse due to those higher moral convictions (Garrett & Bankert, 2020). Higher levels of moralizing politics maximize perceived in-group similarities and perceived out-group

differences, which will be difficult for expanding Civil War interpretation at NPS sites since detailing the causes of the war has also become politicized and moralized, which in turn may lead some highly moralized people to reject any compromise that falls beyond their own moral circles even if compromise is more beneficial than concession (Ryan, 2017; Waytz et al., 2019). However, political arguments are more persuasive when they included the moral values of the opposing liberal-conservative spectrum than when challenging those values, in turn "reducing the attitudinal gap between the two sides" (Feinberg & Willer, 2015, p. 1679).

Although moral reframing can delve too far into assimilating or softening personal views, it can also transform positions from being morally wrong to acceptable or even morally desirable based on the moral foundations present within the persuasive arguments (Feinburg & Miller, 2015, Feinburg & Willer, 2019). Motivations for certain political stances may stem from multiple, potentially conflicting motivations, which is why studying all of the moral pillars together is more advantageous than focusing on one specific foundation (Koleva et al., 2012). As such, one goal of expanded interpretation within Civil War sites should be to inspire unity to protect these public spaces beyond partisan divides by appealing to all or most facets of MFT because public lands are already deeply entrenched in moral values. From this research purpose stems the following questions:

RQ2: What is the relationship between moral foundations and preferences of potential interpretive themes at MANA?

RQ2a: Are there variations within moral foundations across visitation and sociodemographic groups? If so, how?

RQ2b: Are there variations within thematic preferences across groups? If so, how?

Methods

This study focuses on the differences between visitors and non-visitors to Manassas National Battlefield Park, from their demographic makeup to their moral foundations, in order to understand perceptions of welcomeness and belonging related to the site and interpretive preferences. The research team utilized an online panel sample survey from the *Qualtrics* platform for offsite data collection of residence of the Washington-Baltimore-Arlington, DC-MD-VA-WV-PA metropolitan statistical area. *Qualtrics* is a third-party platform that allows for the creation and dissemination of surveys through a pool of paid survey takers. The *Qualtrics* platform allows for the implementation of attention checks that decrease respondent inattention and internally monitors data quality through logging response times and removing outliers who completed the survey too quickly or did not complete enough questions (Berry et al., 2022; Douglas et al., 2023). Online panel sample surveys have also been previously utilized within parks and protected area research (Perry et al., 2015; Xiao et al., 2018), and are prudent method when onsite data collection is unfeasible or respondents are geographically dispersed.

For this study, demographic quotas for race, gender, ethnicity, and political affiliation were established prior to disseminating the survey to align with the sociodemographics the Washington D. C. area. Survey content was inspired by Britt and colleagues (2020) research on how state protection of Confederate monuments negatively impacted perceptions of belongingness on Southern Black residents; additionally, we utilized the Powers and colleagues (2022) Welcomeness and Belonging scale to explore whether similar perceptions occurred at a federally protected site like MANA, which was explicitly protected to commemorate Confederate military heritage (Burns, 2015). Data collection occurred between October 17-19, 2023.

Study Site

Manassas National Battlefield Park is located approximately 30 miles from the heart of Washington D.C. in Prince William County, Virginia. The park's main theme is "Where Southern Victories Tested Northern Resolve," which is ubiquitous throughout the park and interpretive programming (NPS, 2023). Military history and strategy are the prominent interpretive components throughout the park, which includes two separate hiking trails for each of the two Civil War battles. The park also manages two visitor centers, the Henry Hill Visitor Center being the main point of contact with park staff as well as the location of the giftshop, park film viewing, and one of the museums. The latter visitor center at Brawner Farm is not open year-round, but during the peak seasons. While providing a driving tour, the interpretive walking tours from both visitor centers are the main draw for 'history buff' visitors as these highlight the military history of the site. The last major point of interest is the Brownsville Picnic Area, where most of the nontraditional recreation activities like picnicking are allowed on park grounds. Also located throughout the park are myriad monuments, memorials, and family cemeteries. See Figure 2.1 for a spatial overview of the park.

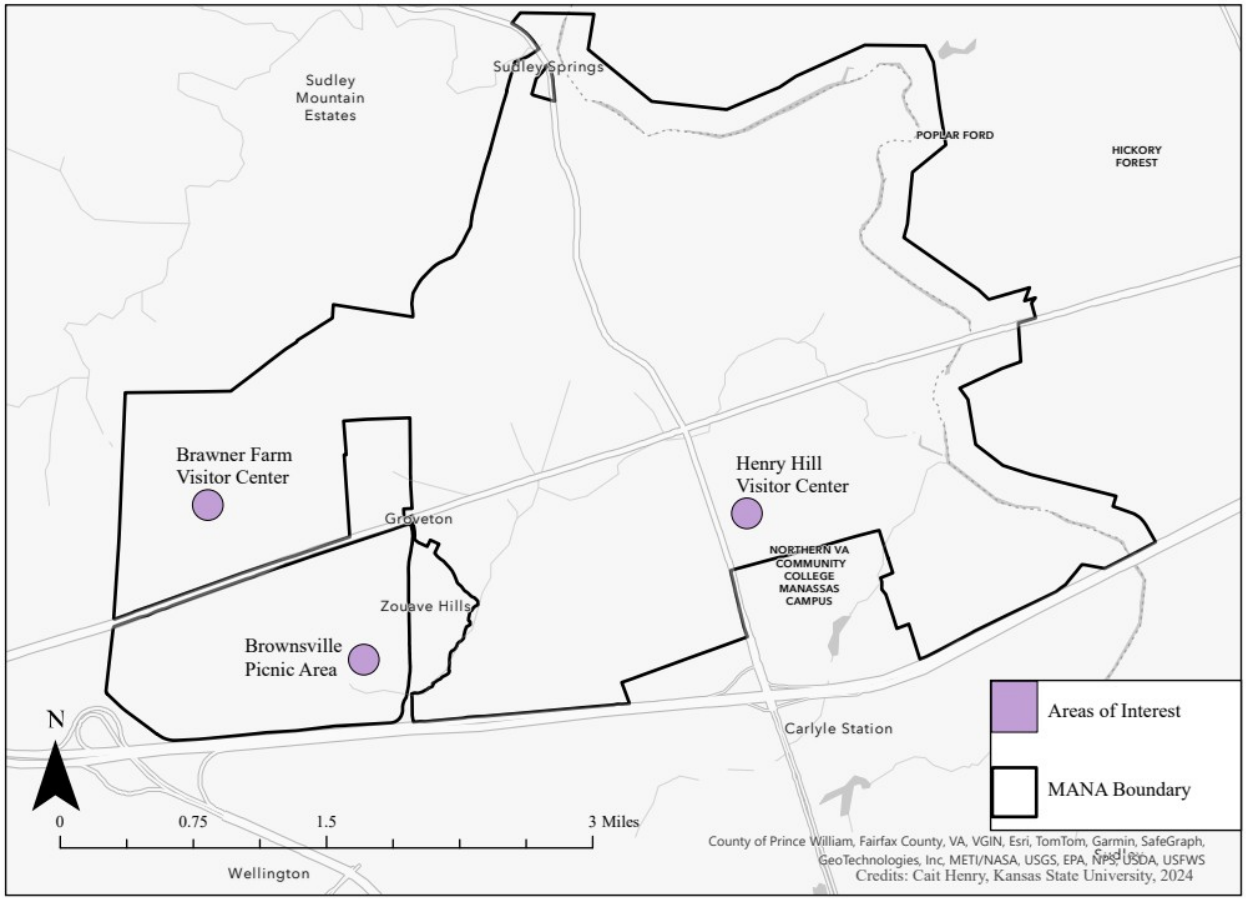

Figure 2.4 Map of Manassas National Battlefield Park

Study Variables

The study variables revolved around respondent preferences toward interpretive themes of MANA. The items listed as potential interpretive themes were created during discussions between the research team and park managers about current and future themes for the site. The 9 items listed as interpretive themes were “Battles of Manassas”, “Changes in the Armies”, “Changes in Technology”, “Experience of the Civilians”, “Memorialization and Public Memory”, “Emergence of Confederate Identity”, “Testing the Union’s Resolve”, “Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War”, and “Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War.”

The study utilized the Welcomeness and Belonging scale with consent from Powers and colleagues' (2022a) on conditions that promote cultural diversity at urban parks. This scale has four items on across a seven-point Likert-type scale from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree" that was found to have sufficient reliability by the authors (Cronbach's alpha of .789). Those four items are "I feel welcome at this park," "I feel like I belong at this park," This park is a comfortable place to hang out," and "At this park, I feel like I matter" (Powers et al., 2022a). If the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of these statements, a final question about perceived barriers was presented to help respondents explain why they disagreed with the previous statements. For these respondents, the research team utilized a modified version of potential constraints from urban populations that included ranking options of "Race/Cultural Issues," "Fear," "Cost," "Not the Best Place," "Limited Knowledge," "Limited Services and Facilities," and "Limited Access to Transportation" (Rushing et al., 2022). The perceived barriers were then recoded into fewer groups (i.e., Most Perceived, Second Most Perceived, and Third Most Perceived became Perceived Constraint – 1 – while similarly all of the Least Perceived items became the Not Perceived Constraint – 0 – modeled after Xiao and colleagues (2022) study related to NPS visitation constraints. The Mann-Whitney U test was utilized for this analysis because not all panel sample survey participants completed this question, rather it was only triggered by responses of disagreement with any the of the Welcomeness and Belonging Scale items (n = 177) and the data was therefore not normalized.

To rank items as well as potential interpretive futures, we utilized Best-Worst Scaling to offer greater insight into participant value functions than discrete choice experiments that only focused on the 'best' choice options instead of the best and worst (Louviere et al., 2015). Items listed within each question were established under the guidelines of MANA managers as feasible

options for current and future interpretive components. Although not the traditional Balanced Incomplete Block Design recommended for Best-Worst Scaling (BWS) questions, the survey was formatted as a BWS Object Case or Case One Framework (Louviere et al., 2015). Binary logistic regressions were utilized with the six moral foundation pillars (Haidt, 2012) as predictor variables for the most preferred interpretive theme along with the Welcomeness and Belonging scale composite scores, visitation, and sociodemographic variables.

