

# Richard Reep and Julian Chambliss

Lake Eola Monument Project  
Orlando, Florida  
2015-2016

## The Problem

In collaboration with Dr. Julian Chambliss, then of Rollins College, we sought to define this problem early when the discussion of confederate monuments was just beginning. The majority of monuments were removed across the South.

We agreed that removal of Confederate monuments left a larger problem behind: without them, how do future generations understand the history of their cities?

Erasing the past deceives the citizenry and creates a false history that avoids uncomfortable truths.

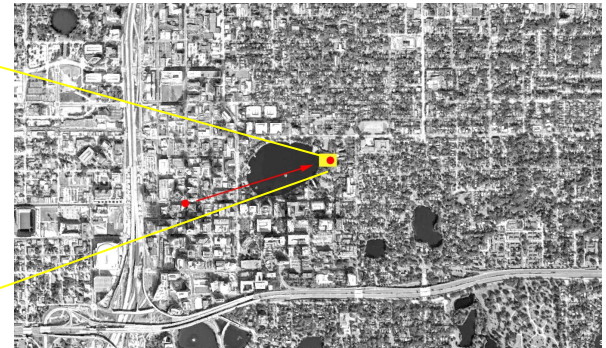


## History

Built in 1911, the Daughters of the Confederacy erected this monument on the street by the Orange County Courthouse. Only in the 1980s was it relocated to the east side of Lake Eola. Today, the monument is in a local cemetery.

Both of its locations created a negative boundary. Its original location reinforced Orlando's reputation as a "sundown" town with a hard geographical marker. Regardless of its location, the marker prevents inclusivity in the public realm.

Source: "1911 Confederate Soldier Monument · Hidden in Plain Sight: A Selection of Central Florida Monuments · RICHES." [Richesmi.cah.ucf.edu](http://Richesmi.cah.ucf.edu), [richesmi.cah.ucf.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/cflmonuments/1911csm](http://richesmi.cah.ucf.edu/omeka/exhibits/show/cflmonuments/1911csm). Accessed 22 Sept. 2023.



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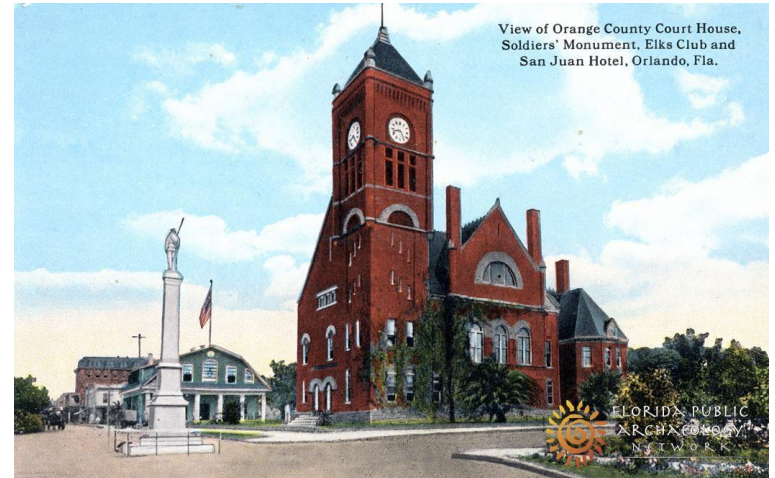
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## Context

Lake Eola's monument resembles many others throughout the South. In fact, they were mass-produced at a time when Civil War veterans were dying off. The Daughters of the Confederacy raised funds, often through a subscription service, to procure and erect the monuments in various cities and towns.



