Flipping the Script: A Rhetorical Analysis of UA Campus Tours

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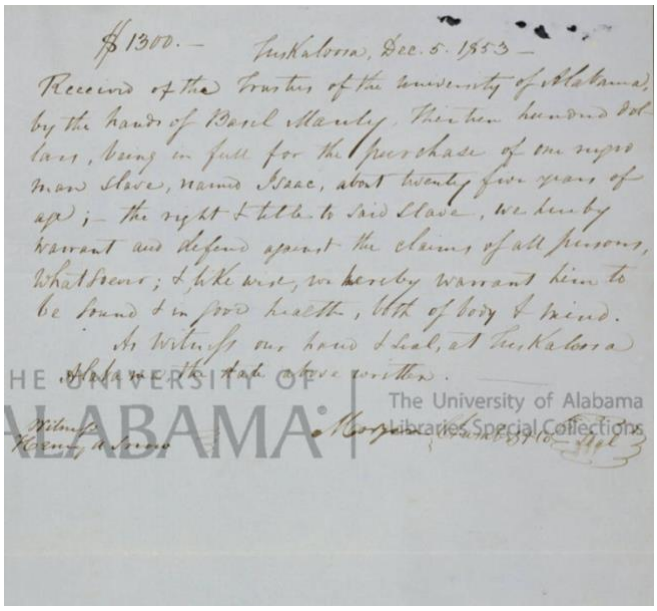
Introduction



Manly, B. (1853). Receipt for payment from B. Manly, The University of Alabama, to Morgan, Chambers, and Company, December 5, 1853 [electronic; image]. Retrieved from http://purl.lib.ua.edu/96024.

$1300 - Tuskaloosa(sic), Dec. 5 1853

Received of the Trustees of the University of Alabama, by the hands of Basil Manly, Thirteen hundred dollars, being in full for the purchase of one negro slave, named Isaac, about twenty five years of age; the right and title to said slave, we hearby warrant and defend against the claims of all persons, whatsoever; and likewise, we hearby warrant him to be sound and in good health, both of body and mind.

As witness our hand and seal at Tuskaloosa (sic) Alabama, date above written. (sic)

According to his stated value in 1853, Isaac would have been worth $42,829 U.S. dollars in 2020. Not only do I find it utterly absurd to put a price tag on human life, but I'm sickened by the extent to which his oppressors went to ensure that students like me wouldn't reach back into the dark to bring his name to light. There is little to no remembrance of who he truly was and how he contributed to the University. All that's left of him is a receipt that quantifies his worth. The dehumanization that he and countless other African American slaves endured, continues to be overlooked and underappreciated. Several facets of the University, cater to the ongoing oppression that had been established since its founding in 1831.

The noteworthy James Baldwin once proclaimed, in his book *The Fire Next Time* that, "to accept one's past - one's history is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it. An invented past can never be used; it cracks and crumbles under the pressures of life, like clay in a season of drought". The University of Alabama has provided campus tours to current and prospective students and their families. With the recent addition of the *Hallowed Grounds* tour, and the *Race and Public Memory* tour, the scripts used to celebrate heroes of The Capstone have changed. As a graduating senior and advocate of social change, I've compiled research that entertains the following question: In what ways do UA campus tours use naming on buildings, monuments and markers to (dis)empower the legacies of UA history?

Applying Mead's (1934) symbolic interactionism from *Mind, Self, and Society,* and using Kenneth Burke's (1954) narrative cluster analysis, this project identifies the rhetorical themes and narratives (e.g., redemption, god-and-devil) that have been used to (dis)empower names and

legacies of UA history during tours. To conduct my analysis, I will collect the transcripts of three campus tours: 1) the *Capstone Men and Women* admissions tour; 2) the *Hallowed Grounds* tour; and 3) the *Race and Public Memory* tour. This paper will describe: 1) Mead's symbolic interactionism 2) past research about symbolic interactionism and the power of naming in public places, 3) themes that emerged from my analysis of campus tour scripts, and 4) a discussion of these findings along with implications about how representation plays a major role in the way a legacy is communicated to the public.