The Moral Foundations Questionnaire (MFQ30) was used from MoralFoundations.org (Graham et al., 2011). The MFQ30 contains 15 questions that are ranked on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Not at All Relevant” (1) to “Extremely Relevant” (6), with no choice option for neutrality for whether an item is considered right or wrong. The second collection of 15 questions indicated levels of agreement with each item on a six-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (6), once again not providing a choice for neutrality. Both sets of questions originally included “catch” items or attention checks, designed to ensure that respondents were answering questions individually and consistently with previous portions of the survey (Douglas et al., 2023), creating 32 total questions within the original MFQ30. The research team included two more catch items to create 34 total items for participants to rank. Scale items were aggregated into six main categories: Harm, Fairness, Ingroup, Authority, Purity, and Progressivism. These categories correlate to the Moral Foundations of Care/Harm, Fairness/Cheating, Loyalty/Betrayal, Authority/Subversion, Sanctity/Degradation, and Liberty/Oppression respectively (Haidt, 2012).

Data Analysis

Binary logistic regression was utilized to compare: 1) the moral foundations aggregates across demographic variables, 2) interpretive theme preference across moral foundations,

visitation, and 3) perceptions of welcomeness and belonging, and of site visitation across moral foundations and sociodemographics. The composite score or aggregate of responses to the four Welcomeness and Belonging scale items were normalized using a two-step transformation (Templeton & Burney, 2017) for further analysis on how perceptions of welcomeness and belonging influenced interpretive theme preferences. Lastly, general summary statistics like frequencies, means, and standard deviations were utilized for the synthesis of demographic information like age, gender, education, income, ethnicity, military history, and political affiliation. The panel survey was created in the Qualtrics platform and then analyzed with SPSS statistical software version 29 for Windows (IBM Corp. Released 2022).

Results

Qualtrics elicited 815 completed surveys of 1,941 attempted survey responses. After data cleaning and removing responses that did not pass the attention checks included within the survey design (Berry et al., 2022), the total sample was 793 participants. The average age of study participants was 44 years old (SD = 16.5). Although participants were able to self-identify their gender across more than two categories, gender was binomially distributed between woman (n = 406, or 51.2%) and man (n = 371, or 46.8%). Ethnicity was identified predominantly as White or Caucasian (n = 497, or 62.7%), Black or African American (n = 180, or 22.7%) and Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano (n = 37, or 4.7%). The greatest frequency of highest level of education attained was high school graduate (n = 233, or 29.4%), followed by some college (n = 196, or 24.7%) and 4-year college graduate (n = 165, or 20.8%). Almost 40% of respondents hold an annual household income between $50,000 - $74,999 (n = 163, or 20.6%) or less than $24,999 (n = 149, or 18.8%). The vast majority of participants never served in the military (n = 700, or 88.3%). Self-identified political affiliation could be split into three main

categories: Strong Democrat (n = 171, or 21.6%), Independent (n = 172, or 21.7%), and Strong Republican (n = 130, or 16.4%). Lastly, a majority of the participants had not visited MANA previously (n = 586, or 72%).

Welcomeness and Belonging (RQ1)

To test Research Question 1 that aimed to understand if feelings of welcomeness and belonging varied across visitation, the Welcomeness and Belonging scale items were aggregated into a single composite score (Cronbach's Alpha of 0.9 across all four items) that was analyzed across group types (visitor and non-visitor) using an Independent Samples T-Test. Results found that survey respondents who had not previously visited MANA felt significantly less welcome than participants who had, $t(791) = 5.55$, $p < .001$ (Cohen's $d = .27$ for a low to medium effect size). When reviewing the frequencies of the individual item rankings, it is of importance to note that the medians across all items for non-visitors was 4, or the "neutral" option on the seven-point scale. As such, even though there are significant differences within perceptions of Welcomeness and Belonging based on visitation, non-visitors do not explicitly feel unwelcome at MANA, but impartial or disinterested.

To investigate Research Question 1a that aimed to understand if differences in perceptions of welcomeness and belonging were due to differing perceived constraints, binomial logistic regressions were utilized to establish whether there were differences between visitors' (n = 206) and non-visitors' (n = 587) perceived constraints[3]. No significant differences were found between visitor and non-visitor groups.

[3] These n's are lower than the total sample and are based on the response frequencies for the question "Have you visited Manassas National Battlefield Park before? As this question was not included within the sample quota, the group sizes are uneven.

A binary logistic regression was utilized to understand what variables were associated with MANA visitation (Table 2.1). Predictors included moral foundations pillars and the composite score for the Welcomeness and Belonging scale as Block One along with age, gender, ethnicity, income, education, military history, and political affiliations within Block Two (R^2 = 0.38). Participants who had visited MANA previously were far more likely to score higher on the Harm (odds ratio [OR] = 15.70, p =.003) and Fairness foundations (OR = 7.40, p = .028) than participants who had not visited the study site. On the other hand, visitors were less likely to score high on the Ingroup (OR = 0.05, p <.001), Purity (0.07, p <.001), and Progressivism foundations (OR = 0.05, p = .042) than non-visitors. Demographic variables for ethnicity, military history, and political affiliation were all removed from the model during analysis since they were not able to predict visitation, leaving age, gender, education, and income as the sociodemographic predictor variables. Visitors were more likely to be older (OR = 1.0, p = .023) and less likely to hold a higher level of education (OR = 0.7, p <.001).

Table 2.2 Odds ratios in binary logistic regression models highlighting variables associated with visitation at MANA

Predictor	B	S.E.	Wald	*p*	OR
Harm	2.752	0.918	8.98	0.003	15.669
Fairness	1.999	0.91	4.823	0.028	7.381
Ingroup	-3.015	0.61	24.425	<.001	0.049
Authority	0.859	0.624	1.897	0.168	2.361
Purity	-2.679	0.649	17.027	<.001	0.069
Progressivism	-2.931	1.444	4.122	0.042	0.053
WBS[1]	-.706	0.437	2.618	0.106	0.493
Age	0.016	0.007	5.177	0.023	1.016
Education	-0.308	0.082	14.059	<.001	0.735
Income	-0.077	0.056	1.878	0.171	0.926
Gender[2]	-0.282	0.229	1.523	0.217	0.754
Constant	3.14	0.824	14.534	<.001	23.108

Note: $p < .05$; OR = Odds Ratio derived from Exp (B). [1]This predictor is the Welcomeness and Belonging scale composite scores. [2]Participants who self-identified as men are the reference group for the Gender predictor.

Moral Foundations (RQ2)

These research questions aimed to understand if moral foundations varied across interpretive theme preferences. Interpretive themes were recoded into binary categories of preferred theme (1) and not preferred theme (0) from the original 9-point Likert-type scale of Least Preferred (-4) to Most Preferred (4), with the neutral preference becoming not preferred as well. Predictors for

interpretive theme preference included the aggregated scores for each of the moral foundation pillars, visitation, and Welcomeness and Belonging scores. The Progressivism foundation (Liberty/Oppression moral spectrum) was normalized for further analysis using the two-step transformation by Templeton and Burney (2017) as neither skewness (1.128, SE = .087) or kurtosis (2.302, SE = .173) ranges were within the threshold for normality. The models utilized two blocks, with the moral foundations in the former and visitation and Welcomeness and Belonging scores in the latter. Between the nine interpretive themes presented to survey participants, the binary logistic regression models were able to predict an average of 63.2% of cases correctly. Results revealed that although the models were not powerful predictors of interpretive theme preference overall, with R^2 values ranging from 0.006 to 0.044, there were significant differences within individual themes for moral foundations (Table 2.2).

For example, participants who scored higher on the Harm foundation were 1.75 times more likely to prefer the "Experience of Civilians" interpretive theme ($p = 0.05$) whereas participants who scored higher on the Fairness foundation were 1.70 times more likely to prefer the "Changes in Technology" interpretive theme ($p = 0.03$). The two interpretive themes with the greatest number of significant predictors were the "Battles of Manassas" and "Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War." People who scored higher on the Harm foundation were 1.85 times more likely to prefer the "Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War" ($p = .03$) and 0.56 times as likely to prefer the "Battles of Manassas" theme ($p = .03$). People who scored higher on the Fairness foundation were 2.50 times more likely to prefer "Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War" theme ($p < .001$) and 0.59 times as likely to prefer the "Battles of Manassas" theme ($p = .04$). The other important moral foundation for the "Battles of Manassas" theme was Purity, wherein participants who scored higher on this foundation were 1.53 times more likely to prefer this theme ($p = .02$).

For the “Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War” theme, people who scored higher on the Ingroup foundation (OR = 0.63, p = .02), the Authority foundation (OR = 0.52, p = .001), and the Progressivism foundation (OR = .35, p = 0.3) were less likely to prefer this theme. Lastly, participants who scored higher on the Authority foundation were less likely to prefer the “Experience of Civilians” theme (OR = .67, p = .05). Moral foundation pillars did not significantly predict preferences for the “Memorialization and Public Memory”, “Changes in the Armies”, “Emergence of Confederate Identity”, “Testing the Union’s Resolve”, or “Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War” interpretive themes.

