HISTORICAL MONUMENTS AS MATERIAL CULTURE
Feb. 3, 2009
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MATERIAL CULTURE

- Culture: language, values, beliefs, rules, behaviors, and artifacts that characterize a society (p. 32)
- Material culture: artifacts of a society, which represent adaptations to the social and physical environment (p. 193)
- Includes clothing, buildings, inventions, food, artwork, writings, music, etc.
- Material culture both reflects and shapes nonmaterial culture (e.g., norms, values, ideology)
- James Loewen’s Lies Across America (1999): a study of monuments as material culture
- Loewen distinguishes between “past” (things that happened) and “history” (what we say about them)

REMEMBERING NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST

- Nathan Bedford Forrest was a confederate cavalry leader
- Forrest has more statues in Tennessee than any other state has honoring a single person
- Historic sites are always the tales of two eras
  - Era of person or event honored
  - Era when monument was erected
- Forrest monuments erected between Reconstruction and Civil Rights movement
- Forrest is symbol of white supremacy
  - First national leader of KKK
  - Slave trader before war, hired black convict labor after war
  - Led massacres of black soldiers during war

STORY OF THE LEMON TREE

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**FAITHFUL SLAVES OF FORT MILL, S.C.**

- Monuments throughout the South honor slaves who were loyal to the Confederacy.
- In fact, most slaves stopped working, fled, joined the Union Army and/or engaged in espionage.
- No monuments in South honor local blacks in Union Army.
- Intent of monuments is to present slavery as a benign institution that had support of slaves.

**INDIAN STATUE IN MUSCATINE, IOWA**

- Although presented in 1926 by “Muscuitine Tribe” and dedicated to “Mascoutin Indians,” no such tribe existed in Muscatine then.
- Actually built by “Improved Order of Red Men,” a white fraternal organization.
- White-built monuments to Indians tend to justify conquering Indians by:
  - Honoring Indians who helped whites.
  - Honoring Indian tribes who are no longer there.
  - Honoring Indians as “vanishing race” (as by Red Men).

**MASSACRE MONUMENT IN ALMO, IDAHO**

- Monuments are usually proposed by local organizations and present a favorable picture of community.
- Often leave out unpleasant history.
- May commemorate things that never happened.
- Almo, Idaho, monument commemorates Indian massacre of 296 whites that never happened.
- Another example: Pittsburg, Tx, has monument to airplane inventor Rev. Burrell Cannon.
- Target for snowplow revisionism?

**CATT HALL IN AMES, IOWA**

- Loewen gives as example of case where “reasonable people” disagree.
- Carrie Chapman Catt was national leader in women’s suffrage movement.
- Claimed “white supremacy will be strengthened, not weakened, by woman suffrage.”
- Opponents (Sept. 29 [1995] Movement) argued her racist statements made her an inappropriate person to name a building after.
- Proponents argued she was “product of her times.”
- Jaime Schultz argues that the decision to name our stadium after Jack Trice in 1997 was a response to Catt Hall controversy.
- Trice was largely forgotten from his death in 1923 until 1973.
- Beginning in 1973 the Trice story was retold as a story of racism and a student movement (resisted by the administration) began to name the stadium after Trice.
- Schultz believes that naming the stadium after Trice was an attempt to tell a more positive story about race at ISU.