Warm greetings to everyone gathered here today.

My original name is Gaen hia uh, my colonized name is Betty Lyons and I am a proud citizen of the Onondaga Nation and President of the American Indian Law Alliance.

I want to begin by acknowledging the original peoples of these territories, the Lenape Peoples. My own people, the Haudenosaunee also had influence on these territories--and we still do today.

I want to thank all the members of the NYC Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers. I want to acknowledge my Mohawk sister Dr. Audra Simpson, as well as Dr. John Tchen, Executive Director of NYU's Asian/Pacific/American Institute, and Associate Professor at NYU, who has hosted many Indigenous events at the A/P/A Institute.

With my short time, I would like to shine some light on the best kept secret in American history--the 'Doctrine of Discovery.' And I would like to talk about how the monuments to Christopher Columbus, and the celebration of Christopher Columbus keeps this secret hidden.

The U.S. system of land title is rooted in centuries old documents from the Vatican--the Catholic Church, known as papal bulls. Collectively, they are known as the 'Doctrine of Discovery.' The first papal bull (an edict from the Pope similar to a Presidential Order) of the Doctrine is titled "Terra Nullius," (1095 AD) and states that any land in which Christians do not live is declared "empty" and open to conquest. These papal bulls gave Europeans the justification to *"invade, conquer, fight, subjugate"* Indigenous Peoples around the world. While these documents were written centuries ago, the U.S. Supreme Court has cited the Doctrine of Discovery to deny land rights to the Oneida Nation as recently as 2005 AD. This is not history. Claims that Columbus was simply a man from the past, out of step with today's values ignoring the fact that this is ongoing. This is not in the past.

Continuing to celebrate Columbus, and leaving monuments of him up is the continued act of erasure to ensure that "Americans" will never be educated on the reality of our harsh shared history. The Papal Bulls set forth a mindset and perception that Indigenous Peoples such as myself were not human therefore not equal to all other peoples.

The statues depicting Columbus ignore his enslavement and massacre of Indigenous Peoples, and the promotion of sex slavery of children, as young as 9 years old. These are NOT merely a 'difference of opinion,' these are historical facts and they are taken directly from Columbus' own diary entries and journals. This is not someone worthy of a monument or of celebration.

Columbus began the imposition of the Doctrine of Discovery, which supposedly granted European settlers sovereignty over non-Christian lands "discovered" by their explorers. That continues to provide the legal underpinning of the denial of land rights to our Indigenous Peoples. Columbus set off the genocide of our peoples. Columbus also opened the way for the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

It is easier for " Americans" to continue the belief that the "Americas," known to us as Turtle Island, was uninhabited then to face the realities of genocide, attacks on the environment, the stealing of our lands and the enslavement of our peoples and those brought here to be enslaved.

We are not asking for reconciliation as it is not possible to reconcile all that has been done but you can make a conscientious choice to do the right thing as these unspeakable horrors and many more are not deserving of celebration. These monuments to hate must come down now!

Remove Columbus, Honor the Lenape

Imaynalla Kasankichis, noqapata Indígena runay, Xwanzhiikan runa. Sutiyqa Arnaldu, Qhichwapuni kani! Hello, my Indigenous people, and American people. My name is Arnaldu and I am an *Indigenous Quechua*. (15 sec)

at Columbus Circle

I call, as one of a multitude from our city, for the Statue of Columbus to be brought down and that he be replaced by the Indigenous People of Our City, the *Lenape* People. For what is a statue? It is *not history only as past, but as history lived out now*. They are heroes of daily reverence, standing high upon a pedestal for the public's gaze. For statues of Christ or the etching of Washington on our coins are *not history as dead, but as living heroes* whom American Institutions choose as worthy of public REmembrance. Now *we* must choose, for Columbus is no hero, not to Natives, nor should he be for Italians.

To condemn Columbus is to *honor* the Italian people, for Columbus cannot truly represent Italy's rich history with his vile character, such as in the accounts of Friar Bartolome de las Casas who witnessed Columbus and his crew's "wholesale slaughter" of the Taínos, where they snatched "suckling infants" who were shredded "headlong against the rocks." Columbus even mocked Christ himself, for Taínos were hung over a bonfire to "burn them alive thirteen at a time" mocking the Last Supper while the crew called it an "honour of our Saviour and the twelve Apostles." If a Christian's blood should remain cold, do they deserve to partake of Christ's wine?

There are figures beyond Columbus worthy of the title "hero:" such as Carla Capponi, an Italian stateswoman who joined the Italian Resistance to fight Mussolini in WWII, or Alcide de Gasperi and Altiero Spinelli, two of the European Union's Founding Fathers, that sought to end

the history of a divided Europe in constant war. Those who cannot see heroes in 500 years either see their people as mediocre, or disparage a beautiful history with their ignorance; and I see Italy's rich history as the opposite of mediocrity.

But, we ***must*** overturn this legacy of genocide for our city to truly honor heroism, for without Indigenous peoples there would be **no** United States. For in 1988, Congress passed H. Con. Res. 331 recognizing the influence the Iroquois Confederacy had on the Founding Fathers, so much so that Iroquois principles [say "quote"] "were incorporated into the Constitution itself" [say "and unquote"]. And the first US treaty was made with the Lenape People, misnamed "Delaware Indians," on "September 17, 1778." It recognized the US as having [s. "quote] "assumed a trust responsibility and obligation to Indian tribes and their members" [s. "and unquote]. Yes, diplomacy as brotherhood. Let the City of New York be an leader and begin to show the respect native peoples deserve by (1st) replacing Columbus with a figure of a Lenape woman, as a grandmother to this Land, and (2nd) renaming Columbus Circle to Lenape Circle, for if Columbus is evil so too is it to have a place named after him. – Anchatapuni Agradecekuyki . Thank You.

NYC

Mayoral Advisory Commission
on
City Art, Monuments, and Markers

Testimony of G. A. Mudge

November 27, 2017

Good morning. Written copies of this testimony have been provided for all members of the Commission and the four ex-officio city agencies. The written testimony contains photographs.

I have written, photographed, and published two books on the statues in Central Park. My testimony is limited to these monuments. The opinions in this testimony are my own and do not reflect the views of any organization or other person.

The Statues in Central Park

While *Angel of the Waters* at the Bethesda Terrace is the only statue in the original plan for the park, there are now 60 statues which have emerged without a uniform set of guidelines. The first was dedicated in 1859 to commemorate the centennial birthday of German philosopher Johann C. F. von Schiller. The most recent was dedicated in 2011 to honor Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave who became an inspirational anti-slavery orator and publisher of abolitionist newspapers. A new monument is being planned – the Woman Suffrage Movement Monument to honor Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony and other leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement.

There is remarkable variety in the existing family of statues. For example, there are four military monuments, one statue of a Native American, nine statues of musicians and dancers, nine of poets and writers, two statues of Christopher Columbus and two of Alice from *Alice in Wonderland*, one statue of a sculptor, one of a doctor, one of a husky, and many more. Four statues celebrate Latin American independence from Spain. This rich variety would not have emerged if one set of guidelines had been in place over the last 160 years. The collection reflects the evolution of values and sensitivities of New Yorkers over time.

Funding for the statues came from a variety of sources – immigrants to honor heroes in the home country, the City of New York, federal grants for relief programs in the Depression, public subscriptions, gifts from foreign governments and cities, and many individuals including small donors and wealthy philanthropists.

Each statue is a combination of fact and fantasy – the fact of bronze or stone in a certain shape and color and the fantasy of the sculptor and of each individual viewer. Each sculptor has exercised artistic license to be both creative and selective in the portrayal of the subject. Each viewer has artistic license to assess and interpret a statue, but not to vandalize it, either physically or by unfair criticism.

To the extent any statue tells a story, that story is not complete; and each statue asks the viewer to step back into history – history of the park, New York City, the United States, art, music, and the world – and to understand and assess the statue as art in the broader historical context.

The Task of the Commission

Part of the task of the Commission is to identify any "symbols of hate" or "offensive" monuments and make recommendations.

The term "symbol of hate" almost defies definition. The terms "target of hate" or "targets of vandalism" may be easier to understand. If a statue is intensely disliked, for whatever reason, perhaps it should be removed, moved, or explained. This said, we must question brief sound bites of hate aimed at any particular statue and try to understand the broad context in which a statue was originally created and dedicated.

Specific Statues

1. *107th Infantry Memorial*

This remarkable statue is almost certainly a symbol of the horror, courage, and hate in trench warfare during World War I. Two of seven soldiers are wounded, one severely; two care for the wounded; and three are charging with bayonets drawn. The courage and hate in their faces are unmistakable.

This monument should remain on Fifth Avenue at 67th Street as a memorial to the 107th Infantry which suffered heavy casualties.

Hate portrayed in a monument does not make the monument *per se* offensive to require removal.

2. *Christopher Columbus*

There are two statues of Christopher Columbus in Central Park, one at Columbus Circle and one at the south end of the Mall. Both statues commemorate the 400th anniversary of the 1492 landing of Columbus in the West Indies. The statues celebrate the voyage to and the safe landing in the New World.

Neither statue portrays the cruelty, slavery, and torture of indigenous peoples during the subsequent administration by Columbus of colonized territories. These unfortunate aspects of the legacy of Columbus are not honored by either statue.

Neither statue is a symbol of hate or offensive, and both should remain in their current locations. We should recognize and appreciate both statues for what they are and not criticize them for what they are not.

3. *James Marion Sims*

The statue of Dr. James Marion Sims portrays the doctor standing in the surgical uniform of his day. The statue does not depict the doctor operating on any person. The statue does not display horror or hate in any way. The statue is in good taste by any test of its visible appearance. The statue is not a symbol of hate or offensive as such.

Nevertheless, the statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims is understandably controversial. For example, NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito alleges that Dr. Sims conducted "horrific, painful, medical atrocities on non-anesthetized enslaved Black women with free-reign" and calls for the removal "of this repugnant statue *from our neighborhood* once and for all." (emphasis added). In sympathy with the East Harlem community in which the Mueum of the City of New York is located, the statement of the Museum acknowledges "that there is a compelling argument to be made for the statue's removal as a symbol of unethical racist medical practice." Also in sympathy with the East Harlem community in which The New York Academy of Medicine is located, the letter dated August 25, 2017 from the President of the Academy to Mayor Bill de Blasio objects to "performing surgical experiments on enslaved women without anesthesia and without consent" and further states that public honors should be reserved "for those who have made achievements in health and medicine without infringing on the civil and human rights of others."

There are two questions:

1. Given these accusations, why was the statue ever permitted by NYC officials to be erected and twice dedicated, first in 1894 in Bryant Park and then in 1934 in its current location on Fifth Avenue opposite The New York Academy of Medicine?

2. What should be done now with the statue?

The answer to the first question can be found in the medical journals. I recommend to all members of the Commission one article in particular titled "The Medical Ethics of Dr. J Marion Sims: A Fresh Look at the Historical Record" by L. Lewis Wall, MD. This article is well researched, well written and balanced. It appeared in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* in June 2006 and is available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2563360. The introductory abstract of this article states "*... the charges that have been made against Sims are largely without merit.*" (emphasis added) A complete quotation of the abstract and the conclusion of this article are included after the photograph of the statue. The entire article merits reflective study by anyone trying to understand the importance of the contributions of Dr. Sims and the controversy around him.

The answer to the first question is simple: Dr. Sims was considered in 1894 and 1934 to be a great doctor by both the medical profession and his patients, and there was no public controversy.

What should be done with the statue now that there is public controversy?

There seem to be five options. Briefly:

a. *Maintaining the statue as is* in its current location is not a good option. The antipathy of the East Harlem community and its leaders is intense and not likely to abate. The statue is surrounded by a barricade and subject to vandalism. The current situation is not fair to the community, to Dr. Sims, or to the statue and its sculptor.

b. *Adding a plaque near the statue in its current location* to provide historical context and explanation has been discussed. A plaque would require text that respects and honors both Dr. Sims and the slave women who were his patients and cured by his care. Obtaining agreement on a balanced text may be an insurmountable challenge. Further, a plaque may not be sufficient to dissipate the intense antagonism to the statue.

c. *Removing the statue to storage* would be a sad result.

d. *Moving the statue to a hospital or medical center* should be considered. This would require an institution willing to accept and maintain the statue and quite probably adding a plaque near the statue in its new location. A plaque would involve the issues identified above.

e. *Moving the statue to a site inside Central Park* is a viable option.

This would remove the statue from the hostility of the East Harlem community. Several statues in Central Park have been moved from their original locations, and moving this statue a second time should be possible.

The Woman Suffrage Movement Monument is currently being planned for a location on the Mall. There is room on the Mall just south of this site for another monument – a Woman Health Monument which would consist of two equally important elements:

- The current statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims, and

- Statues honoring Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey, three slaves who were patients of Dr. Sims and whose affliction and cure contributed to the advancement of medicine so important to women.

The current statue is appropriate to honor Dr. Sims, but additional statues are appropriate to honor his slave patients. Without statues that honor the patients, the statue honoring Dr. Sims does not by itself tell the story of the important medical advances made together by the doctor and his patients.

Thank you.

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A PDF of this testimony is available to the Commission upon request.

NYC

Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers

Photographs and Documents Accompanying

Testimony of G. A. Mudge

November 27, 2017

All photographs are from
Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland (Fotobs Books, 2014) by G. A. Mudge.
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1. *107th Infantry Memorial*

2. *Christopher Columbus* at Columbus Circle

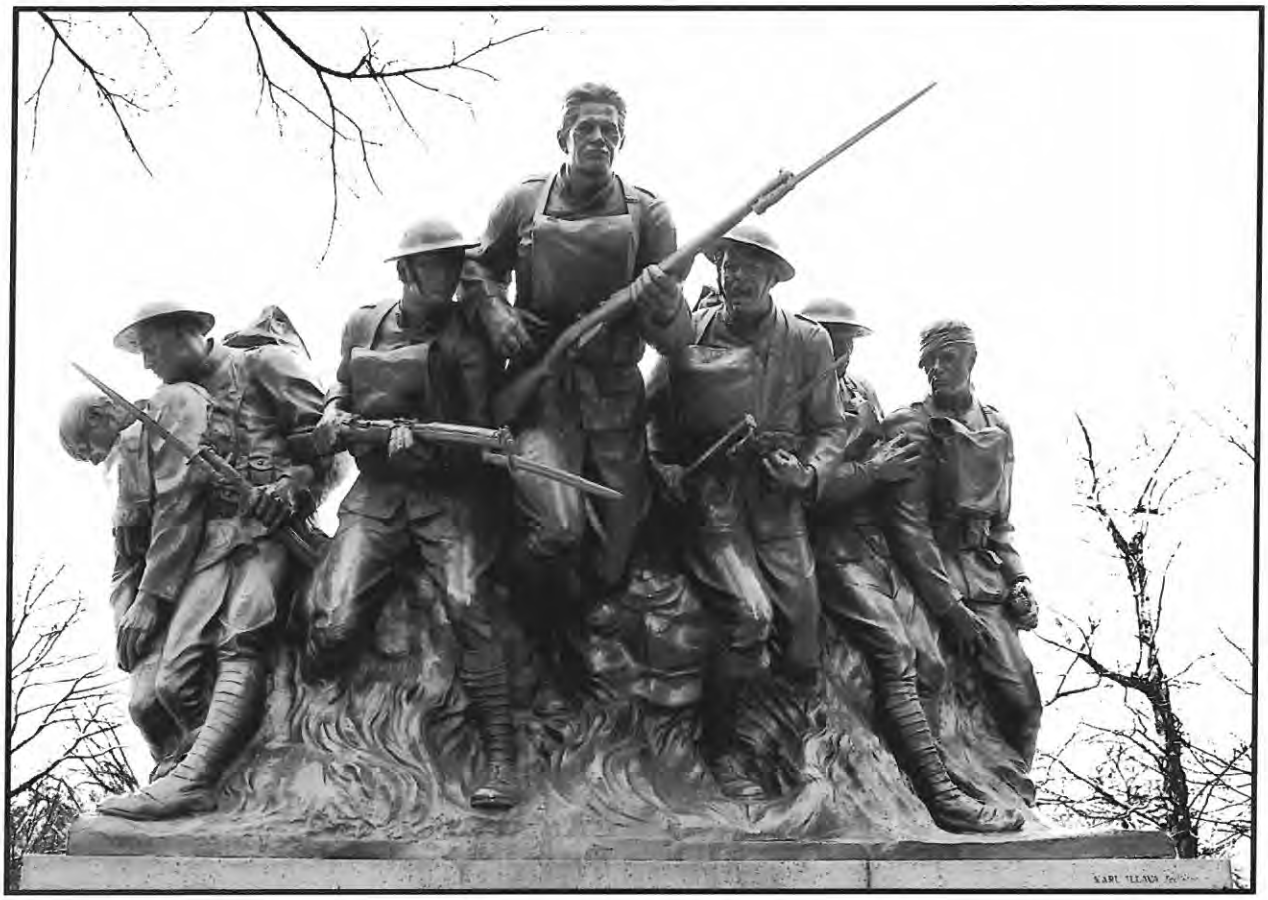
3. *Christopher Columbus* on the Mall

4. The two statues of *Christopher Columbus*, side by side

5. *Dr. James Marion Sims*
   - Photograph and Description of the Statue
   - "The Medical Ethics of Dr. J Marion Sims:
     A Fresh Look at the Historical Record" by L. Lewis Wall, MD
   - Options for the Sims Statue

6. Offerings of Fotobs Books about statues in Central Park

From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 62.
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107th Infantry Memorial

Karl Illava (1896–1954) of the United States, Sculptor
Donated by the Seventh Regiment New York 107th Infantry Memorial Committee
Dedicated in 1927
Fifth Avenue at E67

As a sergeant in the 107th New York Infantry Regiment during World War I, Karl Illava saw and lived the chaos and horror of war. As a sculptor, Karl Illava detailed in bronze the hell of war that he had experienced. In the pyramid of seven soldiers in battle, two are wounded, two are caring for the wounded, and three are mounting a bayonet charge across Fifth Avenue and down East 67th Street. The sculptor is reported to have used his own hands as a model for the hands of all seven soldiers. The whirling footing vividly suggests the turmoil of war. The statue stands nine feet above street level atop a stepped granite base. The 107th was formed from the volunteer Seventh Regiment New York and suffered heavy casualties fighting in France — more than fifty percent killed or wounded. Four members of the 107th received the Congressional Medal of Honor. The inscription on the base reads:

SEVENTH REGIMENT NEW YORK
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTH UNITED STATES INFANTRY
1917 IN MEMORIAM 1918

From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- **Statues** in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 63.
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From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 42.
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Christopher Columbus (1451–1506)

Gaetano Russo (1852–?) of Italy, Sculptor
Donated by Italians Resident in America (wording on inscription at the base)
Dedicated in 1892
Columbus Circle, Central Park South at Central Park West (W59)

The *Columbus Monument* at Columbus Circle commemorates the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the Americas by Christopher Columbus. The inscription at the base reads:

SCOFFED AT BEFORE,
DURING THE VOYAGE, MENACED,
AFTER IT, CHAINED,
AS GENEROUS AS OPPRESSED,
TO THE WORLD HE GAVE A WORLD.

From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 43.
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Columbus at the tiller stands atop a 26-foot column decorated by ship anchors and prows. A youth at the base depicts the *Genius of Discovery* with his left hand on top of a globe. Two bronze reliefs at the base portray the voyage of Columbus and his landing in the New World. The Italian sculptor celebrates nautical conquest and discovery of the New World.

From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 44.
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Christopher Columbus (1451–1506)

Jerónimo Suñol (1839–1902) of Spain, Sculptor
Donated by Citizens of New York through the
New York Genealogical and Biological Society; Dedicated in 1894
Literary Walk (E66), facing *William Shakespeare*



The *Christopher Columbus* statue in the park also commemorates the 400th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus. The bronze statue is based on a marble statue erected in 1885 in Madrid. The Spanish sculptor presents Columbus at "The Landing," giving thanks to God, holding the Spanish flag draped over the globe, a cross on the flagstaff, and wearing a pendant of Queen Isabella. In 1894, *The Art Interchange* wrote:

> Here is Columbus, the living man. This is a being, animated, whose attitude expresses only one thing — gratitude. In the face there is an intensity, an earnestness, which makes one forget that it is cold bronze; for those open lips are actually muttering, those eyes expressing, thankfulness.

From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- **Statues** in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 45.
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Christopher Columbus

Statues to Commemorate 400th Anniversary of the First Voyage of Columbus to the New World



Gaetano Russo
Italian Sculptor

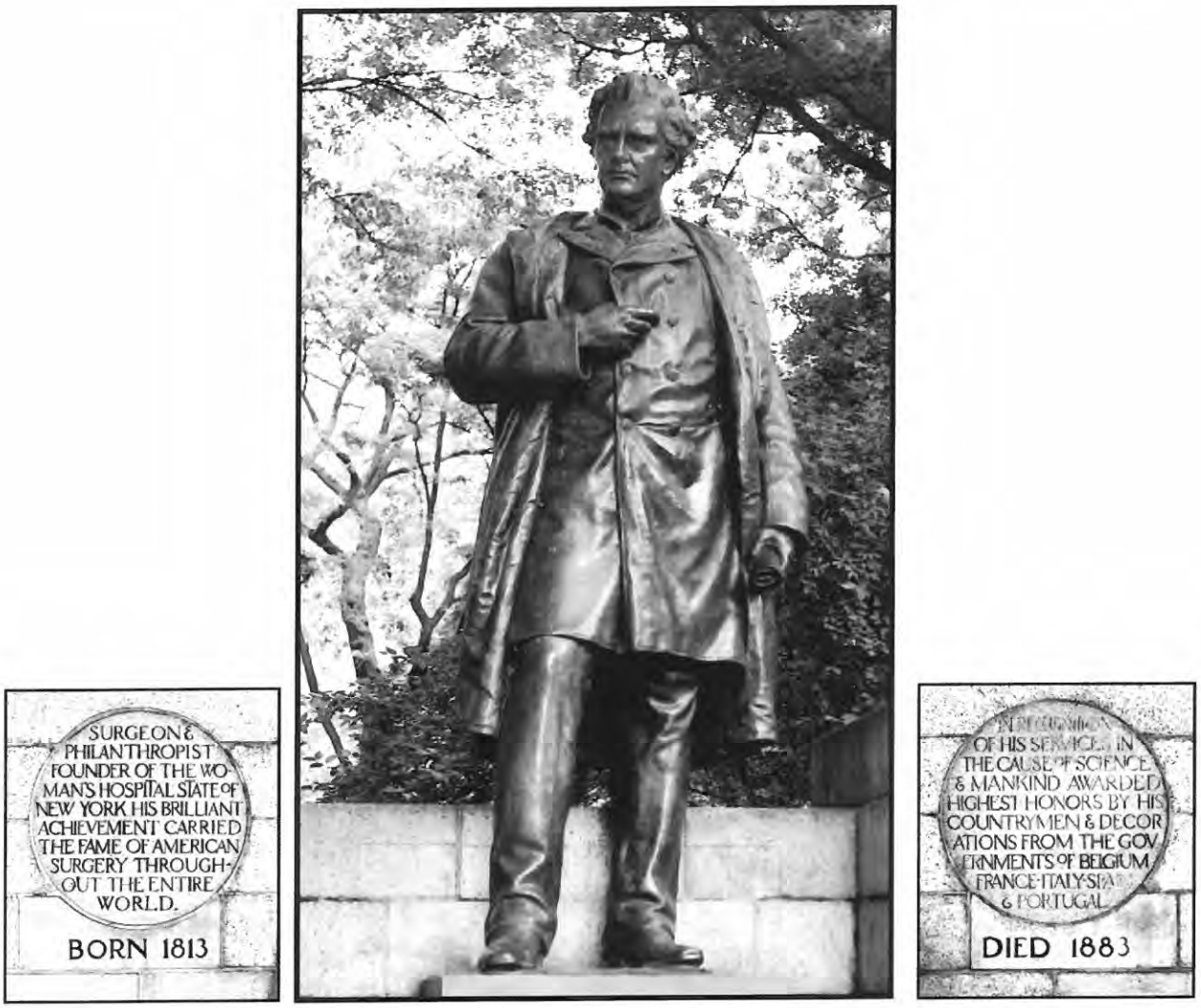


Jerónimo Suñol
Spanish Sculptor

These statues are not symbols of hate.
The first portrays nautical skill -- the sea captain with his hand on the rudder of his ship.
The second portrays religious faith -- the sea captain giving thanks to God for a safe voyage.
These statues are not offensive.

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From Mudge, G. A. *Alice in Central Park -- Statues in Wonderland* (Fotobs Books, 2014), p. 64.
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Dr. James Marion Sims (1813–1883)

Ferdinand von Miller II (1842–1929) of Germany, Sculptor
Donated through public subscription through the *Medical Record*; Dedicated in 1934
Fifth Avenue at E103, opposite The New York Academy of Medicine

Dr. Sims was born in South Carolina, studied medicine in Philadelphia, and practiced medicine in South Carolina, Alabama, New York City, and Europe. He developed surgical procedures, instruments, and suturing methods and materials. Some have credited Dr. Sims to be the father of modern gynecology; others have criticized him for his surgical experiments on slaves in Alabama. During the Civil War, Dr. Sims lived in Europe, where his patients included Empress Eugénie, the wife of Napoleon III. Dr. Sims founded Woman's Hospital of New York and was president of the American Medical Association. In the statue, Dr. Sims is wearing the surgical uniform of his day. The statue was originally dedicated in 1894 in Bryant Park and rededicated in 1934 on Fifth Avenue.

"The Medical Ethics of Dr. J Marion Sims: A Fresh Look at the Historical Record" by
L. Lewis Wall, MD, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, June 2006
Available at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2563360

Abstract (quoted in its entirety)

Visicovaginal fistula was a catastrophic complication of childbirth among 19th century American women. The first consistently successful operation for this condition was developed by Dr J Marion Sims, an Alabama surgeon who carried out a series of experimental operations on black slave women between 1845 and 1849. Numerous modern authors have attacked Sims's medical ethics, arguing that he manipulated the institution of slavery to perform ethically unacceptable human experiments on powerless, unconsenting women. This article reviews these allegations using primary historical source material and concludes that the charges that have been made against Sims are largely without merit. Sims's modern critics have discounted the enormous suffering experienced by fistula victims, have ignored the controversies that surrounded the introduction of anaesthesia into surgical practice in the middle of the 19th century, and have consistently misrepresented the historical record in their attacks on Sims. Although enslaved African American women certainly represented a "vulnerable population" in the 19th century American South, the evidence suggests that Sims's original patients were willing participants in his surgical attempts to cure their affliction -- a condition for which no other viable therapy existed at that time.

Conclusion (quoted in its entirety)

It is difficult to make fair assessments of the medical ethics of past practioners from a distant vantage point in a society that has moved in a different direction, developed different values, and has wrestled -- often unsuccessfully -- with ethical issues of sex, race, gender, and class that were not perceived as problematic by those who lived during an earlier period of history. J Marion Sims was a dedicated and conscientious physician who lived and worked in a slaveholding society. As such, he was often called upon to care for slaves with legitimate medical needs. Among the needs that many 19th century women faced -- both white and black -- was the need for treatment of catastrophic complications of childbirth such as vesicovaginal fistulas. The operations carried out by Sims on black slave women from 1845-1849 represented his attempt to cure them of an odious and devastating condition that was then considered incurable. His operations, which at first were unsuccessful, were performed explicitly for therapetuic purposes and, as far as we can tell from the surviving sources, were carried out with the patients' cooperation and consent. At the time Sims began his efforts to close vesicovaginal fistulas, there was no effective alternative to surgical treatment and the quality of life to which such patients were reduced by their injuries was acknowledged by all medical writers of the time as unendurable. There is no doubt that slaves in the mid-19th century American South were a "vulnerable" population who were often subjected to significant abuse by the slaveholding system. To suggest, however, that for that reason alone no attempts should have been made to cure the maladies of such enslaved women, especially when they were desparate for help and no other viable alternatives existed, seems ethically bankrupt itself. Whatever his other failings may have been, J Marion Sims pursued this clinical goal with vigour, determination, and perseverance, and both his patients then and countless thousands of women since, benefited from his success.

Options for the Sims Statue

1. *Maintain As Is*

   Maintaining the statue in its current location in the community of East Harlem is not a good option. The antipathy, fair or unfair, of the community and its leaders to the statue is intense and unlikely to mellow. Keeping the statue in its current location is not fair either to the community, to Dr. Sims, or to the statue and its sculptor. The statue is currently surrounded by a barricade and at risk of vandalism.

2. *Add a Plaque*

   Adding a plaque near the statue in its current location to provide historical context and explanation has been discussed. A plaque would require a text that respects and honors both Dr. Sims and the slave women who were his patients and cured by his care. Obtaining agreement on a balanced text may be an insurmountable challenge. A plaque may not be sufficient to dissipate the current antagonism in the East Harlem community to the statue.

3. *Remove to Storage*

   Removing the statue to storage would be a sad result and confirm our failure to agree on a solution acceptable to the larger community.

4. *Move to a Hospital or Medical Center*

   Moving the statue to a hospital or medical center should be considered. This would require an institution willing to accept and maintain the statue and quite probably adding a plaque near the statue in its new location. A plaque would involve the issues identified above.

5. *Move to a Site Inside Central Park*

   Moving the statue to inside Central Park is a viable option. This would remove the statue from the hostility of the East Harlem community. Several statues in Central Park have been moved from their original locations.

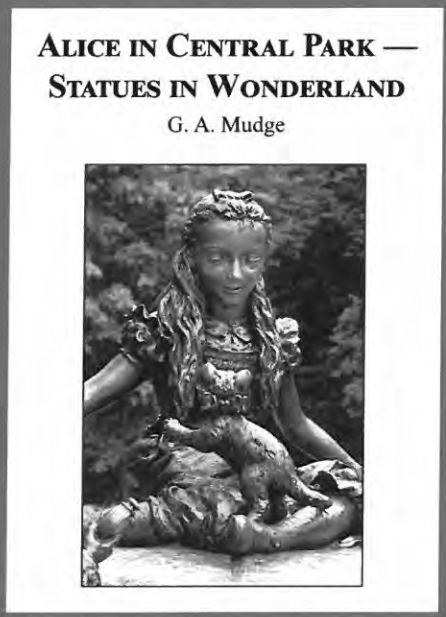
   The Woman Suffrage Movement Monument is currently being planned for a location on the Mall. There is room on the Mall just south of this site for another monument – a Woman Health Monument which would consist of two equally important elements:

   - The current statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims, and

   - Statues honoring Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey, three slaves who were the patients of Dr. Sims and whose affliction and cure contributed to the advancement of medicine so important to women.

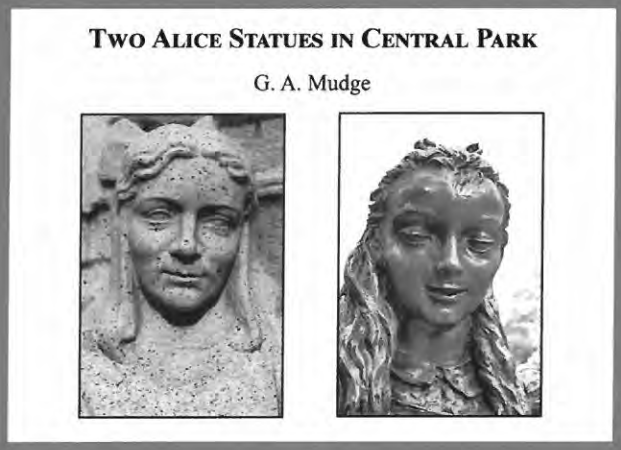
   The current statue is appropriate to honor Dr. Sims, but additional statues are appropriate to honor his slave patients. Without statues that honor the patients, the statue honoring Dr. Sims does not by itself tell the story of the important medical advances made together by the doctor and his patients.

Fotobs Books Offers



Alice in Central Park — Statues in Wonderland (2014) is a history and guide to all statues in the wonderland of Central Park in New York City. The book recommends six walks to meet the statues face-to-face. The 150 photographs focus on the statues, minimize distractions, and beautifully document the wealth of the statuary that most park visitors overlook. Text identifies the subject, sculptor, donor, and location of each statue, with historical comment. The statues appear in the order of their dedication in the park, beginning with the 1859 bust of German poet Johann C. F. von Schiller and ending with the 2011 statue of Frederick Douglass, the African American abolitionist. Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the Morse code, is both a donor of one statue and the subject of another. The book is for young and old, park visitors, students of sculpture and photography, and Lewis Carroll enthusiasts.

Two Alice Statues in Central Park (2015) is a photographic study of the two Alice statues in Central Park in New York City. The *Sophie Irene Loeb Fountain* (1936) by Frederick G. R. Roth and the *Margarita Delacorte Memorial* (1959) by José de Creeft constitute the greatest concentration of Carrollian statuary in the world. The book contains 62 photographs of the two statues and 28 of Sir John Tenniel's illustrations in the two Alice books. The juxtaposition of the Tenniel art and the photographs documents how Tenniel inspired the two sculptors. The book is a tribute to Lewis Carroll, Sir John Tenniel, Frederick G. R. Roth, and José de Creeft. Their combined talents inspired and created the two statues.



Perfect Gifts for Carrollians and New Yorkers

www.statuesincentralpark.com
with links to booksellers
Also available from Fotobs Books: fotobs@aol.com
$24.95 for one book or $44.95 for two, free shipping by USPS media mail

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November 20, 2017

VIA E-MAIL [tfinkelpearl@culture.nyc.gov]
AND CERTIFIED MAIL

Mayoral Advisory Commission on
City Art, Monuments and Markers
c/o Tom Finkelpearl, Co-Chair Commissioner
NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
31 Chambers Street, 2nd Floor
New York, New York 10007

Dear Commission Members:

The Confederation of Columbian Lawyer Associations is an organization comprised of approximately fifteen hundred (1,500) lawyers, judges and elected officials of principally Italian-American ancestry who are affiliated with constituent Columbian Lawyers Associations dispersed throughout nine (9) New York State counties.

We write to this Commission formed to review the merits of retaining, removing, or modifying statues throughout the City of New York and to urge you to retain those of Christopher Columbus as currently displayed.

No person or group can or should rewrite the history of the last five hundred years. The year 1492 is etched in the minds of all, as the year that Columbus discovered the new world at a time when it took a person of great courage, skill and perseverance to dare to sail into the unknown. Christopher Columbus dared, and by doing so, he opened the door to the western hemisphere.

