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The Jefferson Davis Highway: Contesting the Confederacy in the Pacific Northwest

EUAN HAGUE AND EDWARD H. SEBESTA

The Jefferson Davis Highway (JDH) is a controversial Confederate memorial. Since 1913 the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) have placed markers along roadsides across America to commemorate the Confederate President. The women's organization claims that the JDH stretches over four thousand miles from Alexandria, Virginia to the Pacific coast and the Canadian border. In 2002, conflict ensued in the Pacific northwestern state of Washington when a local politician initiated a campaign to remove a granite JDH marker from a state park where it had been erected by the UDC sixty years previously. This led to dispute over whether Jefferson Davis should, or should not, be honoured by a commemorative marker on Washington's border with Canada. Drawing on contemporary secondary sources to interrogate these contests over the meaning of Jefferson Davis and the Confederate legacy, we argue that behind the veneer of heritage and genealogical celebration forwarded by groups such as the UDC there is a neo-Confederate nationalism that works to maintain white supremacy as a dominant interpretation of US history.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1913 the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) initiated a project to place markers, plaques and plinths alongside highways across the United States to identify these stretches of road as together comprising the Jefferson Davis Highway (JDH), a memorial to the President of the nineteenth-century Confederate States of America (CSA). By the late 1930s, the UDC claimed the JDH to be 4,600 miles in length, stretching from the East Coast to the West Coast and from San Diego to the US border with Canada.[1]

Euan Hague, Department of Geography, DePaul University, Chicago, IL. Email: ehague@depaul.edu.

Edward H. Sebesta, independent researcher. Email: esebesta@tx.rr.com.

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[1] Charlotte O. Woodbury, "The Jefferson Davis Highway," *UDC Bulletin*, 1 (May 1938), n.p.

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Markers along the route were located in, amongst other places, Alexandria (Virginia), Fairview (Kentucky), Montgomery (Alabama), New Orleans (Louisiana), San Diego (California) and Blaine (Washington).[2] Accompanying these efforts were UDC maps and brochures describing the JDH, although these depictions were inconsistent, varied over time, and outlined often vastly differing routes.[3]

In 2002, Washington state representative Hans Dunshee, a white, male Democrat, noticed a JDH commemorative marker in the border town of Blaine.[4] Four feet tall and located in Peace Arch State Park, the marker sat on the west side of US Highway 99, facing east, overlooking the southbound traffic entering the United States from Canada. Questioning its presence, Dunshee remarked, "Our state Legislature should make a clear statement that the glorification of those who perpetuate slavery is wrong" and launched an attempt to put the marker into a museum and erase the name of the Jefferson Davis Highway.[5] Dunshee's actions sparked debate about the Confederate legacy and commemoration of Jefferson Davis. Leading those supporting the retention of the Jefferson Davis Highway name and marker was the UDC, whose members had first placed the Blaine marker in 1940, unveiling it in an elaborate ceremony in 1941.[6] With a national membership of around 22,000 in 2002, and about forty women in the Washington state chapter, the UDC demanded the Jefferson Davis Highway name and its

[2] United Daughters of the Confederacy, *Jefferson Davis Highway* (Richmond, VA: United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1960).

[3] Howard Lawrence Preston, in *Dirt Roads to Dixie: Accessibility and Modernization in the South, 1885–1935* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991), identifies two Jefferson Davis highways, one from Washington, DC to San Francisco (at 61), the other from Winnipeg to New Orleans (at 130). See also J. R. Akerman, "Maps of the National Highways Association from a Recent Gift," *Mapline: A Quarterly Newsletter*, Hermon Dunlap Smith Center for the History of Cartography, The Newberry Library, Chicago, 72–73 (1994), 1–9.

[4] Throughout the 2002 controversy, Dunshee referred to himself as "white." For discussions of the contextual social construction of white racial identities in the United States see, amongst others, Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995); Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); and David R. Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*, revised edn (London and New York: Verso, 1999).

[5] Quoted in Autumn Koepp, "Rebel Voices on Road: Proposed Road-Name Change Sparks Anger," *Seattle Times* (online edition), 4 Feb. 2002 (corrected 5 Feb. 2002), accessed 19 Feb. 2003.

[6] Charlotte O. Woodbury, "Jefferson Davis Highway," *Minutes of the Forty-Seventh Annual Convention*, United Daughters of the Confederacy (1940), 180–83; M. A. Wilkins, "Dedication of Jefferson Davis Highway Marker at Blaine, Washington," *UDC Bulletin* 4 (June 1941), 4–5.

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marker remain identified with this major West Coast route to Vancouver, BC, Canada.

Drawing on testimonies given at legislative hearings about the Blaine marker and contemporary newspaper accounts – including letters and editorials which, historian Sally Leigh McWhite notes, often demonstrate how an author feels about the "Confederate past," indicate "the rationale behind [such] convictions," and are typically written in "a hortatory vein" – we explore this 2002 dispute over the Jefferson Davis Highway in Washington.[7] Our article is divided into four parts. First, we place our assessment within the context of revived veneration for the Confederacy at the start of the twenty-first century; second, we review the development of the JDH as a UDC project; third, we examine the controversies in Washington; and fourth, we argue that behind the veneer of heritage and genealogical celebration forwarded by groups such as the UDC is a neo-Confederate nationalism that works to maintain white supremacy as a dominant interpretation of US history.

Erecting statues and building monuments are central to processes identified by geographers as the construction of "cultural landscapes."[8] Many American cultural landscapes are "racialized" and reflect historical practices of white supremacy. As such, Schein explains, memorial landscapes can be understood as "places where American ideas about race take tangible, visible form, and where those forms and ideas not only speak about some collective American past, but also serve as cultural signposts toward our collective future."[9] The power of Confederate memorials to act as "cultural signposts" directing American race relations often derives from their locations. British journalist of Barbadian descent Gary Younge experienced this in Richmond, Virginia while walking amidst a series of one-hundred-year-old statues depicting Confederate leaders:

> I turned around to walk back up Monument Avenue, feeling angry and confused … I had spent about an hour walking along a road in which four men who fought to enslave me … have been honoured and exalted. I resented the fact that on the way to work every day, black people have to look at that. Imagine how black children must feel when they learn that the people who have been raised and praised

[7] Sally Leigh McWhite, "Echoes of the Lost Cause: Civil War Reverberations in Mississippi, 1865–2001," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Mississippi, 2002, 308.

[8] For an overview of the concept of cultural landscapes, see Don Mitchell, *Cultural Geography: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

[9] Richard H. Schein, "Normative Dimensions of Landscape," in C. Wilson and P. Groth, eds., *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies after J. B. Jackson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 200.