Table 2.3 Odds ratios in binary logistic regression models highlighting variables associated with interpretive theme preferences at MANA

Predictor[1,2]	Battles of Manassas	Changes in the Armies	Changes in Technology	Experience of Civilians	Memorialization and Public Memory	Emergence of Confederate Identity	Testing the Union's Resolve	Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War	Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War
Harm	.556*	0.775	1.132	1.75*	1.149	0.761	0.735	1.853*	0.976
	(.264)[5]	(.309)	(.257)	(.282)	(.252)	(.289)	(.290)	(.282)	(.250)
Fairness	.593*	0.636	1.704*	1.506	0.621	0.862	0.723	2.498***	1.147
	(.257)	(.302)	(.251)	(.275)	(.246)	(.283)	(.282)	(.276)	(.243)
Ingroup	1.374	1.204	0.869	0.739	1.177	1.306	1.171	.629*	0.85
	(.191)	(.221)	(.189)	(.200)	(.183)	(.209)	(.210)	(.201)	(.183)
Authority	1.13	1.299	0.772	.667*	1.235	1.308	1.376	.521**	1.105
	(.188)	(.222)	(.187)	(.202)	(.182)	(.209)	(.208)	(.203)	(.181)
Purity	1.532*	1.17	0.738	0.828	1.18	0.852	1.033	0.805	1.059
	(.176)	(.207)	(.172)	(.188)	(.168)	(.195)	(.318)	(.187)	(.167)
Progress	2.311	1.309	0.521	0.56	1.56	1.161	1.668	.354*	0.944
	(.442)	(.513)	(.432)	(.470)	(.422)	(.481)	(.487)	(.471)	(.419)
WBS[3]	3.423***	.422**	0.635	0.619	1.07	1.535	1.033	0.916	1.305
	(.299)	(.318)	(.301)	(.288)	(.057)	(.306)	(.318)	(.287)	(.286)
Visit[4]	1.132	1.286	0.758	0.793	0.746	1.679*	1.001	0.909	1.105
	(.214)	(.222)	(.219)	(.204)	(.204)	(.211)	(.227)	(.204)	(.204)
Constant	2.406	1.022	0.829	1.062	0.456	0.488	0.656	.337*	0.685
	(.479)	(.495)	(.481)	(.461)	(.462)	(.488)	(.502)	(.465)	(.460)

Note: [1]Cell entries are the Odds Ratio of each predictor in the binary logistic regression model. [2]Asterisks indicate *significant at .05, **significant at .01, and ***significant at .001. [3]This predictor is the composite score for the Welcomeness and Belonging scale. [4]Non-visitors were the reference group for respondents who had visited MANA prior.

[5]Standard errors are in parentheses. *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

In determining what could cause these differences, we also tested differences between moral foundations and preferences for interpretive themes across visitation within the same binary logistic regression models (Table 2.2). Visitors were 1.70 times more likely to prefer the Emergence of Confederate Identity theme, p = .0.01). There were no other significant differences within visitation as a predictor for interpretive theme preference. For differences within perceptions of welcomeness and belonging, participants who scored higher on the Welcomeness and Belonging scale were 3.42 times more likely to prefer the "Battles of Manassas" interpretive theme (p <.001) but 0.42 times less likely as non-visitors to prefer the "Changes in the Armies" theme (p = 0.01). The Welcomeness and Belonging score did not predict any other preferences for interpretive themes.

Discussions and Limitations

Although perceptions of welcomeness and belonging varied whether participants had previously visited MANA, no significant differences existed in perceived barriers for those who selected scores that indicated feeling less of sense of welcomeness or belonging. This may be due to the survey participants being predominantly White or Caucasian (63%), or to other factors not included within the ones provided within the survey (i.e., "Race/Cultural Issues," "Fear," "Cost," "Not the Best Place," "Limited Knowledge," "Limited Services and Activities," and "Limited Access to Transportation"). Or this was due to the smaller sample size, as not all respondents were presented this question prompt. Previous research findings state that perceived constraints vary significantly between racial or ethnic communities for local outdoor recreation (Rushing et.al., 2022) and for NPS visitation (Perry et al., 2015; Xiao et al., 2022). Moreover, perceptions of welcomeness and belonging at urban parks also vary by racial or ethnic communities (Martin at al., 2023; Powers et al., 2022a; Powers et al., 2022b) and socio-

economic status for students who utilize university public spaces (Tralwalter et al., 2021). Future research into perceptions of welcomeness and belonging at MANA should include focus groups or participant interviews to determine what specific perceived constraints exist, if any, that the research team may have missed when providing a static list of general constraints. The research team also recommends future studies into the general National Military Park visitor, since the visitors to MANA do not align with the traditional NPS visitor in terms of gender, income, or education demographics. Like previous research into Civil War battlefield recreation (Taff et al., 2017; Zajchowski et al., 2023), this project focused on a single NPS site, Manassas National Battlefield Park, and therefore it is not recommended to generalize the MANA visitors to NPS historic site or battlefield visitors. To the knowledge of the research team, this study is the first to apply moral foundations to NPS site visitation and highly recommends the inclusion of the Moral Foundations Questionnaire be included on visitor use surveys as the main differences between visitor and non-visitors to MANA stemmed from differences in moral foundations—particularly the Harm and Fairness foundations.

When analyzing the different interpretive themes through the lens of Moral Foundations theory, the pillars were significant predictors for some individual themes, but could not powerfully predict general interpretive theme preference. As visitors were more likely to score higher on the Harm and Fairness foundations than non-visitors, the research team recommends highlighting interpretive themes like the “Battles of Manassas” and “Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War”, followed by “Changes in Technology” and “Experience of Civilians” since these themes only held one of the previous moral foundations as a preference predictor. It is of importance to note that the research team had to include the “Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War” interpretive theme, as it is not currently being interpreted at MANA, even though this

theme saw the most significant predictors of any moral foundations across all of the interpretive themes. Not only would including this interpretive theme align with NPS interpretive standards for Civil War interpretation (NPS, 2005; Pitcaithley, 2006), but it would be a positive update to the park's interpretation since MANA already attracts visitors who are more likely to hold higher Harm and Fairness Moral Foundation scores. Moreover, the lack of significant differences between groups based on aggregated Purity scores for "Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War" is exciting, since this pillar has been shown to predict disapproval within "culture wars" (Koleva et al., 2012). These higher scores on the Harm and Fairness foundations relate to findings about a shared belief of these individualizing foundations transcended partisan bias, for example, when predicting what moral depictions were preferred within children's movies that are meant to inspire socially acceptable conduct (Gehman et al., 2021). As such, highlighting the Harm and Fairness moral foundations could provide a middle-ground for visitors to begin to empathize with outgroup members (I.E., Union versus Confederate identity, recreationalist versus history buff) or at least understand that as there is no singular lived experience; multiple histories can and do coexist within the same cultural landscape.

Another interpretive theme that was significantly predicted by higher Harm foundation scores was "Experiences of Civilians", highlighting a potential avenue to expand onsite interpretation. Traditional interpretations of a nation reconciled during the centennial and sesquicentennial celebrations of the Civil War, in turn, normalized a practice of focusing predominantly on the military history of individual sites without including wider social contexts surrounding the war (Janney, 2013; Sutton, 2006; Reynolds, 2010). This led, in part, to the current disconnect between the American Identity interpreted within the NPS and the identity of the everyday American within an increasingly diverse constituency, although this is a disconnect

that has been weakening for a larger percentage of the American public (Pitcaithley, 2007). Using moral foundations theory to understand responses to interpretive programs and exhibits is potentially the greatest avenue for expanding interpretation at MANA (and other NPS battlefield units) in ways that expand moral circles of empathy, decrease the liberal-conservative moral empathy gap, and foster multicultural reconciliation at conflict sites (Feinberg & Willer, 2019; Waytz et al., 2019; Zhang et al., 2023).

This research also mirrors discussions occurring within the realm of heritage and dark tourism, wherein the traditionally negative view of dark tourism sites and the people who visit them are mere stereotypes (Light, 2017). Locations that preserve places of conflict are more often places where visitors come to understand their own identities in relation to the people of the past or to their nation (Carbone, 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Our findings highlight that visitors were over 15 times more likely to score high on the Harm foundation, which is primarily concerned with easing suffering and favors actions that demonstrate care for others (Stern, 2018). These spaces, however, need to reflect the lived experiences of all people, especially those who have been previously excluded from traditional Civil War battlefield interpretation like enslaved or free Black Americans (Pitcaithley, 2006). Finding that visitors were over seven times as likely to score higher on the Fairness foundation, which is concerned with rewarding good work and punishing cheating or trickery (Stern, 2018), also reflects how participants who scored higher on this same foundation were almost 2.5 times more likely to prefer “Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War” as an interpretive theme.

But this research is not without its limitations. Predominantly, there were issues surrounding the extent of assumptions of participant knowledge of the study site, especially when it came to holistic understanding of the meaning of more nebulous interpretive themes.

Although BWS question formatting did allow for comparing item preferences between groups, there was little evidence of a particular visitor typology for MANA visitors versus non-visitors. This is partly due to the lack of extended questioning on the visitation histories of participants, and partly due to the overall lack of knowledge surrounding NPS military site visitors.

Conclusions

Within the physical boundaries of MANA exist myriad lived histories beyond the few days of bloody battle. Archeological findings detail the lives of the people who had to flee their homes, and when paired with historic records like census records, personal writings, oral histories, restitution claims from 1871, historic photographs of the landscape, descriptions of headstones at family cemeteries and the like proffer truly illuminating narratives of the rich local history of Manassas Junction before it was turned into battlefields (Bedell et al., 2023; Potter et al., 2000; Seibert & Parsons, 2000; Reeves, 2003). Multimedia projects like Augmented Reality experiences of the Robinson House can also provide pathways for expanding interpretation into novel frontiers (Pettitt & Fuhrmann, 2017). The monuments themselves all have individual histories and are imbued with moral values that the people who built those memorials hoped would survive after their lives and memories were nothing but dust in the wind (Savage, 1997). Expanding interpretation at MANA and other sites of violence within the NPS should not be viewed as a chore or as revisionist heretic, but as exciting opportunities to share the wonder of protected parks and the history they represent for all Americans.

Chapter 3 –Repetitive compulsions of trauma: Damages done when perpetuating heroic white masculinity at federally managed cultural sites

Introduction

This position paper is the culmination of four years of research into the cultural interpretation of Civil War heritage at a National Park Service (NPS) site. Originating as questions regarding the relevancy of historic battlefields to the current culture within the United States soon evolved into more philosophical questions about what it means to feel welcome at a battlefield site that celebrates Confederate heritage, and what are considered appropriate actions and behaviors at what was once a mass gravesite. In trying to answer these questions, this position paper aims to take a critical view of the confluence between the cultural authority of the NPS and collective memories of the Civil War. Bolstering this view is a framework of analyzing trauma as a cyclical, compulsive repetition that stems from the paradox of having survived accidental trauma while not being fully aware of doing so, since that awareness would have placed the victim on the path of death or destruction (Caruth, 1996).