15th century
21st century standards

Christopher Columbus was an explorer and navigator who successfully opened sea lanes through his challenging crossings of the ocean (at a time the world was thought by many to be flat) linking the "old world" to what would become the "new world." One could reasonably argue that Columbus was the first immigrant to arrive on the shores of the Americas, a land that over time became built on the backs of immigrants of all backgrounds. slave owners (Pres.)

It would be imprudent to evaluate every historically significant event or person through the moral prism of today's culture, experience and mores. It is important to note Christopher Columbus was of Italian descent, and as such, there is a significant cultural element, very important to New York City as well as its Italian-American citizens, which will be most seriously impacted by the anti-Columbus fervor. The recognition of the significance of Columbus to Italian-Americans and New Yorkers in general is emphasized by the fact that virtually every mayor, including the current occupant of Gracie Mansion, has marched in the parade in his honor.

Greater than a discussion of his role in history, Columbus has become the embodiment of the Italian-American experience and the assimilation and successes of generations of Italians who emigrated from Italy to a land, also unknown to them, eventually helping to build and defend the shores of our county, first explored by Columbus in 1492. There can be no separation of the impact of Columbus on the New World without the interwoven link to Italian-American culture, its heritage and most importantly, the "American Experience" of its immigrants.

It is that very profound impact and connection whereby in 1892, President Benjamin Harrison proclaimed the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus as a general holiday for the people of the United States. It was further said, "On that day, let the people, so far as possible, cease from toil and devote themselves to such exercises as may best express honor to the discoverer and their appreciation of the great achievements of the four completed centuries of American life."

After the tumultuous years following the mass immigration of Italians who suffered unconscionable bias, a statue honoring Columbus and his discovery of the New World was built with contributions from Italian-Americans who sought to demonstrate their love and loyalty to our America. The statue that sits prominently at Columbus Circle is more a symbol of the pride of Italian-Americans and Italy's contribution to the creation of America, than the individual achievements of the man himself. To remove, modify or otherwise alter that statue and its iconic symbolism would be a clear and irreversible affront to the Italian-American community in New York City, and of New York State (where Italians boast the second largest ethnic population), and lastly, to the greater United States which is home to many patriotic Italian-Americans.

While it is not our goal to invite a public referendum on Columbus as a man living more than 500 years ago, we seek rather, to express the importance of his symbolism to an ethnic group that has done nothing less than help make this city, state and country great. We understand that all voices must be heard, and we welcome the opportunity to participate in any meaningful discussion on this very important matter. We thank you for your consideration.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail confederationcolumbianlawyers@gmail.com or call me at (516) 361-3368.

Very truly yours,

Carmelo Grimaldi

Carmelo Grimaldi, Esq.
Confederation of Columbian Lawyer Associations
Committee on the Preservation of Columbus Commemoration

c: Hon. William de Blasio

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts on the name of one of our beloved landmarks and parks. And that would-be Fort Tryon Park in upper Manhattan. Named in honor of former Colonial Governor of North Carolina and eventually, New York...William Tryon.

Probably this name has not come up too often in this discussion primarily because the person I'm commenting on is more of a footnote to our American history rather than a titan of democracy or discovery. But in his way, the parks namesake, William Tryon was extremely influential in the road to American independence as much as the English acts and lack of representation that forced the hand of Revolution against tyranny.

William Tryon was Governor of North Carolina and we might say, Got the big call and became Governor of New York in the 1770's. So, as part of his job he was responsible for enforcing many of the taxes in colonies in his charge... The best known: the Stamp Act, Quartering Act and everyone's favorite the Tea Act. He did his job he collected taxes on not so grateful colonists on behalf of their King and Empire.

And if it ended there, I'd say that's fine...he can keep his name on the park...

However, after the war started, Governor Tryon became Lt. General Tryon in the British Army and in July 1779 he was tasked with cutting off New England and supplies crucial to New York and the South by taking the Connecticut corridor and blockading Long Island Sound.

Under his command, the British sailed across Long Island Sound and landed on the Norwalk, Westport, Fairfield and New Haven shore line and proceeded to do battle. Again, a man doing his duty.

However, in fighting and defeating basically a rag tag militia Lt. General Tryon called for the burning of all the homes, churches, shops, farms, boats and crops through this area and felt it necessary to brutalize the citizens with giving his troops authority to rape the women and young girls.

This was executed along the CT coast and he took this terror northwest all the way to Danbury CT where the same fate was met by that town and its people.

Apparently, Tryon's own officers and many soldiers were appalled by his actions and was he all but censured for his cruelty and complete lack of honor.

By today's standards of war, Lt. General Tryon would be tried as a war criminal...We don't honor Rommel or Stalin or Osama bin Laden with a park designation; nor should we honor William Tryon. He should be relegated to the trash basket of American history as the footnote that he is. Again, if he was the last Colonial Governor of NY --- I guess that can fly. But he is not deserving of even the name on toxic waste dump.

In France, every town and village has removed or changed the name of World War 1 hero General Petan, because of his later cowardice and collaboration with Nazi Germany in World War II. So this type of action in the case of William Tryon follows the same logic.

Given the beautiful spot that this park occupies and the great brave people who have made NY safe for its many citizens, I would like to suggest re-naming the park to "First Responders" in recognition of the courage and true bravery of our Fire Fighters, EMS, Coast Guard, Police, Red Cross and so many others who volunteer and sacrifice on our behalf.

As a quick footnote...the people of the CT area in 1804 were awarded land in Ohio for restitution for their suffering and they named the town which they settled, Norwalk, OH. No FEMA or bailouts just a grateful nation recognizing the unsung heroes of the Revolution.

GOOD MORNING

Having grown up in the New York City suburbs and attending public schools, scoring quite high on the Regents' Social Studies exam, and earning bachelor's and master's degrees, I always considered myself a reasonably well-educated person. I learned that yes, the Civil War was about slavery; yes, it was about interstate economics; yes, it was about state's rights; and yes, it was somewhat about heritage. Then almost two years ago I learned about the Cornerstone Address on a late night talk show. For those of you who are not familiar with it - as I was not, the Cornerstone Address was a speech given in 1861 by Alexander Stephens, Jefferson Davis' VP of the Confederacy [here are his words, not mine]:

> *[quote] "Our new government is founded upon exactly [this] idea; its foundations are laid, its corner-stone rests upon the great truth, that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery -- subordination to the superior race -- is his natural and normal condition. This, our new government, is the first, in the history of the world, based upon this great physical, philosophical, and moral truth." [end quote]*

After hearing this, like the German people who have much to be proud of - the Nazi movement and the swastika not among them, I note that our Southern brethren have much to be proud of - but the Confederacy and its symbols are not among them. That includes the Confederate Battle flag and the many Civil War statues.

However, having said that, while they do not deserve venerated positions in our parks and plazas, nor should they be destroyed, but rather relocated - in context - in our museums. The flags and denoted individuals should be recognized for their roles in attempting to denigrate a whole race of our people, and to tear our nation asunder. This principle should also extend to our esteemed Hall of Fame for Great Americans - THE original Hall of Fame - just a mile up the road at Bronx Community College. The busts of Generals Stonewall Jackson and Robert E Lee should remain - BUT with appropriate plaques documenting their roles in a dark, yet significant, part of American history.

I look forward to your similar assessment of the many other statues, sites and street names in our great city!

Thank you.

David Gellman
2621 PALISADE AVENUE
BOUYTEN DUYVIL, NY 10463 (718) 432-9092

Good morning ~~My name is Mona Richardson~~. On the day of my grandmother's funeral, I found out about an incident that affected her, her parents and siblings in Georgia.

My great grandfather went to withdraw funds from his bank account. He was told to leave his bank book and return. He returned the following day, his account had a zero balance and he was threatened. The entire family left Georgia that day and moved to West Virginia. This was sometime after 1920. My great grandfather was forced to abandon over 125 acres of land in GA that he owned. He was in his 70's, imagine having to start all over at that age.

I feel that in NYC ALL statues that have any kind of affiliation to the Confederacy has to be removed from public property. The Confederacy lost, though when you visit certain areas, see Confederate flags and symbols everywhere you would not know it.

The other statues should be allowed to stay, but each with a caveat posting another other side of what the person did. This includes the statutes of Marion Sims and Christopher Columbus. History can not be removed by removing a statue.

Off topic but I hope this will eventually extend to what is taught in NYC schools. Did you know, the ground the Empire State Building is on was owned by a black woman? Some land that NYU is on was owned by a black man. The first permanent resident of NYC was a man of color of from the Dominican Republic. Broadway before it was called Broadway was used by Native Americans as a road. Look at the styles of many metal fences and grilles visible around NYC. Historically they were made by West Africans based on their cultural symbols, which is still being copied today. And don't forget Native Americans were also enslaved.

What about the other people of different ethnicities who contributed to NYC throughout its history? Everyone that lived in NYC contributed to it.

I hope that this commission will not do a whitewash like the National Park Service did re the Statute of Liberty and the original reason behind it. Thank you.

Shannon R. Dingle
Bronx, NY

Good morning; my name is Shannon Dingle and I have been a resident of the Bronx for the past 17 years and was born in the old Morrisania Hospital. I am grateful for this opportunity to share my opinion on so called "divisive structures."

I think the problem we currently face as a society, regarding these monuments, is that we are confusing two different issues. It is appropriate and long overdue that statues of Confederate veterans of the Civil War be removed, as well as streets named in their so-called honor be re-named. I can't recall any other war wherein the losers were so lauded. Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, Nathan Bedford Forrest, etc., were all traitors to this country. Davis, Lee, Forrest, and the rest of the top conspirators should have been hung. Isn't that what we do with traitors? Isn't that what happened to the Rosenbergs? No, we should not enshrine or seek to honor men and women who sought to tear our great nation apart. What we should be doing with them, which we are not, is teaching the real story of the events that led to the Civil War in our schools, so our students understand that Africans in bondage were not "workers" as some of our more recent textbooks have tried to claim. And had the rebels been vanquished, as they should have been, we would have made much better and faster progress on so-called "race relations."

Now what about Columbus? This is where it gets sticky. Current scholarship indicates that he carried out genocide against the indigenous Arawak and Taino peoples of the Caribbean. If we take down Columbus, where does it end? Do we re-name Columbus Circle? Washington DC? Columbus, OH? This becomes a slippery slope. I may not advocate for his removal, but you won't catch me at a Columbus Day Parade!

What about the statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims, that sits on Fifth Avenue across from the NY Academy of Medicine? Dr. Sims is considered to be the father of

modern gynecology. And how did he learn so much about the female reproductive system? By operating, without anesthesia or consent, on enslaved African women. Many feel we should remove his statue. But when we do that, we are not telling the full story. And not telling the full story is what has brought us to this moment. To Alternative Facts. Let's keep Dr. Marion. And let's erect a statue of enslaved women next to his statue, so we can know the full story--of how he tortured defenseless women for scientific advancement and his own prestige. Or how about a statue of Henrietta Lacks across the street from the NY Academy of Medicine? Without her cancer cells, which were used for research without her consent, we would not have most of the major medical breakthroughs of the latter half of the 20th century, including the polio vaccine, many chemotherapy drugs, the HPV vaccine and in vitro fertilization.

The statues we erect are to enshrine and honor the best of us. Unfortunately, many of our "heroes," did terrible things. And they **are** a part of our history. But only one part…What we need to do is tell the full stories, and there are so many that have been forgotten or purposely suppressed. By not telling the entire story, some of us are left feeling less than or not as important or that we don't belong. And those whom may be supported by the current version of history, have a hard time believing that people who don't look like them helped build this country.

Thank you for your time.

BX Resident [redacted] & Member of CB11 (private citizen)

Hello, my name is Joanne Rubino. I am a member of FIAME, or the Forum of Italian American Educators, based in the Bronx and Lower Westchester. We are one of the scores of Italian American organizations which have joined the Save Columbus Coalition, and were one of the signatories of the letter that was sent to all NYC politicians protesting the possible dismantling, defacing or placing a so called explanatory plaque at the base of the Columbus statue at Columbus Circle.

Right before the turn of the century, in the aftermath of the mass migration from Italy to America, Italians were the subject of widespread bigotry and violence. In 1891, Italians in New Orleans were lynched. That year, In response to this, the Italian American Newspaper Il Progresso began a campaign to raise funds to erect a statue of Columbus as a gift to New York City, as a symbol of Italian Americans' love for their new country and to show that they were good citizens. Immigrants and small businesses donated to the cause and the money was raised. The statue, a work of art commissioned by Italian sculptor Gaetano Russo, was erected with much fanfare one year after the lynchings, in 1892, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Columbus' landing in the Americas. The statue was less an homage to a single man than a symbol of pride and focus for Italian American immigrants to celebrate their heritage as well as show their patriotic feelings for the United States of America.

This Commission has served to alienate many Italian Americans. Many feel it is an attempt to discredit Italian Americans by revising history to suit modern day political agendas. If the statues are compromised in any way, it will be seen by Italian Americans as an effort to rewrite history, our history. People are not perfect and Columbus was not perfect, but he is the greatest symbol of Italian American pride and not something that should not be played with for political reasons.



The Schiller Institute

www.schillerinstitute.org

Open Letter to President Donald Trump
In Defense of Columbus

September 21, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
Washington DC

Mr. President:

As an Italian citizen and chairwoman of Movisol, Lyndon LaRouche's movement in Italy, I call on you to intervene in defense of Christopher Columbus and Columbus Day. The same people who are out to destroy the US Presidency, led by Wall Street speculator George Soros (who destroyed the Italian lira in 1992), are also trying to eradicate history and culture not only in the United States, but internationally. Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, his Italian collaborator Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli, Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci and others were part of a revolution in culture, art, geography, and science, which made the discovery of America possible. The deliberate explosion in human creativity that was the Italian Renaissance is a truly proud moment in all humanity's history, and not merely for Italians. The people who want to abolish Columbus Day, whether they are maliciously witting, or merely deluded, are out to also dismantle this Western cultural and scientific heritage.

It has always been the British, including the "cultural thought-police" associated with the British Museum, who have tried to downplay and dismantle the Italian Renaissance: to undermine its successful expedition to explore new lands, and to obfuscate and deny its mission to construct, "in a new world", a new and better sovereign nation-state, superior to those of Europe. The United States of America eventually became that nation-state. This was a central, conscious part of the grand project of discovery, of Cusa, Toscanelli and Christopher Columbus. There was nothing mistaken in that intention.

There is also nothing "sincerely mistaken" about this Dark Age "bring down the statue" movement. The August 29 beheading of a statue of Columbus in the city of Yonkers, New York, reminds one of the beheading of 28 statues of religious figures in one day in October, 1793, during the French Revolution--the same month that Marie Antoinette was guillotined. They called their movement "The Cult of Reason". Similarly, it was the 1950s Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) which actually tried to abolish culture and our historical roots from the 50's on, and now apparently inspires gangs of protesters who, similar to ISIS in

Palmyra and other jewels of culture in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, are out to destroy monuments and statues which remind the population of its inheritance. Beauty, in the classical, aesthetical sense, disturbs them.

Columbus and his trip of discovery was the result of the Italian Renaissance, which is, to this day, an important reference point for each Italian citizen in a moment of great crisis. This is why there was an uproar here in Italy, and rightly so also in the Italian-American community in the United States, when we heard that a statue of Columbus was knocked down and that there are petitions to abolish Columbus Day and the Columbus Parade on Fifth Avenue. What will be next? Tear down the city of Columbus in Ohio, which I visited years ago to admire its Columbus statue? Tear down the Brunelleschi Dome in Florence? Or the statue of Leonardo da Vinci in front of La Scala in Milan, which shows how Leonardo was not only a Renaissance genius, engineer, painter, but also invented Bel Canto with his treatise, De Vocie, on the human voice?

We trust that you will intervene to defend this historical heritage, which cannot be forgotten, but should rather inspire a new Renaissance in culture, leading to scientific and economic cooperation between the United States and the rest of the world, including Russia and China. As Italians, we also call on you to keep your electoral promise and reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act, which would not only stop speculation and free up credit to build urgently needed infrastructure, but would also put an end to the excessive power of Wall Street, which is certainly behind, and financing, such "grass-roots" campaigns. We are hoping to do the same here, and thus to jointly work with your Administration and other nations on new discoveries worthy of the true legacy of Christopher Columbus and Western civilization.

Liliana Gorini
Chairwoman of the Movimento
Internazionale per i Diritti Civili Solidarietà
(Movisol)
Milan, Italy

'Columbus'

by Friedrich Schiller

Steer, courageous sailor! Although the wit may deride thee,
And the skipper at th' helm lower his indolent hand—
Ever, ever to th' West! There must the coast be appearing,
Lies it yet clearly and lies shimm'ring before your mind's eye.
Trust in the guiding God and follow the silent ocean!
Were it not yet, 'twould climb now from the billows aloft.
Genius stands with Nature in everlasting union:
What is promised by the one, surely the other fulfills.

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I. The Land-Bridge in History

The Attack on Christopher Columbus: Irregular Warfare Against the New Silk Road

by Dennis Speed

Oct. 1—The intelligence warfare being waged by British imperial forces against the integration of the United States, China and Russia into a single "World Land-Bridge" as a new economic platform is currently being flanked by Lyndon LaRouche and his co-thinkers "on the culture front." Now that the attack on the Presidency by the FBI has been accurately placed in its proper context by the LaRouche dossier on Robert Mueller, a new front is being opened up in the war to bring the United States into the World Land-Bridge as a partner with those two "continental" nations, thus thwarting the danger of thermonuclear war. Following the release last week of the "Open Letter to President Donald Trump in Defense of Columbus" by Liliana Gorini, leader of the *Movisol* organization in Italy, American artists, political figures, historians, and citizens have begun an animated re-investigation of the origins and purpose of the voyages of Christopher Columbus. Through new and newly reconsidered historical documents, the Columbian expeditions are being re-situated in the context of the alliance that is now possible among Presidents Trump, Putin and Xi Jinping.



newsinpic.com

Flor de la Mar, *a 16th century Portuguese carrack, like Columbus' largest ship, the* Santa Maria.

Addressing a New York City meeting on September 30, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute, and known for more than twenty years as "the Silk Road Lady" because of her tireless campaigning for the economic policy now known as the World Land-Bridge, said:

> Some of you may remember that a couple of months ago, at a meeting in New York at which the Chinese Ambassador in Washington, Cui Tiankai, gave a presentation, he said that there were sixteen examples in history in which a country surpassed the then dominant power: that in twelve cases it led to war, and in four cases, the rising power just replaced the old dominant power.
>
> Ambassador Cui said that China wants neither a future like one of the twelve cases in which war ensued, nor a future like that of the other four cases, because what China is offering is a completely new model of relations among states.
>
> I want to go through this because I think it is absolutely key. China is proposing a new model for major powers, based on absolute respect for the sovereignty of the other states—including the principle of non-interference, the principle of the acceptance of another social model, and a win-win cooperation between the two of them.

A new diplomacy, free of geopolitics, based on a shared community of scientific principle: This is the future for the world if so desired by the United States. Celebrating the best of each culture's contributions to world civilization, and a dialogue among all cultures, is a most effective way to initiate that diplomacy, and this has been the mission of the Schiller Institute since its

inception. Fundamentally, that was also the mission of the Columbus voyages, as conceived by their originator, Nicholas of Cusa, friend of the Toscanelli who provided the maps to Christopher Columbus. It is this outlook which is the true target of the attack on Columbus. And just as British intelligence deployed Jacobin mobs to destroy France, so today Antifa and other forces are deployed to destroy the capability for this new dialogue of civilizations.



Statue of Christopher Columbus by Gaetano Russo, Columbus Circle, New York City.

The New Khmer Rouge

The past decades have seen an intensification in the worldwide destruction of irreplaceable cultural artifacts as ostensibly "collateral damage" in warfare: the Baghdad Museum, the artifacts of Palmyra, the books of Timbuktu. In this destruction, the active hand of British intelligence, as well as the Malthusian cultural outlook of British-affiliated oligarchical forces is manifest. Such was the moral disposition that expressed itself in the firebombing of Dresden and the destruction of other targets of little military value during the Second World War. "Antifa," Boko Haram, ISIS and other organizations are the fronts for this organized assault on the cultural memory and heritage of humanity as a whole.

A 225 year-old monument to Christopher Columbus, the oldest in the United States, was smashed in Baltimore, Maryland on August 21. On Aug. 30, in Yonkers, New York, a statue of Columbus was beheaded. On Sept. 12 a Columbus statue was defaced in Central Park. In Columbus Circle, New York City, on September 23, the hands of Columbus were painted. Just as in 1793 France, when the terrorist fanatics that beheaded statues of prophets and saints at the Cathedral of Notre Dame referred to themselves as "The Cult of Reason," so today's fascist "Antifa" has declared that Oct. 9 will be "Deface Columbus Day," using slogans like "the future is racial and economic justice."

While they claim to be defending others "against racial and economic injustice," Antifa's roots are with the Ku Klux Klan and the anti-Italian campaigns in the America of 125 years ago. In an Aug. 25 op-ed in *The Hill* newspaper, authors J. P. McCusker and Patrick Korten of the National Christopher Columbus Association wrote:

> In the 1920s, from coast to coast, members of the Ku Klux Klan opposed Columbus. In Richmond, they tried to stop the erection of a Columbus monument. In Pennsylvania, they burned fiery crosses to threaten those celebrating Columbus. The Klan newspaper, *The American Standard*, attacked honoring Columbus—on the basis that a holiday for him was some sort of papal plot. The Klan was no fan of Columbus.

There is no reason to assume that the dupes, in or supporting Antifa, know any of this, since there is no reason to assume that they know anything. There is also no reason to assume that since George Soros simultaneously supports right wing Ukrainian fascists (who indeed do use the Confederate flag as a symbol of white supremacy) and Black Lives Matter—to the order of tens of millions of dollars—that the Soros funding conduit is not flowing in all directions in this case as well. Reversing the ongoing assault on human civilization in the form of the defacing and beheading of Columbus statues is best undertaken by using this present circumstance to probe Friedrich Schiller's question: "What Is, and To What End Do We Study, Universal History?"

Columbus, Cusa, and the World Land-Bridge



Ships of Zheng He's fleet in an artist's rendition.

In the past two weeks, a re-investigation by Will Wertz and others, of extant materials regarding the fifteenth century cultural interchange between the "city-builders," astronomers, artisans and machinists of Florence, and the scholars, ship-builders and navigators of China, has established something that is simultaneously of exciting historical significance, as well as urgent importance to the immediate future of the United States. It is, that the 1492 Columbian mission to China, involving advanced knowledge of techniques for the circumnavigation of the globe, and entrusted to Columbus in the 1470's, was discussed by Paolo Toscanelli with Chinese scholars as early as 1433. The Columbus mission was never merely to discover a "westward path to the east," for purposes of trade. Rather, it was intended to create the basis to re-establish, if necessary, a failing European civilization in another location on the planet, free of the corruption of the "Old World," and to initiate a dialogue on the most advanced principles of machine design, navigation and invention itself with a civilization potentially as, or more, advanced than that of Europe. The extraordinary Ming Dynasty fleet, which ruled the world's known waterways for a quarter century (1405-1433) and dwarfed anything that would be seen from Europe for the next 400 years, demonstrated the scientific capabilities of that civilization.

It must, however, also be noted that in the Florence of those years, there was a qualitative difference, a new, unique accomplishment, one that would have already greeted the Chinese scholars that traveled to the Florence in 1433. A fundamental revolution in science had been effected by Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, Filippo Brunelleschi, Paolo Toscanelli and others, which did not exist anywhere else in the world. This was their, and specifically Cusa's, investigation of the creative principle of discovery itself. This was expressed in the three-fold process of Nicholas of Cusa's book *On Learned Ignorance*, the building of the Brunelleschi dome, and the Cusa-proposed mission to the New World, an extension of his work to unify the world through the Council of Florence.

Toscanelli lived from 1397 until 1482, and was closely associated with Brunelleschi, Cusa, Leonardo da Vinci, Columbus, and others. The "machine-tool principle" was expressed in the various machines invented by Brunelleschi (recorded in drawings by his friend Mariano Taccola, 1382-1453), and was expressed in Toscanelli's own astronomical inventions and experimental observations. Cusa's *De Docta Ignorantia* was written by 1439 and transformed all of the science and theology before his time. That, in turn, informed and advanced the knowledge of his perpetual interlocutors, who together shared, once Cusa formulated it, his mission: "Ever to the West."

It is the implications of this, the true mission of Columbus, for the United States of 2017, and for the future of the United States that embraces the World Land-Bridge idea, that the "anti-Columbus" campaign is intended to attack. For example, Lyndon LaRouche's design of his Four Laws, including the "Fourth Law" emphasis on new Physical principles, on thermonuclear fusion for space flight, and on industrializing the Moon, including mining it for Helium-3, are the proper basis for a new diplomacy involving China, Russia, India, Japan, South Africa and all nations in a new world arrangement, never before seen or created. If Americans understand that it is this, the very historic mission that brought this nation into existence, that is under assault in the attacks on Columbus, they will also understand how to use the vigorous defense of Columbus to move the World Land-Bridge policy into place as America's future. "Ever, Ever to th' West!"

Dvorak and Columbus

by Dennis Speed

Oct. 1—Twenty-five years ago, in 1992, a collection of essays entitled *Dvorak in America 1892-1895* was released (John C Tibbetts, ed., Timber Press, 1993) to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Dvorak's coming to America, and American Jeannette Thurber's attempt to create a National Conservatory of Music in the United States. Thurber, a thorough-going supporter of the idea of Classical composition as the birthright of all Americans, sought to deploy Dvorak as the champion of a new American "great and noble school of music." Notably, she saw Dvorak's mission to America as being identical in spirit and purpose with the Columbian mission. To that end, Dvorak brought the Classical tradition, only represented in Europe at that time by Giuseppe Verdi, Johannes Brahms, and himself, to the shores of America. The enforcement of a racist policy at the Metropolitan Opera prevented Dvorak from performing there, since both he and Thurber insisted on instruction in, and performance of Classical music by students of African-American and Indian descent, as well as women. The classical principles of composition were not only *for* all people—Classical music could and should be composed and performed *by* all people.



new-york.czechcentres.cz

Statue of Antonin Dvorak in Stuyvesant Square Park, New York City.

Dvorak composed several works for America, the most famous of which became his symphony number nine, "From the New World." Thurber, intent on forcing the Congress of the United States and the entire nation to support her concept of an American National Conservatory of classical music, also devised a specific "Columbus theme" for Dvorak. The following is excerpted from the essay, "The choral works: *Te Deum* and *The American Flag*," by Nick Strimple:

When Antonin Dvorak arrived in New York on 27 September, 1892 to assume his duties as director of the National Conservatory, he had with him a new *Te Deum* and the piano sketch of a cantata, "The American Flag." Both works were brain children of the Conservatory's benefactor, Jeannette Thurber. Mrs. Thurber had thought that her new director should provide some suitable new work for the Columbus Quadricentennial Celebration scheduled for 12 October. It was at that concert that Dvorak would be officially "introduced" to the New World. Even though she had hatched this idea in the autumn of 1891, she had not provided any concrete suggestions until June 1892. At that time, Dvorak was requested to set to music one of the great ecclesiastical texts of jubilation, since an appropriate patriotic text had not been found ... Within a month he received a copy of Joseph Rodman Drake's poem, "The American Flag." On 28 July he again wrote Mrs. Thurber:

"In my last letter I informed you that I would write a *Te Deum* and now I am able to say that it is completed and in a few days I will send it to you.

"If you wish to have it performed on the occasion of my first appearance in New York, on October 12, together with my *Triple Overture* it would be necessary to get it copied immediately. As to *The American Flag* by Joseph Rodman Drake (and the explanatory notes by his grandson Charles de Kay), I can tell you that I like the poem very much—it is really a grand poem—and your selection for a patriotic hymn—*Columbus Cantata*—is very well fitted for music.

"But what a pity it is that you did not send me the words a month earlier. It is quite impossible

to get ready a work which will take half an hour in time for performance for October, and so I was compelled to write a *Te Deum*. I shall, however, go on with the work from which every musician must get inspired. Meantime, with many kind regards, I am faithfully yours,

Antonin Dvorak"



Jeannette Thurber

Dvorak began work on The American Flag almost immediately; he completed the piano sketch before he left Europe on Sept. 17.

Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the first leader of an African-American regiment after Lincoln's 1863 Emancipation Proclamation, gave a speech in Dvorak's honor at Carnegie Hall, reported in the *New York Herald*, Oct. 22, 1892:

> Over all this wide land to-day men and women have been celebrating the finding of this continent with such zeal you would think that each one had a hand in the discovery... It is fitting that music should take her part in the great festival because music is the only art which, since Columbus, has also discovered a new world. We meet to celebrate that newer discovery, to lay upon the bier of Columbus the only wreath that has wholly blossomed since his time: the one art that is post-Columbian...
>
> The triumphs of our own land in music, like most of our artistic triumphs, lie in the future, if anywhere. If we were all made of unmixed English blood, we might have long to wait for them. Moreover the material successes must come first. If you choose the picked young men of each college class and send them out on railroads art must wait, or if a man of commanding genius give half his energies to the building of steam engines and only the other half to making symphonies, the chances are that the steam engines may go at high pressure, but the symphonies will not. But we shall not always be thus one sided, and, moreover, we are not all of English blood.
>
> ... And we draw to-night on that wondrous country where, it used to be said, every child was tested early in the cradle to see whether he would choose the violin bow or the rifle with his baby hand, the country which has so identified itself with the fire of genius that Boyle O'Reilly makes the burden of his best lyric run thus:—
>
> "I had rather live in Bohemia
> Than in any other land."
>
> Let us hope that our guest tonight will at least not share this opinion, that he may consent to transplantation and help add the new world of music to the continent which Columbus found.



cc/Ericd

Monument to Christopher Columbus in Genoa, Italy.

WE NEED MONEY: A lot of the hate that exists in America could be solved by some payment to leverage people out of the lower class. Money would put hate in its most inert state.

NATIONAL DEBT CANCELLATION/REPARATIONS: America should be indebted to no one but its' citizens. Reparations would go to families of American soldiers (those who died and were drafted, especially), slaves' descendants, Native Americans' descendants. Money would come from Europe, especially from Britain and Germany, for wars and for returning the U.S. portion of Germany, and Japan, to families for lost lives and wages. Are we still a colony responsible for supporting and protecting other countries?

CRIMINAL: USE POLICE TO ARREST ABUSERS: PEDOPHILES, RAPISTS, CHILD: Concentrate on circumstances, not symptoms. This would cause less risk to police to arrest cowardly abusers of children than violent criminals. This should clear out much of our prisons, filled with people who abuse people and drugs to deal with childhood trauma; suicide bombers? Childhood gender change = endangerment.

BUDGET: Raise taxes on the rich and only use what is collected in the previous month for this month.

CHURCH/STATE SEPARATION AND FIRST AMENDMENT: Let Christians, particularly, live according to the New Testament and traditions, and not have to support abortion or gay marriage. Separation of Church and State means the King cannot create his own church and dictate Christianity so he can get divorced.

MILITARY: Fighting every opponent twice is bad foreign policy. Germany can pay to protect Israel and pay reparations to Jews. Allow military representation through squad leaders and individuals, etc., have an annual veto over Congress on war involvement, a winning strategy for war, and military policies.

ECONOMIC: Balance poverty and being a threat to the environment.

HEALTH CARE/DISASTER RELIEF: Medicaid for uninsured and emergency room visitors and a mandatory minimum for those over a certain income through employer paid by employee. Use Berlin Blockade tactics of airplanes/helicopters to drop food, rafts, First Aid, generators, grills, charcoal/wood, and ice.

ABORTION: Planned Parenthood/pro-life groups can collect from families to pay a mother not to abort.

LEVERAGE

NATO: Get out of it and ignore Iran and North Korea as threats unless they are a direct threat to the U.S until Europe and Asia pay past due bills on reparations for soldiers' lives and slavery.

ALLIES: Since Europe got the most Americans killed, form new alliances with Russia (helping Afghanistan against Russia caused 9/11, as did support of Israel), a bridge between Europe and Asia; Australia and the Philippines since Asia may be a more important pivot. Using Iraq against Iran caused two wars.

MILITARY: If the government is to use them like the Roman Empire, let soldiers be compensated accordingly to help collect reparations and spoils of wars for risking their lives. If countries think American military will come in and take everything, they may settle their differences.

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Testimony Against Statue of J. Marion Sims

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony today regarding the statue of J. Marion Sims, which sits on the edge of New York City's Central Park at 103rd Street and Fifth Avenue. This location is in the heart of East Harlem, a culturally diverse neighborhood. It's also across from one of the greatest medical institutions in the world, Mt. Sinai Hospital and the New York Academy of Medicine.

So who was J. Marion Sims? According to Wikipedia, he was a physician and surgeon, and is considered the "father of modern gynecology." The way he became this "father" was by experimenting on African-American enslaved women who did not and more importantly, could not give their consent to his experiments. The surgeries he performed on these women were extremely painful and were performed WITHOUT anesthesia. Although anesthesia had recently become available, Sims did not use any anesthetia during his procedures on Anarcha, Betsy, and Lucy, the only 3 of the women he referenced in his notes, although he performed surgeries on many others. Despite the evidence of his own eyes and ears, he believed, as was common at the time, that black women did not feel pain to the same degree as white women. Aside from the pain, these surgeries also subjected the women to to the risk of infection. The enslaved woman Anarcha, nearly died, and was described as being in great agony, from the surgery and from septicemia.

Sims was greatly rewarded for his experimentation. Once he had perfected his surgical techniques on the bodies of black women, he went on to become a world-famous surgeon, sought out by women all over the world who suffered from vesicovaginal fistulas, a condition common at the time. One of these included the Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III, who became his patron. He also became very wealthy, a wealth in which none of the women upon whose pain he had built his reputation and skill, shared. He became the President of the American Medical Association and received numerous awards and accolades.

So now, what is to be done with his statue? We have four choices.

1. Leave it there as is, inviting continued and escalating defacement, and showing the people who live in the area that the lives of people like them don't matter. Leaving it there would be akin to having a statue of Joseph Mengele in the heart of Forest Hills or Borough Park. This would have consequences for the entire city and not good ones. This solution is untenable, irresponsible, unworthy, and serves no purpose. Most people don't know or care who Sims was, and having a monument to him in Central Park has no educational or cultural value. There is no justification for it.
2. Leave it there with a plaque explaining what Sims did. This also has very little educational or cultural value, as most people wouldn't take the time to read it.
3. Remove it to another location, perhaps the National Museum of African American History and Culture, where it can be seen in its proper context: the enslavement, mutilation, and torture of Africans in America during the pre-Civil War period. This has educational AND cultural value, as the people who go to the museum go there precisely to learn about the history of Africans in America.
4. Destroy the statue completely. As disgusting as Sims's work was, history should never be erased. It should be explained and put into its proper context. We don't have a Holocaust Museum or a Yad Vashem for black people in America, but we should Never Forget. Destroying the statue of Marion Sims will allow us to sweep him and those like him under the rug, and

allow America to continue to ignore the fact that atrocities such as these were committed.