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up the road are the same ones who tried to keep their great-great-grandparents in chains.[10]

In Richmond, Younge encountered a number of Confederate monuments sited close together, their placement arguably a strategic use of space by sponsors hoping to articulate a message of American white supremacy – a message that Younge evidently received. The location of statues along a city street is also symbolically powerful because, "Public space … is an especially potent site for transmitting notions of what is right and true, because it is authored by the government on behalf of all citizens."[11] Furthermore, erecting monuments in a mutually supportive manner produces "symbolic accretion."[12] Before 1890, Confederate memorials were generally placed in the cemeteries of southern towns. At the start of the twentieth century, the meaning of Confederate memorials changed as they were built in the town centres and courthouse squares of former Confederate states, a practice which peaked between 1907 and 1911.[13] The statues Younge felt angered by in Richmond were erected between 1890 and 1929, a period during which US race relations reached a "nadir."[14] Yet the presence of Confederate monuments, explains McWhite, remained uncontested until 1966, when African American marchers began to converge on such sites, sometimes reclaiming them by symbolically raising a US flag. In Grenada, MS for example, an African American rally at a Jefferson Davis monument "incensed whites across the state" and led to elected officials commending the restraint of white residents in the face of such sacrilege.[15] "White southerners," argues McWhite, saw such protests "as acts of defilement and profanity" and with "previously unassailable symbols vulnerable, avid admirers of Confederate commemoration rushed to shore up the breaches."[16]

Not every viewer interprets or values a statue or memorial in the same way. After a monument has been erected, significant effort often goes into its maintenance, not only in terms of its physical condition, but also to ensure its meaning is understood. Heritage groups and other enthusiasts work to

[10] Gary Younge, *No Place Like Home: A Black Briton's Journey through the American South* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 67.

[11] Owen J. Dwyer and Derek L. Alderman, *Civil Rights Memorials and the Geography of Memory* (Chicago: The Center for American Places at Columbia College, 2008), viii.

[12] Kenneth E. Foote, *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997).

[13] J. J. Winberry, "'Lest We Forget': The Confederate Monument and the Southern Townscape," *Southeastern Geographer*, 23 (1983) 107–21; J. P. Radford, Identity and Tradition in the Post-Civil War South, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 18 (1992) 91–103.

[14] James W. Loewen, *Lies across America: What Our Historic Sites Get Wrong* (New York: Touchstone, 2000), 103. [15] McWhite, 290. [16] Ibid., 296, 309.

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produce specific readings of the past for an audience of monument viewers, operating as "reputational entrepreneurs" and engaging in "reputational politics" to ensure that their understanding of the events and people commemorated become the dominant reading of history.[17] In relation to the JDH in Washington in 2002, a reputational struggle was fought over the meaning of Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy. Those for and against the JDH appeared in local media, presented testimony at legislative hearings, and expounded their opinions on the Internet – secondary sources that we draw upon in our assessment. At the forefront of these debates were advocates of "neo-Confederacy," a revived pro-Confederate nationalism.[18]

II. A CONFEDERATE REVIVAL

In the second half of the twentieth century, contends conservative political commentator Kevin Phillips, "the South's sectional consciousness was resurging."[19] Spurred by resistance to civil rights in the 1960s and buoyed by the tacit recognition of white complaints in the "southern strategies" of Presidents Nixon and Reagan in the 1970s and 1980s,[20] the end of the twentieth century saw the rise of an outspoken neo-Confederate sentiment. This neo-Confederacy "intertwines a range of political thought, theology and historical interpretation into a call for recognition of a specific Southern US culture … [and demands that] to uphold this distinctive 'Southern culture', secession of the CSA from the United States is necessary."[21] Neo-Confederates interpret "the War of Northern Aggression" as "a culture war in which Yankees imposed their imperialist and capitalist will on the agrarian

[17] G. A. Fine, "John Brown's Body: Elites, Heroic Embodiment, and the Legitimation of Political Violence," *Social Problems*, 46 (1999) 225–49; Derek H. Alderman, "Street Names as Memorial Arenas: The Reputational Politics of Commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. in a Georgia County," *Historical Geography*, 30 (2002) 99–120.

[18] For the development of neo-Confederate nationalist ideology see Euan Hague, "Texts as Flags: The League of the South and the Development of a Nationalist Intelligentsia in the United States 1975–2001," *Hagar: International Social Science Review*, 3 (2002), 299–339, and Euan Hague, Heidi Beirich and Edward H. Sebesta, eds., *Neo-Confederacy: A Critical Introduction* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008). See also James W. Loewen and Edward H. Sebesta, eds., *The Confederate and Neo-Confederate Reader: The "Great Truth" about the "Lost Cause"* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010).

[19] Kevin Phillips, *American Theocracy: The Peril and Politics of Radical Religion, Oil, and Borrowed Money in the 21st Century* (New York: Viking, 2006), 134.

[20] Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945–1975* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 271–82.

[21] Euan Hague, Benito Giordano and Edward H. Sebesta, "Whiteness, Multiculturalism and Nationalist Appropriation of Celtic Culture: The Case of the League of the South and the Lega Nord," *Cultural Geographies*, 12, 2 (2005), 151–73, 158.

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South" and thus as having "little to do with slavery."[22] Such neo-Confederate sentiments were bolstered during the 1990s by political divisions over the display of the Confederate battle flag in South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama,[23] and by online neo-Confederate resources such as the Dixienet website that enabled like-minded heritage enthusiasts, battle re-enactors, and others to find community.[24] Consequently, disputes about Confederate iconography and commemoration increased during the 1990s; organized neo-Confederate activists pursued letter-writing campaigns, harassed critics, and in some cases threatened individuals who supposedly "bad-mouthed" Southern culture and heritage.[25] Much neo-Confederate ire centred upon disputes over renaming parks, schools and other buildings once named in honour of Confederate leaders. In 1995 in Richmond, Virginia, once the capital city of the Confederacy, protestors for and against the placement of a statue depicting African American tennis star and human rights activist Arthur Ashe amongst those of Confederate leaders on Monument Avenue divided the city, and a subsequent dispute about a portrait of Confederate General Robert E. Lee alongside a commercial waterfront development caused further consternation in 1999.[26] In the year 2000 neo-Confederates also boycotted supermarkets that withdrew a brand

[22] Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*, (New York: Vintage, 1998), 69.

[23] Gerald R. Webster and Jonathan I. Leib, "Whose South Is It Anyway? Race and the Confederate Battle Flag in South Carolina," *Political Geography*, 20, 3 (2001), 271–99; Gerald R. Webster and Jonathan I. Leib, "Political Culture, Religion and the Confederate Battle Flag Debate in Alabama," *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 20, 1 (2002), 1–26; Jonathan I. Leib and Gerald R. Webster, "The Confederate Flag Debate in the American South: Theoretical and Conceptual Perspectives," in A. Willingham, ed., *Beyond the Color Line? Race, Representation, and Community in the New Century* (New York: Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, 2002), 221–42; and Jonathan I. Leib, "Heritage versus Hate: A Geographical Analysis of Georgia's Confederate Battle Flag Debate," *Southeastern Geographer*, 35, 1 (1995), 37–57.