Method

I approached my research using Kenneth Burke's narrative cluster analysis method. Burke's novel *Permanence and Change: An Anatomy of Purpose (1954/1984),* Burke defines this method as a method of rhetorical criticism used to understand and evaluate the perspectives of a rhetor. By "clustering" key words and symbols together and seeing how they connect with other words used in close proximity to the key words, we learn about what a rhetor is thinking and trying to communicate. The cluster analysis method: 1) identifies key terms, 2) charts the clusters around those key terms, and 3) explains the meaning of each artifact. Through cluster analysis, we try to figure out what a rhetor/speaker was thinking and trying to communicate. For instance, rhetors can use symbols such as "god" and "devil" terms to show what s/he regards as good or evil. A rhetor can use symbols and language to describe the act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose (*dramatistic pentad elements*) of an event. A rhetor can also tell stories of "guilt-and-redemption" as a means of persuasion to help the audience relieve themselves of guilt. A rhetor can tell stories of "redemption through victimage" as a means of persuasion that allows the audience to stop blaming themselves (mortification) and find a scapegoat to blame instead (Burke 1954/1984).

Background

As it is my responsibility to walk my readers through each term and concept mentioned, this section provides context for the theory stated in my introduction. George H. Mead, originator of the Symbolic Interactionism Theory, as a multi-faceted philosopher and social theorist that not only studied the nature of self and subjectivity, but also metaphysics with an emphasis on emergence and temporality, in which the past and future are viewed through the lens of the present (The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Born in 1863, George Mead's philosophical ideologies were the fruits of his rooted studies in Sacred Rhetoric and Pastoral Theology. Eventually moving away from his devotion to religion, he became involved in several activist-driven initiatives, some being, supporting the women's suffrage movement, becoming treasurer of the Settlement House Movement and immersing himself in civic duties within Chicago. Mead soon found his love for the research he's widely known for today. His lifelong commitment to his studies and servitude, speaks to the significance and profundity of his work. As I unpack his theory of symbolic interactionism in relation to UA's campus tours, keep in mind how you see yourself in society, as it pertains to your meaning of self, identity, belonging.

Theory

As stated in the Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods, social philosopher and communications expert, George Mead (1934), defines Symbolic Interactionism theory as an approach to understanding the relationship between human beings and society. In his book *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist,* he claims that human action and interaction can only be understood through the exchange of meaningful communication or symbols. Symbolic interactionism and its methodological

position tend to be considered a generic theoretical and methodological framework for all sociological areas of inquiry and types of research questions. Some key topic areas studied by symbolic interactionists include interpretations of meaning and symbols, socialization, identity, development of self, power in race relations, group threat with regard to prejudice, gender relations, emotions, framing in social movements, group commitment, “mob rule” in crowd behavior, and criminology (Mead 1934).

The research and expansion of Mead’s philosophies don’t end at the original *Mind, Self, and Society*, in fact, that’s where they begin. Many studies of this book have been written. The lectures collected in *Mind, Self, and Society: The Definitive Edition* offer a rare synthesis of his ideas, the version, by Daniel Huebner and Hans Joas, gets to the heart of Mead’s meditations on social psychology and social philosophy. Its conversational tone transports the reader directly into Mead’s classroom as he teases out the genesis of the self and the nature of the mind. Included in this edition are an insightful foreword from leading Mead scholar Hans Joas, a revealing set of textual notes by Dan Huebner that detail the text’s origins, and a comprehensive bibliography of Mead’s other published writings. Mead’s lectures inspired hundreds of students, so this new edition ensures that Mead’s ideas will carry on, inspiring a new generation of thinkers (Joas and Huebner 2015).

Past Research

A result of the impact of Mead’s findings, in Herbert Blumer's (2006) seminal work, "Social Problems as Collective Behavior," symbolic interaction theory is synopsized and then applied to explore the emergence of same-sex marriage as an issue in American legal and legislative systems. Since 1965, a series of key U.S. Supreme Court decisions has more fully defined constitutionally guaranteed rights of privacy, equal protection, and self-determination.

Supporters of same-sex marriage have relied on these fundamental rights to argue in state courts for an inclusive definition of marriage, while those in opposition have responded by codifying an exclusively heterosexual definition in state and federal laws and state constitutional amendments. Blumer was a former student and interpreter of Mead and coined the term “symbolic interactionism” itself. Blumer's five-stage model is applied to examine how the development of the same-sex marriage issue follows and expands on his premise that collective behavior is the product of the dynamic, social process of collective definition (Knauff 2006).