Of these choices, I would support number 3. This statue stands as a daily a slap in the face and an insult to every person of color in the neighborhood, and there are many, who have to walk past it on their way to work, or who take their kids to the playground that sits right near it. What answer should a mother give when her child asks, "Mommy, who is that man?" And what does it say to the people who work and study at Mt. Sinai? "We honor a man who had no regard for the suffering of his patients?" Or, "We honor a man who judged his patients by their socio-economic status such that those who had no power got no consideration from him?" Removing it to a museum in which Sims's actions could be be elucidated would contribute greatly to the education of all Americans. New York is one of the great cities of the world. Continuing to memorialize a holder and torturer of slaves is to cheapen and besmirch her. I appeal to you to take this statue down. Thank you.

November 27, 2017

Good morning.

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts with you on this important matter – the matter of the role and management of Monuments in our City's public spaces.

Let me begin by stating that the role of public monuments in our city's public spaces is to celebrate origins, inform people, and capture important historical information.

Monuments demonstrate a community's symbolic honoring of events and/or people for qualities that it finds indispensable to its identity and its reason for being. For example, George Washington is honored as the father of our country; that is why there are many monuments of Washington in our country's and in NYC's public spaces. Christopher Columbus is honored as the greatest explorer by having had the courage, knowledge and skills to sail across the then unknown Atlantic Ocean and founded the Americas (i.e. North America, Central America and South America, in other words, the New World).

Any public monument can never ensure that it will be open and inclusive. This is because no one monument can serve as a universal symbol that is for everyone. The best one could do here is to select a monument which covers the vast majority of the people so that it gives the best appearance of its being open and inclusive. Again, there are no guarantees that all will be happy and well.

The factor that the City must consider when reviewing an existing monument is to FULLY UNDERSTAND and explore WHY the monument was installed in the first place. This means avoiding books or documents from 20th or 21st century revisionist authors, avoiding documents from people of the Left and resisting the need to be politically correct. The City officials must go to authentic documents gleaned from the City Registers, and public and private libraries. The internet, in particular, should not be used for any determination because it is tainted with many inaccurate documents which occur because it is, after all, an open architecture and it is vulnerable to being hacked.
The present Christopher Columbus controversy highlights the absolutely critical need to be as accurate as possible.

An example of a wrong assertion is the genocide claim. It is a total myth, an outright lie! Columbus did not genocide anyone. It is both sad and stupid that people actually believe these false premises without double checking the facts with actual and unadulterated sources. The Revisionists are using the book titled "A Brief History of the Destruction of the Indies" by Las Casas to make history deficient people believe this nonsense. The answer is that all the genocide occurred AFTER Columbus was out of office. The fact is that Columbus protected the natives from the abuses of the Spaniards. So once Columbus was gone and Queen Isabel was dead, it was the corrupt Spaniards who later on, took the opportunity to inflict genocide upon the natives. Now you see the history context which needs to be carefully extracted and fully understood before any decisions are made about a monument.

Many of New York City's monuments are undeniable signs of our great City's history – of what has been done and suffered here. You must carefully and objectively consider whether or not the removal of any monument could be form of historical denial.

If a particular monument is preserved, altered, or removed, then its effect will be whether or not history is preserved, altered or erased. In other words, are we allowing ourselves to be ambivalent to what happened in our history?

The root cause of this misguided Monuments debate is our country's suffering from a deferred or neglected maintenance of its own history. This unfortunate development wrongly questions the existence of our monuments. Monuments are one of the last great things that remind of us of who we are and why we got here in first place. The modern day revisionists, the internet, politicians want us to forget history (i.e. defer the maintenance of history) and be instead, politically correct. This is totally unacceptable and I expect the Commissioners to agree with me!

To address the meaning of public art and monuments, context is desperately needed because many folks, sadly, do not know or understand our rich American history. Thus, critical contextualization is the way to go which draws on the skills and judgments of historians, artists, urban planners, and a healthy cross section of informed NYC residents. This means that news media and politicians are not be used for this important effort. Such a contextualized effort could include supplementary and educational materials like a plaque, relocating objects to another public or private space, or commissioning new public art either in response to an original or on its merit. As part of the maintenance of

context, Laws which protect all public monuments from desecration and damage must be continuously and vigorously enforced.

I thank you for your attention.

Joseph Madia

OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

Testimony of Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams
Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
Tuesday, November 21, 2017

Good morning Co-Chairs Finkelpearl and Walker, and the members of the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers. My name is Eric L. Adams, and I am the Brooklyn borough president, representing the 2.6 million residents who call our borough home.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the Commission on how the City should address monuments seen as oppressive and inconsistent with the values of New York City. The work being done is an important self-reflection upon our history, and the scars of that history, as we continue to work to become a more perfect union.

There has been wide public outcry about the need to revisit existing monuments that honor individuals with checkered pasts, and it is an important conversation that must take place. At the same time, we must build up our communities to recognize the rich and diverse history of individuals that strove against all odds to improve the quality of life of countless during a time when their efforts went largely unrecognized, and subsequently, were not honored by the decision makers that often did not look like, or experience the same New York City, as them.

It was in this vein that in July of 2015, I wrote letters to the Department of the Army and members of Congress calling for the immediate removal of names honoring those who fought to preserve slavery in America from Fort Hamilton in Bay Ridge. I still believe this is a worthy call in Fort Hamilton and throughout Brooklyn and New York City.

In that very same letter, I called for the convening of a commission of historians and local leaders to identify other historical figures more befitting of recognition than those that took up arms against the United States of America.

Today, I renew that call, but also expand upon its vision.

I believe that there are more than enough historical figures and campaigns that worked individually or collectively to build a Brooklyn and New York City that accommodates all and is reflective of our diverse history and community fabric.

At the same time, New York City has more than enough venues to honor these individuals or movements. Imagine, for example, the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Municipal Building in Downtown Brooklyn, the Lena Horne Bandshell in Prospect Park, or perhaps the future archway in Sunset Park named in honor of NYPD Detective Wenjian Liu.

I urge the Commission to go beyond its existing mandate and make recommendations to identify which existing or new monuments, markers, and/or statues could be renamed or built to honor the men and women of color, our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters, and the immigrants that made New York City what it is today and what it will be tomorrow.

If the Commission refuses this task, I call upon my fellow borough presidents to join me to do this work on their behalf.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today, and I look forward to the recommendations of the Commission.



PRESS RELEASE

PRESIDENT OF THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN

ERIC L. ADAMS

BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL 209 JORALEMON STREET BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201 PHONE 718.802.3831 FAX 718.802.3778

November 21, 2017

BP ADAMS CALLS FOR CITY MONUMENTS COMMISSION TO EXPAND MANDATE AND RECOMMEND NEW, DIVERSE FIGURES FOR MEMORIALS

BOROUGH PRESIDENT SUBMITS TESTIMONY TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON BUILDING OR RENAMING SITES FOR UNDERREPRESENTED NEW YORKERS, INCLUDING IMMIGRANTS, LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR

BROOKLYN, NY, November 21, 2017: Today, Brooklyn Borough President Eric L. Adams submitted testimony to New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl and Ford Foundation President Darren Walker, co-chairs of the Mayoral Advisory Commissioner on City Art, Monuments, and Markers, to call for an expansion of the Commission's mandate to recommend which existing which existing or new monuments, markers, and/or statues could be renamed or built to honor New Yorkers from underrepresented groups, including immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people of color. He further noted that, should the Commission be unwilling to undertake this task, he would call upon his fellow borough presidents to join him to do this work on their behalf.

"There has been wide public outcry about the need to revisit existing monuments that honor individuals with checkered pasts, and it is an important conversation that must take place," wrote Borough President Adams. "At the same time, we must build up our communities to recognize the rich and diverse history of individuals that strove against all odds to improve the quality of life of countless during a time when their efforts went largely unrecognized, and subsequently, were not honored by the decision makers that often did not look like, or experience the same New York City, as them."

In July of 2015, Borough President Adams wrote letters to the United States Department of the Army and members of Congress calling for the immediate renaming of General Lee Avenue and Stonewall Jackson Drive at Fort Hamilton in Bay Ridge, denouncing the honor of those who fought to preserve slavery in the United States. At that time, he first suggested an empaneling of "historians and local leaders to determine heroes truly befitting of having their names memorialized inside this post." In today's testimony, Borough President Adams expanded that call.

"I believe that there are more than enough historical figures and campaigns that worked individually or collectively to build a Brooklyn and New York City that accommodates all and is reflective of our diverse history and community fabric," wrote Borough President Adams. "At the same time, New York City has more than enough venues to honor these individuals or movements. Imagine, for example, the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Municipal Building in Downtown Brooklyn, the Lena Horne Bandshell in Prospect Park, or perhaps the future archway in Sunset Park named in honor of NYPD Detective Wenjian Liu."

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OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

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Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today, and I look forward to the recommendations of the Commission.

November 21, 2017

THE GRADUATE CENTER
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Members of the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers:

My name is Mya Dosch, and I am here today as a Brooklynite and as an art historian who specializes in public monuments. And I am here to testify, in my professional capacity, that *it is fine.* It is fine to remove select monuments that no longer represent the ideals we want to celebrate as a city.

There is lots of hyperbole floating around right now about how removing monuments "erases history." Monuments are never truly about some sacred fidelity to history: they are always about the politics of the present, the moment in which they were created. The way we remember history—who we celebrate—is how we frame our identities for the present.

This said, I encourage the Commission to advocate for the removal of all five Christopher Columbus statues in New York City's parks and the J. Marion Sims monument, as these two figures no longer deserve to be put on pedestals by our community. There are dozens of other Italian-American figures that better represent New York City than Columbus and medical innovators that would better represent us than Sims. The Lenape have never been adequately recognized on this land that was theirs.

Opponents of the removal state that such monuments, while flawed, create dialogue. Yet the Sims statue proclaims "His Brilliant Achievement carried the fame of American surgery throughout the Entire world…" To the vast majority of New Yorkers who walk past this statue, this is the only information they have. Nothing about the fact that fundamental to his fame were his inhumane experiments on enslaved women without their consent. If a plaque is added acknowledging these women, it does not fundamentally change the fact that Sims is depicted heroically, standing on a pedestal, hand on his chest, looking outward, flanked by medallions celebrating him. A plaque next to this is insufficient. A substantial inversion is necessary.

Heed the call of East Harlem Preservation, the Black Youth Project 100, Councilwoman Mark-Viverito and other activists to remove the Sims statue. Remove Columbus and Sims from their pedestals and place them, at eye-level, in museums, where the depth of their contradictory histories can be explored more fully, not celebrated in our public space.

I would also encourage the Commission to recommend the creation of new opportunities for temporary artistic interventions into the city's other monuments, reimagining them for the present.

Our public space has never been, and will never be, static. This is a moment of opportunity to redefine who we are as a city.

Thank you very much to the members of the Mayoral Advisory Commission for taking this work seriously.

Mya Dosch, PhD Candidate | The Graduate Center, CUNY | mdosch@gradcenter.cuny.edu

CUNY

My name is Lily Dalke, and I am a midwife at the Brooklyn Birthing Center. I am here to speak about the J. Marion Sims Statue. Thank you for listening to my testimony.

As a midwife, I have become aware of the terrible maternal + neonatal outcomes in our country. We rank 44th in the world in terms of maternal mortality, despite spending the most money on healthcare than any other country.

These outcomes are disproportionately borne by Black people. Black infants die at twice the rate of white babies. Black women die & during pregnancy and childbirth at four times the rate of white women. In NYC, outcomes are even worse - Black women's maternal mortality rate is twelve times that of white women, with the worst outcomes in the Bronx and right here in Brooklyn.

So how does this relate to statues? Statues honor + uplift our values. What are our values when we ~~venerate~~ a man who exploited the most vulnerable members of his community to advance his skills and his reputation?

It is deeply ironic to me that we should honor Sims when around our city, Black women's bodies continue to be used and learned from in residency and medical school programs. Yet, they do not benefit from the advances made from that learning.

When we have so much work to do to address maternal + infant health, is Sims truly the best representation and model, the best inspiration for the way forward?

Thank you for your time.

Director of Midwifery Report: Linda Gaglioti

Midwifery Fellows Schedule: Nicole Primoff, Lydia Doublestein

Lydia Doublestein is on our schedule and has been training in the office and birthing center.
Nicole Primoff was present today for emergency drills and staff meetings, and will be on the schedule for October.
Both fellows will be leading orientations and dress rehearsals as well.

Scheduling

The October office schedule includes a 4th clinic day.

BA Calendar

The schedule is mostly fully staffed. We are beginning to train two new BATs, and we are reaching out to midwifery programs to try to recruit more BATs.

CABC Update

Each midwife received a section of the P&Ps to review. Rachel Anne will update page numbers in the Self Evaluation Report for CABC once the P&Ps are finalized.

Staff Midwives Report: Lily Dalke

Beckon Call Update

Some clients have complained about the new answering service. The message could be improved by making "patient" the first option and using a human voice (which may be a possibility at the end of the month).

STATEMENT BY EDWARD MORAN
OF THE MARIANNE MOORE STATUE TASK FORCE
IN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE MAYORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON CITY ART, MONUMENTS AND MARKERS
Brooklyn Borough Hall, 21 November 2017

In 1944, during the darkest days of World War II, Fort Greene's beloved poet Marianne Moore wrote "In Distrust of Merits," a remarkable poem that still serves as a rebuke to today's corrosive civic dialogue, both locally and nationally. An excerpt from the poem, somewhat less than 140 characters, could handily serve as a counterweight to the tweetstorms that have sadly come to represent our official national discourse. Moore writes:

> "We
> vow, we make this promise
> to the fighting--it's a promise--'We'll
> Never hate black, white, red, yellow, Jew,
> Gentile, Untouchable.'"

In recent days, we have allowed our shared language to be hijacked by cruel and unusual politicians who are using words as a weapon to wreak cruelty and divisiveness on the land. Marianne Moore is one of a vast community of poets, living and dead, who offer a kindlier, gentler alternative. She deserves to be memorialized in Fort Greene Park, near where she lived and wrote for some thirty-seven years. So too does Richard Wright, who composed parts of *Native Son* while sitting on a bench in the selfsame park. So too does Walt Whitman, the great poet of American democracy, who advocated for the creation of the park as editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*. So too does Sojourner Truth and so many others who spoke truth to power.

The coalition of which I am a member includes a growing cohort of members at Marianne Moore's own Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Fort Greene. We believe strongly that the voices of poets need to be foregrounded in our civic landscape. This includes especially the voices of women, the voices of people of color, the voices of the marginalized, the voices of the dispossessed. Let us tear down our monuments to military prowess and political cruelty, replacing them with what Yeats called "monuments of unageing intellect."

I wonder what Marianne Moore would have thought of the situation in New York City today, where there are only five statues of women among the hundreds in our parks and public spaces -- seven if you include Alice in Wonderland and Mother Goose!

Another Brooklyn-born poet, Hyam Plutzik, had Federico García Lorca in mind when he wrote in 1950 of cities, like Granada, that had killed their poets. Plutzik believed that indifference to poetry was just as pernicious, fearing a future American society devoid of literature that represented "the final distillate, the eternal stuff pure and radiant as a drop of uranium."

I call on New York City to lead this charge against indifference by populating its parks with poets, that in honoring their commitment to language we may come to an ever more profound sense of our shared values as a diverse and compassionate community. Thank you.

Edward Moran, emoran8688@aol.com

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Public Hearing of the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers

Testimony of Jessica Lappin
President, Alliance for Downtown New York
November 21, 2017

Commissioner Finkelpearl, Mr. Walker and members of the Committee,

As you undertake the complex task of making determinations and issuing guidelines about New York's public statuary and monuments, we want to share our relevant experience, our perspective on the challenges you face, and offer some specific history, information and recommendations about the sidewalk plaques that mark lower Broadway along the route of New York City's Ticker Tape parades.

We have a maintenance agreement with the city for the 206 parade plaques installed and have been the primary entity dealing with public inquiries and controversies about them since their installation in 2004 following an art commission approved streetscape and design program that was authorized in 2000.

First, as you deliberate, we think there is a difference between public monuments that by their design and purpose were intentionally used as tools of oppression or to incite violence, and those whose intent was to record history or mark notable moments in time.

There is, for example, ample evidence that the monuments honoring confederate generals that were raised throughout much of the south were done not with the intention of honoring fallen soldiers or marking important battles of the civil war. Rather, they were specifically raised to further ideals of white supremacy and rally citizens to resist integration and the expansion of civil rights.

The plaques that mark all the ticker tape parades that occurred in Lower Manhattan are notices of events that happened, not rallying cries for each and every individual that marched up lower Broadway. They are not endorsements, but a public recounting of 131 years of history in the birthplace of our nation and a way to highlight the importance of this street in that history. In their totality, they tell an interesting and complicated social and moral story. There are a number of men who were given parades by our city who no one should ever venerate and that history rightly judges unsparingly. There are still more whose legacies are profoundly ambivalent and controversial. By our estimate there are easily at least 20 markers that one constituency or another might oppose and

find deeply antagonistic, including brutal dictators, fascists, religious leaders, and others.

Given the Mayor's previous comments and tweets on this subject, it would be fair to assume that the commission will propose that we either selectively remove or edit plaques. To remove only a few would be tantamount to grooming history. We can't erase the moment anyone marched up Broadway, nor do I feel comfortable whitewashing history. Trying to render our history free of mistake, contradiction and horror risks sanitizing our past and makes us more likely as a society to repeat those mistakes instead of learning from them. It also risks opening a Pandora's box where both the City and the Alliance we will be regularly and continually asked to judge which moments in history should be remembered, edited, or erased. For those reasons, if the committee is inclined to remove *some* of the plaques on Broadway, we strongly endorse the removal of *all* of them.

It is also important to note that it is logistically impossible to adequately edit, or asterisk, these plaques in the sidewalk. One simply cannot provide the full rich context for these controversial figures in three or four words.

Instead, if they are to remain, what we can do is work to ensure that a marker of a figure like Marshall Petain gives us pause and animates enduring, important discussions about both the often ephemeral nature of heroism and his awful legacy and complicity in genocide. When this particular parade was held in 1931, Petain was globally recognized as a French national hero. Less than 10 years later, he went from being an epic military figure of WWI to a justly reviled Nazi supporter, handmaiden to the holocaust and treasonous figure of WWII. In this most egregious of cases, Petain's presence can help us remember that heroism in one era can still lead to bigotry and hatred in another. That complicated lesson can't be taught with one or two words.

To that end, the Alliance has contracted with the Museum of the City of New York as a partner to deepen the materials we publish about the ticker tape parades and to create a digital teaching guide that will live on our website. This will be information that can be shared with educators, tour guides, tourists and the broader public through a wide variety of mediums.

As an extension of that impulse, we would also urge you to consider the emerging role of technology in our cityscape. With a hugely commendable commitment by the city to the provision of broadly accessible wifi, the role that Beacon technology can play in providing rich, site specific information about any given piece of public art or statuary is almost endless.

New York is a progressive place. Progress demands that we evolve in ways that correct our collective mistakes of the past without deleting them. To that end, we are better served by principles of inclusion and shining a light on the darkness some of these plaques evoke, rather than attempts at selective erasure or inadequate explanation.

To: NYC Advisory Commission On City Art, Monument and Makers

From: Labor and Community Activists

Re: **Stop Glorifying Columbus**

As this country was founded on genocide, slavery and theft, in the interest of mutual respect and working-class unity among all communities living in New York City, in recognition of Lenni-Lenape territory that this city was built upon, we the undersigned labor activists support and strive for the following minimum goals:

One. Replacement of the five monuments to Christopher Columbus with new public art designed to honor the continuity of Indigenous peoples on this land and/or to celebrate the contributions of Italian immigrant workers and their descendants. We know that at the 59th Street traffic circle in particular, the statue was paid for by hardworking Italian Americans who in most cases were coerced by their bosses or *patrones* to chip in, and who in general were misinformed on the horrific nature of the outcomes of Columbus's expeditions for peoples of the Americas and of Africa.

Two. Removal of the offensive three-person statue outside the American Museum of Natural History that demeans African and Indigenous peoples by counterpoising their symbolic nakedness and bare feet to Teddy Roosevelt's full-military dress and powerful position on horseback.

Three. An official change in references to the holiday on the second Monday of October from "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous Peoples Day." **Until the city government approves this, we will work to change it in our union contracts.**

Four. A voluntary name change by organizers of parades on that three-day October weekend from Columbus Day parade to Italian American parade.

Signed (* denotes organization listed for identification purposes):

Chris Silvera, Secretary Treasurer, International Brotherhood of Teamsters local 808
Stephanie Hedgecoke, member, Executive Committee, New York Typographical Union CWA 14156*
Sara Catalinotto, founder, Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST NYC)*
Johnnie Stevens, Community-Labor United for Postal Jobs & Services
Labor Against Racist Terror (social media campaign)

(continues→)

Susan E. Davis, National Writers' Union, UAW 1981*
Joseph Hirsch, Retiree, National Mail Handlers' Union*
Dianne Mathiowetz, host and producer, The Labor Forum, WRFG 89.3 FM
Minnie Bruce Pratt, National Writers' Union, UAW 1981*
Mike Eilenfeldt, Retiree, NYSUT (Union @ Cooper Union)*
Fatima Y Prioleau
Tito Delgado, one of the colonized
James J Burke, union teacher from Bensonhurst
Donna Lazarus, Retiree, UFT Local 2*
Andre Powell, Delegate, Baltimore AFL-CIO Central Labor Council*

List still in formation.

To sign, email your name, title, and affiliation to: CLUPJS@GMAIL.COM

Lessons from Charlottesville

Now that school has begun, education is on my mind, especially considering the Charlottesville brawl. With waves of vandalism, violence, and demands for monument-removal sweeping the nation, an analysis of this event through the prism of education is in order.

Certainly, one of the purposes of education is to develop the rational mind. A citizen needs to be able to weigh facts coming at him, think about the credibility of the sources, and form an opinion that is not based upon a cursory review or propaganda. Such a developed mind was not in evidence in Charlottesville.

Having accidentally come upon the Charlottesville debacle in real time, I sat mesmerized, unable to distinguish the armed, ultra-conservative, white supremacists from the armed, uber-leftist, anti-fascist anarchists. Clubs, barricades and fists flew from both sides. It was very ugly.

Reason and dialogue were gone. When you pick up a torch or a bat, you are part of a primitive form of behavior that requires no thinking. The mob is dangerous and the antithesis of what is civilized.

Mark Twain wrote in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, that "The [pitifulest] thing out is a mob…They don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with courage that's borrowed from their mass…." That is what I saw that day and one thing more – really stupid behavior bound to have the rest of us disdain the mob's position, whatever side.

Where does education come into this bloody mix? The last two generations have turned from books to embrace information in 140 letters under the tutelage of teachers who offer their opinions, crossing the line into proselytizing and exploitation. Learning is not about the teacher's point of view; it is about the child developing his own informed opinion. Now, the kids cannot differentiate propaganda from balanced, factual material.

For instance, there are those calling for the removal of statues of Robert E. Lee. Yet, I venture to guess, not one of the people enraged by General Lee knows anything about him beyond the obvious. In ten minutes of research about the man, I learned of his service in the Mexican-American War fighting alongside Ulysses S. Grant, his desire to keep learning and bettering his skills as an engineer and military strategist, his horror at the presence of slavery in the United States despite his own slave ownership, his tortured decision to fight for his beloved Virginia rather than in the northern ranks, and his fervent hope after the war to reunite the country without demeaning the losing side.

Few members of Antifa would know that when he left the building at Appomattox after signing surrender papers, the Yankee soldiers all stood up and General Grant saluted him as did the others. The respect for him as a man and soldier was clear. This scene is depicted Hollywood-style in the recent film, "Lincoln." Wouldn't this information counter the sloganeering of the mob that he was a traitor and a racist? Knowing this about the general is the

beginning of a real conversation about what to do with the statues of Confederates and plaques around the country. But you need to have developed a hunger for learning facts before forming an opinion. We have failed to educate our protesters to evolve as responsible citizens.

Contributing to this failure to think and analyze is the behavior of the press and news shows. Our Fourth Estate does not exhibit admirable journalistic skills that we fiercely protect in the First Amendment. What is exhibited is blatantly biased news coverage meant to illicit bobbing heads in agreement. Group-think.

The rush to judgment after the Charlottesville news emerged was astounding. The president's first statement became an opportunity to shame the president for inarticulateness, representing that as morally reprehensible philosophy. President Trump has a thought and expression problem. (A teacher might suspect a learning disability and possibly, ADD or ADHD.) This is unfortunate, but it requires the press that covers him to spend more time reaching for meaning in his words.

In saying that there was fault on both sides, he was trying to say that the violence appeared to be coming from the ultra-rightists and the ultra-leftists. Time has proven that to be correct. He was not equating anti-Semitism and white supremacy with condemnation of those things. One must read over and think about President Trump's impromptu utterances. It requires time, desire, and an ability to reason. Bias is a sin against reason, here.

Our education system must help our students develop brains that recognize the difference between propaganda and facts, opinions and facts, surface emotional responses and reasoned analytical thought. To be safe in America, we all must be able to sit down and have a "thunk" like the rapscallion, Huck Finn. Without this evolved brain, the Adbusters of Occupation Wall Street, Antifa oppressors of free speech, Unite the Right haters, and the worst members of Black Lives Matter will speak for all of America. Or perhaps, we will simply be a divided nation, something Robert E. Lee and Lincoln agonized over 150 years ago.

September 21, 2017 Dianne B. Stillman

THE REPORTER DISPATCH

nday, October 13, 1996

$1.50

Restore Columbus to hero status

By Dianne B. Stillman

MY VIEW

Because of him, America stands — flawed but great.

As our traditional Columbus Day holiday draws closer, I find myself musing about the impact of facts on children and the broadest goals for education.

My stomach knots as I recall the day three years ago that my son returned from school to inform me that the trial of Columbus was over, and that Columbus had been found guilty of enumerated crimes by his history class.



Dianne B. Stillman

When I tried to suggest alternative views of Columbus and his significance, my son could not hear me. He was so charged up after several days of this trendy, Hollywood mock trial in class, that he was not receptive.

Verdict: guilty. Inquiry: ended.

Shouldn't a child's mind be open after learning facts? Shouldn't there be room enough for the child to calmly ponder facts and conclusions offered in class, on his own? Did the educators really understand what it was they were killing off in killing Columbus for the students?

It is very difficult for grown-ups to think back to how they learned and what impact lessons in school had on them. The past clouds those private thoughts we had after school, the time when each child synthesizes in a unique way as lessons flow through his mind and his heart. But it is just this self-inquiry that must infuse the educator's overall schema for teaching children, for in that inquiry lies the answer to the "Why?" of education.

For me, as a little girl, Christopher Columbus was a towering figure. He was a dreamer. He was strong. He never gave up. He weathered rejection. He was a hero for acting on a great dream. Columbus empowered me to think I could act on my own small dreams.

As a student of American history, never once did I ever think that colonialism was good, that raping a land of its natural resources was appropriate, or that crushing a culture through violence or forced assimilation was a happy thing. I was able to abstract those negatives from what I learned of the discovery of the New World, but what I was also allowed to do was to explore the positives, see the miracle within this event, and be inspired.

It is this idea of inspiration rising up out of what we learn at school that compels me to think about Columbus. We learn. We are inspired, and then, we can aspire. Maybe it is simpler than that. Maybe we need to be inspired just to make it through life, to fend off despair.

Columbus has remained a lofty figure for me despite the negative field in which his achievements played out. One reason for this is that I have been able to connect him to the formation of America. But for his dream, America would have remained a mere concept for oppressed, distressed and downtrodden peoples. Because of him, America stands — flawed but great.

In my own lifetime, I have seen waves of immigrants come to our shores to escape persecution of all magnitudes and kinds, but certainly all related by blood to the burdens of the Pilgrims and their journey to the New World. I have seen these immigrants sacrifice all to settle here and let their next generation flourish. And I am a child of that miracle, descendant of immigrants of the 20th century. This miracle of renewal for oppressed peoples goes on, flowing from Columbus's lonely dream.

I can see this. I was allowed to see it by the way my lessons were taught me, by the room I was given to think critically on my own, when classes were over. I doubt that my son can make these connections or construct this vision of Columbus and America. Thought was foreclosed in him by a negative, political, overreaching educational approach to facts. The verdict is in, his thoughts cut off.

In the recent rush to endorse educational trends in multiculturalism, political correctness and anti-Eurocentrism, the way we learn as children and the goals of education have been forgotten. Children have to be allowed to extract what is positive and inspiring in our past history, even if this core sits among grave misdeeds and acts we revile today. In the space we give students to ponder all the facts, on their own, with the absence of stifling didactics, is the vital magma out of which comes the young person's ability to analyze, to think critically, to improve on the past, to survive, to reach.

So, on the Columbus Day holiday, may we ask that Christopher Columbus, newly seated at the dais of fallen heros, be allowed to rise and come back to life? Educators, let Columbus live again so that by his connection to our students' sacred dreams, we ensure their futures.

The writer is a resident of Scarsdale.

"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK"

PUBLIC MONUMENTS AND MORAL VALUES



EDITED BY DONALD MARTIN REYNOLDS

GORDON AND BREACH PUBLISHERS

"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK"

PUBLIC MONUMENTS AND MORAL VALUES

Edited by DONALD MARTIN REYNOLDS

Documenting the Image, Volume 3

Monuments immortalize our heroes, celebrate our accomplishments, and mourn our losses. Whether in a public park, private cemetery, or city square, these sculptures of stone and steel reflect the moral, cultural, and social makeup of their surroundings. Just as the Column of Trajan still stands in Rome and as the fall of the Soviet Union brought about the razing of hundreds of statues, some monuments stand as permanent testimony to the accomplishments of a nation or an individual, while others topple at the swing of the pendulum that is public opinion.

"Remove Not the Ancient Landmark" collects essays from today's leading researchers in anthropology, philosophy, psychology, and art history for an exciting look at the roles monuments play in our life and how their significance has changed over the years. These compelling essayists also provide answers to the most pressing questions facing those who would act as curators of these testaments to the past.

All of the essays are accompanied by photographs of monuments, both famous and forgotten, from around the world. This collection of over sixty photographs provides a wonderful look at some of the most enduring symbols of pride, politics, and tragedy.

About the editor

Donald Martin Reynolds is an adjunct professor of art history at Columbia University, in New York, and founder and director of The Monuments Conservancy, also in New York. Dr. Reynolds is founder/coordinator of the Annual Symposium on Public Monuments, established in tribute to Rudolf Wittkower and funded by the Dorsky Foundation. In addition to numerous publications on American art and architecture, his most recent books include *19th Century Architecture; Masters of American Sculpture: The Figurative Tradition, from the American Renaissance to the Millennium;* and a revised and enlarged edition of *The Architecture of New York City: Important Structures, Sites, and Symbols*.

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*"REMOVE NOT THE ANCIENT LANDMARK"**

Proverbs 22; 28

Survival through Celebration

-Donald Martin Reynolds

"The past is not dead history," the eminent scientist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Rene Dubos writes, "it is the living material out of which man makes himself and builds the future."[i] From the past come the timeless, universal, and elemental truths that governed our earliest evolution and determined our gradual development as human beings. By means of those truths we slowly achieved the intellectual and spiritual potential that has enabled us to produce symphonies and conquer disease, as paleoanthropologist Ian Tattersall points out in his discussion of the origins of humankind.[ii] With them we have pierced the cloud of unknowing that surrounds our universe.

When we lose touch with the past, Dubos believes, we lose touch with the inner self. We are cut off from what he calls "the deepest layers" of our natures, a kind of genetic and cultural memory bank. This repository of experiences and images enables us to understand the mysteries of the past that keep us in tune with our origins and the rest of the cosmos.[iii]

Dubos maintains that that sense of continuity with the past and with the rest of creation, which is served by our public monuments, not only enhances life but "is also essential to sanity" because it keeps us mentally and emotionally intact.[iv]

In prehistoric times, primitive peoples believed that all of nature was interwoven into a single pattern and that they were all a part of that pattern. Those beliefs gave rise to complex rituals and taboos, the forerunners of our public monuments. Those who violated or disparaged rituals did so at their own peril.[v] That primitive imperative resounds with meaning today for us, who neglect and destroy our public monuments at our own peril.

"In assuring continuity with the past through our public monuments," art historian Wayne Dynes writes, "we assist our own survival" by means of the "triad of survival—observation, contemplation, and preservation."[vi] The social anthropologist Francis Huxley would say that monuments objectify those truths, which constitute our cultural heritage, and so provide us with permanent and tangible means to study and analyze them.[vii]

"The wise man preserves that which he values and celebrates that which he preserves."[viii] The key word in my aphorism is *celebrate*. It is not enough to gather at the base of a monument

once a year and engage in religious, commemorative, or other ceremonies in which we honor the person or the event. Those ceremonies are important, to be sure, for they contribute to our edification and enjoyment as we join with others to honor the values that we wish to preserve.

Celebration in the fullest sense, however, is not restricted to formal ceremonies. The word comes from Latin and means "much frequented," suggesting continuity of involvement. To celebrate a monument properly, then, is to incorporate it into the everyday life of our society at all levels.

Monuments should be mini-laboratories of human values, the objects of research, inspiring us to study the people and events they commemorate and to contemplate the values they perpetuate. The monuments in our neighborhoods, for example, should be part of our grade school curricula, and they should be the objects of continued study at colleges and universities.

Our colleges should expand their liberal arts curricula to include the interdisciplinary study of public monuments. Classroom and laboratory work should be supplemented by internships.

Curriculum development in public monuments at the university level should encourage research and publication. Chairs should be endowed to assure continued research and development of the various aspects of our public monuments and the timely issues pertaining to them.

It is through celebration in this fullest sense that monuments become living forces that demonstrate the power of human values.

Today, many of our public monuments are being threatened by calls for their removal. Precipitated by the demonstration last August on the campus of the University of Virginia in Charlottesville surrounding the proposed removal of its equestrian monument of Robert E. Lee, demands now extend to other historical figures.

This growing demand to remove monuments is alarmingly reminiscent of Russia's widespread trashing of their monuments to Communism's heroes with its fall in 1991.