[24] Tara McPherson, "I'll Take My Stand in Dixienet – White Guys, the South and Cyberspace," in Beth E. Kolko, Lisa Nakamura and Gilbert B. Rodman, eds., *Race in Cyberspace* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 117–31.

[25] Diane Roberts, "A League of Their Own," *Southern Exposure*, 25, 1–2 (1997), 18–23, 19; Jon Bohland, "A Lost Cause Found: Vestiges of Old South Memory in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia," unpublished PhD dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic University, 2006.

[26] Jonathan I. Leib, "Separate Times, Share Spaces: Arthur Ashe, Monument Avenue and the Politics of Richmond, Virginia's Symbolic Landscape," *Cultural Geographies*, 9, 3 (2002), 286–312; *idem*, "Robert E. Lee, 'Race,' Representation and Redevelopment along Richmond, Virginia's Canal Walk," *Southeastern Geographer*, 44, 2 (2004), 236–62; and *idem*, "The Witting Autobiography of Richmond, Virginia: Arthur Ashe, the Civil War, and Monument Avenue's Racialized Landscape," in Richard H. Schein, ed., *Landscape and Race in the United States* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 187–211.

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of barbecue sauce that depicted the Confederate battle flag on its label and,[27] a year later, organized opposition to the relocation of a Selma, Alabama memorial to Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Confederate General and former Ku Klux Klan leader.[28] Elsewhere, politicians with neo-Confederate beliefs were elected to state legislatures and around half a dozen neo-Confederate magazines began publication.[29] It was within this context of heightened neo-Confederacy that Dunshee began his 2002 campaign to remove the JDH from Washington. Before we explore this case, however, it is necessary to review the development of the Jefferson Davis Highway.

III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY

At their Annual Convention in 1913 the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) proposed that an east–west US highway should be a memorial to Jefferson Davis.[30] Over the next thirty years, markers were erected across both the former states of the Confederacy and in places that had either been Union states during the US Civil War or US territories, such California, Arizona, New Mexico and Washington. The JDH project was consistent with the wider aims of the UDC, which, since formation in 1894, has been "an institution designed to shape the public memory of the Confederacy."[31] Early UDC members, explains Karen Cox, "developed leadership skills and became professional fund-raisers, writers, publishers, speakers, and political lobbyists – all in the name of vindicating the

[27] Gerald R. Webster and Jonathan I. Leib, "Fighting for the Lost Cause: The Confederate Battle Flag and Neo-Confederacy," in Hague, Beirich and Sebesta, 169–201.

[28] W. Fitzhugh Brundage, *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005).

[29] Peter Applebome, *Dixie Rising: How the South Is Shaping American Values, Politics, and Culture* (New York: Times Books, 1996); David Goldfield, *Still Fighting the Civil War: The American South and the Southern History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002).

[30] "Jefferson Davis Highway," *UDC Magazine*, 57 (Sept. 1994), 54–55; Richard F. Weingroff, "Jefferson Davis Memorial Highway," US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, online at www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/jdavis.htm, accessed 18 Aug. 2008.

[31] H. E. Gulley, "Women and the Lost Cause: Preserving a Confederate Identity in the American Deep South," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 19 (1993), 125–41, 131; Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). There is some disagreement as to when the UDC was founded. Gulley dates the organization to 1894, Foster to 1895. The official UDC website states that the first meeting of the organization was in 1894 and that the name "United Daughters of the Confederacy" was decided upon at a second meeting in 1895. UDC meeting minutes show that the first UDC convention was held on 10 September 1894, at which a constitution was agreed upon.

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Confederacy."[32] They approached Congress, museums, school boards, and other institutions, attempting to rehabilitate Confederate figures and promote a "Lost Cause" interpretation of the Civil War which exonerated the slaveholding Confederacy.[33] For over a century, as part of these efforts, the UDC has attempted to portray Jefferson Davis (1808–89) as an American patriot. The only President of the short-lived Confederate States of America (1861–65), prior to secession Davis had served in the US military and as US Secretary of War (1853–57).

To pursue the naming of a transcontinental highway as a memorial to Jefferson Davis, UDC members unveiled plaques and monuments in public ceremonies, installed road signs, appeared on radio shows, planted trees alongside roads and produced JDH maps and guidebooks which outlined the route and recounted a hagiography of Davis. The UDC did not fund road construction, nor did UDC literature suggest that members drive along the multiple spurs and inconsistent routes of the JDH. Instead, UDC members, often the wives or daughters of politicians, not unreasonably believed that they could utilize their influence to locate JDH markers alongside existing or projected stretches of road and then lobby to have these segments officially recognized as together comprising the JDH. The most common UDC practice was to install granite markers or boulders with bronze plaques indicating the presence of the JDH, the more substantial being erected in San Diego (California), Fairview (Kentucky) and Alexandria (Virginia).[34] One

[32] Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 27.

[33] The pro-Confederate "Lost Cause" interpretation of the Civil War was developed by E. A. Pollard – see *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866); and *idem*, *The Lost Cause Regained* (New York: G. W. Carleton, 1868). For examinations of the Lost Cause see Rollin G. Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949); *idem*, *The Myth of the Lost Cause, 1865–1900* (Hamden: Archon Books, 1973); and Gary W. Gallagher and Allan T. Nolan, eds., *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000). For UDC efforts to control the content of school textbooks see James M. McPherson, "Long-Legged Yankee Lies: The Southern Textbook Crusade," in Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, eds., *The Memory of the Civil War in American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 64–78.

[34] Charlotte O. Woodbury, "Jefferson Davis Highway Report," *Minutes of the Fiftieth Annual Convention*, United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1943, 185–88; United Daughters of the Confederacy, *Jefferson Davis Highway*. Today a section of road in Alexandria (Virginia) retains the name "Jefferson Davis Highway" – see Euan Hague, "More Imagined than Real: The Jefferson Davis Highway," *Journal of the Society for Commercial Archaeology*, 28 (2010) 14–19.