Likewise, scholar Paul Tibbets (2004), in his article *Symbolic interaction theory and the cognitively disabled: a neglected dimension*, utilizes symbolic interactionism to convey how symbolic interactionists have, by and large, not explored how individuals with mental illnesses—specifically, delusional misidentification syndromes—are able to exercise the cognitive factors necessary for successful interaction. Such factors include: recognition of self and others, situated interpretation, inferring others' cognitive and emotional states, anticipating what others might say or do, empathizing, maintaining a cogent belief system, etc. What needs to be addressed is how the mentally ill manage—and fail to manage—these cognitively-informed activities as they slip more and more into cognitive and existential chaos, and the associated loss of meaningful dialogue with self and others. Clinical accounts of the cognitively dysfunctional could widen and deepen our understanding of cognition, belief states, self, and self-other relations, central concepts for symbolic interactionists. Accordingly, this paper is as much a critique of symbolic interactionism as a contribution to a humanistic social psychology (Tibbets 2004).

Where Legends Are Made

Using the method of George Mead (1934), my capstone project investigates ways in which UA campus tours use naming to (dis)empower the legacies of UA history. Likewise to

other American institutions, slavery played a major role in the making of creating and up-keeping the foundation of colleges across the U.S. To this day, educational institutions overlook and intentionally hide their history of their involvement in enslaving African Americans. The University owned and rented several slaves for many decades until slavery was abolished. Dr. Hillary Green, assistant professor of History within the Department of Gender and Race Studies at the University, created a script that "sheds light on the lives, experiences, and legacy of the many unsung men, women, and children who lived, worked, and even died at the University of Alabama" (Green). What she calls a "Hallowed Grounds Tour", is what intrigued my interest in grasping a deeper understanding of the meaning of legacy.

As I ponder on what a legend even looks like, I consider the concept of each generation making sacrifices whether they realize it or not. Slaves knew that they were sacrificing their livelihood when rebelling against their masters and attempting to run away, but they did it any way in the hope that one day their people would live a life closer to the freedom, that they once prayed for. Slaves that were bought and rented out by the University sacrificed their freedom, in the hopes that someday their people would be seen as scholars, and not illiterates, contributors to society and not easily expendable, humans and not property. Through the eradication of monuments, commemoration through markers, establishment of buildings and celebration at ceremonies, the University empowers and memorializes specific incidents and people of its past far more than others. It's people such as Gabe, Neal, Sabra, and countless others, that worked tirelessly as slaves on campus: tending the land that exists today, looking after the students that were ignorant to their existence, catering to the University that allowed them to be used as sexual objects, who rightfully deserve the title of a legend. Instead, incoming families and students are, unknowingly, met with Confederate idolization, as soon as they step foot on The Capstone.

Intentionality of Words

As a New Jersey native, one would think that I took a tour of the University before traveling a sixteen hour car ride away from home, prior to freshman orientation, or what we call, “Bama Bound”, but the truth is, I simply skimmed through a virtual tour of the University, admired some high quality, bright and inviting, campus landscape photos, and called it a day. As a student-athlete, my freshman year was much of a discipline routine that made little time to develop research on UA’s campus history. It wasn’t until I parted ways with the cheerleading team, and declared African American Studies as my second major, that I realized my passion for storytelling. I became fascinated with UA’s obsession with Paul Bryant and Nick Saban, the two noteworthy and legendary coaches that were lead components in Tuscaloosa’s (also known as “title town”) reputation in college football.

UA Homecoming Parade [electronic image]. (2016).

As a former cheerleader of the University, I saw, first hand, the influence that the athletic department had in UA’s initiatives and reputation. From elaborate tailgates on The Quad, to Week Of Welcome’s “Script A” Picture with Big Al, the football program is most praised when

it comes to what the University is most known for. Well, football and partying. The reality is, UA offers so much more! The Capstone is truly, an institution of endless organizations and opportunities. The University's 2019 commercial campaign, titled "There's More", flips the narrative on what UA is typically known for, in the effort to expand and redefine viewers' perspectives.

In comparison to the commercial, Mead's theory of the generalized other relates to the ways in which oneself takes other's ideas and viewpoints into consideration, in addition to our expected roles in society. The generalized other, is essentially the vehicle which we use to drive our connection with society. According to *Mind, Self and Society*, "the organized community or social group which gives to the individual his unity of self may be called "the generalized other." The attitude of the generalized other is the attitude of the whole community. Thus, for example, in the case of such a social group as a ball team, the team is the generalized other in so far as it enters—as an organized process or social activity—into the experience of any one of the individual members of it" (MSS, 154).