Looking at those "discarded monuments to lost ideals" piled up in Gorky Park in Moscow, Konstantin Danili, an eminent Russian psychiatrist, said, "Of course this is a disgrace. They should all be in some museum of the past, where something could be learned, not just discarded like this." At the time, an old man with his grandson, examining the trashed monuments, said, "No, I can't say this is good. We trashed the old statues. Now, we're trashing these. Then, we'll be trashing the next ones. There's got to be a better way to do it. Toppling statues is easy and satisfying. But if they are simply added to the litter of history, nothing has been achieved."[ix]

*"Remove not the ancient landmark, which your fathers set up," is a biblical imperative from the Book of Proverbs. The verse refers to the piles of stones in ancient Palestine that served as fences or landmarks defining each family's ancestral land claims.

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[i] Rene Dubos, *So Human an Animal* (New York: Scribner's, 1968), p. 242.
[ii] Ian Tattersall, "The Evolution of Humanness," *Remove Not the Ancient Landmark*,": *Public Monuments and Moral Values*, Gordon and Breach, 1996, p. 60.
[iii] Dubos, p. 76.
[iv] Ibid. p. 201.
[v] Ibid., p. 235.
[vi] Wayne Dynes, "Monument, the Term," *"Remove Not the Ancient Landmark"; Public Monuments and Moral Values,* p. 30
[vii] Francis Huxley, *The Way of the Sacred* (London: Bloomsbury Books, 1989), p. 60.
[viii] Donald Martin Reynolds, "Preface: Monument or Masterpiece," *Monuments and Masterpieces, Histories and Views of Public Sculpture in New York City* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988; paperback, 1997), p. 12.
[viii] Serge Schmemann, "The Old Order, Like Its Ideals, is Toppled, but the Victors Find Words of Bereavement," *New York Times*, September 4, 1991, p. A-13, quoted in *"Remove Not the Ancient Landmark," Public Monuments and Moral Valeus*, p. 6.

Donald Martin Reynolds is an art historian, author of books and articles on American art and architecture, including *"Remove Not the Ancient Landmark," Public Monuments and Moral Values*, and the recipient of ArtWatch International's Frank Mason Prize for "...his dedication to art and the preservation of our cultural patrimony." He served as New York City's Curator of Parks under Parks Commissioner Henry Stern, responsible for the City's monuments and historic houses. Dr. Reynolds is the founder/coordinator of the Annual Symposium on Public Monuments established in tribute to Rudolf Wittkower and funded by the Dorsky Foundation. He was an adjunct professor of art history at Columbia University in New York City, where he earned his degrees and taught for thirty-three years.

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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Testimony for Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
November 22, 2017

Thank you to Co-Chairs Darren Walker and Tom Finkelpearl, and to the members of the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers for allowing me the brief opportunity to speak today. My name is Shulamit Warren Puder, Director of Policy and Special Projects for Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.

Like many cities, states and countries, New York City is discussing how to address monuments and statues with challenging histories and associations in our midst. This conversation is needed and will ultimately bring a greater understanding to how we highlight the role of monuments in public spaces and how we engage with them.

The conversation on the presence and impact of monuments has been ongoing for some time, but we saw a spike in dialogue following the disturbing gathering of white supremacist and Nazi-affiliated organizations opposing the removal of Charlottesville's Robert E. Lee statue. This is not the only statue with such a troubling legacy, and there are few cities that can avoid confronting these issues. Here in New York City in East Harlem, a coalition of community members, my office and other neighborhood stakeholders have been debating the presence of the Marion J. Sims statue, and have participated in community-led meetings advocating its removal.

How should New York City approach its own reckoning with history? Perhaps we should begin by examining other countries for models of how to present history.

Indian cities have taken different approaches with British Raj period statues: Coronation Park in Delhi, India took all of its colonial statues and put them in one park. The public land

where these reminders of a painful past now sit has "not erased its imperial origins," but rather it "collected painful symbols of it and then allowed their potency to dissolve." [1] suggest this Commission seek out and research examples from other countries, as these may broaden our own perspectives on what our choices might be, moving forward.

Another idea would be for all statues to include a plaque, perhaps with an accompanying app or website maintained with City sponsorship, providing fuller information about the person or persons depicted in them and their historical context – the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Our city does need more statues and monuments that celebrate the contributions of its diverse communities. Our heritage as a city built by waves of immigrants, forming a tapestry of vibrant cultures, is one of our greatest strengths. As you may know, Borough President Brewer was deeply involved in working with the Dept. of Parks and Recreation and other stakeholders to realize the Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony Woman Suffrage Movement Monument. Slated for a 2020 unveiling on the centennial of the ratification of the 19th Amendment, the monument will stand on The Mall in Central Park, and its place on Literary Walk was dedicated in a ceremony earlier this month. The monument will be the first figurative piece depicting real women in Central Park, and it will be the park's first new commemorative sculpture installation since 1965. Our statues and monuments must include more women and more people of color, and we should look to public-private partnerships to expand statues and monuments beyond our City's parks to include placements in pedestrian plazas and city-regulated privately -owned public spaces (POPS).

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[1] Coll, Steve. "Things To Think About When Taking Down Statues." *The New Yorker*, August 31, 2017.

Comments by Nicholas Mirzoeff, Professor of Media, Culture and Communication at NYU for NYC Monuments Commission

I would like to suggest to you that the Equestrian Monument that is part of the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial at the American Museum of Natural History should be removed because it visualizes systems of racialized hierarchy, which, while discredited, continue to do harm in the present. Additional signs or information cannot replace the visceral impact of visual materials, as advertisers and artists alike know very well. Certainly, that removal would need to be the start of an extensive repurposing of the Museum, which is long overdue. But given that the Natural History Museum is the most visited in New York, with over 6.5 million visitors, it cannot be right to leave a symbol of racial hierarchy in place.

Roosevelt died in 1919 and the New York memorial was at once proposed by Henry Fairfield Osborn, director of the American Museum of Natural History. That same year, the Museum *Journal* claimed to demonstrate a "relationship between [skin] color and achievement." Osborn was a believer in Nordic supremacy, a theory which also entailed the decline of white dominance unless immigration was controlled. These theories unfortunately continue to have purchase today. In 1921, the AMNH hosted the International Congress of Eugenics under Osborn's organization. It opened a Hall of Public Health to promote eugenics (the attempt to breed out "impurities" from humans, also involving forced sterilization) and the effort to control immigration that resulted in the 1924 Immigration Act.

The Equestrian monument was sculpted by James Earle Fraser, who had earlier made a piece called *The End of the Trail,* illustrating the eugenicist belief in the period that

Indians would "die out." The monument visualizes belief in racial superiority through the now discredited so-called science of craniometry—measuring skulls. The idea was that the perfect skull had a vertical forehead, which is hard to find in an actual human being, so the example given was usually a Greek statue.. In the US this idea was widely disseminated in Josiah Nott's 1857 *Indigenous Races of the Earth.* This work claimed that there are several distinct human races, visible in their different skull shapes more than superficial details like skin color. In this framework, a statue is not a depiction of a racist idea, it is a racist idea.

If you examine the Equestrian Monument, you can see that Roosevelt's skull is close to vertical, while the African figure has a noticeably sloped forehead and the Indian has the most sloped of all. In short, the Monument visibly incarnates Osborne's system of racial hierarchy, as the Trustees acknowledged at the dedication ceremony in 1936 (the sculpture was completed in 1939). Of course, Roosevelt's towering position over the half-dressed African and Indian reinforces that meaning, derived as it was from Roman Imperial sculpture.

It's true that most people have now forgotten the specifics of craniometry. But the racist term "slopehead" indicates that the false claim of cranial angle still influences present-day racist caricature, usually applied to people of Asian descent—it's in the cult film *Pulp Fiction* for example—a Harvey Weinstein production, I might add.

So it's not a question that people at that time had bad ideas and we censor the monument for that but that it actively visualizes and perpetuaties racial stereotypes today.

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I am Andrew Ross, Professor of American Studies at NYU, and I specialize on the Urban environment I am gratified by the commission's work and hope that you will be bold and courageous in recommending the removal of monuments that generate undue harm and offense, among minorities especially. While I support the removal of the Sims, Columbus, and Petain statues, I will restrict my comments to the monument in front of the AMNH, often described as the most hated in the city, and I find it easy to see why.

First of all, what it is NOT is a free-standing statue of the American president, but rather a grouping of figures best described as a commentary on racial hierarchies in the early part of the twentieth century. The NYC Parks Dept tells us that the monument is about "symbolically uniting the races of America," though I believe only the most wilful contemporary interpreter would see it that way. Nor does this description do justice to Roosevelt's own philosophies and policies in his own day. An unashamed imperialist, whose disparagement of Native Americans is all too evident in his writings and public comments, he was a passionate advocate and promoter of the eugenicist circle that met regularly at the museum under the auspices of Henry Osborn, and made it the headquarters of the eugenics movement. The conservationism espoused by Roosevelt and Osborn was inseparable from their commitment to eugenics. For these and other reasons, you would be hard pressed to find any history high-school teacher or professor in this city who would describe TR as a racial unifier..

The surrounding infrastructure (owned by the AMNH) which forms a backdrop to the monument, pays tribute to Roosevelt as a statesman, conservationist and the like, all in line with the generic cult of the presidency. It does nothing to help the spectator understand what these three figures in front are doing together. In this respect, there is a complete disconnect between the monument's public commentary on race relations in America and the rote celebration of TR which we find directly behind the monument and in the museum's rotunda and memorial hall. And this disconnect is confusing, at the very least, to the visitor.

But the real reason why this monument generates such a visceral reaction from the public is because it is seen as a straightforward expression of white patriarchal supremacy. When we remove this monument from public veneration, as I hope you will recommend, some will criticize your action as an ignoble takedown of an American president. Yet so many people will be relieved to hear about the proposed removal or replacement of the monument. I believe it will be taken as a long overdue act of racial healing, and, for educators like myself, as a step toward correcting a long falsified record. So I urge the committee to be brave and do the right thing. You will be performing a great public service in doing so.

Andrew Ross
New York University

TESTIMONY OF JAMES S. KAPLAN, PRESIDENT OF THE LOWER MANHATTAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, TO THE MAYOR'S MONUMENTS COMMITTEE.

November 22, 2017

Email:JsKaplanesq@gmail.com

My name is James S. Kaplan. I am the President of the Lower Manhattan Historical Association (the "LMHA").The LMHA is a civic organization consisting of individuals and members of various historical groups whose purpose is to promote the very rich history of Lower Manhattan and to educate people in Lower Manhattan and elsewhere about events and individuals in Lower Manhattan about which they may not be aware.

In this connection we have been involved with organizing annually a celebration in Trinity Churchyard in October of the anniversaries of the American Victories at the Battles of Saratoga and Yorktown. We have also for the past three years organized a parade through Lower Manhattan on July 4 weekend, and a ceremony in honor of Alexander Hamilton honoring Immigrants who have made outstanding achievements to New York City. We have in addition been responsible for a parade and flag raising in celebration of Evacuation Day, November 25. Evacuation Day for those of you who do not know was the day in 1783 when George Washington's army in the last act of the American Revolution took control of the City of New York, and the American flag was first raised at the north end of Bowling Green (now Evacuation Day Plaza). It was a major patriotic holiday for 133 years until 1916. The LMHA is attempting to revive it and we invite you to join us this Friday the day after Thanksgiving for our fourth annual ceremony here in Lower Manhattan.

In principle I applaud the creation of the Monuments Committee to the extent that it stimulates and encourages discussions about the City's history and important individuals, as I believe there is a woeful lack of understanding of many important elements of the City's history among many New Yorkers However, I believe the currently announced focus of the Monuments Committee on examining the historical propriety of existing monuments is misguided. Many if not most monuments, including that to Christopher Columbus, were erected over the past 150 years because certain civic groups with the City's approval believed they were of importance to the City's history and in almost all cases they still are.

I personally believe the Monuments Committee should focus on individuals and events who are of tremendous historical importance and are not well known to New Yorkers and for whom there are no monuments but for whom there should be. For example, the catalyst for our Saratoga/Yorktown celebration was the recognition five years ago that General Horatio Gates, the commanding general at the Battle of Saratoga, the most important battle and turning point of the Revolution, was buried in an unmarked grave in

Trinity Churchyard. Fortunately through the considerable efforts of Denise Van Buren, the then New York State Regent of the Daughters of the Revolution, the grave was marked in 2012. Similarly Evacuation Day, once one of New York's most important holidays for more than 125 years, was almost completely forgotten until our recent efforts with the New York Veteran Corps of Artillery, the Sons of the Revolution and the National Park Service to revive it.

I believe there are many other places and events which should be marked and recognized but currently are not. For example here in Lower Manhattan, 29 South William Street now the Icon Parking garage near Millenium High School is the site of the first synagogue in North America. In 1730 when the Mill Street synagogue was built there with contributions from Jewisch communities around the world it was the pride of all Jews in America. It helped to spawn the growth of the Jewish community in New York, and without question it is one of the most important places in American Jewish history. However, in a City of more than two million Jewish residents, there is no plaque or other marker recognizing this site.

Outside of Lower Manhattan there are also a number of very important sites which have yet to be marked. One such site is on 46thStreet between 9th and 10th Avenue in Hell's Kitchen near Hartley House. It was there that a young social worker named Frances Perkins met Thomas J. McManus, the Democratic District leader. As a result of that chance meeting, Ms. Perkins became a key aide to Tammany governor Al Smith, and later a key aide to Governor Smith's hand picked successor Franklin Roosevelt. When Roosevlt became President he appointed Mrs. Perkins as his Secretary of Labor, in which capacity she designed Social Security and most of the New Deal social welfare policies. There is no recognition of Frances Perkins her in New York City although Manhattan Community Board 4 recently approved a proposal to name the street on 46th street in her honor.

Another two very important unmarked historical sites are in Harlem. At 120 West 138th Street, the Marcus Garvey first unfurled the Black, Green and Red flag of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and called for the Black race to rise up against white colonial domination of Africa. Although considered a failed visionary in his lifetime. After the second world war Garvey disciples such as Kwame Nkruma and Jomo Kenyatta would fly his flag in triumph throughout Africa. There is no placque, and merely a nondescript residential building to mark the fact that African independence began at Garvey's Liberty Hall on 138th Street in Harlem. Finally, on 135th Stree and 7th Avenue near the Harlem Y stand the so-called "million dollar houses" the purchase of which in 1911 by realtors affiliated with St. Phillip's Episcopal Church ultimately continued the efforts by Phillip Payton and the AfroAmerican Realty Company and broke the back of the attempts by white realtors to keep Blacks out of Harlem. As a result Harlem would become the most important Black community in the country if not the world. There is no placque indicating the historical importance of these buildings and there is no monument in Harlem or elsewhere to Phillip Payton.

I believe that rather than worrying about the historical pedigree of existing monuments, the Monuments Committee would be better advised to examine and perhaps erect monuments that highlight the under appreciated history of the City. We in the LMHA would offer to assist you in this effort and would ask that you assist us in our efforts. I urge you to consult our website.

Attached to my testimony is our Evacuation Day program and an article I recently wrote for the New York History blog on this subject.

James S. Kaplan
President, Lower Manhattan Historical Association

PROGRAM

I.

10:30 AM

Commencement

Federal Hall, 26 Wall Street

A. Presentation of the Colors

Veteran Corps of Artillery-State of New York

B. Welcome

National Park Service

II.

Program on the History and Meaning of Evacuation Day

10:45 AM –11:45 AM

Federal Hall - Rotunda

Speakers:

A. LTC Allen I. Milman, Chief of Public Affairs VCA
("History of the Veteran Corps of Artillery-State of New York & Tribute to John Van Arsdale")

B. CPT John W. Conlin (RMA Sandhurst, former Member of the 6th Gurkha Rifles)
("Impact of Evacuation Day and American Revolution on British military")

C. James S. Kaplan, President LMHA
("Impact and History of Evacuation Day as a New York City Patriotic Holiday"}

D. Retrieval of the Colors by the VCA

III.

11:45 AM - 12:15 AM

Evacuation Day Parade

Down Broad Street from Federal Hall to Bowling Green/Evacuation Day Plaza;
James S. Kaplan, LMHA President, Line of March Announcer

IV.

12:15PM - 12:45 PM

Evacuation Day Plaza Flag Ceremony

Bowling Green / Evacuation Day Plaza

A.Speakers

1. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
2.Allen I. Milman: LTC - Chief of Public Affairs, VCA & LMHA Director
3.Ambrose Richardson: President - Sons of the Revolution, & LMHA Director

B.Ceremony

1.Ceremonious lowering of the United Kingdom national flag and presentation to a representative of the British military
(commemorating the removal of the British Union Jack by SGT John Van Arsdale in 1783)

The Veteran Corps of Artillery - State of New York

and

The Lower Manhattan Historical Association

in conjunction with

The National Park Service

Present:

The Fourth Annual Commemoration Revival of

Evacuation Day

November 25th 1783

Friday, November 24th 2017 @ 10:30 AM

Federal Hall, 26 Wall Street

(@ Broad Street)

and

Bowling Green / Evacuation Day Plaza

(@ Broadway & Whitehall Streets)



John Van Arsdale raising the Stars & Stripes at Bowling Green November 25, 1783



EVACUATION OF NEW YORK BY THE BRITISH, NOVEMBER 25, 1783.



Marking Lower Manhattan History: Saratoga, Yorktown Commemorations

By James S. Kaplan on October 2, 2017



This year on Sunday October 15, 2017at 2:30 pm in Trinity Churchyard, the Lower Manhattan Historical Association (LMHA) with other groups will celebrate the Fourth Annual Commemoration of the American victories at the Battles of Saratoga (October 17, 1777) and Yorktown (October 19, 1781).

Whereas the Battle of Bunker Hill has been celebrated with a parade in Boston since 1786, New York perhaps because of its status as a City of immigrants has been somewhat slower in recognizing its very rich Revolutionary War history. Thus it is perhaps not completely surprising that it is 225 years behind Boston in commemorating these two most important battles in the Revolutionary War which are directly connected with sites in Lower Manhattan.

This year's celebration comes at a time when the nature of historical monuments and celebrations are to a greater extent than ever being brought into questions. New York City's Mayor Bill DiBlasio has recently appointed an 18 person committee to review Public monuments in the City to review "symbols of hate" on City property. Initially the Mayor suggested as a candidate for removal the marker on Lower Broadway to Marechal Henri Petain, the French World War I hero who in World War II headed the Vichy government that collaborated in the Nazi removal of French Jews to the concentration camps. More recently, however it has been suggested by various groups that the list of candidates for removal be expanded to include monuments to Peter Stuyvesant (for his notorious anti-Semitic views); Christopher Columbus (for his alleged abuse of Native Americans) and Thomas Jefferson (a prominent slaveholder). While the exact role of this Mayor advisory Committee is at this point unclear, it was apparently created in response to questions raised elsewhere about monuments to Southern slaveholders , such as that in Charlottesville to Robert E. Lee.

A significant problem independent of inappropriate monuments is that there are many very important individuals and events of which most New Yorkers are completely ignorant to which there are no monuments or plaques.

The Saratoga/Yorktown ceremony in Trinity Churchyard which is now in its fifth year is designed to some extent to deal with this issue. Basically, the ceremony consists of having various patriotic groups lay wreaths on the graves of three critically important American Revolutionary War generals buried in Trinity Churchyard, and a ceremony last year attended by the French consul general honoring the tremendous French participation in the American Revolution. The three revolutionary generals are General Horatio Gates, Alexander Hamilton, and Marinus Willett. The wreath on the outsized tomb of Alexander Hamilton at the south end of the Churchyard is lain by a representative of the Alexander Hamilton Awareness Society (usually Nolan Asch) in recognition of Hamilton's critical role (although technically only a Colonel) at the climactic battle of Yorktown in 1781 where George Washington placed him in charge of the American assault on Redoubt No. 10. This attack led to the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown and the end of the military portion of the American Revolution. As a result of Lin Miranda's musical and Ron Chernow's biography, Hamilton and his achievements are well known to most New Yorkers and Americans.

General Horatio Gates and Col. Marinus Willett are somewhat less well known, and particularly the story of General Gates indicates the uncertainties that can arise in connection with historical markers. General Gates was the general in command of the American troops at the Battle of Saratoga, the clear turning point of the Revolutionary War. A passed over British supply officer, Gates was placed in command of the American troops in the Northern sector by the Continental Congress in August 1777 at a time when defeat seemed highly likely and the American cause seemed almost hopeless. Two months later, on October 17, 1777 the entire 10,000 man British army under Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne surrendered to Gates in one of the most stunning American military victories in American history. Notwithstanding these undisputed facts, there has for more than 200 years been controversy over whether Gates, or subordinate officers such as Benedict Arnold were really responsible for the victory at Saratoga. After the victory Washington sent his young aide Alexander Hamilton to negotiate for with Gates for the troops under his command. Furthermore, there was some discussion in 1778 among the representatives in Congress (particularly from Massachussetts) in the wake of Gates victory about replacing Washington as commander in chief of the entire army with Gates. Gates later in the War was appointed by Congress to command the American troops at the Battle of Camden in South Carolina where he was disastrously defeated and accused to cowardice. After the Revolutionary War he lived in Virginia, somewhat in disgrace, but in 1790 he and his second wife moved up to New York, where he became active in veterans affairs. He became a political opponent of Alexander Hamilton's Federalist Party, and in the critical elections of 1800 he ran at the request of Aaron Burr and the Tammany Society for the New York State Assembly on the anti-Federalist pro Jefferson ticket. His success in this effort led to the election of Thomas Jefferson and the rise of the Democratic party and the Tammany society that would largely control New York City politics for the next 150 years.

Although General Gates, according to his two or three biographers, was clearly buried in Trinity Churchyard when he died in 1806, his gravestone was apparently lost sometime in the 19th century and thus we don't know exactly where it is. He was largely forgotten for more than 150 years after his death (perhaps because of the avalanche of Washington biographers who regularly denigrated his role). Five years ago, Charlotte Van Horne, Squarcy, then a member of a New York City Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution ("DAR") took an all night walking tour sponsored by the Fraunces

Tavern Museum and alerted Denise Van Buren, then the New York State Regent of the DAR about General Gates' unmarked grave. Ms. Van Buren contacted Trinity Church and made having the DAR sponsor a marker to General Gates one of her Regents projects. With the strong support of the Trinity Church management, on October 21,

2012, more than 150 members of the DAR and others attended a ceremony for the dedication of the marker in Trinity Churchyard.

The marking of General Gates grave in 2012 had significant importance. It served as a catalyst for the subsequent Saratoga/Yorktown celebrations, and in part for the formation of the Lower Manhattan historical Association, which has since sponsored three July 4 parades in Lower Manhattan and other activities such as the revival of Evacuation Day at Bowling Green. Although marking the unmarked grave of the most important Revolutionary War general buried in New York State is something one might have expected some branch of the City government or other more established historical organizations in the City to have undertaken, the fact is that they did not, leaving the effort to the DAR. Representatives of the DAR and the Sons of the American Revolution now annually lay the wreath on his marker as part of the Saratoga/Yorktown ceremony.

Another example of such an underappreciated important figure in New York City's history is Marinus Willett, the third general on whose grave a wreath will be laid at the Saratoga/Yorktown ceremony. Marinus Willett was a New York cabinet maker who was an active member of the Sons of Liberty and first came to public prominence on June 5, 1775 when at 60 Broad Street he jumped in front of a convoy of British troops to protest their bringing heavy arms to the British in Boston in preparation for the Battle of Bunker Hill.

Willett later served during the Revolutionary War as an important commander in the Mohawk Valley. He is credited as second in command to Peter Gansevoort with the successful defense of Fort Stanwix, which prevented the British from attacking from behind General Gates at Saratoga. After the War he returned to New York City where he served as the City's Sheriff, and was an active anti-Federalist, member of the Tammany Society, and founder of the New York City democratic party. In 1790, at George Washington's request, he visited the Creek Indians in Georgia, and convinced 27 Creek Indian chiefs to come up to New York, where after partying with the Tammany Society, they signed the Treaty of New York, settling the Creek War with the United States. This was a huge diplomatic success for the new United States, which established the rights of American citizens to settle in what is today Georgia and Alabama. Willett thereafter was actively involved with the Democratic party and the Tammany Society (he was reportedly an observer at the Burr/Hamilton duel in 1804) and was appointed Mayor of New York in 1807. In 1814 at the age of 74 he gave a stirring speech on the steps of City Hall rallying the New York militias to defend the City against a threatened British attack during the War of 1812. He died at the age of 91, and was buried in Trinity Churchyard (his grave has always been marked on the Southeast side of the Churchyard). It is said that his funeral in 1831 was one of the largest in the City's history with more than 10,000 people attending and it was said that he would never be forgotten. Although he is somewhat better known and recognized upstate (visitors to the Fort Stanwix National Park facility in Rome New York are greeted at the Marinus Willett Visitors Center) Very few people in New York City, where he spent the overwhelming majority of his career, know who he is. At the Saratoga/Yorktown ceremony, the wreath layer from the National Democratic Club, after recounting this history and stating that it was said at his funeral in 1831 he would never be forgotten, usually asks "how many of you have ever heard of him before today?"

There are many historical plaques and monuments in Lower Manhattan, which have been placed by various organizations. The Sons of the Revolution of the State of New York, owners of Fraunces Tavern, and whose President Ambrose Richardson is the Vice President of the LMHA and the Master of Ceremonies of the Saratoga Yorktown Celebration, has placed more than 20 such plaques in the past 125 years. One such plaque at 60 Broad Street honors Marinus Willett at the spot where he began his public career by jumping in front of the British Convoy going to Boston.

However, there remains no shortage of important events or individuals (such as General Gates prior to 2012) that have yet to be recognized. Our organization the LMHA was instrumental last year in having the North part of Bowling Green named Evacuation Day Plaza in honor of Evacuation Day, the day on August 25, 1783, when George Washington returned to New York City and the American Revolution was officially over. (See the Fight to Revive Evacuation Day, NY History Blog, Nov. 15, 2016 [check date John}).

Four such candidates for historical plaques or monuments in Manhattan are the following:

(1) The Icon parking garage at 29 South William Street next to Millenium High school, which was the site of the first synagogue erected in North America. At the time it was opened in 1730 by Congregation Shearith Israel, this Mill Street synagogue was financially supported by Jewish congregations throughout the world, and its opening was a source of pride to Jews throughout America. It is undoubtedly one of the most important sites in American Jewish History. No plaque marks its existence in a City with more than 2 million Jewish residents

(2) 46th Street Between 9th and 10th Avenue.in Hell's Kitchen. Frances Perkins. It was here at Hartley House that a young social worker named Frances Perkins met Tammany District leader Thomas J. McManus, which started her career with the Tammany Hall organization and ultimately the key Labor adviser to Governor Al Smith, and later Franklin Roosevelt. When Roosevelt was elected President in 1932, he appointed her Federal Secretary of Labor, a position she held for all four terms of the Roosevelt administration. In this capacity, she designed most of the New Deal Social welfare programs, such as Social Security, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the WPA. and CCC. She was probably the most important female governmental official of the 20 th century. There is currently no significant plaque or monument in New York City to Frances Perkins although the National Democratic Club and the McManus midtown democrats recently applied to Community Board 4 to have the street next to Hartley House named for her.

(3) 120 West 138th Street in Harlem. Marcus Garvey's Liberty Hall. Now a nondescript apartment building, it was on this site that in 1920 Marcus Garvey unfurled the red, green and black flag of the Universal Negro Improvement Association ("UNIA") that would ultimately become the symbol of African independence. Garvey urged members of the UNIA to seek to liberate Africa from white colonial domination and to have black Africans control their destiny. Although considered ridiculously visionary at the time and prior to Garvey's death in 1940, in the late 1950'a and 60's Garvey disciples such as Kwame Nkrumah and Jomo Kenyatta would recognize and realize his vision, so that 70 years later white colonial domination of Africa was a thing of the past. Very few residents or other New Yorkers know that African independence began on this site.

(4) 135th Street and 7th Avenue in Harlem. St. Phillip's Episcopal's Million Dollar Houses. The purchase of these row houses in 1911 by realtor John B, Nail on behalf ot St. Phillips' Church broke the back of the attempts by the Harlem Protective Owners society and other white realtor groups to keep Blacks out of Harlem. It paved the way for Harlem to become the leading Black community in the country. No plaque or other monument commemorates this fact or the efforts of Phillip Payton and his Afro American Realty Company in alliance with certain Jewish realtors to bring blacks to Settle in Harlem.

Perhaps rather than worrying about whether the existing monuments to such important historical figures in New York's history such as Columbus, Peter Stuyvesant or Thomas Jefferson are worth retaining, the City should be ex-

amining whether there are historical figures or events that are not receiving the recognition that they should that the City should support.

In this regard I invite all New Yorkers and others to join our celebration of the American victories at the Battles of Saratoga and Yorktown at Trinity Churchyard on October 15. Hopefully they will find it enlightening.

Photo: Trinity Church Cemetery, courtesy Wikimedia user Gryffindor.

Like 0 G+

This entry was posted in Historic Preservation, History and tagged Lower Manhattan Historical Society, New York City on October 2, 2017 [http://newyorkhistoryblog.org/2017/10/02/marking-lower-manhattan-history-saratoga-yorktown-commemorations/] by James S. Kaplan.

About James S. Kaplan

James S. Kaplan is a lawyer, writer and walking tour historian who is the President and one of the founders of the Lower Manhattan Historical Association. The Association annually celebrates July 4 Weekend with a parade through Lower Manhattan and the Alexander Hamilton Immigrant Achievement Awards ceremony recognizing contributions to New York City by prominent individuals born outside the United States. It also is responsible for naming Evacuation Day Plaza at Bowling Green and efforts to revive the ancient New York City holiday of Evacuation Day and for the Saratoga/Yorktown celebration in Trinity Churchyard annually held in October. Mr. Kaplan is also the founding partner of Greenberg & Kaplan, where his a practicing Tax, Estate and Guardianship lawyer.

View all posts by James S. Kaplan →

November 22, 2017

On the Question of Monuments in New York City

Members of the Commission on Monuments

My name is Krystyna Piórkowska, and I am speaking in my own name and that of the Parish of Stanislaus B&M in Manhattan as well as the Piłsudski Institute in Brooklyn.

Although I know that many people will be speaking to you about their reasons for removing statues or monuments that they believe are hurtful to them I will not.

I'd like to speak to you about a country that once was and then disappeared, partitioned as it was by three mighty empires, which treated it in a colonial fashion. Education was limited – in one area, children could only attend three grades of school as it was considered sufficient for their abilities and needs. The areas of art and culture were also treated in as essentially unnecessary, and those individuals who wanted to paint, sculpt, perform or sing on stage had to leave, much as scholars did, to other lands where they became labelled as being those nationals. Those who wanted to struggle for freedom were either sent to prisons or if lucky, into exile. The average citizens of this country who emigrated to the United States were classified as being of a different nationality than they were, and they were referred to by various demeaning names.

The creativity of those who were more talented or educated became subsumed and coopted by the nations where they developed their work. In many cases their work became accredited to the nations where they lived, not from desire but under duress.

Why do I speak of these people? Because of many of them did travel and work in New York, and in some cases, their efforts were recognized in New York, but only fleetingly. I raise this issue because the disregard of a nation, in a multicultural city like New York is as demeaning and destructive to the psyche of a child or adult as viewing what can be considered a demeaning sculpture. Removing a sculpture or a plaque is destructive by its absence.

If you are wondering what nation I am referring to – it is Poland – and over the past several decades the Parks Department and the City of New York have, I dare say, actively removed or attempted to remove signs and symbols of this nation. Most recently, an action was undertaken by the State of New York, which, luckily, was stymied by the Polish diaspora – this was the attempt to remove the name of Tadeusz Kościuszko from the Bridge which carried his name. Interestingly, this is a man (are you listening Lin-Miranda) who not only rescued this

fledgling nation from certain defeat at the hands of the British at West Point, but also asked Jefferson, as executor to use all the funds owed to him as an officer of the Continental Army to purchase the freedom of slaves. Jefferson never did this. Interestingly, the reason for attempting to remove Kościuszko's name was that it was too difficult to pronounce.

But, you say, this has nothing to do with NYC Parks – so let us proceed – Ignacy Jan Paderewski, pianist and megastar, diplomat and Prime Minister of the recreated nation of Poland – worked to help save the Washington Arch at Washington Square Park. Yet not only did the City of New York not honor him, when the tree that was planted by the Polish community in 1941 died – it was removed together with the two plaques which were present. There were no plans to replant it. It took a year of effort to replant the red oak – but for the past 18 months the community has been stymied in its efforts to have the plaques replaced, with claims being made that there were no plaques there.

The plaque erected to commemorate Kazimierz Pułaski, who died at the battle of Savannah, like Kościuszko came to the US to fight for freedom, while his nation was partitioned, languishes in some Parks Dept. corral.

Most significantly, Maria Skłodowska – the prime example of a female who fought against all odds to garner the studies that she wanted – has been effectively erased from existence in New York City. You will probably ask me who she was – and I will answer – if you ever went to a hospital and had an X-ray – you encountered her discovery. If you've ever walked the halls of Memorial Sloan Kettering Hospital her photos appear on the walls of the ground floor. She was forced to leave Warsaw as under the occupying power women could not get a higher education. She went to Paris, and not only did she complete her studies, she discovered uranium and polonium. She was the first, and for many years the only person to receive two Nobel Prizes in two different fields – Chemistry and Physics. What a prime example to young women who need to know that the STEM fields are not – and should not be alien to them.

Yet, because Maria Skłodowska lived in France, she was obliged to change her Christian name to Marie, and when she married – despite the fact that she used a hyphenated surname (given the time period when she lived that was a radical gesture, and despite that fact that the Nobel Prizes were awarded to her as Marie Skłodowska-Curie she was often reduced to Marie Curie. Thus, when in 1935 the City of New York named a street after her – an Irish alderman refused to support the renaming unless Skłodowska was removed. Soon after the street disappeared (although it exists as the FDR Drive). Eighteen months ago, we approached Rockefeller University to help restore her name to the area around the University. They have supported our project and hope to give the name of Maria Skłodowska-Curie to the new esplanade near Rockefeller University, and it is our understanding that the NYC Parks architecture department is supportive of the concept. But it is important that this esplanade carry the full name of Maria Skłodowska-Curie – because she herself never abandoned her Polish identity. In fact – when

Dr. Mierzwa of the Kościuszko Foundation wrote to her in 1927 concerning the creation of a scholarship in her name – she responded with a handwritten letter in which she concurred to the use of her name – signing her name as Skłodowska-Curie and noted that this scholarship should be utilized by young women to study in the sciences. Any other naming of the Esplanade would dishonor Maria Skłodowska.

