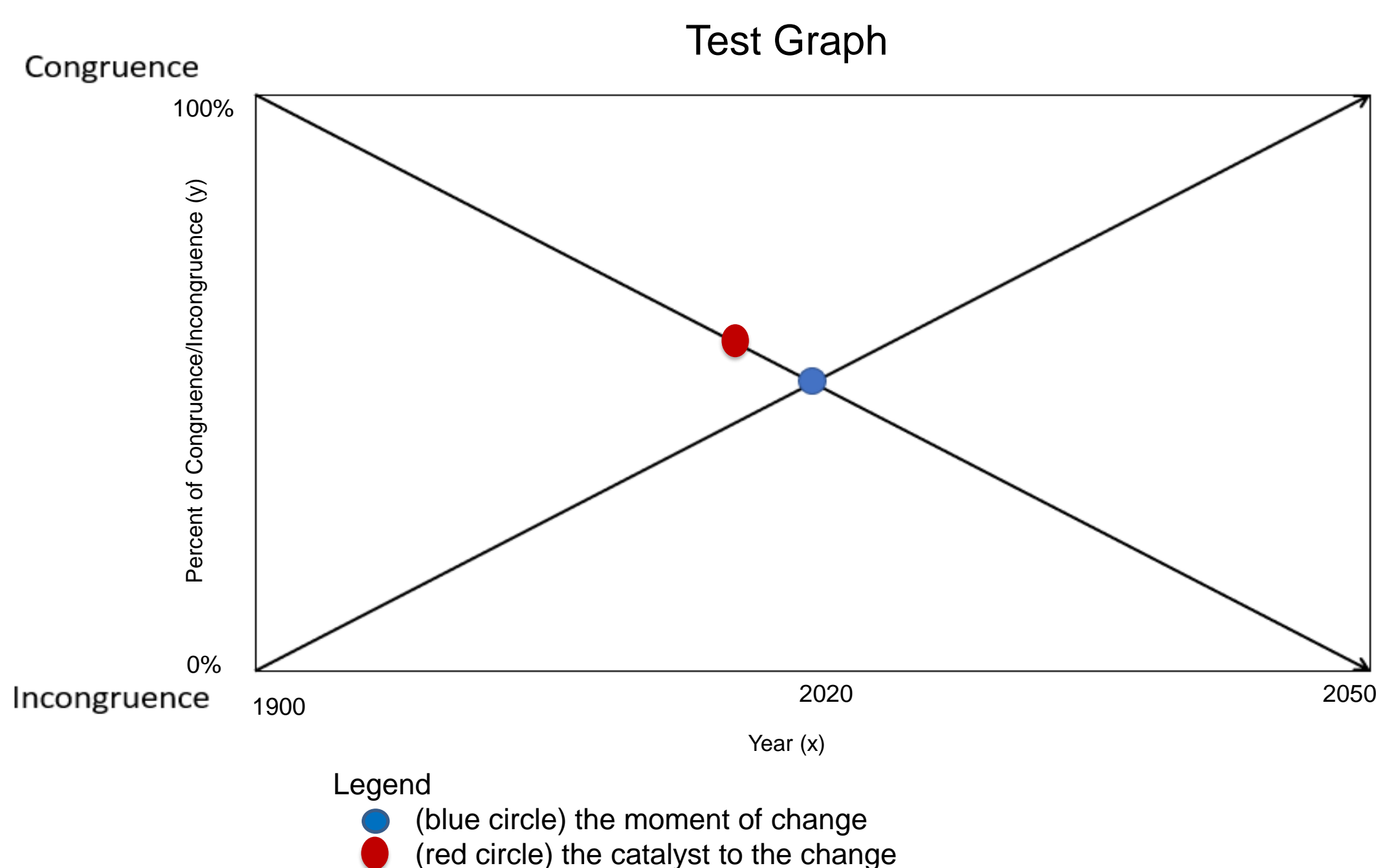


# Mnemonicicide: The Killing of American Public Memory

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## Introduction

Public memory is being removed in the United States of America at a rapid rate. More specifically, Confederate monuments, memorials, symbols, statues, and other works are being removed from the public eye. "Mnemonicicide: The Killing of American Public Memory" aims to find how these removals are affecting the greater public.