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UDC member, A. W. Littlefield, wrote an ode to the Jefferson Davis Highway:

> Across the Sovereign States a Highway long,
> Doth weave a patriot-path from sea to sea,
> That all may hear, with joyous melody,
> The message, – that the right o'ercometh wrong, –
> Adown the patient years, – the glorious song
> The Daughters sing, of gracious Liberty,
> Whose sires and dames fain sought their Land to free
> Around the banner of the Chieftain strong!
>
> That Chieftain's way was strewn with rock and thorn,
> An outcast was he, hurled by cruel hate,
> From leadership and from his righteous throne!
> But, year by year, despite relentless scorn,
> The Shaft memorial and the Highway straight
> Attest his worth, – he cometh to his own! [35]

In the mid-1920s, the UDC pressed Congress for recognition of the JDH. US Senator Earle B. Mayfield (Democrat – Texas) enquired on behalf of the UDC about federal designation for a Jefferson Davis Highway from Washington, DC to San Francisco.[36] A Bureau of Public Roads official responded that he was "at a loss as to just what route your constituents are interested in," because "a careful search [of] our extensive map file" had revealed three different Jefferson Davis highways, each with different routes and lengths, and none matching that for which the UDC had lobbied.[37] UDC efforts were dealt a further blow in 1925 when US authorities ruled that interstate highways be numbered rather than named. As a result, the UDC gained neither federal recognition nor official federal designation for naming the roads they had already physically claimed with markers and mileposts as the JDH. Despite such setbacks the UDC persisted and in 1939 approached the Washington legislature to request that US Highway 99 in the state be

[35] A. W. Littlefield, "A Highway Memorial," *Minutes of the Thirty-Second Annual Convention*, United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1925, 194. Littlefield is identified in UDC minutes as a "Massachusetts Confederate."

[36] Mayfield's name is spelled 'Earl' in some documents. He was a member of the Ku Klux Klan and drew on Klan support to win his single US Senate term 1923–29 – see Kenneth T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915–1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967); and Michael Phillips, *White Metropolis: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Dallas, 1841–2001* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006).

[37] Letter dated 31 July 1925 addressed to Hon. Earl B. Mayfield, Member of Congress, Austin, Texas, initialled "ewj-mlw," the former referring to E. W. James, Secretary of the Joint Board on Interstate Highways.

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named the Jefferson Davis Highway.[38] On 18 June 1939, the UDC placed a highway marker in Vancouver at the southern boundary of Washington, just across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon. Hailing this installation, a UDC official explained to the group's members, "Placing this marker on the border line of the states of Oregon and Washington completed the link of the only continuous paved national highway with markers reaching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean."[39]

Although the UDC now claimed the JDH to be a continuous 4,600-mile-long commemorative named highway, Washington State officials, like their federal counterparts, rejected the proposition to formally name the road the Jefferson Davis Highway. They did, however, allow the UDC to place two marker plinths beside US 99, as local highway department official James A. Davis explained in 1940:

> We discouraged the passage of the bill and agreed that we would permit the placing of markers at the Oregon border and also the British Columbia border. We believed that the placing of these markers would have little if any significance as a name for the highway, because it is not indicated on any maps as the Jefferson Davis Highway, nor does the law describe the route as the Jefferson Davis Highway … The markers are to be placed somewhat as a memorial, and we believe that their erection would cause no difficulty.[40]

The second marker was placed in Peace Arch State Park in Blaine on the Canadian border in 1940,[41] and the UDC praised all the "fine and enthusiastic work that was done in the Pacific coast states to secure recognition of Route 99 from San Diego through San Francisco, Grant's Pass, Portland, Vancouver, Olympia, Blaine to [New] Westminster, B.C."[42] Although never officially named the Jefferson Davis Highway by Washington's Department

[38] Highway 99 was the main West Coast route through Washington between Canada and Oregon until the construction of Interstate 5. In Washington, some sections of Highway 99 were widened to become today's I-5. For an overview of Highway 99 in this area see Jill Livingston, *That Ribbon of Highway III: Highway 99 through the Pacific Northwest* (Klamath River: Living Gold Press, 2003).

[39] United Daughters of the Confederacy, "The Jefferson Davis Highway Marker," *UDC Bulletin* 2 (Sept. 1939), 3.

[40] Quoted in Foster Church, "Race Talk Surfaces with Stone Markers," *The Oregonian*, 12 April 2002, B01.

[41] Charlotte O. Woodbury, "Jefferson Davis Highway," *Minutes of the Forty-Seventh Annual Convention*, United Daughters of the Confederacy (1940), 180–83.

[42] History Committee, *The History of the United Daughters of the Confederacy*, 2 vols., (History Committee, 1956); rept. Orlando: United Daughters of the Confederacy, 1993), 283. It should be noted, however, that no JDH markers were located in Oregon due to local and legislative resistance. Despite this, the UDC implied, mapped and claimed a continuous West Coast route when the reality was quite different.

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of Transportation or state legislature, the unveiling of the granite marker plinth denoting the JDH in Peace Arch State Park on 24 May 1941 was attended by numerous American and Canadian officials.[43] Sixty years later, the Blaine marker and the JDH it indicated were largely forgotten until state representative Hans Dunshee encountered them in January 2002.

IV. THE 2002 DISPUTE IN WASHINGTON STATE

"In this state," Dunshee said following his discovery of the UDC's marker identifying the Jefferson Davis Highway in Blaine, "we cannot have a monument to a guy who led the insurgency to perpetuate slavery and killed half a million Americans."[44] Dunshee proposed relocating the marker to a museum and renaming the highway after William P. Stewart, an African American Union soldier who moved to Washington in the 1880s and whose descendents remained in the state. Dunshee's suggestions quickly became controversial as, nationally, neo-Confederate activists urged retention of both the JDH name and the roadside marker. Supporters of the JDH threatened Dunshee and state police were assigned to protect his family as neo-Confederate and right-wing websites denounced his proposals.[45]

[43] The following guests were at the unveiling of the Blaine marker on 24 May 1941: Howard Roup (state senator, Washington); A. Wells Graym (minister of lands, representing the premier of British Columbia); the mayors of Victoria, Vancouver and Westminster (Canada) and of Bellingham and Blaine (USA); Washington State Lieutenant Governor Victor A. Myers; and representatives of Washington's State Park Board and Highway Department – see, inter alia, M. A. Wilkins, "Dedication of Jefferson Davis Highway Marker at Blaine, Washington," *UDC Bulletin*, 4 (June 1941), 4–5, Charlotte O. Woodbury, M. A. Wilkins, R. S. Wasem, G. A. Matthews and K. C. Souther, "Report on Jefferson Davis Highway," *Minutes of the Forty-Eighth Annual Convention*, United Daughters of the Confederacy (1941), 169–74; Washington House Bill Report, HJM 4024: Requesting that State Route 99 be named the William P. Stewart Memorial Highway, passed by the House 15 Feb. 2002, online at www.leg.wa.gov/pub/billinfo/2001-02/House/4000-4024/4024_hbr.pdf, accessed 20 Feb. 2003; Associated Press, "Controversy Prompts Shift but Not Removal of Confederate Memorial," 15 March 2002, accessed 18 July 2005; Frank Thompson, "Viewpoint," *Northern Light – Community Newspaper for Blaine, Birch Bat and Semiahmoo*, 14–20 Feb. 2002, online at www.thenorthernlight.com/archives/2002/feb14_20_2002/viewpoint.html, accessed 18 Aug. 2008.