But you ask – what has this do with you – well if you walk 5 minutes south and look in City Hall Park you will see a granite plinth standing abjectly in the park – it was placed beneath a tree that was planted there – and although healthy was removed when the NYC Parks landscape designer decided that only native American trees should remain in City Hall Park. He did not concern himself with the issue of the plaque and the meaning it had – not only for the Polish community but for young women in NYC.

And this would bring me to my final point – that removing statues or plaques is easy – but attempting to learn why they were placed there is complicated and at times difficult.

Personally, I am an immigrant and the child of GULAG survivors, taken prisoner at a time when the Soviet Union was an ally of Nazi Germany, my parents joined the Polish Army under British command. Their joint families had a total of 9 siblings – two were killed (one by the Germans and one by the Soviets), three were slave laborers (one for the Germans and two for the Soviets). So out of nine – seven were either slave laborers or prisoners. As a researcher I study the process of concealment of the Katyn Massacre by the British and US governments. Most people are not even aware of this massacre of 24,000 POWs by the Soviets.

I believe I can look somewhat objectively at various facts – and I will make specific reference to the marker showing General Petain's visit to New York prior to the war. Let me state clearly – that marker is an opportunity, as is every marker along lower Broadway, for schoolchildren and adults to learn about history. How many people know that the French created a collaborationist government? How many have tried to understand the history and choices that a person like Petain made in deciding to work with Germans? That plaque does not honor the man he became it simply acknowledges the person he was when he came to NYC. Each statue, plaque and marker in New York gives us an opportunity to study history – and in fact the Department of Education should work with historians specializing in the field to prepare study guides – more detailed for schools, available on line for tourists – to allow people to learn the history – not only of New York.

Addio, Columbo - Michael Madormo's testimony Nov 22

I am a proud Italian-American who believes we need to take down the Columbus Statue and all monuments to colonization and white supremacy.

My grandparents were poor farmers in Abruzzo in central Italy where they suffered the devastation of war. They immigrated to the United State after World War II, like so many others before and since, in search of a better life. I was raised to have pride in the tremendous sacrifices my grandparents made and in my Italian-American identity.

Rather than a celebration of my family's history and culture, the statues and day to commemorate Columbus are a symbol of this country's legacy of oppression, and the ways in which Italian-Americans have been complicit.

Basil Russo, President of the Order of the Italian Sons and Daughters of America said, ""We had a very difficult time in this country for well over a hundred years. Columbus Day is a day that we've chosen to celebrate who we are. And we're entitled to do that just as they are entitled to celebrate who they are."

Do we have a right to be proud and celebrate our ancestry as Italian-Americans? Of course, I would be the first person to say that. We do not, however, have the right to be proud at the expense of indigenous people or celebrate a mercenary whose actions led to a genocide.

In "A People's History of the US", Howard Zinn documents the intent and impact of Columbus' voyage. He writes, "In return for bringing back gold and spices, they promised Columbus 10 percent of the profits, governorship over new-found lands, and the fame that would go with a new title: Admiral of the Ocean Sea." Columbus' motivations were more those of a mercenary, than an explorer.

Columbus was singularly focused on profit, and using indigenous peoples to secure it. Upon meeting the Arawak indigenous people, Columbus wrote in his journal:

> ""*They would make fine servants.... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want...The Indians are so naive and so free with their possessions that no one who has not witnessed them would believe it. When you ask for something they have, they never say no. To the contrary, they offer to share with anyone....*" *He concluded his report by asking for a little help from their Majesties, and in return he would bring them from his next voyage "as much gold as they need ... and as many slaves as they ask."*

Bartolome de las Casas, who, as a young priest, participated in the conquest of Cuba, documented the horrors of colonization:

> "Endless testimonies . .. prove the mild and pacific temperament of the natives.... But our work was to exasperate, ravage, kill, mangle and destroy; small wonder, then, if they tried to kill one of us now and then.... The admiral, it is true, was blind as those who came after him, and he was so anxious to please the King that he committed irreparable crimes against the Indians...."

Columbus' forces captured Arawaks and sent them to Spain to be sold as slaves, and forced them into labor on the island in search of gold. By 1650, the genocide of the Arawaks was complete.

In elementary school, I learned stories and songs like "In 1400 and 92 Columbus sailed the ocean blue", but I didn't learn the history of the Arawak people or the role Columbus played in their genocide. All of this raises an obvious question: how did Columbus become a hero, deserving of commemorations?

In "Recontexualizing the Ocean Blue", Italian-American historians Laura Ruberto and Joseph Sciorra explain the motivations of the Italian-American community to commemorate Columbus:

A response to Italians' experience of racism and attempt to assimilate as white:

> *"The monuments were a means to gain entrance into a racist society under the cover of whiteness...In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Italian immigrants saw the American idolization of Columbus as a way to deflect the onslaught of xenophobic and racial prejudice and violence they encountered, and for which they were relatively unprepared, as new arrivals in the United States. They bought into and contributed to a specific Italian reading of Columbus in relationship to their brutal experiences of bigotry. Italian Americans built their emerging identity as provisional whites out of this hagiography.....Columbus Day coalesced at the moment ethnic Europeans became most invested in whiteness, in the face of civil rights movements of African Americans and other minority communities, including, importantly, Native Americans."*

A push by elite, northern Italians for the assimilation of the working class, southern Italians:

> *The connections between Columbus and Italian Americans developed in great part through the work of Italian immigrant prominenti, ethnic leaders who served as intermediaries between WASP elites and the working poor and who supported an upper-class notion of Italian national identity. These leaders, many from northern Italy, "argued for full inclusion as Americans based upon an imagined 'Italian' heritage of civilization and whiteness." At the same time, the prominenti devalued and inhibited a whole host of Italian working-class cultural expressions that became more and more associated with ignorance and vulgarity—from undermining the practice of Catholic street feasts to belittling the use of Italian regional dialects.*

One clear example of this process is Generoso Pope:

> *The quintessential prominente, Generoso Pope, was instrumental in cementing Italian Americans to Columbus. A powerful businessman and influential newspaper owner in New York City, Pope was pro-Fascist. He used his Italian language daily Il Progresso Italo-Americano during the 1920s and 1930s as propaganda for the Italian dictator, and he led Columbus Day gatherings at Columbus Circle where audience members made the fascist salute (and anti-fascist Italian Americans protested both vocally and physically). Critical in securing the Italian American vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt, he later lobbied FDR's administration for an annual national Columbus Day, eventually proclaimed in 1937.*

Sciorra and Roberto conclude that, " Italian Americans have rarely worked for the commemoration of their working-class immigrant history and have ignored, forgotten, or otherwise erased aspects of their collective experiences." The Zinn Education Project created a list of Italian-Americans to replace Columbus, citing that "there are many other people of Italian heritage worthy of attention—people who have played an active role in the struggle for labor rights, gay and lesbian rights, human rights, and civil rights."

Just to name a few:

- **Angela Bambace** (1889-1975) became the first Italian immigrant woman to hold a leadership position in the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) as vice president in 1955.
- **Arturo Giovannitti** (1884-1959), was a poet and labor organizer. In 1912, he traveled to Lawrence, Massachusetts to help his friend and fellow I.W.W. organizer Joseph Ettor lead the Textile Mill Strike, known as the Bread and Roses Strike.
- **Viola Liuzzo** (1925 – 1965) was a civil rights activist who was brutally killed by the KKK, while she was driving people home from the March to Selma in 1965.
- **Vito Russo** (1946-1990) was a gay rights activist and a film historian. Russo is best known for his groundbreaking book *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies*, an exploration of the ways in which gays and lesbians were portrayed in film.

The Cambridge Dictionary includes in its definition of a monument that it is "built to remember and show respect for a person." In the case of Columbus, what are we remembering, and what are we showing respect for? For the Italian-Americans in the room, please raise your hand if you have any ancestors who were explorers, sailors or mercenaries? Thank you. Now, please raise your hand if any of your ancestors worked in textile factories? The disparity is usually overwhelming. It raises the question, why don't we choose to commemorate our identity with examples of people who actually represent us?

It's time for all of us as Italian-Americans to call out the ways in which our ancestors have been complicit in racism, raise up examples of Italian-Americans who have fought for social justice, and follow in that legacy to disrupt racism in today.

My name is Diana Scopelliti Leo. I am a third generation Italian American. Like many Italian American New Yorkers, my great grandparents came from Calabria and Sicily in the early 20th Century in search of a better life.

A Manhattan resident for 17 years, I am a product of the Italian American dream. I am the culmination of four generations of hard-working people who loved this country, played by the rules, and sacrificed for their children.

I'm here to tell you that Christopher Columbus does not represent me or the Italian Americans who came before me.

First, Christopher Columbus wasn't truly Italian. Italy did not exist until over 350 years after Columbus's death. Columbus was from Genoa, in the north of Italy. To southern Italians like my ancestors, Genoa is like a foreign country – even to this day.

Furthermore, Columbus's supposed accomplishments were not done on behalf of Genoa, or any other region of what we now call Italy. He was an agent of Spain. His ships, crews, and financing for all of his voyages to the Western Hemisphere were Spanish.

Second, Christopher Columbus did not discover America. Indeed, he never set foot on our continent.

Christopher Columbus did not even discover the "New World." He accidentally encountered certain Caribbean islands while trying to find Asia, and incorrectly believed these islands were part of Asia until his dying day. In fact, Amerigo Vespucci was the first European to realize that there was a "New World," not Columbus.

Christopher Columbus was not even the first European to travel to the Americas. Vikings did that 500 years before him.

The true "discoverers" of the Americas were Asian. 20,000 years ago, they migrated across a land bridge from Siberia to Alaska. Their descendants were the tens of millions of native people that populated the Americas when Columbus arrived in the Bahamas in 1492.

If Christopher Columbus wasn't truly Italian, and he didn't discover America, what did he do?

A tool of Spanish colonialism, Columbus kidnapped, enslaved, and committed atrocities against native peoples of the Caribbean. He was a brutal Governor of the Spanish colony in Hispaniola, terrorizing the native Tainos and Spanish colonists alike. Columbus also claimed Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and other islands in the West Indies for Spain.

The indigenous people of these islands were forced to labor in goldfields or on Spanish ranches. Natives who resisted were killed with savage violence or were shipped to Spain to be sold as slaves. Up to 90% of them died of smallpox, measles, and other European diseases to which they had no immunity. Many others were worked to death. 50 years after Columbus's arrival, the Tainos were extinct.

As the indigenous peoples of the islands died off, Spanish colonists brought in African slaves to work on ranches and in sugar-cane fields. The transatlantic slave trade flourished as Great Britain, France, and Portugal followed Spain's lead, conquering and decimating the Western Hemisphere.

Eventually, European colonialism spread to our shores. With it came the genocide of America's native peoples and the enslavement of African Americas, our country's two original sins.

This is Columbus's legacy in the United States – colonialism, genocide, and slavery; in short - White Supremacy. Italian Americans like me reject White Supremacy in all its forms. Columbus does not stand for us and he should not stand over our City.

It's 2017: The time has come to remove all monuments to White Supremacy in New York, including those that have been erroneously associated with Italian American heritage. Please, remove all statues of Christopher Columbus from our City.

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Good morning Mr./Ms. Chairman and members of this commission. I am grateful for the opportunity to share my views regarding the future of the equestrian statue, honoring Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, located at Bedford and Bergen Streets in Brooklyn.

Yes, it is true that Grant's infamous General Order #11, to expel all Jews in the area under his command was the most anti-Semitic act ever taken by an American government official. However, we need to look at the context in which it was conceived, the extent to which it was carried out, and most importantly, how Grant felt about his action and the steps he took to atone for it.

While there is no contemporary account giving Grant's reasons for issuing this directive, we know that he and General William T Sherman were greatly concerned about the profiteering, in which goods were being smuggled into and out of the Confederate states. They felt that this activity was aiding the South and thereby prolonging the war.

During this time, General Grant was visited by his father, Jesse Grant along with several Jewish businessmen, who were engaged in the profiteering that the younger Grant was trying to stamp out. The general was furious as he felt that the older Grant was trying to use him as a means of continuing his illegal dealings.

On Dec. 17, 1862, Grant issued General Order No. 11 that called for the expulsion of all Jews from the area under his command, due to their 'violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department.'

The General's action was noted in the NY Times as follows:

'Gen. Grant has issued an order for all Israelites in his department to leave. Consequently, there has been a general stampede. The order has been enforced in Paducah, [KY], causing great indignation among the Hebrew merchants.'

The number of Jews that were actually expelled from Paducah was 85. Hundreds of letters were sent to President Lincoln protesting this action. In addition, a visit to the president by Cesar Kaskel, a Jew

from Paducah prompted Lincoln to order Gen. Henry Halleck, Grant's superior to revoke the order. This was done on January 4, 1863, one week from when the Jews were actually expelled.

During his campaign for the White House in 1868, Grant's wartime expulsion order of Jews received a great deal of attention. He did not deny that General Order No. 11 had grossly violated core American values. "I do not sustain that order," he wrote humbly. "It would never have been issued if it had not been telegraphed the moment it was penned, and without reflection."

At this time, Simon Wolf, a Jewish lawyer in D.C. defended Grant against charges of anti-Semitism as a result of the tumult over his expulsion order.

Once elected, Grant became the first Chief Executive to offer a cabinet post to a Jew, when he asked his long-time friend, Joseph Seligman to be his treasury secretary.

Furthermore, Grant appointed Jews to prominent positions in his administration. He also protested when Jews in Russia and Romania were threatened with expulsion.

Grant became the first sitting president to visit a synagogue during services, when he attended Adas Israel Synagogue in Washington, D.C. for the dedication of its first permanent home on Friday, June 9, 1876.

The event coincided with the centennial celebration of American independence.

Grant along with his son, Ulysses Jr. and acting Vice President Thomas Ferry sat at the front of the sanctuary, on a sofa rented especially for the occasion. The dedication started at 4:00 P.M. and lasted for three hours, with the three guests of honor remaining the entire time!

At the service, donations cards were passed out to all those in attendance and the president pledged $10.00 for Adas Israel's building fund. This is the equivalent of $200.00 today. Currently, the

Library of Congress holds the receipt for this donation.

The president became the first American to speak out against the persecution of Jews abroad. In response to anti-Jewish pogroms in Romania, he sent Benjamin Franklin Peixotto, a Jew, serving as consul-general in Bucharest to "work for the benefit of the people who are laboring under severe oppression."

Grant also named other Jews to government positions, including Dr. Herman Bendel to be Superintendent of Indian Affairs and Edward Salomon as governor of the Washington Territory.

Grant's presidency proved to be a "golden age" in US Jewish history. When he died in 1885, he was mourned in synagogues nationwide.

Given the above, I request that this commission consider not making any changes in the status of Gen. Grant's statue. To do so, would be a disservice to this great American.

Thank you for your attention.

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Testimony to Mayor's Commission—November 22, 1917

My name is Juliet Ucelli. I am a proud Italian American, born and raised in Staten Island and now a Manhattan resident.

In 1992, the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in the Americas, I helped found a group called Italian Americans for a Multicultural U.S. (IAMUS). We believed that Columbus is not a hero, role model or representative of Italian-Americanness.

In advocating today for the removal of his statue, I would like to present briefly 5 reasons why we believe that Italian Americans must stop honoring Columbus.

Why Italian Americans Must Stop Honoring Columbus

Reason#1: Celebrating Columbus insults Native Americans and other peoples of color, whose ancestors suffered from Columbus' misdeeds. During Columbus' own time—not just today—priests like Antonio de Montesinos, A Dominican, and Bartolome de las Casas, a Jesuit, condemned him for his treatment of Caribbean people. Columbus led the slaughter of the people of Hispaniola (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic) by gun, gallows and fire. He ordered his solders to cut off the hands of any Indian who did not bring him enough gold. He started the Transatlantic slave trade by bringing Native Americans to Spain to be slaves. Do we want to offer this person as a role model?

Reason #2: Columbus wasn't representing Italy or Italians. There was no Italy until 1861. Columbus was sailing for Spain.

Reason #3: The Columbus holiday was initiated by rich WASPs who often despised Italian immigrants. Businessmen like Chauncy Depew, principal agent for the Vanderbilt fortune, led the movement for a Columbus holiday in the 1870s and 1880s. For them, it had nothing to do with Italian Americans. Military and business leaders wanted the U.S. to do more of what Columbus had done: go into people's countries (places like Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico), take them over and exploit them. At this time, Italians were called "beaten men of beaten races, so much slag in the melting pot." Until about 1930, Italian Americans from south of Rome were classified as "African" or "non-white" and suffered some of the same discrimination that people of color suffer—including lynching. For example, in 1899 five Italian shopkeepers were lynched in Tallulah, Louisiana because they were considered "too friendly" to African Americans.

Reason #4: Since the Columbus holiday started, there have been voices of opposition in the Italian-American community. Because Italian Americans have been so demeaned by mainstream U.S. culture, portrayed as gangsters and buffoons, many have embraced Columbus as the only hero allowed us. But it was never unanimous. During the 1930s, for example, some Italian Americans in Providence Rhode Island attacked the Columbus Day parade. They knew that several parade organizers were supporters of Benito Mussolini, the Italian Fascist dictator whom many of our ancestors later fought in World War II.

Reason #5: There are Italian Americans who fought for justice and equality and really should be celebrated! Vito Marcantonio (1902-1942), East Harlem congressman who united Italian Americans, African Americans and Puerto Ricans to fight for housing, jobs and justice; Giuseppe Garibaldi, leader of Italian unification who lived for a time on Staten Island; Anna LoPizzo, worker killed during the Lawrence textile strike; Ralph Fasanella, working people's artist, and many more.

Produced by Italian Americans for a Multicultural United States (IAMUS). Contact jucelli@igc.org

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November 22, 2017

Testimony to the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
at Manhattan DCAS Health Building
2nd Floor Atrium
125 Worth St

Testimony

My name is Nancy Sheran, and I am here as a member of the public. I have been living in New York City for more than 50 years, and I have a B.A. in Art History from Hunter College. One of the papers I wrote as a student was on public sculpture in Central Park using materials in the Municipal Art Society archives. I have worked in museums, including the Yale University Art Gallery and the Hirschhorn Sculpture Museum in Washington, D.C.

Public sculpture and monuments are erected at specific times and places. Interpretations of history and tastes ~~can~~ change over time. We are currently in a time both of extreme political correctness and opposition to political correctness. No person is perfect, and people must be understood in the context of when they lived. Some people are important to our present-day understanding of our history, even though they are flawed or their accomplishments had negative side effects. We should strive to present a balanced view of a historical person's accomplishments. Public sculptures also may have artistic value, apart from their value as a commemorative work.

Public sculptures, monuments and commemorative works should be judged one-by-one on several factors:

- The merit of the historical figure or incident
- The artistic merit of the work
- Does the work glorify historical figures or events more than we would do in present times?
- Is there an un-balanced presentation of monuments glorifying one group of people and events, to the exclusion of others. A sense of proportion and diversity should be maintained.

Remediation can be done at several levels:

- If a work fails on all of the above, perhaps it should be removed.

- If a work fails only some of the above, perhaps interpretive materials can round out information about the time of the event or person and the negative aspects - to show a more balanced view.
- Would adding additional monuments in the area representing achievements of ignored groups provide a more balanced view?

Current thinking is that the public statues in Central Park are too male dominated and overly dominated by people of European descent. Could this be remediated by including more monuments to women and to other ethnic groups associated with New York City and commemorating their achievements?

Most of us wouldn't be here if it weren't for Columbus

What we call accomplishments may be subjective. As an example, Christopher Columbus's achievement was that he opened up a large new continent to Europeans. The tragic side-effect was the elimination of native populations and their way of life. How can a voice be given to native Americans in Columbus Circle representing their side of the story? We certainly need interpretive materials to explain both the good and the bad of the historical events surrounding Christopher Columbus.

and their countries

And if you are planning to replace monuments, consider using New York City artists - There are many talented artists here.

Nancy Idaka Sheran

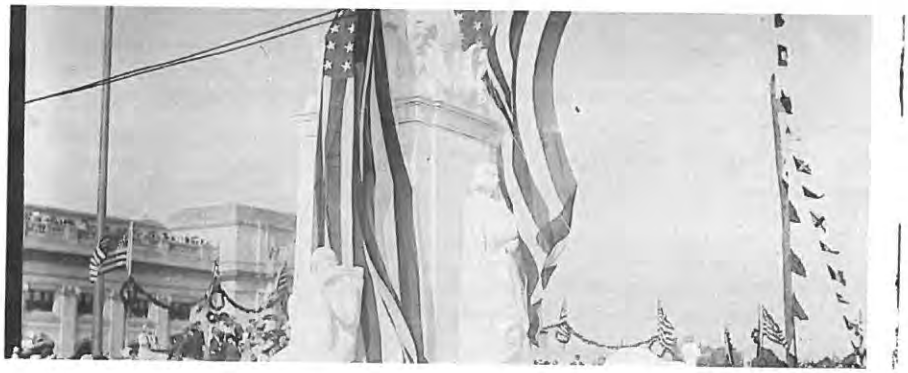
Process: a blog for american history

Recontextualizing the Ocean Blue Italian Americans and the Commemoration of Columbus

1

BY LAURA E. RUBERTO AND JOSEPH SCIORRA ON OCTOBER 4, 2017

COMMENTARY, PUBLIC HISTORY



Unveiling of the Columbus Memorial in Union Station Plaza, Washington, D.C., June 9, 1912. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

Maledetto Cristoforo Columbo e quando ha scoperto l'America.
(Damn Christopher Columbus and his discovery of America.)
—A popular curse among Italian immigrants

The attention on Confederate-focused statuary in public spaces has led to reflection on other historical figures carved in marble or cast in bronze. Perhaps no other individual has single-handedly spurred such impassioned ethnic controversy as the fifteenth-century Genovese navigator, Christopher Columbus.

For nearly two centuries, many Americans have lauded Columbus as the heroic discoverer of a new world. Even so, in his time, Columbus was critiqued and investigated for his cruelty to Native peoples as the Spanish-appointed governor of the newly claimed territories in the Caribbean. In his desire for profit—the Spanish court had awarded him 10 percent of future spoils—Columbus tortured and enslaved Arawaks and Tainos, and he established the *repartimiento* system of forced labor in the desperate search for the islands' negligible gold. These and other atrocities established a genocidal approach to colonization of the Americas; they remain a crucial aspect of Columbus's legacy.

In recent weeks, we have traced an almost daily call to remove Columbus statues on public sites in cities such as Detroit, New York City, St. Paul, and San Jose. These are not new appeals but in fact voices in a decades-long debate. Similarly, anonymous iconoclasts have of late vandalized Columbus statues, smashing the oldest known one, erected in 1792, in Baltimore and toppling one in Yonkers. But this too is not new, as unidentified actors annually have doused Columbus images with symbolic red paint in places like Boston, Houston, and Providence. Protesting traditional representations of Columbus, members of the American Indian Movement in Denver and Pueblo have defaced



Repaired fissures in the Columbus Circle statue, New York City, 2012. Photo: Joseph Sciorra.

ABOUT

Process is the blog of the Organization of American Historians, *The Journal of American History*, and *The American Historian*, dedicated to exploring the process of doing history and the multifaceted ways of engaging with the U.S. past.

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BY CHAD LORD – NOVEMBER 9, 2017

Columbus statues by pouring blood on them and, and in the latter city, affixing images of Adolf Hitler and a skeleton holding brown baby dolls to the statue.

We cannot easily compare Columbus statues and monuments with those that glorify Confederates, armed traitors to the nation and defenders of slavery. Most Confederate monuments were erected as part of Jim Crow and in opposition to the Civil Rights Movement. The proliferation of Columbus representations to a large degree occurred in a different context; namely, the arrival and fraught assimilation of more than four million Italian immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century. The dynamics of symbol-building around Columbus for a once marginalized and attacked immigrant community—whose descendants are now firmly planted in corporate boardrooms, the highest echelons of political power, and white suburbia—necessitate a nuanced discussion about class and race in the United States.

The countless memorials to Columbus that now dot the U.S. landscape were constructed in a variety of different circumstances. Columbus, as a symbol of individualistic resolve and ultimately of Manifest Destiny, emerged as an American cult hero before most Italian immigrants arrived. Washington Irving's 1828 multi-tomed paean reveals early lionization of Columbus, as does the 1893 Chicago's World Fair dedication to Columbus's first voyage. The Knights of Columbus, a Catholic voluntary association founded by Irish immigrants in 1882, was instrumental in championing Columbus as an icon for Catholic assimilation.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Italian immigrants saw the American idolization of Columbus as a way to deflect the onslaught of xenophobic and racial prejudice and violence they encountered, and for which they were relatively unprepared, as new arrivals in the United States. They bought into and contributed to a specific Italian reading of Columbus in relationship to their brutal experiences of bigotry. Italian Americans built their emerging identity as provisional whites out of this hagiography.

The connections between Columbus and Italian Americans developed in great part through the work of Italian immigrant *prominenti*, ethnic leaders who served as intermediaries between WASP elites and the working poor and who supported an upper-class notion of Italian national identity. These included Angelo Noce, a publisher who spearheaded the first declaration of Columbus Day as a state holiday, in Colorado, in 1907, and Carlo Barsotti, a banker and newspaper editor who solicited funds from primarily working-class immigrants to erect New York City's Columbus monument in 1892. These leaders, many from northern Italy, "argued for full inclusion as Americans based upon an imagined 'Italian' heritage of civilization and whiteness," as historian Peter G. Vellon reveals. In Columbus, they perceived a tool by which to forge an Italian national identity which did not exist among the vast majority of immigrants from southern Italy whose geopolitical affinities were to their local villages. By perpetuating ideas of a united Italian community based on racial hierarchies and a grand history of an assumed, singular Italian civilization, the *prominenti* imposed elitist notions of a unified Italian American community that was removed from working-class understandings of history and social formations, and that relied on Italians aligning themselves with a white majority. At the same time, the *prominenti* devalued and inhibited a whole host of Italian working-class cultural expressions that became more and more associated with ignorance and vulgarity—from undermining the practice of Catholic street feasts to belittling the use of Italian regional dialects.

The quintessential *prominente,* Generoso Pope, was instrumental in cementing Italian Americans to Columbus. A powerful businessman and influential newspaper owner in New York City, Pope was pro-Fascist. He used his Italian language daily *Il Progresso Italo-Americano* during the 1920s and 1930s as propaganda for the Italian dictator, and he led Columbus Day gatherings at Columbus Circle where audience members made the fascist salute (and anti-fascist Italian Americans protested both vocally and physically). Critical in securing the Italian American vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt, he later lobbied FDR's administration for an annual national Columbus Day, eventually proclaimed in 1937.

Significantly, many Columbus statues around the country were commissioned, paid for, and built by Italian immigrants. The statues were not created—as in the case of Confederate statues—to impose political dominance over others; on the contrary, the monuments were a means to gain entrance into a racist society under the cover of whiteness. Theirs was no doubt a troubling, but all-too-common, approach to assimilation. Contributions of small change from working-class Italian immigrants helped underwrite statues like the grandiose marble one dedicated in 1892 in New York City or the smaller bronze one erected in 1930 in Easton, Pennsylvania. In some communities like Easton and Richmond, Virginia, the Ku Klux Klan actively campaigned to prevent the placement of Columbus statues in public spaces in opposition to Catholics and "foreigners." In short, these monuments were historically contested sites where Italian immigrants sought visibility in the remaking of local landscapes and the larger political sphere.

In 1971, politicians and business people, many of them Italian American, succeeded in making Columbus Day a federal holiday. This legal holiday—which, importantly, has never been officially named as a day for Italian



Including LGBTQ Americans in Our Nation's Heritage



BY TRACY HUDDLESON – NOVEMBER 7, 2017

Old Sacramento

POPULAR NOW



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Americans—came about with the rise of the white ethnic revival, when the national discourse around normative whiteness shifted from "Plymouth Rock whiteness to Ellis Island whiteness," as Matthew Frye Jacobson has noted. In brief, Columbus Day coalesced at the moment ethnic Europeans became most invested in whiteness, in the face of civil rights movements of African Americans and other minority communities, including, importantly, Native Americans.

Today, representatives of local and national voluntary associations such as the National Italian American Foundation, UNICO National, and the Order Sons of Italy in America have come out vigorously in opposition to the removal of Columbus statues in the name of Italian American victimization, while rearticulating their support for Columbus Day. Their position perpetuates the elite Italian national history championed by the *prominenti* in the early twentieth century and the limiting Italian American identity that developed with the white ethnic revival.

These self-appointed ethnic leaders claim to speak not just for their membership, but also on behalf of a larger and unspecific Italian American community. Yet, numerous Italian American poets, activists, and scholars have long spoken out against Columbus and his legacy. In different moments, groups such as the New York City-based Italian Americans for a Multicultural United States, the San Francisco-based Italian American Political Solidarity Club, and the national NoColumbusDay group, as well as individuals such as poets Diane di Prima ("Whose Day Is It Anyway?") and Robert Viscusi ("An Oration Upon the Most Recent Death of Christopher Columbus"), have offered counter-narratives to a purported Italian ethnic solidarity and its symbols. But these voices, as strong as they are, do not hold the same weight as marble.



Sympathy Labor Parade for Carlo Tresca, December 2, 1916, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

The lack of commemorative public art dedicated to Italian American activists—such as Angela Bambace, Pete Panto, and Carlo Tresca, who struggled on behalf of workers' rights, and James Groppi and Vito Russo, who fought on behalf of civil rights—or victims of anti-Italian violence, such as the eleven men lynched in New Orleans in 1891, let alone the executed anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti, is not surprising. Early-twentieth-century ethnic leaders ingratiated themselves with the Anglo-Saxon ruling class, profited from the working poor, spoke out against unions, and aligned themselves at times with Fascists. Over the years, the labor and civil rights of working-class Italian Americans were ferociously suppressed. Barring only a few examples, such as the 1918 Colorado Ludlow Monument and the planned memorial to the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in New York City, Italian Americans have rarely worked for the commemoration of their working-class immigrant history and have ignored, forgotten, or otherwise erased aspects of their collective experiences.

All symbolic works, especially those that bear the weight of group identities, are open to re-interpretation by members of a pluralistic society. Understanding the historical context in which commemorative objects are erected reminds us of the dangers of investing too much symbolic power in any one individual. We instead imagine alternatives and look toward a new generation of Italian Americans who find different ways to bear witness to their histories and evolving lives.

Laura E. Ruberto is a professor in the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies at Berkeley City College and the author of Gramsci Migration and the Representation of Women's Work in Italy and the U.S. *(2007). Joseph Sciorra is a director at Queens College's John D. Calandra Italian American Institute and the author of* Built with Faith: Italian American Imagination and Catholic Material Culture in New York City *(2015). Ruberto and Sciorra are the co-editors of the two-volume* New Italian Migrations to the United States, Vol. 1: Politics and History since 1945 *(2017) and* Vol 2: Art and Culture since 1945 *(2017).*

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1 COMMENT

ANNIE RACHELE LANZILLOTTO on OCTOBER 18, 2017 3:58 PM

grazie Laura e Joe, bravi

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH V. SCELSA, ED.D.
MAYORAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CITY ART, MONUMENTS AND MARKERS
NOVEMBER 22, 2017

My name is Joseph Scelsa, Founder and President of the Italian American Museum in New York City's "Little Italy" on the corner of Grand and Mulberry Streets.

The Italian American Museum was officially founded on June 12, 2001 when it was chartered under the aegis of the University of the State of New York, Education Department as a museum. The Italian American Museum is more than an immigrant museum. Its purpose is to document the myriad contributions made by the people of Italy and their descendents to the very fabric of American society from its earliest origins and its philosophical underpinning through philosophers, explorers, adventurers, industrialists, scientists, educators, politicians and everyday people, telling the whole story which continues to flourish and evolve in America today.

Prior to becoming executive director of the Italian American Museum, I was a Vice President at Queens College, CUNY and the first Dean of the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute of The City University of New York. During my tenure at the University, I was also appointed Vice Chair of the Multi-Cultural Advisory Board and Co-Chair of the Intergroup Relations Council of the New York City Board of Education. In 1992, I sued CUNY for discrimination along with forty other Italian American professors and on October 18, 1992 was granted a Federal Court injunction barring CUNY from discriminating against Italian Americans at the University.

I hold a Doctorate in Sociology and Education from Columbia University's Teachers College, the subject of my dissertation being "Constructive Pluralism". It is a concept by which each group respects the rights of the other to celebrate and practice their culture in their own way and share those practices and beliefs with other groups in a civil society. Thus, in my mind, maintenance of the monuments in New York City in particular those of Christopher Columbus are strongly supported by constructive pluralism, a concept endorsed by The United Nations in promoting peace and harmony in a pluralistic world.

The removal or alteration, in any way, of city monuments does not! That would be "Destructive Pluralism", the very opposite of what is intended. What is necessary is dialogue between peoples with the goal of obtaining a mutual respect and understanding of each other. No one group, whether large or small, should be replaced or superseded by another.

I implore this Commission to take seriously these remarks. Your good intentions are no substitute for unintended consequences. Your very existence is pitting one group against another. That is what is happening and must stop if we are to maintain a civil society and restore domestic tranquility.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my views on this important issue.

Joseph V. Scelsa, Ed.D.
President/CEO
Italian American Museum
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New York, NY 10013
917.642.4922

Testimony of Dr. Lynn Roberts, Assistant Professor, CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy, 55 West 125th Street, Harlem USA to the ***Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers***.

November 22, 2017

Good Morning Honorable Commissioners:

My name is Lynn Roberts. I am an Assistant Professor in the City University of New York's Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy in Harlem. I am also an emeritus Board Member of the *SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Coalition* and co-editor with Loretta Ross, Erika Derkas, Whitney Peoples and Pamela Bridgewater Toure of a recently published anthology *Radical Reproductive Justice*.

I would like to begin by explaining what Reproductive Justice is. Back in 1994, a caucus of 12 Black women gathered in Chicago IL to discuss the health of women of color. Their gatherings coincided with the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, Egypt where global activists agreed that reproductive rights are essential to social justice. Inspired by Cairo and the Clinton Administration's push for health care reform, this group of Black women in Chicago discussed the multiple ways that reproductive rights were jeopardized by domestic policies. After much organizing,

the group named themselves *Women of African Descent for Reproductive Justice,* and thus the term Reproductive Justice was born. It would not be until 2003 at a conference convened by *SisterSong* that Reproductive Justice would become widely used as an organizing framework on behalf of *all* indigenous and women of color who were impacted by sexual and reproductive oppression.