Within the context, therefore, I argue that one of the lasting traumas of the Civil War stems from the mythic glorification of heroic white masculinity, which has been perpetuated predominantly through the traditional interpretation of NPS Civil War battlefields as devoid of social context to maintain notions of war as morally right—a notion that grew from the 1880s and still exists today (Spielvogel, 2013). From here the paper moves outward to focus on the prevalence of heroic white masculinity, and particularly the notion that to take back masculinity one must utilize violence as a means of symbolic restoration from perceptions of white

victimhood. This position paper aims to be the awakening toward the repetitive compulsion of violence as a restorative threat to perceived white masculine authority that has roots within NPS interpretation of war, but also holds the current citizens of the United States hostage over 150 years later.

Confederate Exceptionalism as Heroic White Masculinity

A plethora of research has connected Confederate memorialization to lasting racial strife within the United States (Britt et al., 2020; Evans, 2021; Klein, 2021; Lantz et al., 2022; O'Connell, 2022; O'Connell, 2020; Rios et al., 2022). Yet it is not only Confederate memorialization that reifies heroic masculinity; although this is a major component within Confederate Exceptionalism, which combines Lost Cause mythos of a genteel, patriarchal South with the ideals of American Exceptionalism that stressed duty, honor, and masculinity as the most important values a patriotic man could hold (Marauantonio, 2019). Although the historical overview of the causes of the Civil War highlight sustaining of the economic and social institution of slavery within the South, the individual soldiers' motivations for enlisting were more closely tied to Victorian notions of duty, honor, and masculinity (Linderman, 1987; McPherson, 1996). While the memories of why soldiers fought are valid and important for understanding their motivations, it can be dangerous to conflate these memories with historic fact, as is often done within Confederate Exceptionalism (Marauantonio, 2019). One of the many lasting traumas that stemmed from the Civil War is that the emphasis on white reconciliation in the first fifty years after the war distorted why the Civil War was fought in the first place: to maintain the institution of slavery, or rather, to insure the institution's transference into federal territories (Davis, 1996; Wakelyn, 2002). Furthermore, Lost Cause ideology vehemently opposes the South's connection to the institution of slavery but instead argues that the war was fought for

state's rights [4], crystalized after the Civil War ended (Blight, 2001). Specifically in the 1880s and 1890s, during the social fad of veterans waxing poetic about their war experiences to validate the Victorian notions of duty and honor that veterans came to symbolize within a changing society did the Lost Cause ideology become normalized (Linderman, 1987).

When analyzing Confederate Exceptionalism and Lost Cause mythos through the lens of unclaimed trauma, they can be understood as survival responses to the fall of the Confederacy during the Civil War, with the loss of institutional power mirroring the failure to save hundreds of thousands of lives lost during the war. Both the North and the South, although particularly the latter, firmly believed that God was guiding them to victory and that their cause was both just and morally correct. The weight of four years of battle, a devastated landscape, financially ruined families, and the belief of no longer being God's chosen or favored people became the ethical dilemmas that the nation had to overcome after 1865. Within this frame of mind, turning to perceptions of valor, courage, and masculinity—values that created good and morally upstanding citizens seems a logical response to arise in the decades following the war (Faust, 2009; Linderman, 1987). The perpetuation of these sentiments of white reconciliation from the 1880s into the current year of 2024, however, has morphed them into a coddling tool that distort why the North and the South fought the Civil War.

Intersection of Heroic White Masculinity and Perceived White Victimhood

J. Christian Spielvogel's *Interpreting Scared Ground: The Rhetoric of National Civil War Parks and Battlefields* (2013) is seminal for understanding how deeply tied notions of Victorian masculinity was to the American public before, during, and after the Civil War.

[4] Although not directly tied to the thesis of this paper, I want to share a quote from Civil War historian William C. Davis on the 'states rights' rhetoric. "A reading of the congressional debates from the decades prior to the war, of the editorials in the Southern newspapers, of the speeches of leading regional statesmen produces no list of rights endangered. Only one right. Slavery. No one at the time complained that the federal government was interfering in state taxation, road building, external trade, or anything else." (1996, p. 180).

“Courage, exemplified by calm resolve under the most fearful battle circumstances, was the ultimate test of one’s manliness and was achieved through strong faith, self-control, and an unbending commitment to duty. Adherence to these principles, it was widely believed, would yield victory, honor, and immortality” (2013, p. 85). As public memories are mainly transmitted through battle narratives, the National Park Service (NPS) plays a significant role in normalizing Civil War memory through its role as a public educator (Pitcaithley, 2007; Spielvogel, 2013). Yet what is preserved and interpreted at battlefields “frozen in time” to their Civil War appearance depend on the subjective interpretations of war as morally good proving grounds for Victorian masculinity, which is in turn normalized as the values that inspire civic engagement in patriotic Americans (Bodnar, 1992). These notions of militarized masculinity beholden to honor, duty, and courage are still apparent today in war memorials unrelated to the Civil War, like the U.S. Battlefield Cross, in turn create a new myth of the Masculine American Man (Dundes, 2023).

When American men feel they do cannot live up to this expectation—how can anyone live up to a myth—instead they seek avenues to ‘restore’ themselves to this ideal through violent enactments of masculinity, either actualized or fanatical (Myketiak, 2016; Neville-Shepard & Kelly, 2020). The present hegemony of masculinity upholds outdated Victorian ideals, which were partially transmitted through the memorialization of the Civil War, and have been transferred into a meta-history where masculinity was once revered within the past, but is no longer within the present or future unless men stake claim on hegemonic masculinity denied to them through violence against the Others who slight them (Al-Ghazzi, 2021; Spielvogel, 2013). Scholars in gender and Far Right studies posit that “the gender of terrorism often is a response to the ‘terror’ of gender—especially the dramatic increase in gender equality, and changing

definitions of femininity and masculinity, that have been attendant upon globalization" (Ferber & Kimmel, 2008, p. 874).

The terror of gender is, of course, a perceived or symbolic threat to the Victorian notions of masculinity, housed within the Victorian worldview of a rigid system that denotes right from wrong and moral from immoral to create a singular, value-laden understanding of a past that was further normalized within the period of consensus history in the 1950s that sought to create an overarching historic memory of American identity (Carmichael, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2002). That threats to masculinity may be symbolic does not matter to the men experiencing those threats, but instead fosters a worldview wherein acts of violence are considered to be acts of reclaiming masculinity easily and without regard to larger social, complex realities surrounding the changing perceptions of race and gender in the United States (Ferber & Kimmel, 2008; Johnson, 2017a; Myketiak, 2016; Neville- Shepard and Kelly, 2020).

These perceptions of symbolic threats to heroic white masculinity exist within American culture like a contagion, moving beyond battlefield interpretation into mass media. Chrystie Myketiak found within a critical discourse analysis of a mass shooter the deeply entrenched belief that the person who would enact senseless acts of violence on others was actually the victim in his own mind (2016). I stress whiteness specifically because of its direct tie to *masculine victimhood* that is absent from notions of black or other ethnic masculinities, which are often stereotyped as more violent and therefore align more closely to hegemonic masculinity (Cramer et al., 2023; Ferber & Kimmel, 2008; Myketiak, 2016). Critically acclaimed media like *Fight Club*, *Breaking Bad*, and even *The Punisher* perpetuate notions of an abject white masculine hegemony which is at once invisible and visible, lost and reclaimed, and most

importantly, a validating and pleasurable experience to watch victimized white men reclaim their power through violence (Cramer et al., 2023; Johnson, 2017b; King, 2009).

Awakening to the Root of Trauma: A Case Study

Within contextualizing trauma in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, Cathy Caruth argues that "a rethinking of reference is aimed not at eliminating history but at resituating it in our understanding, that is, at precisely permitting history to arise where immediate understanding may not" (1996, p. 11). Within this lens, the Civil War was a threat to the body of a nation and for the United States to survive, the violence of battle had to be forgotten, at least for a period of time, in order to allow the consciousness of the country to awaken to a new world built on the foundations of destruction. The Cause Victorious sought to preserve the Union, which was accomplished by the end of the war. Yet in order to reunite a nation culturally divided, white reconciliation overshadowed the more nebulous and unsteady march toward restructuring a nation built upon racial equality (Blight, 2001).

The trauma for the white masculine soldier— who was viewed as the American Ideal of a morally upstanding, honorable man— from the Confederacy was a loss of their honorable reputation when General Robert E. Lee conceded to General Ulysses S. Grant. As a soldier's duty transcended his own reputation to subsume the reputation of his entire family, in turn the loss of Southern civilians' reputations from losing a war they themselves did not fight in—and therefore would never wholly know the true cost of savage warfare—I posit within Caruth's view of unclaimed trauma is the original trauma of the Civil War for white Americans and especially white Southerners. Until reckoning with the ancestral loss of reputation and honor, Neo-Confederates and other 'heritage not hate' groups will compulsively repeat traumatic acts like mass shooting (i.e., Charleston Massacre) or less imposing displays of intimidation like

preserving monuments that symbolize the Lost Cause and the Confederacy (Adams, 2011; Martinez & Cagel, 2021; Sheehan & Speights-Binet, 2019) as attempts to push back against what are seen as symbolic threats to white heroic masculinity (Heath & Waymer, 2022; Rios et al., 2022).

The interpretation of military strategy disconnected to social contexts fosters dissonant understandings of heritage; by not acknowledging all of the lived experiences affected by warfare—especially those of enslaved and newly freed African Americans—the visiting public is not provided interpretation that meets the standards of the Interpretive Development Program (Larsen, 2002; Lemelin et al., 2013; Tilden, 1977). Instead, people who visit Civil War battlefields in hope of understanding how a nation so divided survived four years of bloody warfare are provided "interpreganda" of heroic white masculinity as the most important, if not only, perspective that can be known about the Civil War (Larsen, 2002; Brochu & Merriman, 2015). Notions of reconciliation and the valor of all soldiers bled into the preservation of battlefields within the NPS, as Spielvogel argues within Gettysburg National Military Park, which have become distorted through the passage of time to glorify the act of war as a moral right of passage into manhood instead of emphasizing the savage cost of the war (2013). From Gettysburg, I move focus toward a case study of how another NPS site—Manassas National Battlefield Park (MANA)—also perpetuates notions of white heroic masculinity devoid of cultural context within their commemorative events to celebrate two Confederate battle victories.