[44] Quoted in Associated Press, "Discovery of Jefferson Davis Highway Outrages Lawmaker," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 24 Jan. 2002, on-line at seattlepi.nwsource.com/local/55734_highway24ww.shtml, accessed 18 Aug. 2008.

[45] For a sampling of these threats see *Seattle Times*, "Digest: Threats Increase in Highway 99 Debate," 6 Feb. 2002, online at http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/134400575_legidige06m.html, accessed 6 Feb. 2002; "Aw Shucks – Southern News and Links," online at www.shucks.net, accessed 31 Jan. 2002; discussion of "'Southerners indignant at plan to rename Washington state's Jefferson Davis Highway' by Susanna Ray"

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One telephone caller reportedly told Dunshee's wife: "You tell that Hans Dunshee to go back to Africa and take all his kind with him."[46]

The UDC had originally placed two JDH markers in Washington: one at the state's northern border at Blaine in 1940, and one at the state's southern boundary, almost three hundred miles away, at Vancouver in 1939. As the controversy over Dunshee's efforts to remove the Blaine marker intensified, attention turned to the whereabouts of the second marker. It was found in a City of Vancouver storage facility having been removed from the roadside in the late 1990s.[47] This further angered JDH supporters: state representative Tom Mielke, a Republican, reportedly "bristled," and asserted, after learning which officials had overseen the removal, "I would question the intent of the two people involved, who were definitely prejudiced themselves … One was homosexual, and one was black."[48]

During the controversy it emerged that the official name of the highway was merely its number, 99, not the Jefferson Davis Highway, and on 4 February 2002 Washington's state legislature began debating House Joint Memorial 4024, which proposed renaming the road after William P. Stewart. At public hearings on the legislation, Dunshee maintained that the JDH and its markers were relics from a past when white supremacy was prominent

(2002), at "Free Republic," online at www.freerepublic.com/focus/fr/619248/posts, accessed 31 Jan. 2002, and www.freerepublic.com/focus/fr/619248/posts?q=1&&page=51, accessed 4 Feb. 2002; "Dixie Daily News," online at www.southerncaucus.com, accessed 31 Jan. 2002.

[46] Quoted in David Chesanow, "Jefferson Davis Marker to Be Relocated to More Visible Site," *International Examiner*, 29, 6 (20 March–2 April 2002), 4; see also Associated Press, "Plan to Remove Davis Marker Angers Scores of Southerners," *The Olympian*, online edn, 1 Feb. 2002, online at http://news.theolympian.com/specialsections/Legislature2002/20020201/8741.shtml, accessed 20 Feb. 2003; Sam Howe Verhovek, "Road Named for Jefferson Davis Stirs Spirited Debate," *New York Times*, 14 Feb. 2002, 20; Susanna Ray, "Jefferson Davis Highway Here? Legislator Outraged," *Herald of Everett*, 24 Jan. 2002, online at www.heraldnet.com/article/20020124/NEWS01/201240711, accessed 18 Aug. 2008; and Susanna Ray "Southerners Indignant at Plan to Rename Washington State's Jefferson Davis Highway," *Herald of Everett*, online edition, 31 Jan. 2002, online at www.heraldnet.com/Stories/02/1/31/15100978.cfm, accessed 31 Jan. 2002.

[47] Foster Church, "Monument to Get a New Home," *The Oregonian*, 14 May 2002, B01; Rebecca Cook, "Senate Committee Kills Plan to Rename Jefferson Davis Highway," Associated Press Wire Service, 5 March 2002; Associated Press, "Jefferson Davis Marker in Clark County Moving to Less-Traveled Spot," 15 May 2002, accessed 18 Feb. 2003. These sources are unclear as to when the Vancouver marker was removed – some say 1997, others identify 1998.

[48] Quoted in Jeffery Mize, "Jefferson Davis' Legacy Continues to Provoke Battle," *The Columbian*, 6 Feb. 2002, C1. See also Gregg Herrington, "Political Notebook: Marker Removal was Public Business," *The Columbian*, 27 Jan. 2002, C1; *idem*, "Removed Davis Sign Stirs Regret, Ire" *The Columbian*, 31 Jan. 2002, C1; *idem*, "Legislature OKs Renaming State Highway After Black Soldier," *The Columbian*, 16 Feb. 2002, A1.

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and thus were symbols of racism. He argued that removing the Blaine marker was an opportunity for Washington to take a stand against racism, noting that the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the past had promoted racism and that current neo-Confederate groups who supported the JDH markers were also racist. A UDC representative, Marjorie Reeves, rebutted Dunshee. She documented 107 Confederate veterans who moved to Washington State after the US Civil War.[49] Then, using a well-worn UDC strategy, Reeves maintained that rather than a rebel,

> Jefferson Davis did a lot for the United States … He excelled in the Mexican war, served as a Senator, and as Secretary of War under President Pierce. That's when he oversaw the building of roads here in Washington state, to expand the United States.[50]

Suzanne Silek, UDC president-general, reiterated this argument, claiming that the placement of the granite marker in Blaine in 1940 had little to do with Davis's leadership of the slaveholding Confederacy:

> Members of the UDC in Washington [state] did some research and found his ties to highways and railroad development in Washington when it was still a territory and he was serving as secretary of war in the 1850s … they, according to our records, worked with the state of Washington. The designation was made … as part of the 50-year anniversary of statehood in Washington … in recognition of his work to help develop the roads and railroad routes in Washington state … Of course, they did it because they were members of the UDC and he was the president of the Confederate States of America, but since the Confederacy had certainly no ties to Washington, not until they did that research work [were they able] to come up with a reason for even the UDC to want to do it up there.[51]

UDC support for the JDH markers and name was echoed by the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), whose representative at the legislative hearings, John Palmer, refuted accusations that Confederate heritage groups were racist and then recited a list of what he called "hate crimes" of "blacks against whites."[52] Washington state representative Tom Mielke also questioned why the issue of the highway markers was presented as a debate on race, rather than as "honor[ing] a great general from the South."[53] In contrast, Oscar Eason Jr., a local leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), argued, "Honoring the memory of a secessionist, slaver and president of the Confederacy would logically

[49] Susanna Ray, "Davis Flap Triggers Security Steps for Dunshee," *Herald of Everett*, 5 Feb. 2002, online at www.heraldnet.com/article/20020205/NEWS01/202050701, accessed 18 Aug. 2008. [50] Quoted in Chesanow. [51] Ibid.

