

Name: _____

Class: _____

Off-Site Instruction -- (10 pts)

Day 5

“Magnolia Miscreants” Analysis

Read the attached article, “Magnolia Miscreants Strike War Memorial” and answer the following questions.

1. Do you think that this article is appropriately titled?
2. Would this article appear in a local or national newspaper? Include a quotation in your answer to back up your opinion.
3. Identify three other incidents of vandalism which the town has experienced.
4. Previous incident does the writer feel is the most serious? Explain why this might be the case.
5. What are the motives of the vandals?
6. Do you think that these motives are justified? Explain your answer fully.

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7. In your own words, explain Reverend Hart's views on the matter of these acts of vandalism.

8. Why might the Reverend's views have such a strong influence on the people of the town?

9. Does the art teacher believe that the graffiti is the work of one individual or a group? What has caused him to think this?

10. Is this article written in an objective or subjective manner? Explain your answer with reasons and quotations.

11. Miss Hattie lamented "the decline of decency and common courtesy" - in your own words explain what she means by this as it relates to the graffiti.

12. What can we infer about the size of the town of Magnolia from this article?

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13. Do you think that vandalism is ever an acceptable form of self-expression? Give reasons for your answer.

14. Write an alternative title for this article, which shows a more positive opinion of the graffiti artist's action.

Magnolia Miscreants Strike War Memorial

by Cyrus Honeycutt

IN what appears to be the latest incident in a string of vandal attacks on our city's most significant and cherished landmarks, the Magnolia Confederate War Memorial was last night defaced with antiwar slogans and cartoons that appear to mock Magnolia's distinguished military history.

According to a source at the Sheriff's Department, officers responded to a 911 call at 2 a.m. this morning reporting a disturbance at the monument. Upon arrival at the scene of the crime, one officer described the area surrounding the memorial as "littered with empty spray paint cans, used stencils, and pacifist propaganda material". The perpetrators, however, had already fled the scene and have not yet been apprehended.

The similarities between this assault on our town's cultural history and those that have recently taken place on the town hall, the police station and, perhaps most shocking of all, on the family mausoleums of the town's founding fathers, seem to indicate a dangerous pattern. This has already been noted by Mayor Ravenwood, who this morning released a statement condemning the desecration of civic property. (The Mayor's statement can be read in full on page 6)

Many prominent local



The area around the memorial was littered with graffiti paraphernalia.

business owners have also voiced their outrage. Miss Hattie Evesham, of Miss Hattie's Cakes and Bakes, lamented "the decline of decency and common courtesy", while Amos Barkley, owner of Amos' Autos, decried the "outright contempt for the law and our wonderful community".

However, not all of Magnolia's inhabitants view our resident reprobates in the same light. Arthur DeWitt, a Magnolia High School art teacher suggests that the vandalism could in fact be considered an act of self-expression. Mr. DeWitt even claims the repeat offenders show "remarkable talent and a real eye for color and design, reminiscent of the British graffiti artist Banksy." It is this distinctive, consistent style

that has lead Mr. DeWitt to propose the theory that Magnolia's crime wave may actually be the work of one individual and not, as our law enforcement officials believe, the coordinated actions of a gang.

This possibility will undoubtedly be received with relief by the majority of the town's citizens, particularly after the unease generated by Reverend Hart's sermon last Sunday. The Reverend has responded to calls for his reassignment by clarifying that his comments were in no way meant to justify or encourage delinquent behavior. However, he stands by his assertion that "these attacks could serve as a timely catalyst for a long-overdue conversation on race-relations and social justice in Magnolia". •