2016



1920s

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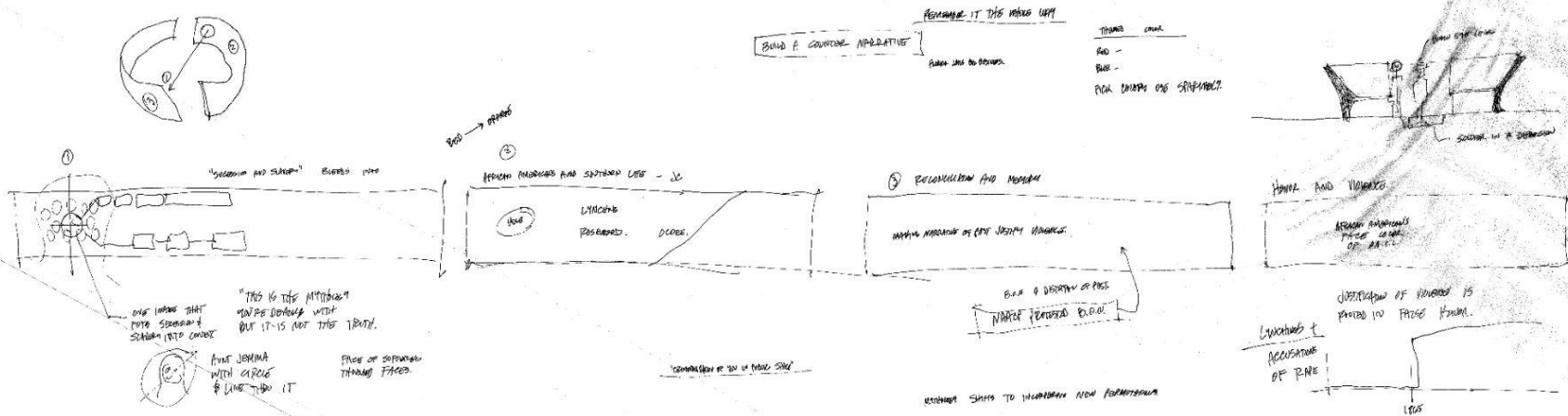
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## Solution

Chambliss urged the creation of context for the actual object. The goal was to present it in a way that allows an understanding of the Reconstruction and post-reconstruction period of central Florida, create a path towards spatial justice in the public realm, and prevents the erasure of truth.

These diagrams grew out of our collaboration in an effort to conceptualize the solution.

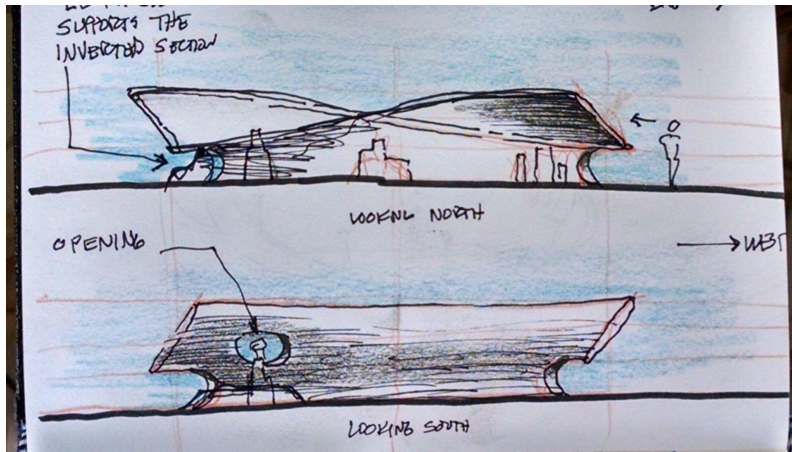
We proposed a “context ring” around the monument, and de-elevated the statue so it is at eye level with the average viewer.





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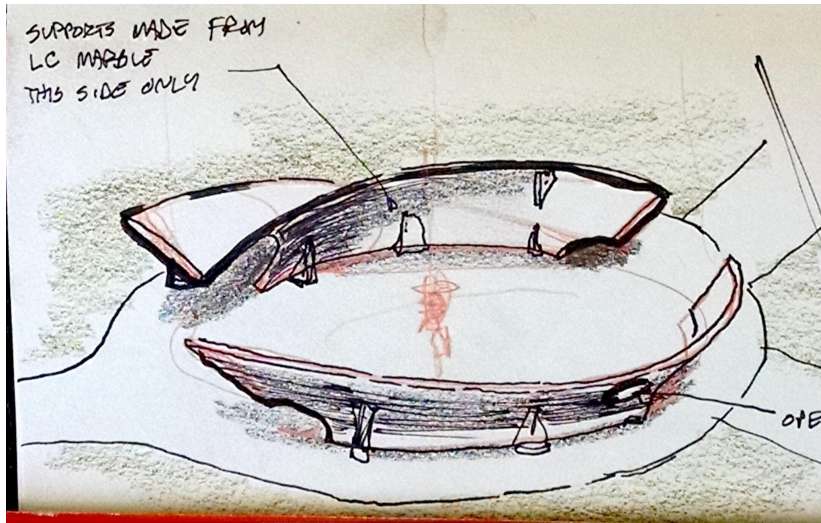


## A context ring as a Möbius strip?

A Möbius strip has one topological side, created by twisting a strip of material and joining the two ends together. This became a multivalent metaphor to reference how the black and white worlds of the region were two completely separate worlds yet intimately linked together.