[52] House Transportation Committee, "Naming SR 99 The William P. Stewart Highway," 4 Feb. 2002, from TVW, Washington Public Affairs Network, 1063 South Capitol Way, Suite 16, Olympia, Washington. [53] Ibid. In fact, Davis was not a general.

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signify accord with the principles and objective of the pre-Civil War South."[54]

Washington State's Transportation Committee voted in favour of naming Highway 99 after William P. Stewart, with Washington's State House subsequently voting unanimously for the name change on 15 February 2002.[55] On 4 March 2002, however, efforts to name the highway after Stewart stalled. Officially, Washington's State Senate claimed it was too busy to rename the highway, but committee chairwoman Mary Margaret Haugen, like Dunshee a Democrat, explained that state legislators "got too many ugly letters and too many nasty phone calls on both sides of the issue … It just was far too controversial."[56] Following the failure to pass the legislation changing the name of Highway 99 to commemorate Stewart, in 2002 the Blaine marker was placed in storage, with plans to relocate it to "a more visible location" in Peace Arch State Park.[57] In Vancouver, however, officials relocated their JDH marker to the roadside in front of the Clark County Museum on 13 May 2002.[58] This put the marker in a "less-traveled spot" than its original location about a mile and a half away.[59] Importantly, museum director David Fenton explained, the marker was to remain outside, "to honor the original intent of those who built it and put it there, [and] to make sure it was accessible to the motoring public."[60] This decision satisfied JDH proponents and a rededication ceremony was held on 15 September 2002.[61] The Vancouver JDH marker was also placed on Clark County's Historic Register, although, attempting

[54] Quoted in Aydrea Walden, "Jefferson Davis Roadblock Pushed," *Seattle Times*, 13 March 2002, B2.

[55] Rebecca Cook, "House Approves Name Change for Jefferson Davis Highway," *The Olympian*, 16 Feb. 2002, online at http://news.theolympian.com/specialsections/Legislature2002/20020216/18254.shtml, accessed 20 Feb. 2003. See also Herrington, "Legislature: House OKs."

[56] Quoted in Susanna Ray, "North–South Highway War over for Now," *Herald of Everett*, 5 March 2002, online at www.heraldnet.com/article/20020305/NEWS01/203050717, accessed 18 Aug. 2008; see also Rebecca Cook, "Davis Highway to Keep Name as Proposal Dies in Senate," *Seattle Times*, 5 March 2002, B2.

[57] Susanna Ray, "Davis Marker Heads for Storage," *Herald of Everett*, 28 March 2002, online at www.heraldnet.com/article/20020328/NEWS01/203280729&SearchID=73327250103197, accessed 18 Aug. 2008; Chesanow.

[58] Jeffrey Mize, "Jefferson Davis Monument: Marker Finds Home at Museum," *The Columbian*, 14 May 2002, A1.

[59] Associated Press, "Jefferson Davis Marker in Clark County."

[60] Quoted in Church, "Monument to Get a New Home."

[61] Vancouver City Council Meeting Minutes, 13 May 2002, online at www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/minutes/may13-02.htm, accessed 5 Sept. 2002; "Lane Camp's 'Western Office' Works to Save Jefferson Davis Highway markers," *Lane's Dispatch – Newsletter of Col. John Randolph Lane Camp 1570*, ed. C. Pate (Siler City: Sons of Confederate Veterans, 2002).

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to distance itself from the controversy of commemorating the Confederacy, the county noted that the marker was restored to honour the UDC:

> The listing of this monument on the Clark County Heritage Register is unique. The monument is, in itself, not deemed to be historically significant to Clark County, nor is the life of Jefferson Davis. The significance lies in the grassroots project, lead by the Daughters of the Confederacy, for the designation and commemoration of Highway 99. The designation of The Jefferson Davis Highway, from coast to coast, is an important early project accomplished by an American women's organization.[62]

V. INTERPRETING THE CONTEST OVER WASHINGTON'S JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY

By locating a granite marker on the Canadian border in 1940 the UDC achieved their goal of erecting monuments to Jefferson Davis across the United States, extending the legacy of the Confederacy beyond the US South and nationalizing Davis as a figure supposedly to be revered by all Americans. The Blaine marker was, for over sixty years, the first roadside memorial one would encounter when arriving from Canada. As Jefferson Davis was the first person to be honoured with a monument upon entering the US from Canada, the marker could be interpreted as symbolically representing what the United States valued, its definitional power coming from the primacy of its location. Memorials to Confederate leaders, geographer Jonathan Leib proposes, claim US territory as "Confederate space."[63] Even if the Jefferson Davis Highway name was never officially agreed to by federal or state authorities, officials responsible for highway maintenance across America did allow, and in the Washington case tacitly approved, the installation of the UDC's JDH commemorative markers.

The ability to fund and erect a memorial indicates the power to author a "cultural landscape." An American cultural landscape that, from South to North and East Coast to West Cost, contains Jefferson Davis memorials claims the United States as "Confederate space," a "racialized landscape" in which "reputational entrepreneurs" can continue to promote and revere Confederate ideology. Placing markers at Washington's borders, along its major north–south route, achieves similar symbolic ends, encompassing the entire state as Confederate space. Further, the installation of Blaine's JDH marker on public property, ironically a park dedicated to peaceful relations between neighbouring nation states, the USA and Canada, suggests that the

[62] Clark County Historic Register, "Jefferson Davis Highway Monument," online at www.co.clark.wa.us/longrangeplan/historic/reg-properties/jeffdavis.html, accessed 18 July 2005.

[63] Leib, "The Witting Autobiography," 199.

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"symbolic accretion" at such a location gives an implicit seal of approval by Washington's legislative bodies for the monument and, by extension, Jefferson Davis and his beliefs. The marker's location on public property meant that the state funded its upkeep. Raymond Miller, a Black Veterans leader, commented on this during the 2002 contest, stating, "we don't think that state dollars should go into maintaining it," and proposing that the Blaine JDH marker be given to the UDC, who could erect it on private land.[64] Local NAACP leader Oscar Eason Jr. similarly contended that the marker should not be "taking taxpayers' money" and maintained that it would be acceptable to him if "somebody wants to take [the Blaine JDH granite marker] home and put it in their closet or anywhere that's private."[65] The role of public finances in maintaining the JDH marker on city property were also raised in Vancouver, where the marker, following relocation outside Clark County Museum, was given over to the ownership of the UDC.[66] In 2007 the Vancouver marker was again moved, this time to private land purchased just north of the city by the SCV.[67] In 2008 it was joined by the Blaine marker in this newly constructed "Jefferson Davis Park." After funding the transportation of the Blaine marker, the state of Washington relinquished ownership, giving it to an Oregon chapter of the SCV.[68]