Leslie Harris' article, "Higher Education's Reckoning with Slavery", discusses the self-examination of campuses across the nation and the extent to which students, faculty and staff are willing to go to know the truth about the grounds they walk each day. From financial redress to apology markers, Harris unpacks the narrative of redemption and reconciliation. Through her observations, I analyze the ways in which campuses are reshaping and reclaiming their institutions as a way to redirect the attention of history of the campuses and the town that surrounds them, to the truth of the matter.

While the Capstone Men and Women's script was intentionally used to attract and compel students to attend the University and polish the school's reputation, Dr. Green and Dr.

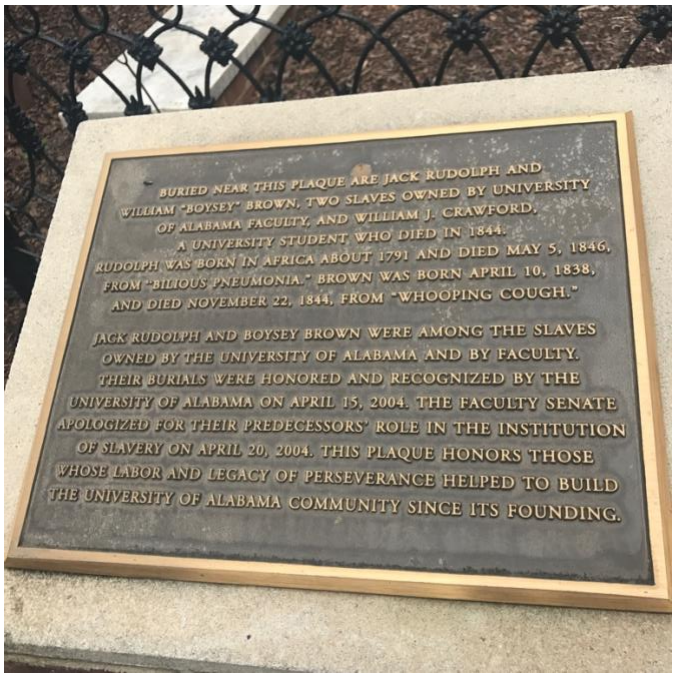
Bagley use rhetoric of confrontation that serves to unpack the University's active role in the preservation of the Confederacy and white supremacy, from its founding in 1831. Their intentionality resonates with the audience, that evokes a sense of empathy for the people who endured much turmoil at the time. It's not only the word choice that's being used, it's the way the words are conveyed when telling stories of the past. Likewise, the tone that's used when Capstone Men and Women navigate their tours, is one that's rehearsed to be appealing and inviting to incoming students. The script itself, is more of an applaud to the architecture of the buildings and their modern day uses, and no mention of the victor versus the victim narrative. In both cases, language is used as action. For instance, when discussing Manly Hall the *omission* of critical information is intentional in the University's Undergrad Admissions tour, just as much as the *inclusion* of critical information is intentional in the alternate tours. These conclusions correspond to the previously mentioned concept of an institution's way of appealing to the "generalized other", which in this case would be, incoming students, their families and society.

Intentionality of Location

Furthermore, The University of Alabama has, in fact, made attempts to reconcile with their racially divided past. From the Malone Hood Plaza to the Apology Marker, I applaud the institution for taking steps in mending what was broken, but some steps were followed by a few stumbles. In this section I will express my perspective of the intentionality behind the location of buildings, and commemorative markers on campus, that empower the Confederacy, as well as those that empower the oppressed.

Starting with the ways in which the university uplifts the values of the Confederacy, there are several buildings and markers, that have been explained in depth in the alternate tours, located in significant corners of campus, that convey a notion of pride in Confederate ideology.