From its inception, the Reproductive Justice framework has utilized an **intersectional analysis** based on internationally accepted **human rights** doctrine and the practice of **self-help/community care** to heal from the multiple traumas of oppression.

Sexual and reproductive oppression can be defined as "the control and exploitation of cis/trans women and girls, and other marginalized individuals through our bodies, sexuality, labor and reproduction."

Just as in many other parts of the world, reproductive politics in the U.S. is based on gendered, sexualized and racialized systems of dominance that inform and become concretized in public policies with harmful consequences for women and girls. It is this "regulation of cis/trans women and girls that becomes a powerful and strategic pathway for controlling and imperiling entire communities."

These structures can also be based on class, ability, immigration status, health status and other social statuses.

There are several examples of **sexual and reproductive oppression** visited upon indigenous and people of color throughout our shared history in the United States and up until the present:

~In addition to the exploitation of their labor, enslaved women of African descent were forced to breed only to have their children sold as chattel during slavery. As has been very well documented by Harriet Washington there are few more egregious examples than the fact that between 1845-1849, the purported founder of modern gynecology, J. Marion Sims, experimented on enslaved African women and their infants (without anesthesia) to perfect surgical procedures for white women and children. It was this dehumanization of Black bodies that has contributed to an enduring legacy of sexual and reproductive oppression.

~ From the late 1800's until the early 1970's Native American children were removed from their families and sent to boarding schools to be "civilized and remove the Indian" from them.

~ There have been numerous cases of sterilization abuse by the U.S. government and medical institutions that specifically targeted Puerto Rican women (both on the island and mainland), African American women and girls in the South, Native American women on reservations, and Mexican American women in California.

~In the 1950's, Puerto Rican women were aggressively recruited to participate in clinical trials (without their informed consent) to develop The Pill.

~ More recent examples include:

- Limits on comprehensive sex education in schools
- Coercive promotion of contraceptives
- Restrictions on abortion (e.g., Hyde Amendment, TRAP laws)
- Discriminatory early termination of parental rights that separates children from their families
- Shackling of incarcerated pregnant women during transport *and* during birth (had to pass legislation twice in NYS; 2009 and 2015)
- Racial disparities in multiple health outcomes, most of which are preventable
- Demonization and criminalization of POC, including those who are pregnant or parenting, based on our gender, our age, substance use, being poor, being incarcerated, or for simply wanting to control and live freely in our own bodies.

AND most recently a new Administration and conservative-led Congress who have acted boldly to repeal the Affordable Care Act, defund provisions of the Violence Against Women Act, and re-instate the global gag rule on abortions, to name just a few. It's becoming increasingly difficult to keep up.

Reproductive Justice is the unequivocal mobilized resistance to sexual and reproductive oppression.

One of the founding member organizations of *SisterSong* – now known as Forward Together - defined Reproductive Justice as:

> *"the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, economic, and social well-being of women and girls, and will be achieved when women and girls have the economic, social and political power and resources to make healthy decisions about our bodies, sexuality and reproduction for ourselves, our families and our communities in all areas of our lives."*

As first introduced by *SisterSong* and since expounded upon by others, **Reproductive Justice** is the human right to:

1. Decide if and when you will have a child and the conditions under which you will give birth or create a family.

2. Decide if you will *not* have a child and your options for preventing or ending a pregnancy.

3. Parent the child(ren) you want or already have with the necessary social supports in safe environments and healthy communities, and without threat of harm from individuals, organizations or institutions of the state.

4. Bodily autonomy from any form of sexual or reproductive oppression.

One of the Key Strategies of Reproductive Justice includes:

Disrupting ahistorical narratives (such as the narrative of J Marion Sims as the benevolent father of modern gynecology)

In August 2014, I was invited to have my photo taken at the special request of a social justice advocate and former student, Daisy Bugarin, as part of an NYU photo exhibit called "I Thou" that included A Series of Eleven Portraits, reflecting on concurrent themes in social justice and a panel conversation exploring the individual's role in social activism. I cannot say enough about Daisy's commitment as an artivist in the struggle for liberation. It is always my honor and privilege to learn with my students new and creative ways to disrupt the false narratives that are holding so many of us in bondage 'til this day.

I chose to be photographed in front of the statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims located at the 103rd Street perimeter wall of Central Park in El Barrio/East Harlem. I wanted to honor the victims of his cruel and unusual medical experimentation on enslaved African-descendant women and infants by connecting their sacrifice to the long line of Black cis/trans women and girls whose bodies have been brutalized by reproductive and state violence and oppression.

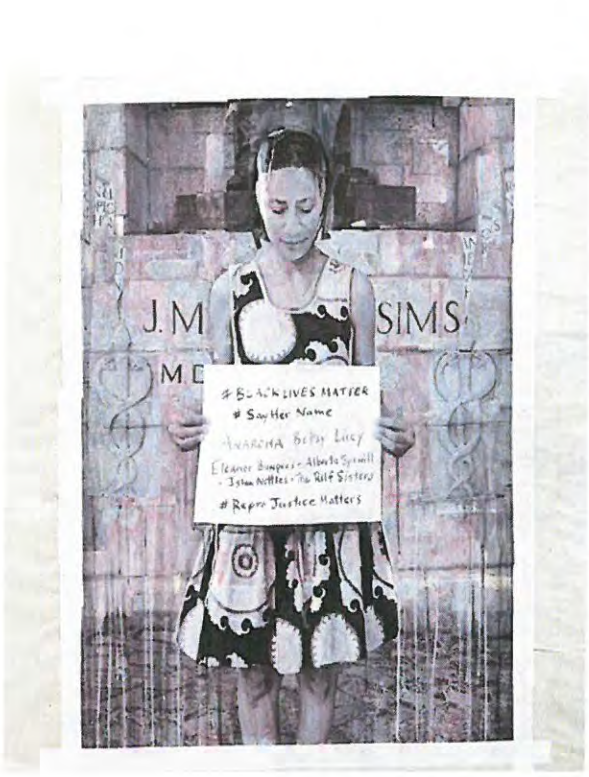
Like the confederate flag that flew on the South Carolina State House, there are many of us who believe this statue needs to be removed from its location in a historically Black and Latino community and across from the New York Academy of Medicine. Despite Viola Plummer leading the charge and the outcry of local community leaders such as Marina Ortiz of East Harlem Preservation (who were later joined by the efforts of NYC Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and her fellow NYC Council Member Inez Barron and the local Community Board) to have the statue removed, the NYC Parks Department has yet to place a historical sign providing an accounting of J Marion Sims' inhumane acts and honoring the enslaved African-descendant women and infants he violated.



On the day of the photo shoot in August 2014, I chose to hold and leave a protest sign at the statue with several hashtags reflecting just a few of the intersections of my social activism and memory.

~Anarcha, Betsey and Lucy – three enslaved African-descended women identified in the detailed medical research notes of J Marion Sims.

The photo appeared in the Kimmel Windows at NYU in October 2014. It is my hope that some folks who passed by the window saw the names of Anarcha, Betsey and Lucy and the statue J Marion Sims and took the time to dig a little deeper to unearth the stories that are too often buried and forgotten. Until the statue is removed, we must always #SayTheirNames.





In fall 2014, and also at the invitation of two of my students, I was invited to share the Reproductive Justice framework with staff of the Bureau of Maternal, Infant and Reproductive Health at the New York

City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. This led to the formation of the Department of Health's Sexual and Reproductive Justice Community Engagement Group (fondly known as the CEG) ~ a group of community leaders, activists, and nonprofit organizations dedicated to collectively promoting sexual and reproductive health and justice in New York City. The CEG has embarked on a multi-year Birth Justice campaign to improve health outcomes for *all* New York City's pregnant and parenting families, especially those who have been marginalized because of their race, gender and other social identities. At a time in NYC when Black women are 12 times more likely than white women to die as a result of complications during pregnancy and birth, we cannot tolerate this symbolic reminder of the disregard for the human rights and dignity of African-descendant women and their children.

In February 2017, I was invited by East Harlem Preservation to be part of a panel discussion on the Sims statue with Medical Apartheid author Harriet Washington and Diane Collier, Chair of East Harlem's Community Board 11. The program was broadcast over the Manhattan Neighborhood Network.

Finally, I am a member of the recently formed ***Coalition to Remove the Dr. Sims Statue: Reclaiming Reproductive Rights of Women of Color***. This coalition of community leaders and elected officials convened by Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and Council Member

Inez Barron is demanding the immediate removal of the Central Park Monument to Dr. J. Marion Sims.

Thank you.

Don't Erase History, Put It in Its Proper Place. By Vincent J. Tomeo

Only human beings can set a concept to symbols. If memorials to the Civil War have been reinterpreted to arouse hate, anger, and disunity, then they should be removed to a proper place; a Civil War Cemetery, or a Civil War Museum. We must learn different interpretations of history to discover the truth. Memorials can serve as props to the teaching of history. Radicals must not use propaganda, political correctness, or suppress different historical viewpoints. Looking at the past in the present distorts history. History is not always pleasant. History can be a hard pill to swallow. Nevertheless, history is a search for truth. We must learn from our mistakes and try never to repeat them. To tear down historical monuments, burn history books, or allow only one interpretation is not history. It is propaganda, wrong, and plays into the hands of the enemies of truth, freedom and the principals of the Republic.

Vincent J. Tomeo 11/21/2017

Many people are upset that Bill O'Reilly and Charlie Rose, exposed as sexual predators, are not who they thought they were. They're now fired so we won't see their faces any more. Many Italians have helped expose the bad truth about Columbus - and while they are sad, they don't want to see his face anymore as well.

For centuries Columbus was just a small, bad moment in history –until a writer, Washington Irving (wrote Sleepy Hollow) started to write an English biography of Columbus. He started out writing that Columbus was a murderous failure but then stopped and realized "This horrid stuff won't sell copies, let me instead create a hero and say he proved the earth was round and discovered America". Even during Columbus's time – he never set foot in America and it was already common knowledge that the earth was round.

Irving's story wasn't well known until the 19th century when Italians immigrated to America. At first they were persecuted and treated poorly - until some Italians cleverly started showing the Irving story to any American that would listen - to show they had a connection to America - and they were then finally accepted.

So since they didn't bring the European version of Columbus to tell – it's important to know that the Italian and Spanish version was info complied from two key sources. Columbus's own diary and letters (of which none were written in Italian because he only spoke and wrote Catalan) – and the from the letters that his crew wrote and sent back to Spain. The crew wrote and complained that Columbus was having them commit heinous crimes against the people who they met. Columbus's own writing confirmed much of this. In a letter to one of his Spanish patrons about the people he met, Columbus said: "They are very decent and generous people." BUT, BUT, - then, in the midst of all this praise, Columbus writes: "They would make fine servants. We could make them do whatever we want."

He packed hundreds of them onto ships and sold them as slaves. Many died during the trip. Those that remained were forced to search for gold and would be disfigured if they were unsuccessful. He made everyone convert to Christianity. He began the depopulation of Hispaniola in 1492 - one-third were killed off in 4 years and then over time, several hundred thousand more were killed until only a few hundred remained.

His soldiers stabbed the natives for sport, dashed babies' heads on rocks and many natives were beheaded or burned at the stake.

The Europeans brought with them diseases like typhoid and smallpox.

Women received especially brutal treatment. Columbus and his men used religion as an excuse to forcefully have their way with and rape thousands of native women.

Therefore, it is not history that people are trying to remove. A mistake is what they are trying to remove. "History" is things that actually happened. Not things made up to have happened. Taking down certain statues is a way to educate youth that when we suddenly learn of mistakes we made - we do everything possible to correct them.

http://www1.nyc.gov/site/monuments/public-hearings/public-hearings.page

I am here today as a New Yorker and a proud Italian-American.

I also stand before you as the 14th President of the Columbus Citizens Foundation – a cultural and philanthropic non-for-profit institution that provides over 700 annual scholarships to students in need and oversees New York City's annual Columbus Day Parade up Fifth Avenue.

Most recently, and most relevant to these meetings, I have been working with more than 50 leaders in the Italian-American community as we stand together as we face down the cultural debate which would label Columbus as nothing more than an historical villain – and the physical defacing of Columbus statues and monuments throughout New York, which – with all due respect to those present today from the Mayor's Commission – are directly linked to the polarizing discussion of statues and monuments which began in September with a direct critique on Columbus by the Speaker of the City Council.

Over the years, Columbus Day and the Columbus Monument have played a vital role in Italian-American acceptance and the celebration of Italian culture. The statue of Columbus at Columbus Circle was created by renowned Italian sculptor Gaetano Rosso in 1892 and funded by Italian-immigrants through newspaper sales.

In fact, many of the statues that honor Columbus were financed by Italian Americans seeking validation as patriotic United States citizens.

Though it is not often discussed, the Italians who came to New York and other US destinations in the late 1800s were met with intense discrimination and in many cases extreme violence – not the least of which was the largest mass lynching in US history which took place on March 14, 1891 – when 11 Italian-American workers were acquitted by a jury, but then lynched by a mob organized by the Mayor of New Orleans.

It is against this background of violence and discrimination that we as Italian-Americans embraced the figure of Columbus, and as a result, these statues – often financed by our ancestors – take on emotional and historical significance to the community that I am so proud to belong to.

We can look to many historians with different viewpoints but there can be no doubt that Columbus had a lasting, incredible impact on the opening of the "Columbian exchange" and truly changed the world by being the first to open a connection between Europe and the Americas. Those who simply attack the accomplishments and voyages of Columbus are attempting to rewrite history – and are often basing their reactions on fiction, not fact.

Should the commission decide to remove the statue of Columbus, will the Circle in which the monument stays be renamed? Will Columbia University need a similar review we are undertaking here? How about Columbus Avenue or Columbia Presbyterian Hospital? Where will this historical revision end?

I am an Italian-American and I am also a New Yorker – and the New Yorker in me celebrates and cherishes the great diversity of the city that we all share. I support and applaud the efforts for more

recognition for the Indigenous People of the Americas, and particularly for the tribes from the New York state area. The Indigenous cultures must and will be celebrated – but as a proud Italian American I cannot accept that the celebration of Indigenous Peoples would require erasing of Christopher Columbus from our history as Americans.

I would also make the argument that while Columbus makes for a convenient scapegoat for others that came after him, there are other truths to look at. If we are truly looking to redress wrongs done toward the Indigenous Peoples of the United States, one should first look at their treatment at the hands of our own Federal Government in the early years of the nation's development. Why for example is the likeness of President Andrew Jackson not receiving the same public scrutiny, if indeed the commission's focus is purely based on fairness and justice, and not Columbus bashing?

No government agency or commission should determine what we as citizens should believe. Every citizen has the right to determine their own beliefs and make their own educated judgement of Christopher Columbus. There should be no plaques or kiosk with a revisionist view on the statue. Our rights as American citizens living in free country must be respected.

The statues of Columbus must remain with no alteration or additions. They should be untouched by vandals, and allow us all as citizens in a free country to make our own conclusions about the man that they represent.

Thank you for your time.

Angelo Vivolo

Dear Mayor Bill de Blasio,

We represent a coalition of 50 major Italian American and Catholic groups, representing hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers, who have come together to endorse the retention, without modification, of the statues of Columbus in New York and simultaneously confront the disrespect foisted upon our community by those who would seek to abolish Columbus Day.

The clandestine initial meeting of your monument commission announced your intention to conduct a survey and convene public hearings. This ill-advised survey is now public and is lacking in many respects. Fortunately, we have a reputable survey from Marist polling that indicates widespread support for Columbus Day. Additionally, the noteworthy opinion leaders in this state are overwhelmingly in favor of retention of Columbus Statues and the holiday. Governor Cuomo and Senator Schumer, two of the three highest ranking public officials in New York City, Public Advocate James, Comptroller Stringer, three of your former mayoral opponents as well as over 50 other candidates who sought municipal office, are all in agreement that the Columbus statue should not be disturbed.

As for the notion that erecting explanatory plaques would be appropriate, we would ask whether it is your intention to request the same of Columbia University. Will your commission be asking New York State to rename Columbia County, NASA to explain the Space Shuttle Columbia or ask Congress to rename the capital district?

We emphatically support Indigenous Peoples' Day, but not as a replacement for Columbus Day.
Indigenous culture is indeed beautiful but would there be an asterisk noting the condemnation of their 15th century practices or explaining that many tribes fought against American Independence and sided with the British in the War of 1812? Of course not and it should not!

Our understanding is that your Commission is on a quest to determine "New York values."
Perhaps, if you observed the Columbus Day parades in every borough of New York, you would understand how hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers peacefully celebrate their culture and heritage with pride and dignity.

We are also genuinely concerned that public hearings will further contribute to the divisiveness in our country. Your hearings will be a lightning rod for hatred and acrimony and will serve no useful purpose. The existence of your monument commission has exacerbated ill will and enabled those who would deface monuments.

We sincerely recommend that you disband this commission.

Respectfully yours,

The Christopher Columbus Preservation Coalition

Question One:

What do you think is the role of public monuments in our city's public spaces?

- Monuments and statues connect present-day New Yorkers to the rich history of their city and country.
- Public Monuments are expressions of the mood of the people at the time they were installed.
- Public monuments remind us of the significant deeds and accomplishments of others.
- In the case of monuments to Christopher Columbus, these statues exist to recognize the role Columbus played in establishing a bridge between the eastern and western hemispheres.

Question Two:

When considering the role of public monuments in NYC, what do you think is the best way to achieve public space that is open and inclusive?

- All should be made to feel welcome in any public space in New York City.
- Monuments in public spaces are open to all – and all are free to look, study and reflect on their meaning.
- In a city as diverse as NYC, different public monuments will have different meaning to various cultures within New York – for example, the monuments of Columbus throughout New York will have special meaning to specific New Yorkers – most notably Italian Americans.

Question Three:

What factors should the City consider when reviewing a monument?
Consider historical and contemporary context, intention and time of installation, and the values to which New Yorkers aspire.

- We should not view the merits of historical figures, whose accomplishments took place long ago, through the lens of 2017.
- NYC's monuments were erected for a reason, each and every one of them, to commemorate an individual achievement or event as a reference point for all.
- Allowing political correctness to censor specific monuments and statues is short-sighted.
- Monuments should remain for all New Yorkers to make their own judgements as to their historical value.
- No governmental commission should be empowered to enforce their own values and moral judgements onto the city's citizens.

Question Four:

If a particular monument is preserved, altered, or removed, what do you think the effect will be in the future? What would be the effect on your experience in New York City with or without changes to a particular monument? What would be the effect on our collective experience?

- The removal or altering of monuments in NYC sends a message that negates the accomplishments of our country's past.
- Specially, the removal of monuments and statues of Columbus shows ignorance in what Columbus's voyages represented to the eventual formation of the United States, and the creation of a bridge between the New and Old Worlds of the 15th Century.

- Removing or altering monuments of Columbus would send a message to the large Italian-American community in New York City that the figure who helped them gain legitimacy as US citizens, is not respected and their history with our city and our country is unimportant to the Mayor's Office.
- To alter or remove a statue would have a divisive effect on all citizens.

Question Five:
Does your comment relate to a specific, existing monument in NYC?

- Yes

Question Six:
Does your comment relate to a proposal for a new monument in NYC?

- No

Question Seven:
There are many possible ways to address the meaning of public art and monuments, such as adding supplementary and educational materials like plaques, relocating objects to another public or private space, or commissioning new public art either in response to an original or on its merits. How might you best add context and tell a more complete story of a particular monument?

- The city must not take on the role of education in public spaces – this is the role of our school system.
- New Yorkers must be allowed to honor their heroes and culture in their own way – this is a basic freedom with which the Office of the Mayor must not interfere.
- The silence of the Mayor and his Commission in defending Columbus has led to acts of vandalism and destruction, caused by his silence.
- All of history is open to diverse interpretations – and all public moments can be judged in a negative or positive light – but it should not be the role of the Mayor's Office or the City Council to determine which historical accounts are the most accurate.
- Every citizen has the right to make their judgements on the men and women currently represented by the city's monuments without prejudice created by governmental interpretation.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS' BIGOTED SIDE

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.
President
Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights
450 7th Avenue
New York, New York

Testimony
Mayoral Advisory Commission on Art, Monuments and Markers
November 22, 2017, Manhattan DCAS Health Building

In schools all across America, Frederick Douglass is known as a former slave who became one of the nation's leading abolitionists; he was also a champion of women's rights. Not so well known was his bigotry: his anti-Catholicism was a trait he shared with most abolitionists, especially those who were Protestant ministers. Douglass was a ordained deacon and a preacher in a local African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

In his classic, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, University of Notre Dame historian John T. McGreevy notes that Douglass "displayed a casual anti-Catholicism, attacking the 'cunning illusions' of Catholic leaders." Professor Richard Hardack offers plenty of evidence to support McGreevy's observation; his work is available in an edited volume by Alan J. Rice and Martin Crawford, *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass & Transatlantic Reform*.

Douglass' bigotry became apparent when he visited Ireland for four months in 1845; it was part of a two-year visit to the United Kingdom. According to Hardack, Douglass' extensive lectures and writing amounted to an "anti-Catholic diatribe" seeking to blame the Catholic Church for slavery. He also blamed Irish Catholics, not the English, for their victim status in the United States and Ireland.

"Irish Catholics, especially Irish Americans," Hardack says, "are not simply ignored or critiqued, they are systematically cast out of Douglass's circle." Douglass spoke compassionately about the Irish experience, but he also depicted the Irish as unfairly competing with blacks. "Throughout his life," Hardack notes, "Douglass worried about Irish American prejudice, intemperance, and competition with blacks regarding foreign support, jobs, and voting rights, anxieties partly reflected in and partly caused by his distaste for all varieties of Catholicism and Irish Catholicism in particular."

Douglass got away with his "anti-Catholic convictions" because America was receptive to this strand of bigotry. Indeed, his "anti-Catholic animus" was evident in his "descriptions of religious practices throughout his

life." He was known for his "senseless tirades" and long lectures on the pope and bishops.

It cannot be that Douglass was reacting bitterly against his experience in Ireland—it was uniformly positive. He even went so far as to say that "one of the most pleasing features of [his] visit [to Ireland]...has been a total absence of all manifestations of prejudice against [him] on account of [his] color." No matter, he gave the Irish no slack, blaming the Catholic Church, not the English, for their plight. He referred to the Church as the work of "Satan," ultimately holding the Irish responsible "for this crushing religious" system.

This pro-black, pro-suffragette, and anti-Catholic American recorded many of his writings in his weekly publication, *The Douglass Paper*. In it, Hardwick writes, Douglass "minces no words in literally demonizing the Catholic Church as a force of evil and in following popular prejudice in equating Irish Catholicism with popery." In his own words, Douglass bragged how he spoke of "the prevalence and power of the Christian Church and religion at Rome and of the strange things that are believed and practiced there in the way of religious rites and ceremonies."

Douglass was quick to finger the Catholic Church with bringing about the "evil" that existed in Ireland, namely the "ignorance, cunning, and crimes" associated with "Romanism." Yet his expressed interest in opposing social injustice did not allow him to comment on the Irish famine.

"The potato blight was only a rumor and a worry when Douglass visited Ireland in 1845," says journalist Joan Walsh, "but it was a crisis by the time he left England in 1847 to return to the U.S. How could such a towering human-rights figure remain silent on the catastrophe, as it seemed he had?"

Douglass was struck by the suffering of the Irish, but he always chose to blame the victim. He noted that the "streets [are] almost alive with

beggars," and women with "infants in their arms, whose emaciated forms, sunken eyes and pallid cheeks," clear evidence, he concluded, that they "had nursed in vain." He said the only difference between blacks and the Irish was the "black skin and wooly hair" of the slaves. But as Walsh notes, he attributed these conditions to Irish "drunkenness."

On the eve of the famine, Douglass wrote a letter to his abolitionist ally, William Lloyd Garrison, that summed up his position. "The immediate, and it may be the main cause of the extreme poverty and beggary in Ireland, is intemperance. This may be seen in the fact that most beggars drink whiskey.... Drunkenness is still rife in Ireland."

Drunkenness was also rife with Native Americans at this time as well, but not to mention the role that European explorers played in accounting for such conditions would be seen as irresponsible, if not bigoted. Douglass' reaction should not be treated in a different manner.

Like virtually all heroic figures in history, Frederick Douglass was a complicated person. His contributions to human rights, as far as blacks and women are concerned, must be recognized, but it cannot proceed without citing his anti-Catholic bigotry. It is time to set the record straight about him.

Finally, nothing I have said should be read as a plea to remove the statue of Frederick Douglass from Central Park. It should stay.

The Catholic League does not support scrubbing American history free of its shortcomings. Indeed, the idea of taking down the monuments and markers of American icons is abhorrent, a practice favored by totalitarian regimes, not democratic governments. My only request is that students learn of Douglass' bigoted side, as well as all the good that he did.

Bibliography

See especially the following:

John T. McGreevey, *Catholicism and American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003)

Alan J. Rice and Martin Crawford, *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass & Transatlantic Reform* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1999).

Peter Walker, *Moral Choices: Memory Desire and Imagination in Nineteenth-Century American Abolition* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

Joan Walsh, "What Frederick Douglass Made of the Irish and Catholicism," www.chicago.suntimes.com, June 24, 2016.

November 22, 2017

To: The Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
Attn: Co-Chairs Darren Walker and Tom Finkelpearl
DCAS Health Building, 2nd Floor Atrium, 125 Worth St New York, NY 10013

Re: Public Hearing on City's monuments and markers in public space

As I listen to the testimonials of the past few days. I notice that the subject of monuments has stirred up a lot of fear, hate, and misunderstanding. So much so that I feel, that from day one, the priority of this commission should have been to educate the people of this city on the truth about it's history, so that it can finally reconcile with it's violent past.

Without this fundamental work of educating the public, it will come as no surprise, that at the end of the day, these monuments to a brutal history remain. In fact these forces and the spectre of dispossession are still with us today, now only justified by the city apparatus of democratically elected and appointed officials privileging for-profit developers over it's people. If you look at the population shift on the coastal fronts and city centers of New York City, you will see a mostly white racial majority spreading and that the black and latino populations are being pushed further out where city resources are scarce or into homeless shelters. *(It is no coincidence that New York City's homeless families now number close to 60,000 are disproportionately black and latino. New York City is by far one of the most diverse cities in the USA, but is also one of the most segregated.)*

In the summer of 2016, New York City had a chance to do what was right and allow African American artists Aaron Bell to express his feelings related to lynching by way of his public sculpture "Stand Tall, Stand Loud," (designed for Riverside Park.) Instead the NYC Parks Commission forced him to censor his own work and remove the symbolic noose in his sculpture. For this, I am ashamed of being a New Yorker, I am ashamed that to this day we do not give the space for people of color to express their history and concerns and means exercise self-determination in designing their neighborhoods and monuments in this city.

But if there is something that has given me hope today, it is what is happening in cities across the United States. Today, I am proud of all the cities that have renamed colonial holidays to honor Native Americans. Today, I am proud to hear that in the southern town of Charlottesville has removed over 60 monuments and secured 4 million dollars in reparations for its African American citizens ($250,000 of which was set aside for an African American Heritage Center. Today I am proud of Texas where I am from, for setting aside $700,000 for grant to artists of color.) I am proud for the southern state of Mississippi, who with the work of Equal Justice Initiative will open the first ever national memorial to victims of lynching in 2018. 4000 names will be memorialized through this 6 acre monument.

After a presentation on art and activism to students Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, a student asked me and the panelist, *"But don't all lives matter?"* I replied by explaining that one way society shows who and what matters to them is by building monuments, naming streets and plazas. So, I asked him to look around, show me the statues for my people, for the latinx community, for african americans, for asian americans, for womyn and indigenous people. Study the number and locations of monuments throughout the city, and then you tell me, *Do all lives really matter for the people of New Yorker City?*

Thank You,
Antonio Serna
New York City

Statement on the J. Marion Sims Statue Presented to the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers by Marina Ortiz, November 22, 2017

Hello, my name is Marina Ortiz and I'm here representing East Harlem Preservation.

We have been demanding the removal of the J. Marion Sims statue for over seven years because we believe that a monument honoring a white southern doctor who experimented on Black female slaves without anesthesia or consent does not belong in our community.

Our campaign was greatly inspired by earlier efforts by activist Viola Plummer—who had begun calling attention to Sims' cruel experiments soon after the publication of Harriet Washington's book "Medical Apartheid" in 2006.

Since 2010, East Harlem Preservation has sponsored petition drives and public forums. We've also engaged in direct actions with local performance artists, community residents, and members of the NYC chapter of Black Youth 100.

We maintain that the statue's presence does a huge disservice to the neighborhood's majority Black and Latino residents—groups that have historically been subjected to medical experimentation without permission or regard for their wellbeing.

The debate surrounding the removal of symbols of hate and injustice is certainly not new, although it has certainly broadened to the point where it is no longer a matter of censorship or removing "art" for content—which was the previous administration's position.

We are pleased that Mayor de Blasio has responded to the growing controversy by announcing the formation of an Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers. But, we've been waiting over seven years and we can't be patient any longer. We want the statue removed and we want it down now.

We hope that Mayor de Blasio and members of the Commission will join over 20,000 people who have endorsed the campaign. Now, more than ever, as the nation undergoes the erosion of our fundamental rights, it is imperative that New York City stand firm in its commitment to honor and defend its residents with this simple gesture.

Dr. Sims is not our hero. There are many African American and Puerto Rican women (and men) who have made great medical inroads benefitting our community—Helen Rodriguez-Trias and Rebecca Lee Crumpler, for example. Those are the s/heroes we would prefer our children learn about as they stroll near Central Park, confident in the understanding that Black Lives Matter.

Thank you.

Daily News 10/9/17

Imagining a new Columbus Circle

BE OUR GUEST

BY DAVID EISENBACH

This month marks the 125th anniversary of the dedication of the now controversial statue at Columbus Circle commissioned by Italian-American New Yorkers in 1892. Our view of Christopher Columbus has changed a great deal since then – and it's time the monument changed, too. No, we shouldn't tear it down. But we can and must modernize it to make it more genuinely compatible with the values of 21st century America.

We owe our city and nation a new Columbus Circle not because we have uncovered new facts – his brutal conquest and enslavement of the Taino people was well-documented and publicly condemned in his lifetime – but because world-changing events in the 20th century have given us a necessary new perspective on the explorer and his legacy.

The world wars gave birth to the modern human rights movement. Battles over civil rights and immigration gave rise to multiculturalism. Both sides in today's debate over whether to preserve or tear down his statue agree on the facts about Columbus; the conflict is over opposing perspectives.

Mayor de Blasio has empaneled a diverse commission of experts to explore these issues with regard to the Columbus statute and other monuments. If the commission takes the mayor's lead, it's likely they will support supplementing the pedestal that celebrates Columbus' explorations with a plaque listing his crimes.

That is not enough. Now more than ever, we need a new Columbus Circle that forces us to reflect on power, greed, discrimination and exploitation and teaches essential lessons of history to New Yorkers and visitors from all over the world for generations to come. I have proposed a plan to do exactly this – transforming the plaza around the Columbus statue to offer multiple perspectives that tell a fuller, more complete story of the man and his legacy: the good, the bad and the ugly.

If we were to embrace this vision, we could not only recalibrate our treatment of this complex and important historical figure. We could set an elevated new standard for the way our monuments handle the people who shaped the past.

The circular plaza around the statue is presently divided by the pedestrian entrances into three plazas. Each of the three plazas should contain educational panels dedicated to one of three aspects of the story of Columbus and his legacy: conquest, slavery and immigration.

Instead of hustling past the statue on the way to Central Park, visitors would take a historical journey around the monument. With Columbus in view above, they would encounter educational reliefs that tell the stories of the Native peoples, African slaves and Italian immigrants who contributed to building the Americas.

In the section of the plaza dedicated to conquest, visitors will learn that Columbus slaughtered and enslaved Native peoples on several Caribbean islands. He created a tribute system that forced every Taino to work in mines and bring him a certain amount of gold.

If they didn't fill their quota, soldiers cut off their hands and tied them around their necks to send a message to others. If slaves tried to escape, Columbus had them burned alive or ripped apart by attack dogs.

Three sections

Which brings us to the second section. We think of Columbus as an explorer, but he made his fortune as a slave trader who supervised the selling of native girls as young as 9 into sexual slavery.

When European diseases wiped out the native population, Columbus found a new source of slaves: Africa.

These are inconvenient truths we too often refuse to face: America was built not just on high hopes and ideals, but on greed and brutality, too.

The final section of a reimagined Columbus Circle should focus on the tremendous contributions of Italian-Americans. The 19th-century Italian immigrants and their children who built the monument to Christopher Columbus did not know these monstrous aspects of the Columbus story. They were celebrating Columbus the Explorer, not the conquistador and slave trader.

At the same time, the immigrants were victims of discrimination from a majority population, who saw them as foreign and un-American. To counter this prejudice, they pooled their spare nickels and dimes to honor someone from their homeland who would serve as an enduring symbol of the essential role Italians played in our nation's founding and development.

Defenders of the Columbus statute are absolutely right that to tear it down would disrespect the memory and struggle of those who funded it and contributed so much to building our city and country.

And so, that third slice of the plaza must make explicitly clear the original intention of the immigrants who built it – and celebrate the Italian-American experience.

Standing within eyeshot of the Trump International Hotel, this will serve as a constant reminder that immigrants have always made America great. That greatness will be enhanced by a Columbus Circle that confronts hard truths and honestly tells the story of how America was created.

Eisenbach is a history professor at Columbia University.

To: NYC Advisory Commission On City Art, Monuments and Markers

From: Labor and Community Activists

Re: **Stop Glorifying Columbus**

As this country was founded on genocide, slavery and theft, in the interest of mutual respect and working-class unity among all communities living in New York City, in recognition of Lenni-Lenape territory that this city was built upon, we the undersigned labor activists support and strive for the following minimum goals:

One. Replacement of the five monuments to Christopher Columbus with new public art designed to honor the continuity of Indigenous peoples on this land and/or to celebrate the contributions of Italian immigrant workers and their descendants. We know that at the 59th Street traffic circle in particular, the statue was paid for by hardworking Italian Americans who in most cases were coerced by their bosses or *patrones* to chip in, and who in general were misinformed on the horrific nature of the outcomes of Columbus's expeditions for peoples of the Americas and of Africa.

Two. Removal of the offensive three-person statue outside the American Museum of Natural History that demeans African and Indigenous peoples by counterpoising their symbolic nakedness and bare feet to Teddy Roosevelt's full-military dress and powerful position on horseback.