Manassas National Battlefield park interprets the site of the First and Second Battles of Bull Run, however, for the site to be acquired from the Sons of Confederate Veterans the NPS had to make concessions about preserving Lost Cause mythos and Confederate Exceptionalism for the American public for time eternal (Burns, 2015). For the most part, the park has succeeded

in meeting this goal. Embedded within the park's mission statement is language like 'appreciation,' 'inspiration,' and 'enjoyment' that are further established through the fundamental value of providing a commemorative atmosphere at the site that catalyzed four gruesome years of battle (NPS, 2014). Since its conception, MANA has commemorated the Civil War through contentious garishness and grandiosity, wherein the 1961 Civil War centennial battle reenactment was so upsetting and disrespectful to both the public and particularly the Civil War dead that the NPS outright prohibited all battle reenactments on their federally managed lands (Daniels et al., 2012; Smith, 2017). Although more subdued and somber by the sesquicentennial, the commemorative, festive spirit remains within the marrow of battle anniversaries. An adjunct historian at Gettysburg College mused on his blog in 2011:

> I thought to myself, "What does this REALLY have to do with the Battle of Manassas? I watched, less than mesmerized. I have deep respect for the 3rd U.S. Infantry's skill. But what did tossing 1903 Springfield muskets have to do with the ground upon which they were standing? It seemed more gratuitous, frivolous entertainment, ala theme park stunt shows, than measured and meaningful commemorative activity. (Rudy, 2011, n.pag).

I was able to witness some of the commemorative events at MANA, although for Memorial Day in 2023 rather than the battle anniversary events, and can attest that the largest component of the interpretation was not about commemorating the supreme loss of life from the Civil War and all other wars since then, but the excitement of hearing musket and cannon fire that was supposed to replicate the battlefield soundscape at a much smaller scale. Witnessing this type of war celebration struck me as odd, but it was not until situating this experience within Caruth's conception of trauma was I able to grasp exactly why this memory remained unsettling. In her framing of trauma through a parable about how wounds cry out, trauma can also be

understood as a repetition of violence in hopes to understand how one was able to survive the initial loss when others, through their deaths, could not (Caruth, 1996). It is through this lens I argue that the emulation of the battlefield soundscape at MANA is a compulsive repetition of trauma. It is impossible to understand what was lost as soldiers fought during the Civil War, whether lives or reputations, and it is this ancestral incomprehension that drives us to pass on this trauma without awakening to its root cause onto future generations, as had occurred in the 1880s until now. This can also be especially traumatic for Black visitors—since the inclusion of slavery as a cause for the Civil War has not yet occurred onsite—as the 'layers' of trauma from the recreated battlefield experience compounds with the trauma of being systematically excluded from the history interpreted at MANA (Pain, 2020). Visitors do not leave MANA with answers, but the tools for championing their own heroic masculinity; as such it is only logical that one common reaction when masculinity is symbolically threatened on public lands is met with violence as a restorative force (Smith, 2021).

Awakening to the cyclical impacts of trauma involves tethering failing memories of heroic masculinity in Civil War combat to the history of its causes and consequences. Beyond MANA, the NPS has awakened to the necessity of this tethering, as championed by former NPS Chief Historian Dwight T. Pitcaithley and other Civil War interpreters in the late 1990s (Pitcaithley, 2006 & Pitcaithley, 2007). In 2022, one year after the January 6th Insurrection wherein the Confederate battle flag was flown in the Capitol for the first time ever, the NPS American Battlefield Protection Program's most pressing priority was to ensure that battlefields are equitable and accessible to all through funding grant projects that explicitly aimed to expand battlefield interpretation beyond the traditional, heroic white masculine narrative across all NPS battlefield sites. Of the six projects funded, the largest component was dual projects by the

Shenandoah Valley Foundation that illuminate the Black Civil War experience as well as the social consequences of war (NPS, 2023).

Indeed, there is rich history that has been accumulated by MANA, from some of the very first Civil War memorials ever built by Union officers and civilians "reclaiming the space" from the victorious Confederates are preserved onsite (Janney, 2013) to the nation's largest act of white reconciliation during the 1911 Manassas National Peace Jubilee (Burns, 2015), to the distorted view of "Stonewall" Jackson by Jim Crow Virginians in the 1930s who were desperate for any symbol of heroic masculinity during a time ripe with national and political strife (Adams, 2011) to the wide array of archeological studies of households of enslaved African Americans and free Black people, predominantly the Robinson House that has since then been demolished entirely due to structural issues after a fire but whose descendants still live within the Manassas community and help in archeological digs and oral histories (Bedell et al., 2023; Galke, 2000; Reeves, 2003; Seibert & Parsons, 2000). For MANA to remain beholden to strictly interpreting military strategy and reifying white heroic masculinity via Confederate military glorification after almost twenty-five years since the first call to integrate slavery as a cause for the Civil War is not merely an active resistance to NPS policies, it is also poor interpretation to the detriment of the constituency. Until the dangerous celebrations of mythic heroic white masculinity are no longer heralded by cultural authorities and protectors of public memory like the NPS, the causes and consequences of the Civil War will remain a deep, festering wound in this nation's side.

Chapter 4 – My own worst enemy: Transcending myself, my dissertation process, and sense of meaning within the grand scheme of things

> Meaning is the web of connections, understandings, and interpretations that help us comprehend our experience and formulate plans directing our energies to the achievement of our desired future. Meaning provides us with the sense that our lives matter, that they make sense, and that they are more than the sum of our seconds, days, and years. (Michael Steger, 2012, p. 165)

This reflexive essay will be far more transparent than a traditional concluding dissertation chapter, at the behest of my colleagues who have my professional best interests at heart. But more than a conclusion, this is a personal pact to hold myself accountable to grow from the doctoral program process. It is also (admittedly rather public for my tastes) a baseline to chart said personal growth. Italicized block quote passages are minimally censored[5] selections of random musings I have compiled over numerous notebooks I've filled over the past few years. Unedited, it totaled to over 4,700 words, but recycled enough patterns of thought to uncover core themes. After contextualizing these passages, I will refer back to the psychology research base to provide even more insight into what those passages attempted to convey. Grounding these passages are descriptions of the previous chapter implications, as well as the originally proposed chapter plans to highlight deviations that inspired personal reflection. What follows may be professional immolation, but I like to believe it's doing my due diligence on being transparent about wider contexts that influenced this dissertation.

[5] Along with minimal censorship, I have rewritten some phrases or statements for better flow and cohesion.

> *More than being morally opposed to the interpretation at my study site, its also a personal lack of meaning. For six years now, my life's meaning has been to enact what little positive change I could contribute to the world. With the advent of Google Scholar logistics and ResearchGate, I can see how I have positively influenced other researchers by deepening their knowledge of the research base with the publication of personal and group manuscripts. Visitor Use Management projects that focus on Management-Based Objectives and pragmatic frameworks to meet those objectives are also obvious examples of contributing directly to the betterment of people's lives while they exist at that study location. But I don't have those pathways anymore, instead I have scrapped proposal plans and aloof managers.*

Given how often I return to psychology to reaffirm how I view the world and myself within it, perhaps Park Management and Conservation was not the most natural of choices as a research pathway. Yet it is a wonderful arena for trying to understand why people act the way they do, and what values they hold dear. As King and Hicks (2021) synthesize, meaning *of* life and meaning *in* life are two separate, nebulous things, but the former is far more difficult to explain than the latter. Meaning *in* life (MIL) mainly stems from subjective senses of coherence (or cognitive cohesion), purpose, and existential mattering/significance (King & Hicks, 2021; Martela & Steger, 2016). Personally, I've always naturally tied the last two components to my work, finding purpose and existential mattering within being able to contribute to the world around me, and I believe the previous passage highlights these notions. The last six years of graduate school reinforced this coherence of my worldview within daily life. Although not an empirical study, my reflections align with Costin and Vignoles' (2020) findings that mattering is the main predictor of MIL judgements, which then reflect notions of coherence and purpose. My

life matters because my research can be read and cited online; as long as the internet remains eternal, so will my legacy.[6]

I am aware that it is unhealthy to follow this train of thought, to conflate self-worth with what I can produce for others, becoming essentially the same vision. This is not the standard I hold anyone else to, no, I firmly believe that people are inherently valuable beyond something as frivolous and cursory as *work*. But for myself, this is simply not the case. Objectively I understand that this is illogical and toxic, but subjectively I am still shackled to this belief. I've been deeply depressed for most of my life, which is something I do not normally tell people. But if I am to grow from this experience, I need to be as honest with myself and you, dear hypothetical reader who is not one of my committee members, as possible. Although it is a relatively recent diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder and Generalized Anxiety, these have plagued my life as early as nine years old and went untreated until my mid 20s after realizing that I needed therapy if I were to survive another suicidal season. I would not exist in 2024 without the help of my wonderfully understanding friend Jack and Dr. Kelly Bollinger from the CAPS services at Clemson University. With their guidance I went from a lost person desperately seeking any meaning in life and coming up with less to show every time to a (relatively speaking) self-compassionate, understanding person who realized their self-worth and want to share my knowledge that with whoever I can.

As a child I was an Athlete, and when I was no longer within the bubble of southern Illinois Lutheran middle schools that sense of self shattered. Looking back, this was inescapable. A 5'6 basketball forward with dulled senses of motivation and drive does not make for a

[6] Trigger warning for the upcoming section: depression, thoughts of suicide, and self-harm. If you are not in a headspace to process traumatic baggage, skip this portion. The next footnote denotes the end of this section.

successful high school player in a metropolitan area. After an excruciating sophomore year of building myself back up, I realized I was Smart, making that my identity instead. This notion held for four more years, until in college I realized that instead of 'getting better' I was masking those feelings of meaningless and isolation with gluttonous alcohol and drug use. I'm still unpacking what is retrospectively a traumatic college experience, which at that time I accepted as something I deserved. Then came the second existential crisis and suicide season, which took even longer to overcome, but at least I was still Smart and could throw myself into my grades. It was during a senior year project meeting with my influential advisor Dr. Thomas Lekan at the University of South Carolina where the first inkling of graduate school became viable. Learning is what I do best, so what better career than a perpetual student? Even today, being paid to ask why and find meaning seems almost too wonderful to be realistic.