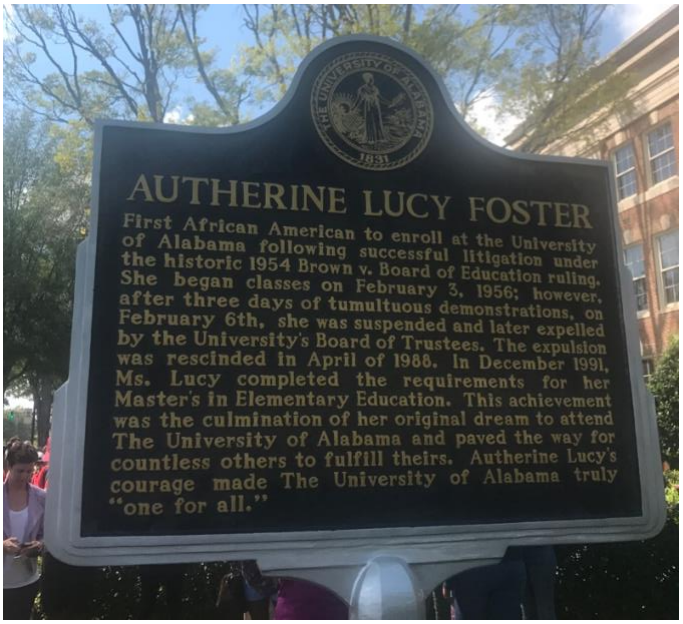
To list a few, there's the location of Many Hall within Woods Quad, the President's Mansion, the Confederate Boulder, and the Tiffany stained-glass window in Mary Bryant Hall. In short, the University has, whether they realize it or not, created a campus narrative that doesn't reflect the Capstone Creed as well as it should. Whether it be SGA tactics that support "The Machine", unequal treatment within Greek-life between the NPHC and PHC, or institutionally-administrated division of tailgating sections, where the Ferguson Center grounds are highly populated with black students, while the Quad's sections are mostly white-facilitated, one can't deny that segregation doesn't *still* exist in some shape or form. While some students advocate for the removal of the white slave masters' names off buildings and the demolishment of Confederate monuments, I'd rather focus my energy towards establishing new spaces and creative initiatives to uplift the liberation narrative and shed light on campus history, connecting the past and the present to change the future of storytelling.



Gaskin, K. [electronic image]. UA Apology Marker. (2017).

As previously mentioned, the university has made progress in mending its racial-inflicted divide amongst students to unveil the history that's been buried beneath them for decades. According to Mead's theory, the development of the individual is a social process, as are the meanings that individuals assign to things. Mead explains that we act based on the meaning we give to something and the social interaction we have with others, which leads to the understanding that meanings aren't permanent. The identity of UA as a racially divided institution isn't permanent, therefore, to cultivate and develop students intellectually, I believe it's imperative to surround students with empowering narratives that stimulate them to be motivated to succeed at The Capstone. The Malone Hood Plaza, the Autherine Lucy Marker, the apology marker and, most recently, John England residence hall are all implementations of the university's way of seeking forgiveness and uplifting black people for their success at The Capstone. Walking to the buildings and markers that aren't mentioned on the official UA campus tour, allows students to attain an enriching and rounded perspective of the campus' history. When discovering the intentionality of the locations of markers, I realized that they were either tucked behind buildings, such as the apology marker/slave cemetery, or were simply not seen as a priority for the university to mention in the script of UA campus tours, like Malone Hood Plaza. Perhaps, is it because they feel it's taboo to talk about something so traumatizing? Or possibly because it will make people feel uncomfortable or offended? Maybe even that discussing campus history is something that people feel wouldn't impact today's campus community? Regardless of the excuse, it's completely and utterly paradoxical to eradicate markers, if they don't serve the purpose of which it was established for in the first place: to reconcile and restore.

Intentionality of Time



Gaskin, K. (2017). Autherine Lucy Foster Marker [electronic image].

Mead's theory of symbolic interactionism discusses role playing and the ways in which people assign meaning to things. In this case, the role that Autherine Lucy Foster plays in the integration of UA, is essential to the role that black students, and truly minority students in general, have on campus. Foster's marker was established in 2017, but she, and her best friend, Polly Meyers, were denied enrollment into the university in 1952 after the university discovered that they were black. After a three-year court battle, with Thurgood Marshall by her side, she was reenrolled into UA. The question I raise is, why did it take several decades for the university to establish some form of a commemorative initiative in her name? Josiah C. Nott, whose building was established in the early 1920s, studied the racial theory of polygenesis, which was essentially used to justify his absurd claims that backs were scientifically inferior to whites and Native Americans were destine to be extinct. In a 2013 Crimson White article by Ellen Coogan,

titled “Building Names Reflect a Forgotten History”, she explores the cornerstone buildings (i.e. Morgan Hall, Manly Hall) that were named after men with similar values. She highlights that “currently at the University, the plaques in front of Nott Hall and Morgan Hall do not address the negative connotations with their namesakes’ history, nor does the tour section of the University website”. This speaks to the lack of accountability shown in UA’s execution of establishing a more inclusive campus history narrative.