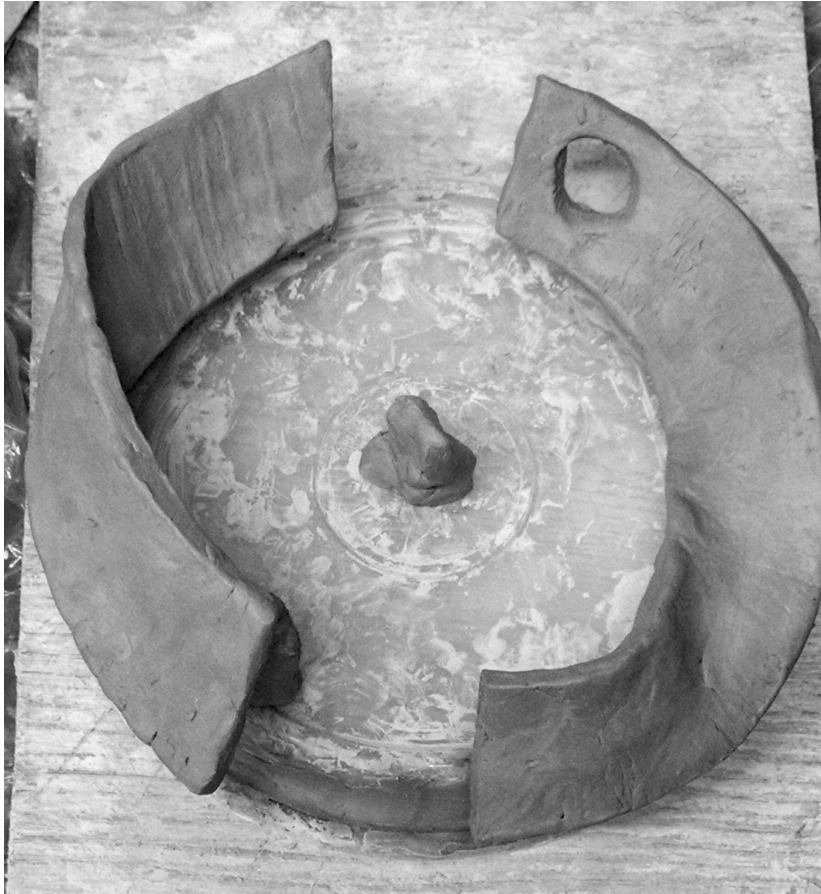
In this solution, the tall pylon and base of the monument are repurposed into support bases for the context ring. The statue remains in his current position but is no longer put on a pedestal.

As one passes by the strip, there could be an opening allowing the outside viewer a glimpse into the interior of the monument and at the statue itself.



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## Found Truths

This clay model shows the Möbius strip with two openings, dividing it into four panels. The twist creates intentionally awkward curved planes which translate into themes on each of the four panels.

**Panel 1. SECESSION AND SLAVERY:** On this panel, the real cause of secession - defence of an immoral institution - is depicted. This sets up the mythology to understand the decision to erect a monument in 1911.

**Panel 2. AFRICAN AMERICANS AND SOUTHERN LIFE:** On this panel, the reality of the African-American experience will have a record of lynchings, the massacres at Ocoee and Rosewood, Jim Crow, and restriction of development.

**Panel 3. RECONCILIATION AND MEMORY.** On this panel, the mythology of the “noble cause” of the confederacy shifts to incorporate new permutations. Rationalized violence against blacks was based on a carefully manufactured narrative to explain the Civil War’s end.

**Panel 4. HONOR AND VIOLENCE.** On this last panel, protests against the formation of the NAACP and mythical rapes of white southern women to justify murders are documented. A new “honor imperative” leads to a fabricated need to build the Confederate Monument.