The Parks and Recreation department at Clemson University was what I needed: work hard play hard mentality with an emphasis on the former, but it's unnecessarily lofty standards for staff and students were akin to what I was already self-enforcing. I thrived there, not mentally of course, but I built a thesis project from nothing and was able to create something that had direct implications to help Congaree National Park Staff, of whom I had grown fond of during a brief internship followed by temporary work as a consultant for their Historic Research Survey during my gap year. Since my constant self-judgement meant that I was obsessively tracking my behaviors and acceptable emotions, I knew that halfway during my program was the anniversary of the suicide seasons that disrupted my youth. To combat this, I ensured that I would not be a burden to anyone else in my cohort by keeping to myself as much as I could. When this period came and went, I was shocked. Years of myriad self-harm actions and behaviors led me to believe that I would never reach the age of twenty, yet there I was. It was both freeing and

terrifying. After this I told myself to *suck it up* and seek mental help (which was always seen as taboo in my family, and why even today they know only about the tip of the iceberg of how bad my mental health was, saving them from feeling guilty about something beyond their control).

Now you see, dear hypothetical reader who is more likely than not a committee member, I'm in a better mental headspace now. It's not perfect by any means, but at least I have the tools to process and understand that those experiences are not an albatross around my neck, but moments to reflect upon for future personal growth. My negative thinking devolved from being my greatest nemesis, to a disinterested critic, to an inconsequential whisper in the back of my mind that has been locked in Pandora's Box. I'm proud to say that outside of the nicotine addiction, it's been a few years since I have actively and intentionally enacted self-harming behaviors. It took a long time, but I got there. [7]

From an analytical point of view, I can take comfort in building cognitive connections between purposeful actions like continuing to work on academic projects and this overarching self-conception of MIL. Simply put, being useful to others makes me feel good, and I want to prolong this feeling for as long as I can. The Meaning Maintenance Model, proposed in 2006, hinges on the tripartite framework of understanding meaning to be relational, innate to the human experience, and that when frames of meaning making are broken people will try to build alternative paradigms of understanding in order to "reconstruct meaning through other relational structures that are available and intact" and when this cannot occur people can become emotionally distraught (Heine et al., 2006, p. 93). I most certainly felt distraught after realizing the futility of my research endeavors after returning to what was initially proposed as this dissertation's framework chapters.

[7] End of section that may be triggering to some.

The first half of my program was spent working on a massive Visitor Use Management (VUM) project within the National Capital Region, helping with data collection, analysis, and presenting findings to site managers and regional park planners via oral presentations and written technical reports for almost a dozen different park units. That time period was not existentially challenging, since my daily life was built on the cohesive worldview that what I had created and disseminated about visitor experiences at these locations was being taken into direct consideration with site and regional management. It was a good time, which lulled me into a false sense of security that I would be able to complete my program with relatively little difficulties because I loved what I did and felt like my life's meaning was in my grasp.

During the final years of my experience, however, both the department and my project had undergone multiple changes. My first two advisors left the program, the former leaving academia entirely, and although I hold no grudge against either for their actions, it did cause some confusion about the MANA project timeline and who was considered the main point of contact with park staff. I should also note that the park itself had also gone through considerable staff changes as well, with three or so acting superintendents at the helm within as many years. The staff changes were more detrimental, since the people who had championed the project were only directing the staff during the beginning window of time. As such, there currently seems to be little interest in the experiential outcomes for visitor use that does not align with the normalized behaviors and viewpoints of long-term, vocal staff members who oppose all forms of recreation at the park. Together this context birthed the original dissertation proposal titled "Masques of heritage or masques of hate? Exploring the collective memories of Confederate victories at Manassas National Battlefield Park." Built on an increasing body of research about negative perceptions of Confederate monuments in public spaces that was partially catalyzed by

the Charleston Massacre and the Black Lives Matter movement of the middle-to-late 2010s (and bolstered by MANA staff interviews that depicted intense perceived conflict between historical and recreational use) the original statement of significance emphasized understanding how all people—visitors, non-visitors, and federal employees—navigated the Lost Cause legacy built into the study site. The middle dissertation chapters aimed to understand multiple points of view through predominantly qualitative research analysis. Thankfully, Chapter One: "Not a zero-sum game between facts or feelings: Public historians at the crossroads of collective memory and history of the Civil War at Manassas National Battlefield Park" did not deviate from the original plan to be an extensive literature review to contextualize upcoming chapters, however, the sections included did change from what was assumed to be important concepts, with only collective memory and MANA site history remaining. Chapter Two, on the other hand, as witnessed the most deviation.

Although the current Chapter Two ("Moral Foundations, welcomeness and belonging, and visitation to Manassas National Battlefield Park: The necessity of nuance in understanding interpretive theme preferences") technically utilizes the same panel sample survey instrument as originally planned, the final product looks drastically different from what was intended. The predominant qualitative component of the survey was a panel of four researcher-modified images of the infamous Stonewall Jackson statue that welcomes visitors at MANA: one panel with no change, one panel with an interpretive sign added, one panel with graffiti and vandalism on the statue, and one panel with the statue removed from its pedestal. Respondents were going to rank their acceptability of each image and explain their reasoning for their judgements, a novel research project because Confederate monuments on federally protected lands have not been studied prior. During the fall of 2023 MANA staff alerted us that they were greatly concerned

that the panel imagery would create confusion since they were planning to add interpretive context to the monument some point in the future, which in turn could potentially distress park users and staff alike who might deal with backlash against the two more extreme, hypothetical images. Although technically this online panel sample survey was not federally funded and as such didn't need managerial approval, I conceded with the hope that compromise would inspire the rest of the staff to take part in the research process for a different project. No such luck.

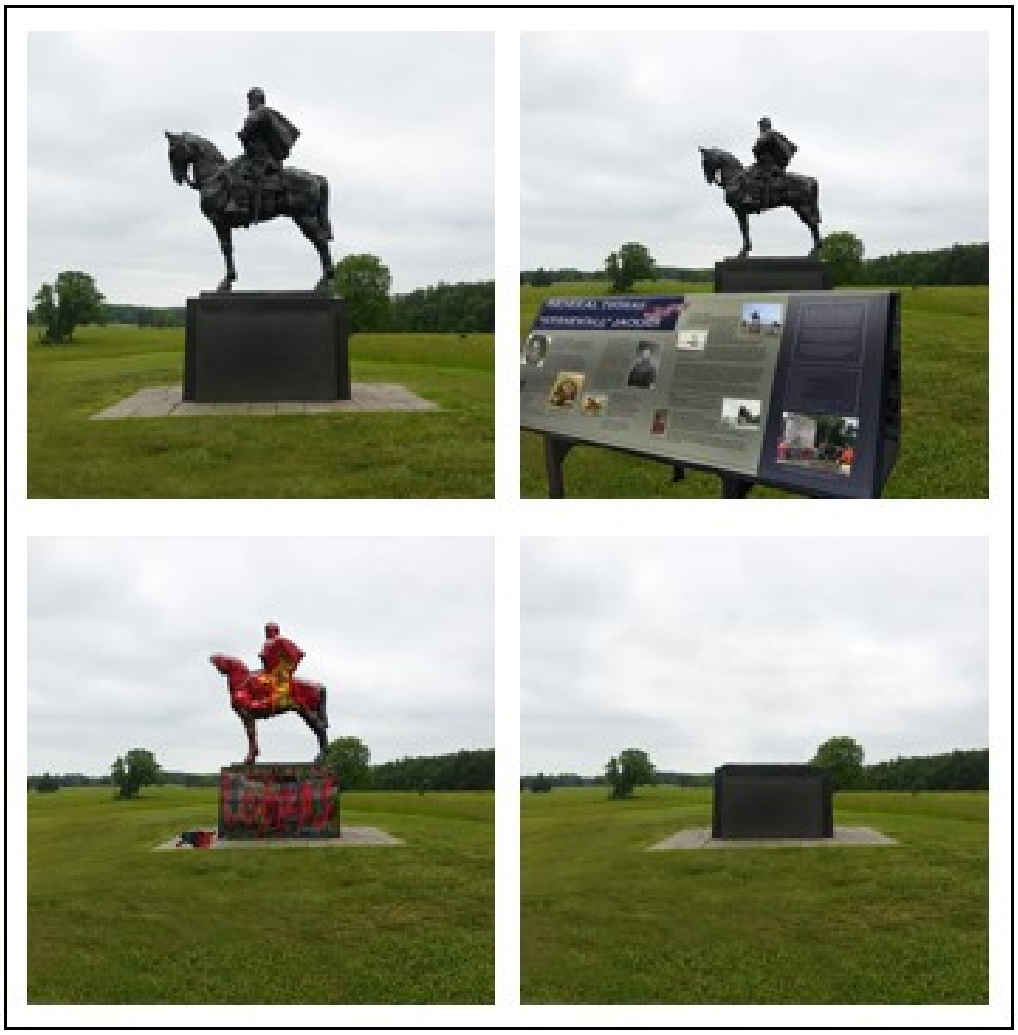

Figure 4.5 Intended Edited Images for Panel Sample Survey

The originally proposed second and third chapters were to be complementary endeavors that aimed to understand how people internalize the site's interpretive themes and modalities from their onsite visits into wider concepts like self and national identities—especially visitors who explicitly visited during the battle anniversary events—and whether or not management perceptions aligned with visitor perceptions. Staff members were supplied with the same set of image prompts and questions as the visitors before being asked to assume the role of a visitor themselves. By comparing the similarities and differences between the two samples, I would be able to inform MANA staff about how well their perceptions of visitor conflict aligned with actual experiences, which was the most pressing concern provided from the initial staff interviews in 2021. Unfortunately, due to bureaucratic red tape, I was unable to be physically onsite during the 2023 battle anniversaries. Although the research I had already completed on the Visitor Employed Photography method all stemmed from projects where researchers were able to intercept participants onsite and provide the necessary context for rich data collection, I was hopeful that pivoting to offsite intercepts, novel in itself as a data collection modification, would allow me the incredibly low baseline of nine unstructured interviews via image caption and question prompt completions that I was technically allowed before having to submit a data collection plan to OMB for approval and was already the cause of onsite data collection delays.

