

**Monuments of Racial Terror:  
Spatial Violence, Confederate Monuments, and Lynching Memorials**

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***Abstract:***

This paper examines the relation of memorial aesthetics between Confederate monuments and lynching memorials. It argues that Confederate monuments are problematic not only because of their false relation to history, but also because of their political relation to the aesthetics of space and place. This can be seen in direct relationship to lynching memorials and the culture they actively produce and normalize, which is most thoroughly expressed in lynching forms of racial terror. This paper focuses on the lynching memory of Hayes and Mary Turner not only to engage the significance of the aesthetics of lynching, but also to illustrate why it is important that we think of lynching memorials as posing a critique beyond our collective political imaginary. It argues that, as monuments of racial terror, they spatialize colonial violence, memory, and culture, at the same time that they efface the aesthetic traces of lynching generationally as an extension of the culture of a place and as a continual expression of political sovereignty. It concludes that focusing on the aesthetics of lynching memory demands that we not only question the relation of art and representation to cultural narratives and memory, but also question the past and continual political relations. And, more than this, we have to actively work to dismantle not only the markers of colonial violence, but its political form and relation as well.

***Keywords:*** spectacle terror lynching, Confederate memorials, aesthetics, anti-Black violence, political sovereignty, anti-Black colonialism, memorialization, racial terror

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