The Crimson-White

ALL-AMERICAN

University of Alabama, September 23, 1952

Volume 38 Number 1

Federal court battle may be result of 2 Negroes attempt to enter Bama

REGISTRATION AT BAMA

One of many

Library to open Sundays; first floor rooms only

Get-acquainted meeting highlights frosh week

Gaskin, K. [electronic image]. (2017). Auherine Lucy’s Denial into UA.

The article “’A’ for Apology: Slavery and the Collegiate Discourses of Remembrance – Cases of Brown University and the University of Alabama,” written by Max Clarke and Gary A. Fine, explores the fact that institutions should be held accountable for preserving memory and dissemination of history, for it’s an essential task that students, faculty, staff and visitors should expect when walking the grounds of the university. The essay’s rhetoric describes how universities go about remembering (or not remembering) history that deems difficult or problematic. I use this piece as a means to support my claims on the significance of properly and fully crediting the underrepresented voices of history and creating spaces of awareness as a means to shed light on the complete perspective of walking on hallowed grounds.

Always More to the Story

While doing research of UA's campus buildings and comparing the scripts to each other, I stumbled upon a finding that was a commonality across all text: the absence of Searcy Hall. Named in remembrance of James T. Searcy, Searcy Hall was used as a psychiatric unit for black patients. The much talked about, Peter Bryce, known as the founder of the on campus, mental asylum Bryce Hospital, worked with Searcy and was heavily involved the foundation of the healthcare system that currently exists in Tuscaloosa today. While it's no longer segregated, they are poorly facilitated and incredibly underfunded. In fact, it's from personal experience as a patient in one of the town's hospitals, that I can recall a time when I was facing an identity crisis and was greeted with ill treatment and poor living conditions. From confined rooms of isolation, to monitored and limited phone calls with my parents, I questioned if I was admitted into a hospital or a prison.

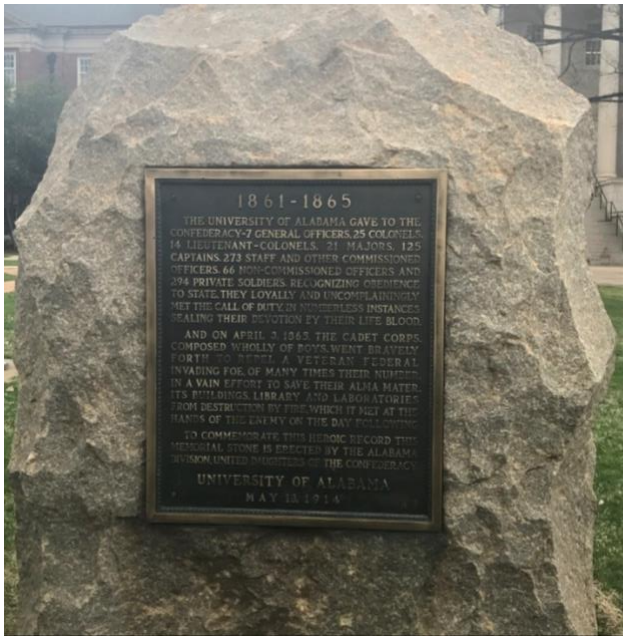
Eventually, my parents took me home to New Jersey for proper treatment of the trauma I was undergoing, some of which was stimulated by my experience at North Harbor Hospital. With an intense and extensive treatment plan, I became reconnected to my true sense of self. I

silenced what society thought and began to amplify my personal perspective of creative freedom. With that, I never hesitated on my return to Alabama, for I knew that I had nothing to lose and all to gain. Only God would have aligned the stars just so perfectly for me to have stumbled across a vacant building on campus that once housed black patients that suffered from the mentally destabilizing experiences of racial brutality, or perhaps just because the state admitted them into the facility under no circumstances whatsoever. After researching Searcy and his family, many of which studied eugenics and implemented their advocacy for white superiority in their medicinal practices, I was disheartened that he was so widely recognized as a hero. From the heroic narrative that UA frames about Searcy, to the physical location of the building itself, students are least likely to pass Searcy Hall on their way to class, therefore less likely to learning the history of its impact on campus. Consequently, this enables the perpetuation of empowering "legends" who dedicated their life's work to see Confederate beliefs thrive in a society built off the backs of those who were deemed powerless.