All of one person completed the project, even after pivoting once more to direct messaging people on the MANA Facebook page who initially 'liked' the two posts about project participation. Also, during this time, I had already contacted the park staff member in charge of the VUM project on the park's end thrice about the MEP, which under the Seidman (2013) approach to qualitative data intercepts is the final time a researcher should contact a prospective participant before conceding to their autonomy and moving on. The MEP and VEP were dead. I

had to scramble to expand what was originally intended to a single chapter and eventual journal article publication into three separate chapters and assumed statistically significant manuscripts, as is the general consensus surrounding dissertations in my research field.

> *It is disheartening to see how many people placed "slavery as a cause of the Civil War" last for preferred interpretive themes. I assume this will correlate with racial ethnicity [update: it did not because the sample was predominantly white, so while it might be true anecdotally it wasn't statistically significant]. Even with this more quantitative data my moral bias is screaming at me, that even if people don't want this our country needs to come to grips with this fact that the Civil War was caused by Southern states wanting to sustain the institution of slavery if we ever want reconciliation. How much longer can we put our feelings over the lives lost during the war and under the institution of slavery?*

The concept of meaningful work can be understood broadly as either stemming from self-realization or a contribution to the Greater Good, both which provide intrinsic value wholly contingent upon the individual (Martela & Pessi, 2018). Furthermore, conceptualization of meaningful work often mirrors components of MIL research (Ward & King, 2017). Thankfully, my advisor(s) have provided the space to foster these pathways, particularly self-realization, by providing guidance yet also the freedom to establish my own research paradigm (Lysova et al., 2019; Martela & Pessi, 2018). The problem arises, however, from failing to meet the normalized standards for what contributing to the academic Greater Good.

It is safe to say that it was an incredibly nearsighted undertaking to make meaning from an online survey taken by people who are paid to take them without particularly caring that much about the study site or context. This was most apparent within analyses that directly tied to "visitation" without previous operationalization beyond a general binary question (I.E., Yes/No). As was rightly brought forward in a committee meeting, 'visitation' could range from daily use spanning multiple years to stopping once to use the restroom, so any results discussion were built

on glaring underlying assumptions. I had no ways of knowing if the (paid) participant responses accurately reflected their abilities to make informed decisions when answering management questions about the Henry Hill Visitor Center and current /potential onsite interpretive components that ranged from specific thematic preferences to modes of interpretation acquisition (I.E., staff or self-guided tours and interpretive waysides). My research project provided little statistical significance, certainly not enough for three separate chapters and has since been condensed into the current Chapter Two: "Moral Foundations, welcomeness and belonging, and visitation to Manassas National Battlefield Park: The necessity of nuance in understanding interpretive theme preferences." Managerial implications from the current chapter include the following:

1. Non-visitors perceived themselves as being significantly less welcome than visitors across all four items on the Welcomeness and Belonging scale (Powers et al., 2022).
2. When comparing individual interpretive theme preferences and the moral foundations aggregates, the best predictors for thematic preferences were the Harm and Fairness moral foundations, while Ingroup, Authority, and Purity were still significant predictors for individual themes but not to the same extent nor across as many themes. As such, highlighting these foundational pillars within thematic interpretation at MANA should connect visitors more deeply to the site than not utilizing them.

I can only hope that these findings can contribute to the academic Greater Good, since the MEP process greatly diminished any notion of my research being considered valuable enough to be implemented onsite, especially after finding numerous papers on some amazing archeological findings on park grounds that have yet to be integrated into onsite interpretation. Simply stated, I

have poor level of fit within the MANA environment, wherein my worldview does not align with job-level factors like the type and quality of work that has traditionally existed within that location since its conception in the early 1940s (Lysova et al., 2019).

> *We come to these battlefields searching to understand how this nation survived. Instead, the NPS presents interpretations of heroic masculinity and perpetuates white dominance ideology. We do not leave with answers, but with tools to enact further violence. Especially when connecting perceived white male victimhood to battlefield interpretations of manhood and honor, the American phenomenon of mass violence with military weapons becomes slightly more understood. These normalized acts of violence are repetitive compulsions that slow the awakening of consciousness to the root cause of trauma. The Confederate battle flag flown during the Insurrection was the proliferation of trauma from poorly interpreted Civil War sites like MANA. Perceived white victimhood is the reaction to the delayed awakening that Confederate Exceptionalism is a myth. It is the refusal via violent backlash in the struggle between comprehending history AND memory together and where someone belongs within.*

To clarify Confederate Exceptionalism, I humbly yield to its originator Nicole Maurantonio, who has described it as "Drawing on elements of late 19th-century Lost Cause mythology and American Exceptionalism" (2019, p.xxii). American exceptionalism, within the realm of NPS Civil War battlefield interpretation, stems from commemorative displays of white reconciliation and heroic masculinity (Blight, 2001; Spielvogel, 2013). Lost Cause mythos, for the most part, is the notion that the Civil War was not fought over the institution of slavery but for vague, morally acceptable reasons like states' rights. Although factually incorrect, this mythos is built from collective memories of the war-torn Southern elite who lost their family members, their human capital, and potentially their land or financial capital during the Civil War.

Collective memory is not rote memorization of historic facts, which in theory is fine and this crossroad between them lies the fascinating job of Pubic Historians, who are to navigate these potentially rocky and oppositional waters to interpret meaning for the general public about national identity and beyond. Memory and history usually complement each other, or provide enough context for someone to determine their own meaning making.

The problem arises, however, when the two are conflated, or worse—vehement belief that acknowledging historic fact is 'revisionist' and was explicitly created to make white people feel bad, in turn inciting violence against fellow Americans. This is the crux of Chapter Three: "Repetitive compulsions of trauma: Damages done when perpetuating heroic white masculinity at federally managed cultural sites." This is a topic that has been simmering since the proposal, or more specific having to raincheck a group meeting about a project on how people forget partisan differences when enjoying public parks because we were watching the January 6th Insurrection in real time. Moreover, there was an even more disorienting narrative that instead of MAGA right-wing extremists storming the Capitol hoping to hang Mike Pence, those were actually 'antifa members' intent on making the MAGA right wing extremists look bad—you see, *they* were the victims in this situation, not the rest of the nation that witnessed a failed coup and certainly not the security guards who were so traumatized afterward they took their own lives. What's worse is that this thought process has been utilized before, particularly for the explanation of the Charlottesville Riot (Maurantonio, 2019). There isn't much else to say about this chapter's implications that weren't already said, and for that I thank my dissertation committee for allowing me the space to change one of my chapters from an empirical study to a position paper. This freedom has supplemented meaningful work by reconfiguring in my mind what is an acceptable dissertation chapter. No longer beholden to previous, incorrect assumptions

about how a dissertation conveys knowledge and greater understanding, I can utilize the mental space once clouded with feelings of crippling inadequacy for far more fruitful self-compassion.

Jennings and colleagues (2023) champion that a practicing a self-compassionate mindset while working led to greater motivation and work performance—both of which I desperately need as the end of my dissertation program experience is in sight. Yet even beyond granting myself the space to muck up deadlines and admit when I am not feeling mentally well enough to work somedays, what I've learned most from this experience is that it is *okay* to acknowledge how much it hurt to work on a project when I hate what study site commemorates, and furthermore it is not my cross to bear, pretending to be this park's champion, even if there is truly incredibly history from that site that is languishing away in an unread project report. Sometimes—even when it could directly benefit themselves—people don't want to participate in a research project. Ambivalence to the study is not a direct reflection of myself, nor do insignificant statistical analyses mean that I, in turn, am insignificant.

I began conceptualizing this reflection as a reprieve from trying to force myself through what had become meaningless work because it so longer aligned with my previous mechanisms of making meaning in my life (Heine et al., 2006; Martela & Pessi, 2018). I knew that I wanted to stew in my thoughts and work through how my experiences could be explained (and therefore what I was feeling was normal/acceptable). But I also know from previous therapy sessions that 'unacceptable' or abnormal feelings are still valid, and only after I confront these residual self-perceptions can I find mental peace. Since these are longstanding residuals, initially I looked to deconstruction theory only to realize it is predominantly a literary theory. Thankfully there were some publications I was able to find that phrased self-transcendence in this way, to "peel back the layers of identification, or self-image, to reveal deeper levels of Being" (Bodian, 2003, p.

229). I had spent all of my pre-teen and young adult years existing in constant survival mode from myself, only reflecting upon my place in the world in order twist it into being another personal failing. Only through years of experimenting with different mindfulness meditations have I been able to process, and eventually let go of, viewing consciousness as a cage instead of a mind palace. Self-actualization and transcendence from mindfulness also allow for the awareness of personal biases; so even when it felt like I was procrastinating finishing this project, mentally I was recalibrating to remain analytically neutral (Vago & Silberseig, 2012).

I don't believe I would have conflated self-perceptions with my work as a perpetual student had I not genuinely loved learning. However painful could be in trying to reaffirm my MIL while being embedded in Confederate Exceptionalism ideology, I don't regret becoming a social scientist who studies parks and protected areas. These seemingly natural spaces are built upon human history and social values—this is what draws me to this field of research. Only after understanding the people can we understand the place. And only after we understand ourselves can we find our place in this world. For me, it's just not Manassas National Battlefield Park.

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Appendix A Institution Approval and Panel Sample Survey

Figure A.2.1 IRB approval of IRB-11790

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | University Research Compliance Office

TO: Sarah Jackson
Horticulture & Nat Resources

Proposal Number: IRB-11790

FROM: Lisa Rubin, Chair
Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 09/12/2023

RE: Proposal Entitled, "MANA Panel Sample Survey 2023."