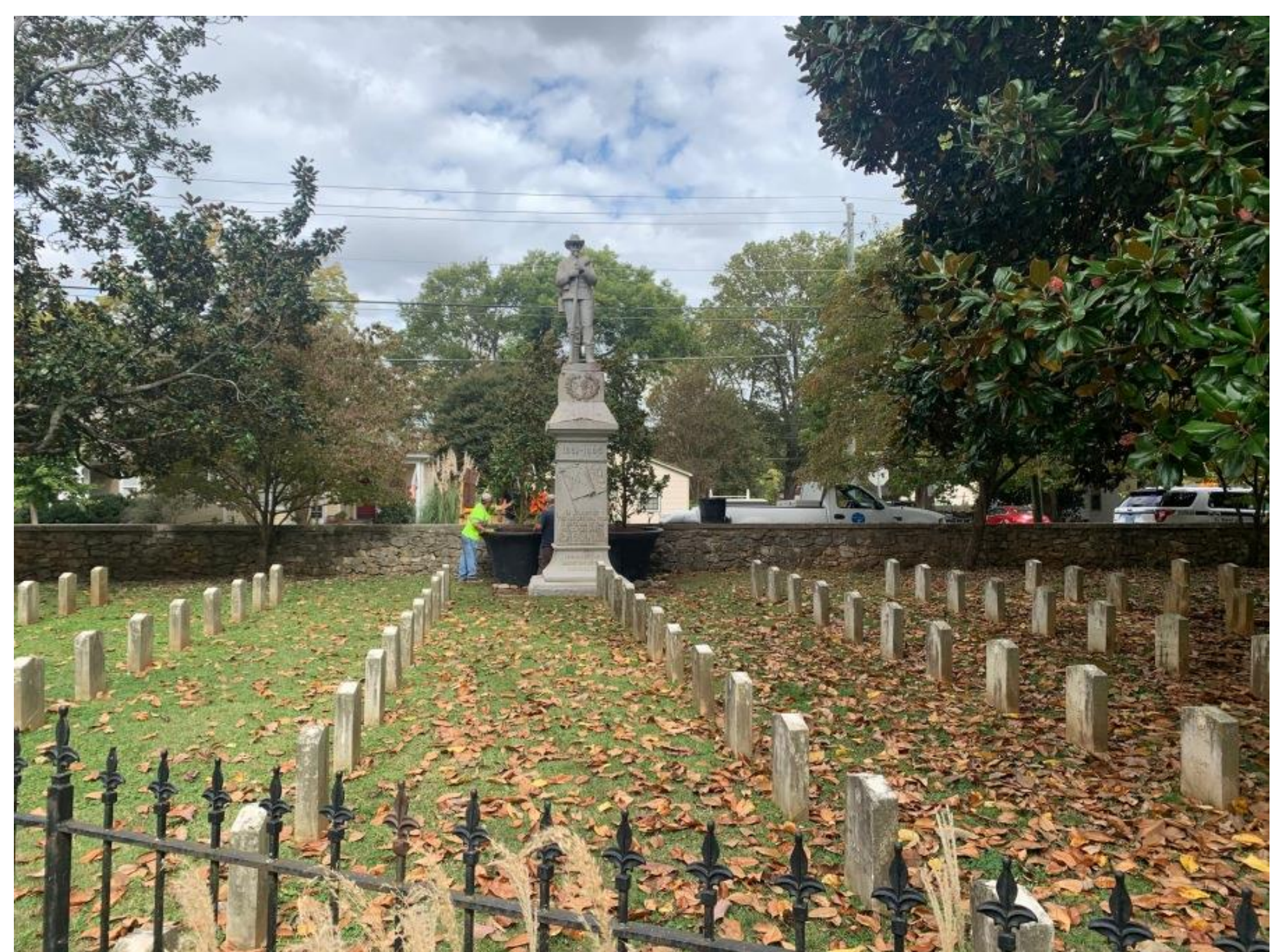


## Impact/Conclusions

The public memory landscape in America is changing more than it ever has before and is even happening in Huntsville where a Confederate monument was moved from the courthouse to Maple Hill Cemetery. Due to the timeliness of this research, examining the effects of the removals in the Communication Arts field is fresh. Studying the removals allowed us to grasp a working framework to understand the complete lifecycle of public memory texts.

## Key Findings

Based on Michael McGee's "ideograph," we coined the term "incongruent ideograph" to explain how the removals are affecting the greater public. The Confederate public memory removed over the past 20 years are incongruent ideographs, meaning the ideologies portrayed in the text represent a select group of people, and could not work as an ideograph for the evolving public. The ideograph gives the reason to argue for the removal, while some hold onto a previous culture making it incongruent. When public memory is first unveiled, it is at its highest congruence (aligning most with the ideas of the local public), but the congruence begins to decay overtime. Incongruence grows as the culture of a group changes, and eventually causes a removal of public memory.



Confederate monument at its new home in Maple Hill Cemetery (WHNT News 19)

## References

- McGee, Michael Calvin. "The 'Ideograph': A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology." Quarterly Journal of Speech. Quarterly Journal of Speech, January 31, 1980. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ221278>.
- Photographers of WHNT News 19 [photographer]. "Confederate monument at its new home in Maple Hill Cemetery." (photograph). Huntsville: Nexstar Media Inc., 2022. From WHNT News 19, Internet, <https://whnt.com/news/huntsville/crews-removing-confederate-statue-outside-madison-county-courthouse/>

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