In 2002, Dunshee had argued neither that Jefferson Davis should be expunged from history, nor that the memorial be wholly removed from public view, rather that the Blaine marker should be taken from its location outside in a state park with its implicit state sanction, and relocated inside a museum: "I want to put this in a museum with historical context … That is different than having him glorified in a state park."[69] This is what many opposed. Critical to supporters of the JDH markers is their placement outside. Locating the Davis memorial markers inside a museum would, through symbolic accretion, change their meaning, namely rendering Davis and his ideology past. Keeping a roadside marker by a road keeps it in use, maintaining its vitality and message. Even if, as was the case in Washington, a Confederate memorial is overlooked by residents for many years, it remains current as part of the landscape of everyday life, arguably lying dormant until

[64] Quoted in Chesanow.
[65] Quoted in Associated Press, "Controversy Prompts Shift."
[66] Associated Press, "Jefferson Davis Marker in Clark County."
[67] Jeffrey Mize, "Controversial Marker to Get a New Home along I-5," *The Columbian*, 18 Oct. 2007, A1.
[68] "Blaine Jefferson Davis Highway Marker," *The Bayonet*, 3, 10 (2008), 1. Newsletter of Sons of Confederate Veterans Colonel Isaac Williams Smith Camp #458, Portland, Oregon, online at www.scvportland.org/webletteroct2008.pdf, accessed 27 Jan. 2011.
[69] Quoted in Koepp, "Rebel Voices on Road."

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an individual encounters and interprets it – as Dunshee did in Blaine, and Younge did in Richmond. A JDH marker sitting outside, alongside a busy international highway, suggests that its message remains current. In the case of Jefferson Davis, this message must be the cause for which he is best known, namely leadership of the white supremacist Confederacy. To claim otherwise is disingenuous. Given this, Washington history professor Alan Gallay contended during the 2002 controversies, Davis seems "an awfully strange icon" to be honouring.[70] Yet perhaps honouring Davis is not as strange as Gallay suggests. As a way to assert a neo-Confederate agenda, to forward a race-based politics in a nation supposedly beyond overt racial campaigning, and to reassert the importance of white supremacist leaders in American history, supporting JDH markers does make sense. Interpreting the marker in just such a manner, John Lovisk, an African American state representative in Washington, said that the UDC's memorials to Davis were a "disgrace."[71]

In the 1960s, many who counted themselves as descendents of Confederate ancestors understood challenges to UDC memorials and other Confederate symbols to be attacks on their own personal identities. Arguably such beliefs persist. Furthermore, the fact that disputes over Confederate symbols and commemoration exist when previously there were none, maintains McWhite, "denotes an environment in flux" in which meanings are being remade and historical reputations struggled over.[72] These disputes, as the JDH controversy demonstrates, continue into the twenty-first century and the UDC's transcontinental JDH memorial campaign parallels the organization's ongoing efforts to paint Davis as an American patriot and national figure. By emphasizing Davis's time as US Secretary of War in the decade before he led the Confederate rebellion, UDC leaders at the Washington hearings elided the issues that came to fundamentally define Davis and that throughout his life he refused to renounce, namely that "the domestic servitude of African slavery … is essential" to American economic development.[73] The UDC focus on Davis as a pioneer of road building in the Northwest is particularly strained and was derided by Dunshee: "People are saying, 'Oh, Jeff Davis was into roads for the Northwest.' That's their cover … But let's be clear. This memorial was not put up by the AAA [American Automobile Association]. It was put up to glorify the Confederacy."[74] Elsewhere Dunshee emphasized that the

[70] Ibid. [71] Ibid. [72] McWhite, "Echoes of the Lost Cause," 309.
[73] Jefferson Davis, "Slavery in the Territories," *Appendix to the Congressional Globe*, 13–14 Feb. 1850, 31st Congress, 1st Session, 154.
[74] Quoted in Verhovek, "Road Named for Jefferson Davis."

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organization promoting the Davis markers was "not the Daughters of Good Roads."[75] Yet the improbable "Davis as road builder" interpretation was accepted by some,[76] such as state senator Georgia Gardner, who concurred with the UDC evaluation claiming that "Davis was an advocate for building roads in the state before the Civil War."[77]

This strategy of selectively reading the historical record to deflect challenges to the legacy of someone like Davis is typical of advocates of neo-Confederacy. A common neo-Confederate strategy in this struggle over reputational politics is to argue that the personal characteristics of Confederate leaders, rather than their roles in trying to perpetuate slavery, make them worthy of commemoration.[78] This was evident in Washington when one strong supporter of the retention of the JDH markers, Tom Mielke, echoing the rhetoric of neo-Confederate nationalists, explained that he was "very reluctant to remove something from history that I don't connect with slavery,"[79] and asserted that Jefferson Davis was "an outgoing, friendly man, a great family man who loved his wife and children and had an infinite store of compassion."[80] A monument to Jefferson Davis can thus be explained away as having "nothing to do with racism or hate," as SCV leader Jim Morgan stated at the 2002 legislative hearings in Washington.[81] Yet if the issue was genuinely about Davis as a road builder, why would those supporting the highway markers tell Dunshee, a white person, to "go back to Africa," challenge that "hate crimes" by "blacks against whites" are unreported, or hysterically write to him,

> People of the black race such as yourself, YOU are the reason this country is going downhill … You, yourself, are more than likely a lazy SOB that does nothing but try

[75] Quoted in Janet Williams, "Civil War Marker Sparks New Conflict," BBC News website, 6 May, online at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/1970969.stm, accessed 17 August 2008.

[76] This interpretation was repeated by the Washington State Historical Society in Karen Meador, "An Unlikely Champion: Jefferson Davis and the Pacific Northwest," *Columbia*, 18, 4 (2004–5), 12–21.

[77] Autumn Koepp, "No Fans of Davis in State House," *Seattle Times*, 16 Feb. 2002, B2. Technically, Washington was a territory, not a US state, before the Civil War. Washington gained statehood on 11 November 1889, just twenty-five days before the death of Jefferson Davis on 6 December.

[78] See Leib, "Robert E. Lee, 'Race,' Representation"; and *idem*, "The Witting Autobiography."

[79] Quoted in Howard Buck, "Jefferson Davis Marker Stirs Passions in Capital," *The Columbian*, 5 Feb. 2002, C1.

[80] Quoted in Verhovek.

[81] Paraphrased in Williams.