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §104(d), category:Exempt Category 2 Subsection ii.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

Electronically signed by Lisa Rubin on 09/12/2023 12:17 PM ET

Appendix A. Copy of the Panel Sample Survey Provided by Qualtrics

Informed Consent Statement

Hello, my name is Cait Henry, and I am a graduate student at Kansas State University. I am inviting you to participate in research aimed at understanding how residents within the Washington D.C. metro area prioritize different management options at Manassas National Battlefield Park. The panel sample survey is confidential, and there is virtually no psychological or political harm in participating. All responses and your identity will remain strictly anonymous. Further, your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to stop participating at any time during the study and your information and consent can be withdrawn at any point. Your anonymous information will not be distributed to another investigator for future research, nor will it be used in future research studies outside the scope of this project. If you consent to participating, please complete the attached survey.

If you have any follow-up questions, please contact the principal investigator of this study, Dr. Sarah Jackson with Kansas State University at sjackso@ksu.edu. More information about informed consent for social science research can be found at the Kansas State University IRB website at www.k-state.edu/comply/irb/.

□ I Consent

□ I Do Not Consent

About You

What year were you born?

What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Non-binary / third gender
    - ☐ I use another term
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your highest level of education?

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ Some high school
- ☐ High school graduate
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Two-year college graduate
- ☐ Four-year college graduate
- ☐ Graduate or professional degree
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Are you of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish Origin?

□ No, not of Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin

□ Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano

□ Yes, Puerto Rican

□ Yes, Cuban

Which of these categories best indicates your ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

□ American Indian or Native Alaskan

□ Asian Indian

□ Black or African American

□ Chamorro

□ Chinese

□ Filipino

□ Japanese

□ Korean

□ Native Hawaiian or another Pacific Islander

□ Samoan

□ Vietnamese

□ White or Caucasian

□ Other (please specify)

Which category best represents your annual household income?

- ☐ Less than $24,999
- ☐ $25,000 - $34,999
- ☐ $35,000 - $49,999
- ☐ $50,000 - $74,999
- ☐ $75,000 - $99,999
- ☐ $100,000 - $149,999
- ☐ $150,000 - $199,999
- ☐ $200,000 or more
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Have you ever served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?

- ☐ Never served in the military
- ☐ Only on active duty for training in the Reserves or National Guard ☐ On active duty now
- ☐ Was on active duty in the past, but not now

What is your political affiliation? (Select One)

- ☐ Strong Democrat
- ☐ Not strong Democrat
- ☐ Independent near Democrat
- ☐ Independent

□ Independent near Republican

□ Not strong Republican

□ Strong Republican

□ Other (Please Specify)

Moral Foundations Questionnaire

When you decide whether something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following considerations relevant to your thinking? Please rate each statement

	Not at all relevant (This consideration has nothing to do with my judgements of right and wrong)	Not very relevant	Slightly relevant	Somewhat relevant	Very relevant	Extremely relevant (This is one of the most important factors when I judge right and wrong)
Whether or not someone suffered emotionally	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not some people were treated differently than others	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone's action showed love for their country	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone was good at math	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone cared for the weak or vulnerable	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone acted fairly	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone did something to betray their group	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone conformed to the traditions of society	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not I answer this survey truthfully	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone did something disgusting	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone was cruel	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone was denied their rights	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone showed a lack of loyalty	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not an action caused chaos or disorder	○	○	○	○	○	○
Whether or not someone acted in a way that God would approve of	○	○	○	○	○	○

Have you ever visited Manassas National Battlefield Park?

□ Yes

□ No

Visitor Center Alternative Management Actions for MANA visitors only

Manassas National Battlefield Park is considering potential alternatives in the future to update the Henry Hill Visitor Center. Please answer the following questions based on potential management alternatives.

Would you prefer the Visitor Center be the current historic structure or a new, modern building?

□ Historic Structure

□ Modern Building

The current Henry Hill Visitor Center is located atop Henry Hill, which some people believe diminishes the preservation of the cultural landscape of Henry Hill from 1861. In order to preserve the landscape, a new visitor center would be built at another location within the Park Boundaries.

Would you prefer to keep the current location of the Visitor Center, or have a new visitor center built at another location?

□ Current Location

□ New Location

There have been minimal updates to the interpretive exhibits within the Henry Hill visitor center, often being technological updates to the military maps, since the last major changes in 1980.

Would you prefer to keep the current interpretive exhibits, or have them updated?

□ Keep current exhibits

□ Update exhibits

The original visitor center parking lot was built in 1942 and designed to hold 25 spaces. The parking lot was expanded in 1962 to its current circular system and

size.

What is your parking lot preference?

□ Keep the parking lot as is

□ Reconfigure spacing in current lot (I.E., create more parking spaces on the current parking lot)

□ Create more parking elsewhere

The bathrooms within the Henry Hill Visitor Center are located in the basement of the building, with a ramp at the back of the building for people who have difficulties using stairs.

What is your bathroom preference?

□ Keep the current bathrooms

□ Limited updates to the bathrooms (I.E., sinks, hand dryers)

□ Modern bathrooms (I.E., have on main floor of a new building)

The Henry Hill Visitor Center had accessibility ramps built in 1980, which are still used today for access to the main floor of the visitor center and the bathroom at the back of the building.

What is your accessibility preference?

□ Keep the current accessibility

□ Limited updates to accessibility (I.E., repaving walkway)

□ Modernize accessibility (I.E., not have bathroom in basement, including more handicapped stalls, lower sinks, and lower dryers)

The Henry Hill Visitor Center has experienced minimal structural changes since 1942, including the addition of the West Wing that houses the theater in 1962, and then the addition of the bookstore in 1999. These spaces have not changed since

then.

Lastly, what building configuration do you prefer?

□ Keep the current Visitor Center as is

□ Make limited changes to the space (I.E., switch locations of museum and theater) □ Create new spaces for the Park museum,

film seating, and giftshop

Based on your response to the previous alternative management options, what were the most important and least important factors for your decision on your Most Preferred management alternative?

Most Important Least Important

Parking Lot

Exhibits

Building Location

Bathrooms

Building Type

Accessibility

Building Configuration

Based on your response to the previous alternative management options, what were the most important and least important factors for your decision on your Most Preferred management alternative?

(This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Important Least Important

» Building Location

» Parking Lot

» Bathrooms

» Exhibits

» Building Type

» Building Configuration

» Accessibility

Based on your response to the previous alternative management options, what were the most important and least important factors for your decision on your Most Preferred management alternative? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Important Least Important

» Exhibits

» Accessibility

» Building Type

» Parking Lot

» Bathrooms

» Building Location

» Building Configuration

Motivating Interpretive Components

What potential interpretive themes would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park?

Most Preferred Least Preferred

Emergence of Confederate Identity

Battles of Manassas

Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War

Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War

Experience of Civilians

Memorialization and Public Memory

Testing the Union's Resolve

Changes in Technology

Changes in the Armies

What potential interpretive themes would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Preferred Least Preferred

- Battles of Manassas
  - Changes in the Armies
  - Changes in Technology
  - Experience of Civilians
- Memorialization and Public Memory
- Emergence of Confederate Identity
  - Testing the Union's Resolve
- Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War
- Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War

What potential interpretive themes would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Preferred Least Preferred

- Experience of Civilians
- Emergence of Confederate Identity
- Changes in Technology
- Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War
- Memorialization and Public Memory
- Testing the Union's Resolve
- Battles of Manassas
- Changes in the Armies
- Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War

What potential interpretive themes would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Preferred Least Preferred

- Experience of Civilians
- Emergence of Confederate Identity
- Memorialization and Public Memory
- Life in Manassas Junction before the Civil War
- Changes in the Armies
- Battles of Manassas
- Testing the Union's Resolve
- Changes in Technology
- Slavery as a Cause of the Civil War

What potential experiences would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park?

Most Preferred Least Preferred

Staff-guided History Tours

Immersive Living History (I.E., people reenacting historical roles)

Media/App-driven Guides or Programs

Self-guided History Tours

Hands-on/Interactive Experiences

What potential experiences would motivate you to visit Manassas National Battlefield Park? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Preferred — Least Preferred

» Media/App-driven Guides or Programs

» Self-guided History Tours

» Staff-guided History Tours

» Immersive Living History (I.E., people reenacting historical roles)

» Hands-on/Interactive Experiences

What interpretive components do you prefer to see at Manassas National Battlefield Park?

Most Preferred — Least Preferred

Interpretive Signs Outside

Interpretive Tour

Visitor Center/Museum

Park Film

Driving Tour

What interpretive components do you prefer to see at Manassas National Battlefield Park? (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Preferred Least Preferred

» Driving Tour

» Interpretive Tour

» Interpretive Signs Outside

» Park Film

» Visitor Center/Museum

Welcomeness and Belonging Scale

Regardless of visitation, please rate your level of agreement with the following four statements explicitly about the Manassas National Battlefield Park on a scale of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I feel welcome at this park	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel like I belong at this park	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
This park is a comfortable place to hang out	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
At this park, I feel like I matter	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Based on your responses to the previous question [if a respondent chose "Strongly Disagree" or "Disagree" as their answer for any of the 4 items on the Welcomeness and Belonging Scale], please rank the following potential constraints from most important to least important within your perceptions of un-welcomeness.

Most Important Least Important

Not the Best Place

Limited Access to Transportation

Cost

Race/Cultural Issues

Fear

Limited Knowledge

Limited Services and Facilities

Based on your responses to the previous question [if a respondent chose “Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree,” or “Somewhat Disagree”], please rank the following potential constraints from most important to least important within your perceptions of un-welcomeness. (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Important — Least Important

- Race/Cultural Issues
- Fear
- Cost
- Not the Best Place
- Limited Knowledge
- Limited Services and Facilities
- Limited Access to Transportation

Based on your responses to the previous question [if a respondent chose “Strongly Disagree,” “Disagree,” or “Somewhat Disagree”], please rank the following potential constraints from most important to least important within your perceptions of un-welcomeness. (This question had the previous two responses removed)

Most Important Least Important

» Limited Access to Transportation

» Cost

» Limited Services and Facilities

» Race/Cultural Issues

» Not the Best Place

» Limited Knowledge

» Fear

Final Thoughts

Is there anything else you would like to share that was not covered in this survey? [Open-ended comment section]