And So We Press On…

Through my research, I've concluded that The University of Alabama isn't alone in the journey of historical reconciliation. Other universities, southern institutions in particular, have or, in some cases, have not found ways to mend the broken pieces of racial history. In LeeAnn Whites' 2005 essay, entitled "You Can't Change History By Moving A Rock: Gender, Race and the Cultural Politics of Confederate Memorialization", she explores the actions taken by African American students at the University of Missouri, who felt compelled to present an alternative relationship with the school's glorification of the Confederacy rock on campus. Likewise to Missouri, The University of Alabama showcases their Confederate boulder in the center of the

Quad, that is a complete eye sore, yet many students and faculty pass by it unaware of its history, purpose, or even its impact it has on minority students.



Gaskin, K. (2017). United Daughters of the Confederacy erected a Civil War Memorial.

"On August 16, 1974, in the depths of the Missouri summer heat, and when most university students were far from campus, the city of Columbia quietly removed a five-and-a-half-ton Confederate Memorial from the center of the University of Missouri campus. Placing the pink granite boulder on a flat bed truck trailer, workers transported it to an outlying weed-infested field in a city park. There it stood, its original 1935 bronze plaque of dedication to the "valor and patriotism of Confederate Soldiers of Boone County," virtually obscured by the spray paint and graffiti of a younger generation of students. This ignominious end was hardly the future that the local chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy envisioned for the Rock when they first unveiled it with great pomp and ceremony some 40 years earlier. With their eyes trained firmly on the past, as their motto, "lest we forget," would indicate, the women of the UDC hoped that the Rock would continue to serve to bind the generations that followed them to

a memory of what was for them still, even in the early twentieth century, a lived experience of the Civil War and Civil War loss" (Whites).

Implications & Recommendations

At a young age we are taught to ask for forgiveness when doing something wrong to somebody. We are trained to treat others the way we wish to be treated. Similarly, the article, "A haunted past: Requesting forgiveness for wrongdoing in International Relations" by Nava Lowenheim, examines why states ask for forgiveness from other states or peoples that they have harmed. Asking for forgiveness has significant political, legal, and moral implications. But beyond these, the subject concerns how states confront their history and their collective responsibility for wrongdoing. My focus on the reasons states have for asking forgiveness could also improve our understanding of conflict resolution. The article introduces an innovative typology of requests for forgiveness by presenting important conceptual distinctions in the terminology currently employed in the field. Apologies, regrets, and expressions of sorrow are conceptualized as distinct avenues of asking forgiveness with varying degrees of significance and meaningfulness. I assert that the type of request for forgiveness is influenced by the degree of severity attributed to a wrongdoing and by the extent to which a state perceives its image as threatened by its wrongful act. The article analyses the important 1951 statement of West Germany's Chancellor Adenauer regarding the Jewish Holocaust as an example of a type of request for forgiveness (Lowenheim).

In comparison, while The University of Alabama has made incredible strides in reconciliation, there are *still* many initiatives that should be put in place. The establishment of John England hall in 2019, a dormitory named after UA trustee, John England, which honors his dedication to the university, Tuscaloosa community and state of Alabama. It's the first building

to ever be named after a person of color at UA, which not only attests to the incredible leaps that black people have made, but speaks to the fact that one's accomplishments should reflect their character, not the color of their skin.

Ever since the beginning of the Reconstruction Era, it has been an uphill battle for African Americans to attain reconciliation from their oppressors. While the eradication of monuments and markers, such as the Malone Hood Plaza and Autherine Lucy's Marker, play a major role in educating the Tuscaloosa community of its history, knowledge that the establishments exist, is as equally important as the stories they tell. It's evident that the narratives of black liberation have been skewed and downplayed, which further signifies that there should be a heighted sense of urgency to promote Dr. Green and Dr. Bagley's alternate tours. They not only exploit the unfiltered history of UA, they set a stage for those who were silenced, to be heard. With the intent to forge a greater awareness of the university's history, I suggest that the administration creates a required course, that's dedicated to learning the campus' history. I believe the most effective way to combat ignorance, is through education. If Western Civilization and American history are required courses to graduate, a class on UA campus history should be included in university curriculum as well. The information I know about UA, is both a product of seeking interest in its history and taking a class that further discusses the subject.