Three. An official change in references to the holiday on the second Monday of October from "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous Peoples Day." **Until the city government approves this, we will work to change it in our union contracts.**

Four. A voluntary name change by organizers of parades on that three-day October weekend from Columbus Day parade to Italian American parade.

Signed (* denotes organization listed for identification purposes):

Chris Silvera, Secretary Treasurer, International Brotherhood of Teamsters local 808
Stephanie Hedgecoke, member, Executive Committee, New York Typographical Union CWA 14156*
Sara Catalinotto, founder, Parents to Improve School Transportation (PIST NYC)*
Johnnie Stevens, Community-Labor United for Postal Jobs & Services
Labor Against Racist Terror (social media campaign)

(continues→)

Susan E. Davis, National Writers' Union, UAW 1981*
Joseph Hirsch, Retiree, National Mail Handlers' Union*
Dianne Mathiowetz, host and producer, The Labor Forum, WRFG 89.3 FM
Minnie Bruce Pratt, National Writers' Union, UAW 1981*
Mike Eilenfeldt, Retiree, NYSUT (Union @ Cooper Union)*
Fatima Y Prioleau
Tito Delgado, one of the colonized
James J Burke, union teacher from Bensonhurst
Donna Lazarus, Retiree, UFT Local 2*
Andre Powell, Delegate, Baltimore AFL-CIO Central Labor Council*
R. M. de la Torre, retiree, Legal Services Staff Assoc. UAW 2320*
Anne Pruden, retiree, 1199/Service Employees International Union*
IndigenousPeoplesDayMA.org
United American Indians of New England
Catherine Zeitz, Workers World Party

List still in formation.

To sign, email your name, title, and affiliation to: CLUPJS@GMAIL.COM

#StopGlorifyingColumbus

#NotMyHero

Special Shout out To the Beautiful Visionary voices of Black Youth Project 100 who testified Today. I urge the City To Listen To The & wise voices of Youth!

Testimony of Maureen Silverman – New York City Commission on Statues. Hearing – November21, 2017.

and Theodore Roosevelt ~~at the~~ Fist

As a native New Yorker who has lived in Manhattan for over twenty five years I urge the city of New York to remove the violent, White Supremacist statues of Christopher Columbus and J.Marion Sims **once and for all!!** Given that this country and city are built on white supremacy—including slavery of African Americans and genocide of indigenous people, it is imperative to dismantle statues of people such as J . Marion Sims and Columbus which **uphold this legacy!** The current political climate of rising White Nationalism and White Supremacy is an opportune time to evaluate, face and advocate to over turn the destructive, oppressive systems and symbols in this country and city. Accordingly, statues are meant to honor great people who have made our society better—not people such as J. Marion Sims and Columbus. While they may have made some contributions to humanity—they also committed tremendous atrocities which are not worth honoring with statues of any kind. By allowing these statues to remain our society has admitted that they are not committed to ending White supremacy. Now is the time to remove these statues and to embark in a new discourse based on honesty and justice. Accordingly, I oppose recommendations to maintain these statues with the addition of plaques containing historical information and explanations related to the racism of J Marion Sims and Columbus. I recommend replacing these statues with symbols of truly great people who ~~are worth~~ Deserve honoring. Therefore, I urge the city to remove these statues expeditiously and replace them with freedom fighters who fought against the racism, exploitation and state violence that J. Marion Sims and Columbus perpetuated!

Also Remove Statue Theodore Roosevelt at Museum Natural history.

I also support recommendations For replacing these Statues ~~by~~ made By Black Youth Project 100, The American Indian Community House and others who have Been Excluded, marginalized, Exploited and murdered By State violence.

I agree with the filmmaker from American Artists that along with Removing these statues - Pro-Active Measures must be taken towards Re-dress, restoration + reparations as we work to Dismantle White Supremacy.

⇒ Considering the history of exclusion and the Imbalance of power discussed earlier today I Recommend that the Commission + the city of N.Y. prioritize the voices + Recommendations of people of color, women, Indigenous people + others. My Recommendations have validity - But are privileged based on being White. White people have a Responsibility because of our privilege to speak out Against racist statues + to stand in solidarity w/ people of color + Indigenous Peoples in the struggle for justice.

ARTHUR PICCOLO
ELEVEN BROADWAY
NEW YORK CITY 10004

November 22, 2017

To: Mayor de Blasio's so called statues & monuments commission

These hearings lack any credibility whatsoever.

Any reasonable individual an American who believes in the principles our nation should stand for would be embarrassed to serve on such a tribunal as this and would have refused our ethically challenged Mayor's invitation.

Unfortunately 12 individuals were seduced to serve on this Inquisition.

What qualifies you 12 to make judgments for 8 ½ million New Yorkers and indeed all Americans as to which individuals from history are "symbols of hate." Which historic figures now long gone who up until now have been accorded public recognition in New York City no longer should be because Mayor de Blasio has chosen 12 of his supporters to decide for us.

And what exactly is your definition and de Blasio of a "symbol of hate." There isn't even some so called "standard" that you and Mayor de Blasio has created or circulated that you are going to apply objectively to each individual and their status or monuments.

You are making judgments about something you do not even have a definition for. This situation has a clear definition "arbitrary and capricious" and in any REAL court of law "arbitrary and capricious" is always grounds for immediate dismissal as in violation of all concepts of law and fairness.

I have read all of your profiles. I have not found anything about any of you that makes you better or more qualified to make judgments for all the rest of us about statues and monuments let alone without a definition to apply.

What you are doing meets the classic definition of an "inquisition." Throughout history inquisitions have been bodies appointed by powerful individuals to provide them "official" credibility to attack and punish certain individuals who a despot wants to dispose of in one way or another.

There has never been a body anywhere in the United States at any time in American history quite like Mayor de Blasio's so called commission on statues and monuments and a commission that has chosen ONLY a very few targeted individuals to review and potentially condemn in this extra-judicial proceedings while leaving alone unreviewed hundreds of other individuals from history who are recognized in New York City in public places with statues, monuments, bridges, tunnels, public parks, building names and hundreds of streets co-named in honor of individuals from history.

Almost all of them are not being scrutinized by this commission as possible "symbols of hate" no only just a very few a couple out of hundreds who could have been selected for review and potential condemnation and neither the Mayor or his so called commission has even identified who is on their list or why others are not, yet another characteristic of an "inquisition."

So that the criteria is none other than some one in power such as NYC Council Speaker Mark-Viverito mentioned a name and to please her it appears that individual is under review by this so called commission as a possible "symbol of hate" in the mind of her and now Mayor de Blasio.

I could easily sit here and defend one of the greatest individuals in all of human history who may be on your list. I am confident I know far more about the facts of his life and his exploits than anyone on this so called commission. But to do so would be for me to acknowledge you have authority or credibility to judge others as "symbols of hate" you do not have.

If any of you have any integrity stop doing Mayor de Blasio's dirty work for him providing him phony "political cover" for him to make decisions about any statue or monument to gain him some perceived political advantage.

You are embarrassing our city and our nation by your actions.

End this inquisition right here right now !



Arthur Piccolo

Manhattan



Good morning,

Thank you to the members of the Commission for allowing me to testify here today. My name is Travis Ballie and I am the Associate Field Director for NARAL Pro-Choice America. The 1.2 million member activists of NARAL Pro-Choice America fight for reproductive freedom for every person in every state. Each day, we organize and mobilize to protect that freedom by fighting for access to abortion care, birth control, paid parental leave and protections from pregnancy discrimination. Since 1969, our member-driven campaigns have propelled political and cultural change at every level, from the statehouse to the White House.

Today, I am here on behalf of our over 50,000 members here in New York City to say that NARAL is a proud member of the Coalition to Remove the Dr. Sims statue. We are together with our allies, such as BYP 100, in declaring that a man like J. Marion Sims deserves no monuments or accolades. No one deserves a monument who experimented on enslaved black women without their consent, without anesthesia, and often at the cost of their fertility.

At this very moment, our nation is in a state of radical change. The voices of survivors of non-consensual acts are rising, echoing in almost every major power center of our society. Subsequently we have seen a growing awareness in the national consciousness of voices long ignored. While in a different context, the discussion around the J. Marion Sims statue is a complementary discussion. At what point will we confront the gross misdeeds of those we honor or hold up? How many black or brown bodies does someone have to step on while achieving their professional accolades for us to say enough?

The story of J. Marion Sims and his medically unethical experiments should always be studied and remembered, if only to ensure that we understand the institutional barriers that held back black and brown women, and how that history still lives with us today in the form of existing racialized medical disparities, such as with the maternal mortality rate. We do not need a monument to Dr. Sims in order to remember and learn from his dark legacy.

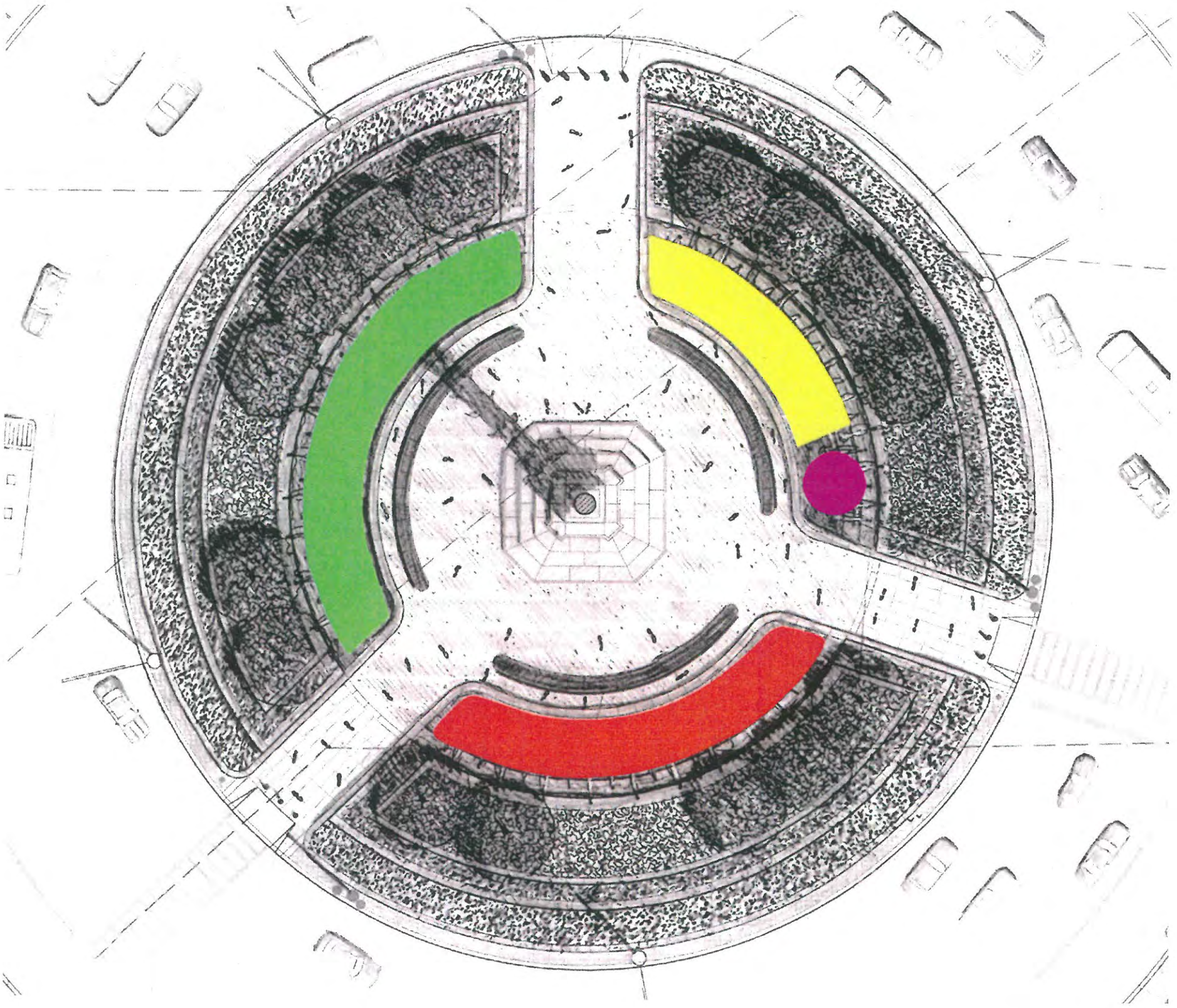
A monument connotes governmental and societal recognition and approval of the figure and their accomplishments. The ugly juxtaposition of honoring such a man as Dr. Sims through a public monument, especially in a neighborhood that is majority people of color, is glaring. I thank the Commission for your time today and urge the swift removal of the J. Marion Sims statue.

Sincerely,

K. Travis Ballie
Associate Field Director, NARAL Pro-Choice America

David Eisenbach Presents:

A New Columbus Circle



Conquest

Slavery

Immigration

USS Maine

11/17
Queens

To: Mayor de Blasio and the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City, Monuments, and Markers

From: The Resilient Sisterhood Project and Allies

Re: The Removal of the Statue of Dr. James Marion Sims

Date: 11/16/2017

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

This letter is written on the behalf of the Resilient Sisterhood Project (RSP), an emerging nonprofit based in Boston that seeks to empower women of African descent affected by diseases of the reproductive system through education, advocacy, and health equity, using a social justice lens. We are joined by concerned historians, bioethicists, college professors, doctors, teachers, artists, community activists, medical and science researchers.

We thank your administration for appointing a commission to review certain historical monuments for the offensive and oppressive symbols of injustice they represent to many people in this country. We write to ask the commission to consider the removal of the status of Dr. James Marion Sims in Central Park. Dr. Sims exercised inhumane and unethical conduct through his racial experiments on enslaved women in the 1840s. In 1853, Dr. Sims moved to New York, founded the Women's Hospital and became a world-renown celebrity physician who operated on royalty, became the president of the American Medical Association, and aided in the establishment of the first New York cancer institute.

Historians, bioethicists and community members in New York have been debating Sims' role for years. Considered the father of modern gynecology, Dr. Sims operated on nearly a dozen black women, three of whom he bought—and we only know them as Anarcha, Betsey, and Lucy. In an era when anesthesia for operations was just beginning to be used and doctors debated whether black men and women felt pain the same as white people, these multiple surgeries were done without the benefit of loss of sensation. As Sims himself would declare, "Lucy's agony was extreme, "and Anarcha endured more than 13 different attempts to close her fistula.

No one denies that fistulas are a serious problem. With his experimentation, Sims found a way to remove the necrotized tissue and sew up these fissures with silver wire sutures. Obstetric fistulas can occur due to protracted labor and tears that often happen in very young mothers, or in women with deformed pelvises from rickets, lack of proper nutrition, syphilitic ulcers, or serious infections. While this horrific damage that leads to further infections, terrible smells and social isolation is now seen primarily in parts of Africa, it was a common problem for all women in the 19th century, but frequently was a by-product of slavery that enforced rape and demanded consequent pregnancy.

Since the 1960s, however, awareness of how Sims rose to his fame, and the women's bodies he experimented upon, has raised serious concerns about how he achieved his greatness. His granite pedestal proclaims: "his brilliant achievement carried the fame of American surgery through the entire world" and that the statue is in "recognition of his services in the cause of science & mankind." Nowhere do we learn of Anarcha, Betsey, and Lucy and the nameless others who made his career possible. At a time, too, when the history of medical experimentation on black bodies is remembered for the mistrust it engenders, should we still be staring up at a slave owning Sims in all his medical glory? Or should we just understand that this was about the past and that in the end his surgical interventions saved countless lives from a serious problem that still haunts millions?

We ask for the removal of Dr. Sims, perhaps moved to another site or into the New York Academy of Medicine. We recommend that it be replaced at a later time with a statue of Anarcha, Betsey, and Lucy to memorialize their significant contribution to modern gynecology of these enslaved women. Such a monument would reclaim their history as well as restore their dignity and grace. Moreover, it would help to establish a degree of trustworthiness and raise awareness to help redress this country historical legacy of medical malfeasance at the hands of ill- intentioned medical professionals.

Once again, we thank you and the Reviewing Commission for your crucial work and the opportunity to raise our concerns and the hope for bringing the courageous and resilient spirits of Anarcha, Betsey, and Lucy.

Sincerely,

Lilly Marcelin
Executive Director
Resilient Sisterhood Project
566 Columbus Avenue --- Suite 3A
Boston, MA 02118
Website: Rsphealth.org
Phone: 617-590-4003

Susan Reverby, Ph.D, Historian – Wellesley College, Harvard University
Andrea James, Executive Director – Families for Justice as Healing
Martina Green, Policy Analyst
Ann Gilmore, Teacher and Lawyer
Yvonne Gomez-Carrion, MD, OB/GYN
Ellen Blaney, Teacher and community activist
Jody Leader, Ph.D, Psychologist
Paul McLean, Bioethicist – Harvard University
Eugene Stein, Teacher and musician
Robin Carton, Lawyer and Consultant — Kayak Consulting Group

Layly Maparian, Ph.D, Professor – Wellesley College Centers for Women
Sumru Erkut, Researcher – Wellesley College Centers for Women
Yasmina Macer, Nurse Practitioner, OB/GYN
Helene Tomlinson, Lawyer
Liz Sohn, Student and Community Activist
Elizabeth Saunders, Executive Director Clean Water action
Kathryn Rogers, Scientist
Fiona Jamal, Public Policy
Charlene Galarneau, Professor, Bioethicist – Wellesley College
Anne Devalois, Teacher
Frances Laroche, Executive Director and Teacher — Educational Development Group
Jordan Fox-Kemper, Professor – Northeastern University
Ann Marie Teuber, Social Worker – Parenting Journey
Lisa Hartwick, Executive Director – Beth Israel Hospital
Peggy Barrett, Community Activist
Linette Liebling, Professor – Wheaton College
Maud Carty-Fischer, Manager – Fischer Neurology
Michele David, Primary Care Physician – MIT
David Aronstein, Executive Director – Boston Alliance for Community Health
Aziza Robinson-Goodnight, Artist and community activist
Emma Watkins, Executive Director, Cambridge Senior Center
Jules Arthur, Artist
Curdina Hill, Consultant and community activist
Donna Bivens, Consultant and community activist

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November 16, 2017

My name is Jeffrey Kroessler. I am a librarian at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and received my doctorate in American Urban History at the CUNY Graduate School. There I studied with Arthur Schlesinger, at the time he was writing *The Disuniting of America*, which was published in 1992. I recommend that short work to each member of this committee. He was among the first to recognize the cancer of identity politics, and its poisonous effect on our ~~political character~~ body politic.

In the mid-1990s, I was one of the leading opponents of the Queen Catherine of Braganza statue, a plan pushed forward by the Portuguese-American community and enthusiastically supported by Borough President Claire Shulman and the entire Queens political establishment. No one asked the historians.

The idea was that since Queens County was named for Queen Catherine of Braganza, the wife of Charles II of England, we should honor her with a 35-foot statue atop a 15-foot base. There was only one problem: there was absolutely no evidence that Queens was named for her. None. So if she was not the borough's namesake, why were we erecting this statue?

I pointed out that this was the wrong symbol for us. First, the royal house of Portugal, and the royal house of England, profited from the slave trade. Further, there was the matter of the American Revolution, where dissolved the political bands which bound us to England, and specifically rejected the monarchy. Not a small matter, I thought.

I categorically rejected the idea of erecting that statue because I rejected what she represented. Finally, she had nothing, nothing at all to do with America and American history.

At the same time, I categorically reject the idea that any of the statuary or historical monuments or markers should be removed. As a historian, as a New Yorker, and as an American I recoil at the notion of whitewashing history, eliminating what some among us find deeply or superficially offensive. History is not pretty. History does not care how you feel.

We do care what you know. And if we eliminate any monuments we will all know less. Once the past is relegated to history books alone it is lost. If only because it is usually so badly taught. Let's get beyond the simplistic. Everyone agrees that slavery was evil, wrong, the original sin of the United States. Who among us thinks the nation, or the world would have been better had the South won the Civil War? Those are no longer historical debates; they are in our national DNA now. Americans donning Confederate Gray as reenactors are not wishing for the Lost Cause, they are honoring American history.

Baltimore recently removed the statue of Roger Taney, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Taney wrote the wretched and racist Dred Scot decision, which sent our nation further and faster along the road toward civil war. How will we know about the evil he did in that decision? By removing that statute we have eliminated the possibility of someone walking by and telling his companion, hey, you know who that is? Roger Taney. Do you know what that son of a bitch did? Now, Roger Taney doesn't exist. Roger Taney never existed.

That's a reference to George Orwell's *1984*. The mania for removing statues and monuments is Orwellian, which is to say, totalitarian. It is an effort to enforce a single interpretation on the American past. In *1984*, the Party well knows: Who controls the present controls the past; who controls the past controls the future. The horror is for the state, or anyone, to eliminate the past, to say something didn't happen, a person never existed. America disapproves of white supremacy, America has always disapproved of white supremacy. Since we've removed all symbols of those who did believe in white supremacy, where is the evidence that they existed?

Leave Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson in the Hall of Fame of Great Americans. They were Americans, who turned their backs on America. Why would they do that? Well, their busts are gone, and no one will have to think about that. We can just thump our chests and claim victory over those racists and purged our own souls of such. But in his second inaugural, Abraham Lincoln, in the midst of that bloody civil war, called not for retribution, but reconciliation. "With malice toward none," was his phrase.

If he could express such a sentiment in his historical moment, what would he make of the madness of ours, when a minister in Bay Ridge not only removed a plaque from the church where Robert E. Lee worshipped, but also wanted to cut down the tree he planted. He was on the wrong side, a side seeking to maintain slavery. He was also a Christian. Remove the plaque and we can't ask, what kind of Christian fights to maintain slavery? Tough question? Then better not to ask it.

History is not pure. It is not simple. It is messy and inevitably makes us uncomfortable. Purifying our American past will make some happier. And simpler. And stupid. And our nation, our city, ourselves will be emptied out or the conflicts and controversies and challenges, leaving only the moral supremacy of the present. Moral purity, yes. But historical illiteracy certainly.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you. My name is Robert Bishop. I live in Little Neck. I am a native of Queens.

My testimony follows the format suggested by your survey. The role of most public monuments in our City's public spaces is to commemorate specific people events and ideas, to celebrate our culture and its historic roots and to educate current and future generations. Some public monuments are created and placed solely as artistic enhancements to their immediate surroundings. Each and every public monument should tell a story. In a perfect world, a monument would be located in a place somehow connected to its history.

You have asked for recommendations as to the best way to achieve public space that is open and inclusive. I defer to City planners and architects regarding the physical elements needed. In terms of cultural inclusivity, I would suggest that the very term requires that we be open to varying viewpoints. There are limits. Inclusivity does not involve welcoming the catalysts of future violence.

When reviewing a monument with an eye towards potential removal, I believe that there should be consideration given to the structural integrity and related safety issues of the monument itself and the educational value presented by the monument. Consideration should be given to the monument's artistic value, its cultural significance to the residents of the City and the original terms under which the City caused or allowed the monument to be placed. The question in the survey (http://www1.nyc.gov/site/monuments/survey/monuments-survey.page) asks for consideration of the values to which New Yorkers aspire. I do not think that the aspirations of New Yorkers can be limited within the confines of definition or a two minute testimony.

My comments relate to all existing and proposed monuments. It is my suggestion that the presumption should be to preserve monuments unless there is virtually universal agreement from the body politic to remove a monument.

Controversy provides interest. Interest provides educational opportunity. Education leads to understanding.

Removing a monument serves to erase a memory. Removal may effectively remove a symptom but fails to provide an educational path to understanding. The dystopian novels (1984, Fahrenheit 451, We, etc.) are replete with descriptions of cultures built around erasing and re-writing history. The results usually involve a failed effort to create an entirely homogenized society without tolerance of divergent opinion. That is certainly contrary to the story defining New York City.

The infrastructure of a solution is already in place. The Parks Department maintains a web site at https://www.nycgovparks.org/art-map which maps and describes most, if not all, of the public monuments in New York City. With relatively small improvements, the site can be made user friendly and have a corollary smart phone app. A vast amount of informational material can be provided through links within the existing web site. A sample of what can be done is currently available on with the "Talking Statues" pilot project at http://www.newyorktalkingstatues.com/ . When at a listed statue – one can scan a QR code and be led to an internet hosted performance related to the statue.

In closing, I urge you to use the opportunity afforded to you as members of this Commission to continue the dialogue. Your time in the spotlight of this issue presents an opportunity to unite people through an educational process. I hope that you choose to seize the moment.

Thank you.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES MUST HAVE A SEAT AT STATUE REMOVAL HEARINGS

BY BETTY LYONS AND RICK CHAVOLLA |

NOVEMBER 16, 2017 |

When Mayor Bill de Blasio's Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers begins a series of hearings around the city on Friday, New Yorkers will be asked to testify on how to accommodate the painfully incomplete historical record that whitewashes racist and oppressive actions by those depicted.

As indigenous peoples, we must be part of that discussion

Much of the focus rightfully has centered on depictions of Christopher Columbus, whose voyages set off centuries of genocidal exploitation of a so-called New World where tens of millions of indigenous peoples had lived for millennia.

The statues depicting Columbus ignore his enslavement and massacre of indigenous peoples, promotion of sex slavery of children and the imposition of the Doctrine of Discovery, a series of 15th-century papal bulls granting European nations sovereignty over non-Christian lands "discovered" by their explorers that continues to provide the legal underpinning of the denial of land rights to our peoples.

And it is not just Columbus. In a letter last month to the commission, indigenous leaders called for the removal of the equestrian statue of Theodore Roosevelt outside the American Museum of Natural History, which includes a portrayal of Roosevelt as a "Great White Father" with Native American and African-American stereotypes depicted subserviently below him.

As the sometimes violent struggles in the American South over depictions of Robert E. Lee and other Confederate generals has highlighted, history is not a static enterprise. It is said that history is written by the winners, but history changes – and is rewritten – as time exposes how hollow those earlier depictions can be.

For indigenous peoples, those depredations and degradations of the past are a living history we struggle with and against every day.

It is very much a New York City issue as well. It is often overlooked that New York City has more Native Americans living within its boundaries than any other city in the United States, more than 111,000 people according to the 2010 Census.

They are not predominantly from any one indigenous nation, but people who have come here from indigenous nations across the Western Hemisphere, what indigenous peoples call Abya

Yala, or Turtle Island. New York City is a magnet for people from around the world. Names such as Manhattan and Canarsee derive from the Lenni Lenape, the original peoples of these lands.

We all live with constant struggles that plague our daily lives as we maintain our identity on occupied land. That is why we continue to push the Catholic Church and the United States government to confront the continuing devastating impacts of the Doctrine of Discovery.

Columbus' transatlantic voyages and those that followed were protected under the doctrine, especially Inter Caetera, issued in 1493 by Pope Alexander VI as European powers began jockeying to divide up the so-called New World.

As recently as 2005, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg cited the doctrine in rejecting the Oneida Indian Nation's claim to repurchased land within its treaty established homeland, just one example of how the Supreme Court continues to rely on the doctrine to deny indigenous land rights.

We continue to hope that Pope Francis, the first pontiff from the Americas, will respond to calls for the church to rescind the doctrine and begin a healing process. While he has apologized for crimes committed by the church in subjugating indigenous peoples during a visit to Bolivia, he has not responded to calls from the United Nations and religious organizations like the World Council of Churches to rescind it.

The papal nuncio at the United Nations has told our representatives that the doctrine is ancient history. It is not ancient, but a form of living history as painful as the continuing wounds stemming from the centuries of genocidal oppression those European explorers brought to these shores.

It all started with Columbus and the process of colonization in what is today referred to as the Western Hemisphere. That is why the movement to rename Oct. 12 as Indigenous Peoples' Day, and urging inclusion of the Doctrine of Discovery in public education curricula, is so important as part of broader work towards sovereignty, self-determination and full justice for native peoples.

And it is why we believe the Mayoral Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers must address this living history and ongoing wounds. As an important first step, we demand these statues come down.

Betty Lyons, a citizen of the Onondaga Nation, is president of the American Indian Law Alliance. Rick Chavolla, a citizen of the Kumeyaay Nation, is board chairman of the American Indian Community House in New York City.

http://cityandstateny.com/articles/opinion/indigenous-peoples-must-be-at-statue-removal-hearings.html

The Task before You

This committee has the opportunity to proceed along either of two lines – the line of divisiveness, or the line of inclusion.

The choice facing this Committee is whether to take a myopic view of history, and thereby create anger and ill will among the people of this great city, or take a broad view of history, and thereby create harmony and inclusiveness in the minds and hearts of the people of this great city, making this great city even greater.

This committee could suggest the removal of the statue of Christopher Columbus, or suggest the erection of a statue to honor Native Americans, right here on Staten Island, where such a statue was approved by the Federal Government one hundred years ago.

Future generations and critical historians will assess the workings of this committee. Don't fail in the task before you; take the line of healing and inclusiveness, not the line of anger and divisiveness. The choice between Columbus and Native Americans is not exclusive. Rather, the choice ~~which~~ IS FOR this Committee ~~to~~ SHOULD suggest is BOTH. Have the courage to embrace that approach which will lead to harmony, healing, inclusiveness among all the people of New York.

Keep Columbus and honor Native Americans

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RONALD CASTORINA, JR.
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THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER
Committee on Cities

COMMITTEES
Banks
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Sports Development

Memorandum

To: Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers

From: Assemblyman Ron Castorina, Jr.

Subject: Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers; Columbus Circle statue of Christopher Columbus

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The latest campaign against Gaetano Russo's iconic Columbus statue reveals a hypocrisy and blatant disregard for the very immigrant story the left claims to champion.

A basic understanding of the history behind the Columbus Circle statue bears this out, for it would be inaccurate to assume that the statue was intended simply as homage to a single man. The truth reveals a much richer American success story that should be celebrated. At the turn of the 20th century Italian immigrants were arriving on American shores by the hundreds of thousands, seeking a better life and a small piece of the American Dream. My ancestors, including my grandfather Sebastiano Castorina who emigrated from Giardini, Sicily in 1914, and the ancestors of many of my constituents on Staten Island were among them. Sadly, they did not always receive a warm welcome. Italian workmen were the victims of mob violence while newspapers ran editorials calling Italians "sneaky", "treacherous", "filthy" and "descendants of bandits and assassins."

Despite challenges and persecutions, Italian immigrants like my ancestors never lost faith in the promise of America and the exceptionalism of the society they fought so tirelessly to be a part of. Despite coming here with barely a cent to his name, Sebastiano Castorina opened his own grocery store in the East Village to support himself and his family. His success story is one of countless others.

By their merits, their achievements, the sweat of their brows and the fruits of their labors, Italian-Americans proved that they deserved a seat at the table and the gratitude of a nation they helped to build brick-by-brick, rivet-by-rivet. From the Empire State Building, to the Verrazano and Brooklyn Bridges, Grand Central Station, and the frescoes that beautify our Nation's Capitol Italian – Americans played a profound role in constructing some of our most famed architectural achievements.

Undeterred and undaunted by the sleights and setbacks they suffered, and fiercely proud of their accomplishments in the face of such adversity, the Italian-Americans of New York donated the iconic sculpture to the City of New York in 1892 on the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery as a gift to their adoptive homeland. To represent their pride they chose Cristoforo

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Colombo, an Italian explorer from Genoa. Not a perfect man with a spotless legacy, but the man himself is less important than what the monument symbolizes - that Italians from Columbus to Amerigo Vespucci, whose name would become the inspiration for the name of *America* itself, had paved the way for the founding of the greatest nation on earth.

For the earliest Italian-Americans, the statue of Christopher Columbus in Columbus Circle was a token of appreciation to the Americans who had embraced them and a tribute to the Italians who sacrificed to earn their place in American society. At the end of the day, we cannot bow to reactionary backlash against the despicable demonstrations in Charlottesville by throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Now is the time for mature leadership, for cooler heads to prevail, and for us to acknowledge that no historical figure is without flaws, failings, and moral shortcomings. The essential thing to consider is what lies at the core of our motivations for idolizing imperfect historical figures who nonetheless made profound contributions to our society. In Columbus' case, a true understanding of the history behind the statue reveals the proud and inspirational immigrant success story of the Italian people in America. Coming from a political party that claims to champion the immigrant cause the left should be the first ones to line up and defend Columbus' statue, especially after having no qualms about marching in the Columbus Day parade when campaign season comes around. With all of the issues surrounding our great City - homelessness, traffic, the opioid epidemic and countless others, New York taxpayer dollars should be allocated to more pressing matters.

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Statement

To: Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers

From: New York City Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo, 50th District

Date: November 28, 2017

Re: Removal of Monuments in the City of New York

Members of the Commission:

I am New York City Council Minority Leader Steven Matteo, and I represent the 50th Councilmanic District in City Hall.

I think I speak for many of my friends, neighbors, and constituents when I say that I am completely opposed to the mission of this body. The notion that City government may seek to sanitize our history by removing monuments of figures that are distasteful to some in today's society is misguided. The history of our country and our city is as complex as the lives of the people who lived it. Alongside their great accomplishments, many of those enshrined in our City's monuments had characters or beliefs that today would be called into question, even considered repugnant. Allowing them to remain is not an endorsement of these individuals, but rather a testament to the views and values of those that came before us. They are literal benchmarks in our progress as a people.

(see reverse)

We can acknowledge that today many of the monuments we currently have would not be erected, but removing these statues does nothing to erase the wrongs of the past. It will only serve to remove from the public consciousness the history that brought us to our present times. Yes - that history is messy. It can be ugly. It is certainly not easy. But most importantly, history is also instructive. Let these statues stand so they may educate those who pass by about our true history, rather than shoving it into a closet to be forgotten.

Moreover, many of these monuments have taken on a new life and meaning as time has elapsed. The statue of Christopher Columbus in Columbus Circle does not celebrate the man as much as the people he represents. The Italian-American community had to struggle for acceptance in this country for years; and in some ways, anti-Italian and anti-Catholic views are still present in our culture. However, this monument was erected due to the efforts of a proud, hard-working people who felt that they had carved for themselves an important place in this country. To take it down would be a great injustice and insult to a community of which I am proud to be a part.

In summation, I support efforts to place statues in their historical context, but I cannot support the removal of statues from our City. I ask that the Commission make no recommendation for removal of these monuments and in particular the statue of Christopher Columbus in Columbus Circle.