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to imitate MLK [Martin Luther King], your idol … Have you ever had a child illegitimately by more than one woman? My guess would be yes.[82]

Although neo-Confederate authors regularly assert that race is not a factor in the celebration of Confederate heritage, a central tenet of neo-Confederacy is belief that "white, Anglo-Celtic" people should be "dominant."[83] Indeed, retention of the JDH markers was enthusiastically supported on "The Last Stand" white supremacist website, which also warns white people that they face "extinction".[84]

For Dunshee, the issue was clear: "This is about racism."[85] Yet other elected officials disagreed. Councilwoman Jeanne Lipton stated that the dispute over the Vancouver JDH marker was "not a race issue" but arose merely because the memorial plinth had been removed without permission.[86] Perhaps the strongest opponent of the Jefferson Davis Highway markers was the main regional newspaper, the *Seattle Times*, its editorial emphatically calling for officials to "Tear Down That Sign":

> We were never a slave state. We were never a Confederate state … There was not a Confederate state within 1,000 miles of here. Indeed, the people of Washington never knew U.S. 99 as the Jefferson Davis Highway. They never named it that. The Daughters of the Confederacy named it, and some official in 1940, having more authority than good sense, allowed them to put their marker in our park. It stayed in our park for 60 years only because we didn't notice it. It is time to take it out. Jeff Davis and the Confederacy he led are not us and have never been us. If the Southerners object, let it be said that we have state's rights, too.[87]

[82] Letter to Dunshee, quoted in Rebecca Cook, "Jefferson Davis Highway Becomes 'Live Snake' for Unsuspecting Lawmaker," Associated Press Wire Service, 8 Feb. 2002, original emphasis.

[83] Michael Hill quoted in Roberts, *A League of Their Own*, 20. See also Hague, Beirich and Sebesta, *Neo-Confederacy*; Hague "Texts as Flags"; McPherson, "I'll Take My Stand in Dixienet"; Edward H. Sebesta, "The Confederate Memorial Tartan: Officially Approved by the Scottish Tartan Authority," *Scottish Affairs*, 31 (2000), 55–84; Benito Giordano, Euan Hague and Edward H. Sebesta, "Asserting Celtic Roots: The Use of Celtic Culture in the Nationalist Campaigns of the Lega Nord and the League of the South," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 31, 1–2 (2004), 23–36, Gerald R. Webster, "If First You Don't Secede, Try, Try Again: Secession, Hate and the League of the South," in Colin Flint, ed., *Spaces of Hate: Geographies of Discrimination and Intolerance in the U.S.A.* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 137–64.

[84] "The Jefferson Davis Highway," online at http://macstand.com/html/jdhway.html, accessed 20 Feb. 2003.

[85] Quoted in Koepp, "No Fans of Davis."

[86] Quoted in Associated Press, "Jefferson Davis Marker in Clark County." Lipton thereafter voted against the compromise solution that relocated the marker plinth to county museum grounds and turned its ownership over to the UDC.

[87] "Tear Down That Sign: Jeff Davis Was Not Us," *Seattle Times*, 18 March 2002, B4. Other newspapers opposed Dunshee's proposals. The *Bellingham Herald*, for example, suggested, "Dunshee is making an issue where none exists. It's not like this is the Deep South and

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The responses to this editorial again showed that the power to define the reputation of Davis and the Confederate cause was as important as the physical highway markers themselves. One letter writer mocked the newspaper's stance, before stating somewhat obliquely that "very real objections" are made by "some to the Martin Luther King holiday."[88] Other individuals contacted the newspaper to claim that that Davis "was an American patriot" and reiterated the Lost Cause mantra that the Confederate secession had nothing to do with slavery.[89]

The racial undercurrents of the Jefferson Davis Highway debates in Washington raised questions about who should be honoured by statues and memorials in the United States, a country where "markers, monuments, and names on the landscape," writes historian James W. Loewen, "glorify those who fought to keep African Americans in chains as well as those who after Reconstruction [1865–77] worked to make them second-class citizens again."[90] If such monuments and memorials are opposed, as in this case by Hans Dunshee and his supporters, then the normality and authority of a racialized cultural landscape that reflects America's history of white supremacy are challenged. This may be a symbolic struggle, but arguing about granite JDH markers in Washington is also implicitly an argument about US race relations, past, present and future. It was noticeable throughout the 2002 debates that supporters of the JDH markers, such as UDC leaders Suzanne Silek and Marjorie Reeves, utilized the linguistic technique of "deixis,"[91] encouraging participants to identify with words like "we," "our" and "us": Silek, for example, remarking that Dunshee's actions "will not unify our country."[92] Such rhetoric implies that opposing Confederate memorials is what damages American unity and that if Confederate monuments, with their white supremacist implications, remained uncontested, then "our country" – that is, the United States as understood by the UDC – would be harmonious.

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there's a highway dedicated to Ku Klux Klan founder Nathan Bedford Forrest" – see also Cook, "Jefferson Davis Highway Becomes 'Live Snake'."

88 *Seattle Times*, "Letters to the Editor," 20 March 2002, B7. Many neo-Confederates oppose the federal designation of a holiday honouring civil rights leader Martin Luther King – see Hague, Beirich and Sebesta, *Neo-Confederacy*.

89 Quoted in Koepp, "Rebel Voices on Road." Some correspondents pointed out the irony of a struggle over the name of Jefferson Davis when George Washington, for whom the state is named, was a southern slaveholder who never set foot in the Pacific northwest and rebelled against the government of the day, causing states to secede (e.g. *Seattle Times*, "Letters to The editor," 23 March 2002, B5).

90 James W. Loewen, *Lies across America*, 16.

91 Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995), 39.

92 Quoted in Koepp, "Rebel Voices on Road."

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VI. CONCLUSION

In an examination of US civil rights monuments, Owen Dwyer notes, "As sites of historic memory, memorials become constitutive of contemporary racial politics."[93] In turn, debates over the meaning of the Confederate past, contends Jim Cullen, remain "a key battleground in struggles to envision the possibilities and limits of U.S. society."[94] The granite JDH markers that caused such consternation in 2002 were erected in Washington in 1939 and 1940 as part of a UDC project which since 1913 has attempted to ensure the presence of Confederate memorials across the United States, extending far beyond the former Confederate states to the Pacific coast and the Canadian border. Appropriating state-built roads and claiming them as a transcontinental memorial highway honouring Jefferson Davis, UDC members continue to replace and rededicate JDH markers along American roadsides, working as reputational entrepreneurs to shape the understanding of the Confederate President.

Contests over Confederate commemoration are typically, albeit often through elision and implication, arguments about race and racial relations in the United States. By bringing the Confederacy out of the South and nationalizing Jefferson Davis through the placement of commemorative roadside markers across the USA, the UDC materially and symbolically reproduce the Confederate cause as a vibrant and living entity – a nationalist ideology that remains worthy of support. As the 2002 events in Washington demonstrated, many Americans are still actively involved in defending and promoting the Confederacy, a short-lived, white supremacist, slaveholding nation that existed 150 years ago.

[93] Owen J. Dwyer, "Interpreting the Civil Rights Movement: Place, Memory and Conflict," *Professional Geographer*, 52 (2000) 660–71.

[94] Jim Cullen, *The Civil War in Popular Culture: A Reusable Past* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 13.

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