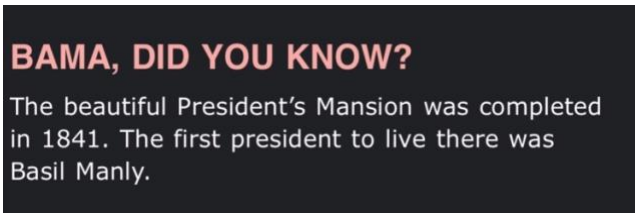
In addition to the history course, Searcy Hall should be renamed as Foster Hall, dedicated to Autherine Lucy Foster. Foster Hall would serve as a multicultural center, used for researching various subjects, holding campus events, and meeting for campus initiatives. Redefining the building's history, Foster Hall would protect and advocate the intellect of minority students, to foster inclusivity and diversity. In reference to the Fall 2019 report, 10.5% of UA's

undergraduate student population is African American/Black, compared to the 75.1% White student population. Therefore, not only would this project flip the script of UA's history, it would attract more minority students to attend, knowing that their voices will be heard at The Capstone. The possibilities are truly endless when it comes to creative ways to pay homage to those who sacrificed their lives for freedom. I'd love to even see a plaque next to the slave cabins that surround the President's Mansion, dedicated to the slaves that worked the events and gatherings of previous university Presidents.

Gaskin, K. [electronic image]. (2020) Recreation of School House Door Incident.

As a society, I believe we have been programed to silence our curiosity. We become complacent with stories we're told, whether it's within the classroom or at the dinner table. We succumb to the comfortability of knowing that we don't live in the same reality that our ancestors lived, thus, considering our current circumstances as "good enough". In doing so, we formulate excuses for reasons not to push the needle on initiatives that weren't nearly as

attainable as they are now. It's the lack of empathy to reach back in history and admire the legends of the past, that reflects our individual lack of understanding and applying the history itself. What good is knowing the truth of a narrative if you don't speak truth to power? People will always be ignorant to the concept of confronting the facts of historical events, which is only a sheer reflection of their preconceived notions, nonetheless, one must seek the truth first. To start, let's provide interesting and thought-provoking facts about UA's history, instead of shallow and passive, trivia night "fun facts" in the Bama Newsletter, that perpetuates the false narrative of people like Basil Manly.



Gaskin, K. [electronic image]. (2020). Screenshot of Bama Newsletter.

As I reflect on the past research of Mead's theory, I realize how it parallels to the research I conducted in many ways. All of my findings speak to the significance of institutional identity: the idea that each educational institution wants to be represented in a particular light. They don't want the past to impact the present or future state of how the particular university is perceived. My research, as well as Blumer's and Tibbets' research, explores the application of recognition within a particular group in society. All discourses unpack the self to society relationship as a means to dissect social psychology. It's evident that the conclusions of these studies, support the leveled understanding that our society would be more socially cognitive if the people within it made a collective contribution to understanding and appreciating others in the hope to see past our differences and reconcile opposing social groups.

Conclusion

My capstone project explored the ways in which UA campus tours use naming to (dis)empower the legacies of UA history. With the foundation of Burke's narrative cluster analysis, this paper described Mead's symbolic interactionism, past research about symbolic interactionism and the power of naming in public places, themes that emerged from my analysis of campus tour scripts, and a discussion of these findings along with implications about how representation plays a major role in the way a legacy is communicated to the public. Utilizing the transcripts of three campus tours: the *Capstone Men and Women* admissions tour; the *Hallowed Grounds* tour; and the *Race and Public Memory* tour, I critiqued the rhetoric of UA Campus tours, investigated the ways that other campuses have confronted racial history and provided recommendations for what the future of storytelling within educational institutions should embody.

[electronic image]. (2017). Meeting Autherine Lucy Foster

My research, along with several others whose dedicated much time into unpacking the silence of the past, is not only the facts of our nation's history, it's the first step to living in a more unified and socially cognitive society. If we claim ourselves to be *"one nation…under God…indivisible…with liberty and justice… for all"*, each person, regardless of their intersectionality must do their part in upholding such expectations, and that starts with flipping the script. From education and politics, to entertainment and media, people fabricate ambiguous narratives that glaze over the fact that the "legends" who the monuments, streets and lecture halls are named after, are the same people who found joy, and in some cases, continues to enact systemic tactics of racial terror. If we started turning the page and began writing the script of truth and justice, that brought the heroes of the oppressed to life, to peace, to freedom, then maybe, just maybe we will learn to mend the crumbled clay pieces that once cracked from the pressures of life. It's the truth that Sojourner spoke, the reason Rosa said "No", the words Maya wrote, the justice that Thurgood fought for, the dream that Dr. King preached, and the courage that Autherine Lucy exuded, that sparks the fire within my core to continue to empower a generation that deserves the truth. For the truth of a story can only be unveiled if the storyteller is searching for truth itself.

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