The Schiller Institute

www.schillerinstitute.org

Open Letter to President Donald Trump
In Defense of Columbus

September 21, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
Washington DC

Mr. President:

As an Italian citizen and chairwoman of Movisol, Lyndon LaRouche's movement in Italy, I call on you to intervene in defense of Christopher Columbus and Columbus Day. The same people who are out to destroy the US Presidency, led by Wall Street speculator George Soros (who destroyed the Italian lira in 1992), are also trying to eradicate history and culture not only in the United States, but internationally. Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, his Italian collaborator Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli, Columbus, Amerigo Vespucci and others were part of a revolution in culture, art, geography, and science, which made the discovery of America possible. The deliberate explosion in human creativity that was the Italian Renaissance is a truly proud moment in all humanity's history, and not merely for Italians. The people who want to abolish Columbus Day, whether they are maliciously witting, or merely deluded, are out to also dismantle this Western cultural and scientific heritage.

It has always been the British, including the "cultural thought-police" associated with the British Museum, who have tried to downplay and dismantle the Italian Renaissance: to undermine its successful expedition to explore new lands, and to obfuscate and deny its mission to construct, "in a new world", a new and better sovereign nation-state, superior to those of Europe. The United States of America eventually became that nation-state. This was a central, conscious part of the grand project of discovery, of Cusa, Toscanelli and Christopher Columbus. There was nothing mistaken in that intention.

There is also nothing "sincerely mistaken" about this Dark Age "bring down the statue" movement. The August 29 beheading of a statue of Columbus in the city of Yonkers, New York, reminds one of the beheading of 28 statues of religious figures in one day in October, 1793, during the French Revolution--the same month that Marie Antoinette was guillotined. They called their movement "The Cult of Reason". Similarly, it was the 1950s Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) which actually tried to abolish culture and our historical roots from the 50's on, and now apparently inspires gangs of protesters who, similar to ISIS in

Palmyra and other jewels of culture in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, are out to destroy monuments and statues which remind the population of its inheritance. Beauty, in the classical, aesthetical sense, disturbs them.

Columbus and his trip of discovery was the result of the Italian Renaissance, which is, to this day, an important reference point for each Italian citizen in a moment of great crisis. This is why there was an uproar here in Italy, and rightly so also in the Italian-American community in the United States, when we heard that a statue of Columbus was knocked down and that there are petitions to abolish Columbus Day and the Columbus Parade on Fifth Avenue. What will be next? Tear down the city of Columbus in Ohio, which I visited years ago to admire its Columbus statue? Tear down the Brunelleschi Dome in Florence? Or the statue of Leonardo da Vinci in front of La Scala in Milan, which shows how Leonardo was not only a Renaissance genius, engineer, painter, but also invented Bel Canto with his treatise, De Vocie, on the human voice?

We trust that you will intervene to defend this historical heritage, which cannot be forgotten, but should rather inspire a new Renaissance in culture, leading to scientific and economic cooperation between the United States and the rest of the world, including Russia and China. As Italians, we also call on you to keep your electoral promise and reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act, which would not only stop speculation and free up credit to build urgently needed infrastructure, but would also put an end to the excessive power of Wall Street, which is certainly behind, and financing, such "grass-roots" campaigns. We are hoping to do the same here, and thus to jointly work with your Administration and other nations on new discoveries worthy of the true legacy of Christopher Columbus and Western civilization.

Liliana Gorini
Chairwoman of the Movimento
Internazionale per i Diritti Civili Solidarietà
(Movisol)
Milan, Italy

'Columbus'

by Friedrich Schiller

Steer, courageous sailor! Although the wit may deride thee,
And the skipper at th' helm lower his indolent hand—
Ever, ever to th' West! There must the coast be appearing,
Lies it yet clearly and lies shimm'ring before your mind's eye.
Trust in the guiding God and follow the silent ocean!
Were it not yet, 'twould climb now from the billows aloft.
Genius stands with Nature in everlasting union:
What is promised by the one, surely the other fulfills.

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Testimony of Staten Island Borough President James S. Oddo
Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers
Staten Island Borough Hall
November 28, 2017

When I sat down to compose the testimony I would present to the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments and Markers, it occurred to me that despite the tremendously important work this commission is doing, perhaps the time and efforts donated by such distinguished individuals might have been put to better use. After all, why is studying Art, Monuments and Markers deserving of a commission when so many other issues were deemed to be unworthy of such study?

Several come to mind.

Why has the leaky Five Borough Fast Ferry Service morphed into a FOUR Borough Fast Ferry Service, excluding only Staten Island? Last I looked we were still considered a borough of the City of New York, although historically we've often been treated as a BINO - a "borough in name only." We find this inattention to our borough's lack of transportation alternatives to be highly offensive. Why is this issue unworthy of a distinguished commission?

While we are on the subject, why not broaden our perspective to the hellish commute endured by Staten Islanders in general. Which commission is studying our now way-too-often two hour commutes at the start and end of our work day?

We also find it highly offensive that the DDC - which ostensibly is an acronym for the Department of Design and Construction, but which in reality stands for Delay, Dishearten and Confound - is able to get away with project cost overruns stretching into the tens of millions and estimated completion dates delayed by years and years. Why is there no Mayoral Advisory Commission to make recommendations about the black hole that is the DDC? In principal, I believe such a commission should study whether or not the agency should exist at all.

What distinguished body studies possible solutions to the problem of newly-paved streets being dug up by utilities or other contractors, and patched up in a

substandard manner? If you know of any commission studying this very real problem, which offends us on a daily basis, please let me know.

Which commission is studying the need to return to teaching civics in our schools?

And where's the Mayoral Commission on Sandy Recovery, and I don't mean the one that has essentially been contracted out to the City Council?

Which commission is studying Staten Island's curiously high cancer rates? Oh, that's right...New York State just announced they have created one - after the city never responded to Councilman Borelli's request.

However, we are not here to address commissions which do not exist but should, rather, we are here to testify before a commission that should not exist – but does.

Monuments and markers are testaments to our history – good or bad, like it or not. They are made of metal or stone or concrete and possess neither a voice nor a soul. Why are we so bent on destroying inanimate objects that neither espouse nor decry any philosophy, but simply remind us that such a person or such a time existed at some point in our country's history? Does taking down a monument mean that the deeds – or misdeeds – of an individual never existed? I believe we cannot, and should not, attempt to whitewash our history. What we were, we were, and what we are, we are. I see monuments as part of the timeline of our great history, and a much-needed reminder of what and who we once were, and just how far we have come.

I also believe that commissions such as this are capable of creating more division within our city than any monument or marker ever could.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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Andrew Haswell Green (October 6, 1820 – November 13, 1903) was a lawyer, New York City planner, and civic leader. Considered "the Father of Greater New York," he is responsible for Central Park, the New York Public Library, the Bronx Zoo, the American Museum of Natural History, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He also participated in or led projects including Riverside Drive, Morningside Park, Fort Washington Park, and the protection of the Hudson River Palisades from destruction. His last project was the consolidation of the "Imperial City" or City of Greater New York; he chaired the 1897 committee that drew up the plan of amalgamation.

Green was born in Worcester, Massachusetts on October 6, 1820,[1] one of 11 children. In 1835, he moved to New York, where two of his sisters ran a school for young girls.[*citation needed*] Green is the brother of Samuel Fisk Green, a medical missionary of the American Ceylon Mission in Sri Lanka.

Green started work in the mercantile trade and befriended a local merchant, who subsequently hired him to manage his sugar refining plantation in Trinidad. Green lived there for about a year, where he kept a daily diary of his thoughts.[2]

Green returned to Worcester for a year or two before returning to New York City to pursue a legal career.

In 1845, Green became a lawyer under the tutelage of railroad attorney Samuel J. Tilden. The two met at a party and became fast friends,[2] along with Tilden's law partner John Bigelow. In 1854, Green was elected to the New York City Board of Education. He soon became its president a year later.

From 1857 to 1870, Green was active in or led the Central Park Commission. The Republican-led New York State Legislature began to institute measures to control the municipal affairs of the largely Democratic metropolitan region; one such act created the Central Park Commission (CPC). Green was appointed to the CPC, eventually becoming its head. A year later Olmsted and Vaux's Greensward Plan for Central Park was chosen by the CPC, thanks largely to Green's influence. The CPC's work would proceed under Green's leadership, despite resistance from resentful local Tammany Hall politicians who had little control of the project.

With Green's coaxing, the legislature began to expand the CPC's authority, transforming it into the city's first comprehensive planning body. In the next decade, the CPC planned and/or proposed improvements in northern Manhattan, the Harlem River, and the Bronx. Projects included Riverside, Morningside and Ft. Washington Parks; the street plan above 155 Street; a widened and straightened Broadway; a Grand Circle at 59th Street and Eighth Avenue, and more. In 1869, Green got approval for the CPC to create the American Museum of Natural History, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, two public-private institutions.



By 1870, a new home-rule ("Tweed") charter ended the state-run CPC. However, the city's Departments of Public Works and Public Parks would eventually execute most of the CPC's unfinished plans. The Tweed Ring was exposed in 1870, and Green was made New York City Comptroller to sort out the ring's crippling theft and graft. He used his personal credit to obtain funds to cover the city payroll.[*citation needed*]He cut waste and halted most public works to spare the city from bankruptcy. Critics claimed his retrenchment policy was too arbitrary and severe. Green served until 1876. Later, the Niagara (Falls) Park Commission was created to establish New York's first state park and defend the falls; Green soon became president of the commission and would serve until his death.

In 1886, Samuel J. Tilden died, leaving a fortune to create a public library for New York City, but his will was contested by relatives. The executors, Green and two others, had to make do with fewer funds. Green would propose consolidating the Tilden Trust with the Astor and Lenox Libraries, leading eventually to the New York Public Library.

Green was elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society in 1889.[3]

Sentiment soon built in the business community for municipal consolidation of the metropolitan region to protect the mismanaged port. The state legislature created a commission to explore consolidation, with Green at its head. Green immediately proposed an ambitious consolidation plan that would be rebuffed a number of times, mostly by Brooklynites who called the movement "Green's hobby." In 1894, changing his approach, Green got a nonbinding consolidation referendum on the ballot. Most surrounding municipalities voted in favor of consolidation, but Brooklyn's pro-consolidation majority was razor thin. only about 0.2%. Alarmed by the results, opponents lobbied to thwart subsequent bills by Green and others.

Also in 1894, Green also rallied preservation-minded New Yorkers against the proposed demolition of the 1812 New York City Hall building. The following year, he formed the city's first formal preservation and conservation group, called the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.[4] The society created parks and fought to rescue endangered sites throughout New York City and State; it became defunct in the 1970s. Green became President of the New York Zoological Society, as well, serving from 1895-97.

Republican Party boss Thomas C. Platt embraced Green's consolidation plan, and pushed the measure through the legislature in 1896; a Greater New York charter was passed in 1897.

Andrew Haswell Green

Selective Reading List

By Michael Miscione who is entirely responsible for the choices and all editorial comments. Revised 6-11-2008

BIOGRAPHICAL TREATMENTS (long-form, cradle-to-grave)

The Life and Public Services of Andrew Haswell Green, *by John Foord (Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913). Long out of print, but available at research libraries and from old book dealers. It is also available for free reading, searching and download at www.google.com/books.* This is Green's "official" biography. The author, who knew Green personally, gushes with unqualified praise for his subject on every page, and writes in a numbing, dated style. Still, this hagiography is packed with plenty of otherwise hard-to-find details.

The Public Career of Andrew Haswell Green, *by George Alexander Mazaraki; an unpublished PhD dissertation (NYU, 1966). See below for how to obtain a copy; Dissertation Express catalog # 6810032.* This is *the* roadmap for any serious Green researcher. It reconstructs his life story with objective sources and a historian's sensibility. The emphasis is on Green's Central Park work, his city planning, the comptroller years and the consolidation movement. Green's work with cultural institutions, conservation, and historic preservation is mentioned, but, sadly, not covered in depth.

CENTRAL PARK

The Park and the People: A History of Central Park, *by Roy Rosenzweig & Elizabeth Blackmar (Henry Holt and Company, 1992).* This work is rightly regarded by many as the definitive history of Central Park. Olmsted is treated as a mortal, and Green is correctly cast as a driving force in the creation and defense of the park, not a liability. And Green's work outside the park proper – the museums and the planning of northern Manhattan – is not ignored. A delight to read for laymen and researchers alike.

Country, Park & City: The Architecture and Life of Calvert Vaux, *by Francis R. Kowsky (Oxford University Press, 1998).* Green is, of course, just a supporting player in this splendidly written biography, but because their careers intersected often, even after Central Park, it includes many fresh Green tidbits.

CITY PLANNING

"Comprehensive Planning before the Comprehensive Plan," *by David Hammack; a chapter in the book* ***Two Centuries of American Planning, Studies in History, Planning, and the Environment****, by Daniel Schaffer, Editor (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988). Out of print, but available.* Hammack is generally regarded as the foremost expert on Green's work. He gets extra credit for his precise, almost surgical, writing style. This essay makes a winning case that Green was Gotham's first comprehensive urban planner, even though most planning histories overlook him.

Capital City: New York City and the Men Behind America's Rise to Economic Dominance, 1860-1900, *by Thomas Kessner (Simon & Schuster, 2003).* Kessner presents, in one jaunty, layman-friendly chapter, a concise yet thorough snapshot of Green and his achievements, with an emphasis on his planning work. This is an excellent place to start if you are unfamiliar with Green.

Empire City: The Making and Meaning of the New York City Landscape (Critical Perspectives on the Past), *by David M. Scobey (Temple University Press, 2002).* An ambitious study of the work and motives of the planners, proto-planners, speculators, boosters, real estate developers and politicians that designed and built nineteenth century New York City. Beach chair readers need not apply. Green stands out as a major player, to be sure, but he is often painted as petty and unremarkable – criticisms that deserve an airing, I suppose.

CONSOLIDATION OF GREATER NEW YORK

Power and Society: Greater New York at the Turn of the Century, *by David C. Hammack (Russell Sage Foundation, 1982). Out of print, but not too hard to find.* This tour de force is primarily an in-depth study of the social and political landscape of Gilded Age NYC, but it contains a chapter that is considered the definitive academic analysis of the consolidation of Greater New York.

A Study in the Politics of Metropolitanization; The Greater New York City Charter of 1897, *by Barry Jerome Kaplan; an unpublished PhD dissertation (SUNY Buffalo, 1976). See below for how to obtain a copy; Dissertation Express catalog # 7609068.* Despite the dreadful, off-putting title, this long-form chronicle of the consolidation movement is quite a worthy work, mostly because it includes, in detail, elements and events that Hammack omits or truncates.

NY PUBLIC LIBRARY (including mentions of the fight to save City Hall)

The New York Public Library: A History of its Founding and Early Years, *by Phyllis Dain (The New York Public Library, Astor Lenox and Tilden Foundations, 1972).* The birth of the NYPL was a messy and little-known civic soap opera. This work tells the founding story with wider research and a modern candor that the Lydenberg book lacks. Both provide the context and back-story to the City Hall battle that divided Green against his fellow Tilden Trustees.

History of the New York Public Library: Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, *by Harry Miller Lydenberg (The New York Public Library, 1923; reprinted by Gregg Press, 1972). Out of print, but available at research libraries and from used book dealers.* This exhaustive – dare I say, exhausting – history of the NYPL and its forebear institutions is considered the classic in the field. It is a treasure trove of information, but it pulls its punches and suffers from a dated writing style.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION / CONSERVATION / AMERICAN SCENIC & HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY

"Historic Preservation, Public Memory, and the Making of Modern New York City," *by Randall Mason; a chapter in the compilation* ***Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States,*** *edited by Max Page and Randall Mason (Routledge Press, 2003).* This essay is a welcome and long overdue reevaluation of Green's American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society, New York's first formal historic preservation organization. It argues that the AS&HPS's work does not deserve to be overlooked or dismissed, as it often is, by today's students of the preservation movement. Mentions the effort to save City Hall.

The Creative Destruction of Manhattan, 1900-1940 (Historical Studies of Urban America), *by Max Page (University of Chicago Press, 2000).* This curiously themed book contains among its zigzagging topics a chapter that recounts Green's fight to preserve City Hall and his subsequent founding of the AS&HPS.

NEW YORK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY / BRONX ZOO

Gathering of Animals: An Unconventional History of the New York Zoological Society, *by William Bridges (Harper & Row, 1974). Out of print, but not too hard to find.* Green puts in a fleeting – but essential – appearance before being entirely overshadowed by the fulltime zoo professionals that are the real objects of the author's interest. This book makes the list because it sheds a little light on this otherwise ignored chapter of Green's career.

A NOTE ABOUT DISSERTATIONS

Copies of unpublished dissertations are available from Dissertations Express. Go to their website and follow the links. *http://www.umi.com/hp/Products/DisExpress.html* (observe upper and lower case exactly as written). For easy title searching, use the catalog number supplied in entries above.

Members of the Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers and Fellow Citizens

My name is Pearl Barkley. I am a resident of East Harlem. Ethnically I am an African American, politically I am a Descendant of Africans Enslaved in the United States, racially I am Black and the other variables which make up my identity are a Child of God, a woman, mother grandmother etc. with none of these variables having any particular order. I am speaking to you today to express my perspectives and position on the debate surrounding the removal of statues of Christopher Columbus and Marion Sims.

The nature of argument implies that anything and thereby all things can be debated on. It is my perspective that the fact that a debate on the removal of the statues of Christopher Columbus and Marion Sims is a debate reveals that much of the work that it left to make America a society which is rooted in the ethics that it has espoused to the world, liberty and justice for all as inalienable rights. Surely, both of these men deserve a place in history as does Adolph Hitler, but not as honorable men or persons to celebrate. Why? Because their actions demonstrate the darker side of humanity which emerges when it is guided by "the ends justifies the means" as a credo. Both of these men, one in the name of "discovery" and the other in the name of "science" partook in actions which tortured, maimed, and killed women and men whose descendants live here in America and indeed make up a substantial part of the population that contribute to the society through culture, social ideology, and economics to name a few!

The debate can be settled quickly if the question is asked "How would these men be judged if they committed these atrocities today?" The ancient Egyptians or as they called themselves, the Kamitians endeavored to live according to the Laws of Maat which mandates that truth is to be lived yesterday, today, and as tomorrow as truth. Therefore, what is true today was true yesterday and will be true tomorrow. It is this lack of following truth at the crossroads which is the reason why the Lenape Indians are fighting the Pilgrim Oil Company today!

Sincerely Yours in Peace,

Pearl Barkley

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

THE MOSQUE OF ISLAMIC BROTHERHOOD INC.

130 WEST 113TH STREET

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10026

STATEMENT BEFORE THE MAYORAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CITY ART, MONUMENTS, AND MARKERS

November 27, 2017 BRONX BOROUGH HALL ROTUNDA

By Imam Al-Hajj Talib 'Abdur-Rashid

WE PRAY FOR WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT FOR OUR CITY'S CIVIL LEADERS EVEN AS WE PRAY THE SAME FOR THE NATION. WE THANK THE MAYOR FOR CONVENING THIS HEARING AND YOU FOR BEING PART OF IT.

A KEY QUESTION GERMAINE TO THIS MOMENT IN THE HISTORY OF OUR CITY AND NATION, IS "HOW DOES ONE HEAL A BROKEN NATION, DIVIDED BY INJUSTICES AND TRAUMA OF THE PAST?"

SURELY WE ARE NOT THE FIRST CITY OR NATION TO BE CONFRONTED BY THIS QUESTION, NOR WILL WE BE THE LAST. A REVIEW OF RECENT HISTORY INDICATES THAT ONCE A NATION BECOMES FRACTURED BY ACTS OF INJUSTICE AND OPPRESSION, RESULTING IN ATROCITIES, GENOCIDES, AND VARIOUS MEASURES OF PHYSICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND SPIRITUAL TRAUMA, IT CAN ONLY BE HEALED THROUGH TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION RECENT EXAMPLES OF THIS WOULD BE THE NATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA AND RWANDA, AND THEN BACK DECADES AGO TO GERMANY.

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THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT TODAY, 152 YEARS AFTER THE END OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, AMERICA REMAINS A DIVIDED NATION IN NEED OF HEALING THROUGH TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION.

IT MIGHT DISTURB SOME TO HEAR ME SAY IT. BUT I BELIEVE FERVENTLY IN THE REALITY CONVEYED BY THE WORDS OF ANDREW HACKER IN HIS 1994 BOOK "TWO NATIONS" . THEREIN HACKER QUOTES BENJAMIN DISRAELI THE PHILOSOPHER, WHO UPON VIEWING THE DISPARITY BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR IN ENGLAND, DESCRIBED THEM AS 'TWO NATIONS...WHO ARE AS IGNORANT OF EACH OTHERS' HABITS, THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS AS IF THEY WERE...INHABITANTS OF OTHER PLANETS.''

HACKER DECLARES THIS DESCRIPTION AS ABSOLUTELY RELEVANT TO WHITE AND BLACK FOLK (AND BY EXTENSION BROWN FOLK, PEOPLES OF COLOR IN AMERICA) THE AMERICAN COMMISSION ON CIVIL DISORDERS DECLARED IN 1968, 'OUR NATION IS MOVING TOWARD TWO SOCIETIES - ONE BLACK, ONE WHITE, SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL.'"

HACKER STATES, 'THESE TWO SEPARATE SOCIETIES HAVE EXISTED FROM THE START.' ... IN EVERY CITY WE HAVE A DUAL SOCIETY. TWO ECONOMIES. TWO HOUSING MARKETS. TWO SCHOOL SYSTEMS. THIS DUALITY HAS BROUGHT ABOUT A GREAT DEAL OF INJUSTICE..."

HE DEMONSTRATES WITH STATISTICS AND FACTS, THE CORROSIVE EFFECT OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION ON AMERICAN LIFE, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, POLITICS, AND CRIME. THIS BOOK CLEARLY ILLUSTRATES WHAT MALCOLM X MEANT WHEN, 53 YEARS AGO, HE COUNTERED

DR. KING'S PRONOUNCEMENTS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM BY STATING, 'WE DON'T SEE AN AMERICAN DREAM. WE HAVE EXPERIENCED THE AMERICAN NIGHTMARE. ALTHOUGH KING SPOKE IN 1964 AND HACKER WROTE IN 1994, THEIR WORDS ARE STILL TRUE TODAY. "

SO OUR SOCIETY THIS CANNOT BE HEALED THROUGH DENIAL, BUT RATHER THROUGH TRUTH, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, REPENTANCE, JUSTICE, AND DEGREES OF FORGIVENESS.

THIS PARTICULAR HEARING REMINDS ME OF ONE THAT OCCURRED IN THE CITY COUNCIL A DECADE AGO. THEN , A STREET NAMING WAS PROPOSED AFTER BLACK ACTIVIST SONNY ABUBADIKA CARSON . A CONTROVERSY ERUPTED BECAUSE THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL SPEAKER AT THAT TIME CONSIDERED ABUBADIKA A VIILIAN BECAUSE HE ONCE SAID IN FRONT OF LOCAL TV CAMERAS THAT HE "DIDN'T HATE SOME WHITE PEOPLE, HE HATED ALL WHITE PEOPLE".

NOW AT THIS MOMENT WE ARE EXAMINING WHETHER OR NOT THE DEEDS – NOT JUST THE WORDS BUT THE DEEDS – OF PEOPLE, MOSTLY WHITE MEN SHOULD CONTINUE IN THE 21ST CENTURY TO BE NORMALIZED, MEMORIALIZED, AND CELEBRATED, WHEN THE DEEDS OF THOSE MEN RESULTED IN THE VICTIMIZATION, BRUTALIZATION, OPPRESSION, REPRESSION, AND EXPLOITATION OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE IN AMERICA.

I AM A MUSLIM RELIGIOUS LEADER WHO REPRESENTS A CONGREGATION OF MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN PRIMARILY FROM AMONSGT AMERICANS OF AFRICAN descent , BUT ALSO LATINOS. BUT WE SHARE A BELIEF IN COMMON WITH MANY PEOPLE OF VARIOUS BELIEFS, THAT THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE

BWETWEEN FREEDOM AND OPPRESSION, BETWEEN JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE, AND RIGHT AND WRONG . WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SUCH A THING AS RIGHT AND WRONG ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF GOD AND MAN . MORALITY STILL EXISTS AND MUST EXIST AND THERE CAN BE NO COMPROMISE BETWEEN MORALITY AND IMMORALITY, AND THERE CAN BE NO RECONCILIATION WITHOUT TRUTH

TODAY THERE ARE NARRATIVES STILL HELD IN DEFENSE OF PAST INJUSTICES AND IMMORALITIES. IT IS THIS CULTURAL DENIAL THAT PROLONGS OUR NATIONS HEALING. WE SEE THIS RECENTLY WHEN WHITE HOUSE CHIEF OF STAFF JOHN KELLY DESCRIBED THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR AS RESULTING FROM "LACK OF AN ABILITY TO COMPROMISE". HOWEVER AS CONGRESSMAN CEDRIC RICHMOND, WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS SAID , THE CIVIL WAR "WAS NOT A DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN 'MEN AND WOMEN OF GOOD FAITH ON BOTH SIDES'. IT WAS A STRIGGLE FOR THE COULF OF THE soul COUNTRY

SO WE SAY, IT IS APPROPRIATE THAT THESE CURRENT DEBATES BEGAN OVER CIVIL WAR MONUMENTS THAT IN THE 21ST CENTURY, CELEBRATE

THE DEEDS OF CONFEDERATE LEADERS WHO ATTEMPTED TO EFFECT AN INSURRECTION AGAINST THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN DEFENSE OF STATE RIGHTS TO MAINTAIN AND PERPETUATE THE ENSLAVEMENT OF BLACK PEOPLE. PHYSICAL RECONSTRUCTION AT THE END OF THE CIVIL WAR DID NOT GUARANTEE THE SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL EQUIVALENT OF THE

SAME. THROUGHOUT THE NATION AND THE CITY THERE IS EVIDENCE OF THIS FAILURE.

OUR NATION IS TRAUMATIZED AND DIVIDED, AND IT IS THE MAINTENANCE OF MONUMENTS FROM THE CULTURE OF THE CONQUEROR NOT THE CONQUERED, OF THE EXPLOITEROR NOT THE EXPLOITED, OF THE VICTIMIZER NOT THE VICTIMIZED, THAT PERPETRATES THIS SOCIETAL DIVISION AND CONTINUED TRAUMA AND SUFFERING. THESE MONUMENTS ARE TO THOSE WHO WHO HAVE BUILT PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE BACKS OF OTHERS, NOT OF THOSE ON WHOSE BACKS REST THAT PROGRESS

THESE HEARINGS HAVE RAISED THE ISSUE IN OUR CITY ONCE AGAIN. IS THE NATION TO BE HEALED THROUGH TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION, OF SYMPATHY AND EMPATHY, THROUGH ACKNOPWLWEDGEMENT OF WRONGS COMMITTED, OR THOROUGH PERPETUATION OF THE GLORIFICATION AND NORMALIZATION OF DEEDS PAST?

IN CONCLUSION, I MISSED THE HEARINGS 10 YEARS AGO AROUND THE STREET NAMING, BUT I WILL SAY TODAY WHAT I WOULD HAVE SAID THEN. AND THAT IS THAT THE MATTER CURRENTLY BEFORE THE COUNCIL IS NOT ONLY WHETHER STATUES SHOULD BE MOVED, OR IN SOME MEANINGFUL AND EDUCATIONAL WAY ANOTHER NARRATIVE PRESENTED THAT REFLECTS A MORE BALANCE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

THE MONUMENTS IN QUESTION INCLUDE THOSE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS (STATUES OF WHOM ARE IN DIFFERENT BOROUGHS, NOT JUST

MANHATTAN) . THEY ALSO INCLUDE AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT WHO WAS NONETHELESS AN AVOWED WHITE SUPREMACIST LIKE TEDDY ROOSEVELT - DEPICTED IN SCUPTURE IN FRONT OF THE MUSEUM OF NATUTAL HISTORY, NOBLY ASTRIDE A MAGNNIFICENT STALLION WHILE A NATIVE AMERICAN AND AN AFRICAN WALK BESIDE HIM.

THEY INCLUDE DR. MARION SIMS – TIIE SO-CALLED "FATHER OF MODERN GYNECOLOGY". YES HE DEVISED BENEFICIAL SURGGICAL TECHNIQUES FOR TREATMENT OF COMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM OBSTRUCTED CHILDBIRTHS. BUT HE ALSO PERFECTED THOSE TECHNIQUES OPERATING ON ENSLAVED, UNANESTHETIZED BLACK WOMEN – NOT WHITE WOMEN –ENCSLAVED WOMEN, NOT FREE WOMEN. CAN WE CONTINUES TO IGNORE THESE TYPES OF CONTRADICTION IN THE 21ST CENTURYTHE ~~MARION SIMS, TEDDY ROOSEVELT~~

LASTLY, IT IS NOT ONLY THESE MONUMENTS THAT POSE A CHALLENGE TO PUBLIC MORALITY IN 21ST CENTURY NEW YORK CITY. WE LIVE IN A CITY WHERE THE ARE MANY STREETS, AND SCHOOLS, AND STONE MONUMENTS ERCTED IN HONOR OF PEOPLE WHO WHILE CONSIDERED HEROES TO MANY IN TIIE HERETOFORE DOMINANT CULTURE, REPRESENT AN IGNOMINOUS PAST THAT CAN NO LONGER BE LIONIZED IN THE 21ST CENTURY, AND IN THE CENTURIES AHEAD.

THE TIME HAS NOW ARRIVED FOR RECTIFICATION OF THE NORMALIZATION OF MISDEEDS PAST . IT IS IN YOUR HANDS TO RECOMMEND THAT THIS BE DONE HERE IN OUR OWN CITY.

Planned Parenthood
Care. No matter what.

Planned Parenthood of New York City

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Testimony of Planned Parenthood of New York City
before
The Mayoral Advisory Commission on City Art, Monuments, and Markers
regarding
NYC monuments and markers in public space

November 28, 2017

Good afternoon, I am Christina Chang, Vice President of Public Affairs at Planned Parenthood of New York City. Planned Parenthood has been a leading provider of reproductive and sexual health services in New York City for over 100 years, and serves more than 85,000 New Yorkers annually through our clinical and education programs. Our doors are open to all New Yorkers regardless of income, gender, insurance, or immigration status and we believe that high quality health care is a human right every person deserves.

Thank you to the Commission for holding these hearings and to the de Blasio administration for prioritizing this important issue. I am pleased to submit testimony today regarding the statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims and calling for its urgent removal.

When images of white supremacists taking the streets in Charlottesville first surfaced, thousands of New Yorkers participated in rallies to condemn the hateful actions and rhetoric of white supremacist groups. The protests were powerful affirmations of our city's stance against racism and hatred. But even though New York City is seen as a progressive place, we must not let this reputation blindside us. The history of racism isn't particular to Charlottesville – New York must recognize white supremacy in our own backyard and we must take steps to upend it.

For years, activist groups around New York City have been doing just that by calling for the removal of a statue of Dr. J. Marion Sims, who repeatedly performed surgical experiments on enslaved black women in the 19th century without their consent and without anesthesia. According to Sims, "black women don't feel pain."

Recently, Black Youth Project 100 (BYP 100) held a powerful protest in Central Park calling for the statue to be removed. Planned Parenthood of New York City joined elected officials and partners at a rally calling for the removal of this statue. East Harlem Preservation has also been calling for this statue to be removed for a decade.

PPNYC strongly condemns the statue of Dr. Sims because it sanctions racism, hate, and abuse of black women. We stand with the many groups calling for its immediate removal.

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This call to action goes beyond merely removing a statue or symbol. We need to recognize and call out white supremacy as a fundamental and systemic problem that fuels racial and economic inequality and reproductive oppression.

America has a long history of controlling and threatening the safety and body control of people of color. White supremacy affects the people who come to Planned Parenthood for care and their ability to determine their own destiny. We cannot lose sight of that as we continue to fight to expand and improve reproductive health care for all.

Black women are still three-and-a-half times more likely to die in childbirth than white women in The United States. Laws that block access to abortion and contraception disproportionately impact low-income communities, including immigrants. Women of color, who are more likely to rely on Medicaid to receive health care, risk losing access to life-saving services like cancer screenings, STD testing and treatment, and more, because of Congress' shameless attempts to defund Planned Parenthood.

At PPNYC, we know that a statue that represents violence and hatred and a lack of medical care has no place in our city. We also know that our work will continue beyond the statue's removal. PPNYC is more committed than ever to delivering compassionate care, and to building a city where no one has to live in fear of exclusion, harassment, or violence.

At PPNYC, we welcome people of all races, backgrounds, ages, incomes, and immigration statuses to our doors for high-quality health care. We will never turn away anyone seeking health care – no matter what.

Not just because our patients' lives are at stake, but because that is our mission – to ensure that all New Yorkers can access the care they need to lead safe and empowering lives.

Planned Parenthood of New York City stands with BYP 100, East Harlem Preservation, and other groups and activists speaking out against racism and white supremacy and calling for the removal of this statue. As the injustice of racism persists, none of us can be silent. For the sake of our city and our country, all of us must take a stand.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY BEFORE THE MAYORAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON CITY ART, MONUMENTS, AND MARKERS

CONGRESSMAN DANIEL M. DONOVAN, JR. (NY-11)

November 28, 2017

Members of the Commission, thank you for visiting Staten Island today to accept public comments on our city's monuments and markers. My name is Dan Donovan, and I represent Staten Island and South Brooklyn in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Frankly, this entire operation is an exercise in political correctness run amok. A small group of malcontents have focused media attention on a problem that didn't exist until 6 months ago, and now a panel of experts must determine which acknowledgements of our shared past are too offensive to remain in existence.

Some might see statue removals as a milestone on society's march toward a world free from micro-aggressions, but whitewashing history by scrubbing Columbus and other historical figures from public view does nothing but sow division and conflict.

Christopher Columbus probably wouldn't contend for the Nobel Peace Prize, but whether folks like it or not, his life shaped 500 years of progress. He's a symbol of Italian-American pride, generations of whom built this city.

A sober analysis of our history is absolutely necessary to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. Classrooms, textbooks, and historical accounts are all appropriate forums for an important conversation about who we are and where we come from.

But a commission judging the lives of people who lived centuries ago to avoid triggering every conceivable sensitivity is absurd.

The Christopher Columbus statue has stood in Manhattan for more than 100 years. Our city's statues and monuments are important pieces of our shared history and culture. Removing them won't right wrongs that happened decades or centuries ago, but sanitizing history will certainly inflame conflicts and set a dangerous precedent.

I encourage this commission to recommend maintaining the monuments and markers that, for better or worse, are part of New York City's past.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony today.