

Articles

QUESTIONING THE ASSUMPTIONS
OF MORALISM, UNIVERSALISM, AND
INTERPRETIVE DOMINANCE IN RACIST
MONUMENT DEBATES

Dan Demetriou

This essay questions three widespread assumptions in monument debates: “moralism,” “universalism,” and “interpretive dominance.” Roughly: moralism assumes that memorials should be only to good people or good causes; universalism holds that memorials should represent or be “for” the whole polity or its (real or supposed) corporate values; and interpretive dominance maintains that, when faced with monuments with reasonable qualifying and disqualifying interpretations, policy should respond to the disqualifying one(s). These assumptions do not settle the debates between removalists and preservationists, but they do make the removalist position easier to defend. Various counter-examples to these assumptions, real and imagined, motivate competing positions I term “sentimentalism,” “particularism,” and “interpretive independence.”

INTRODUCTION

In the name of antiracism and decolonization, monuments commemorating Confederate figures, American Founders, and European colonialists are being defaced, destroyed, and legally removed at a pace reminiscent of a cultural revolution. On the day I write these words, Charlottesville is removing two monuments to Confederates and one to the Lewis and Clark expedition. Even monuments to those who died fighting *for* racial justice or anti-colonialist causes are under

threat: for instance, a Madison, Wisconsin, statue of abolitionist Hans Christian Heg, who died in the battle of Chickamauga as a Union soldier, was torn down and decapitated by Black Lives Matter/Antifa vandals in the summer of 2020.¹ Nothing written here can stop this iconoclastic convulsion, nor is the purpose of this essay to persuade anyone that this movement is misguided. My goal is, rather, to diagnose, name, and question three widespread assumptions in monument debates. These assumptions are independent from each other and are best discussed not in terms of their affirmations and denials, but rather as dimensions or (to borrow a psychological term) “scales” that stretch between these assumptions and certain contrary positions that are less often assumed in monument debates, but are nonetheless philosophically salient alternatives. These scales are as follows:

1. Moralism-Sentimentalism: “The object of memorials must be morally good” versus “Monuments to immoral people or for immoral causes are perfectly acceptable when they memorialize culture heroes, national struggles and so on.”
2. Interpretive Dominance-Interpretive Independence: “If a monument has two reasonable interpretations—one that would morally disqualify it, and one that would not—policy must respond to the disqualifying interpretation” versus “It is morally unproblematic for policy to respond only to the morally qualifying, not the morally disqualifying, interpretation.”
3. Universalism-Particularism: “Monuments should strive to memorialize the (values, history, struggles, victories, etc. of the) entire polity” versus “Monuments memorializing (the history, values, etc. of) particular demographics are morally unproblematic.”

I present these scales as a neutral framework for enriching our thinking and teaching about monument debates. (Although my presentation is polemical, the *framework* is neutral, and some will find the assumptions I criticize here worth defending.) Readers are encouraged to consider where and why they fall on various places along these scales, as explicit thought about them can help us form more consistent positions across cases of contested monuments.

As we shall see, it is perfectly possible, and not particularly rare, for two commentators to share one or more of these underlying assumptions but disagree about whether some class of monuments should be preserved. Nonetheless, it may be that certain positions on these scales make either preservationism or removalism easier to defend. It is especially notable that many preservationists unwittingly assume positions on these scales that, it seems, lend themselves to removalist (or otherwise revisionist) conclusions. There is no methodological problem with this if, after consideration, the said preservationists conclude that their assumptions are justified but lead to unexpected conclusions. However, every experienced ethicist knows that disputants often appeal to “inauthentic” rationales: that is, reasons that are not ultimately what motivate their conclusions, but nonetheless are the only

ones their *audience* accepts, or is expected to accept, as justifying. Sometimes people are so embedded in a particular language-game or moral paradigm that, when called onto the carpet for their unorthodox conclusions, they cannot help but appeal to orthodox rationales: compare how Jonathan Haidt and his colleagues have shown subjects readily offer contrived “post-hoc” justifications for their illiberal positions via liberal rationales, as liberal considerations were the only ones they could supply or that they felt would be taken seriously.² It’s plausible that, since removalism is the dominant position in academic circles, preservationists feel pressured to appeal to moral assumptions removalists favor, hoping to better persuade their removalist opponents or, failing that, at least appear properly motivated in the eyes of their critics. I suspect they fail on both counts and, if anything, are thought worse of for offering accounts that are not only wrong but also chimerical.

Although these scales apply to debates over monuments controversial for reasons other than those concerning race, racist monuments will be our focus, if only because they are the most contested at this time. I will use the term “racist monument” for any monument controversial because of its alleged racist character. The term is helpful for encompassing both Confederate monuments in the American South and colonialist monuments around the world. Nonetheless, in this essay at least, any use of “racist monument” should not be read as asserting the monument in question actually is racist (whatever “racist” amounts to). Moreover, even if a monument *is* racist, this fact would not settle the moral question of whether it ought to be removed, given considerations raised here and elsewhere that are meant to justify maintenance of genuinely racist monuments.³

MORALISM-SENTIMENTALISM

We begin with the scale stretching from moralism to sentimentalism, which is easiest to describe by focusing on the extremes. As we will use the term, the “moralist” about monuments says that the object of memorialization must be morally good. If a figure being memorialized is granted to have major character flaws or to have done importantly bad things, then the moralist needs the monument to memorialize the figure for the morally good things. If an item being memorialized is a morally mixed bag, such as the typical war effort is, then the memorial must be about its morally good aspects. Monuments about evil events are permissible for the moralist, as illustrated by the University of Alabama’s plaque commemorating the very place where governor George Wallace stood in defiance of Alabama’s first black students entering under the protection of the National Guard: these are memorials *of* bad things, but speak *for* peace (or at least just wars), racial justice, or other morally good things.

National Public Radio’s Steve Inskeep’s contribution to the monuments debate is representative of a popular removalist position that is moralistic in its rationale.

For Inskip, whereas Confederate generals were fighting for a bad cause, removalist zeal—won't? shouldn't?—⁴target the American Founders, because Founders are memorialized for something morally good.

Must they all go if Robert E. Lee goes? Not necessarily, because they are not all the same. Some figures stood for something larger. Washington guided the foundation of a country that eventually preserved freedom for all. Jefferson authored the Declaration of Independence, in which a single phrase—"that all men are created equal"—became a hammer that later generations would use to help smash the chains of slavery. It's possible to make a case for honoring such men, so long as we are also honest about their flaws. They were participants in a great experiment in self-government, which has expanded over time to embrace more and more people of all races, not to mention women, too.⁵

Plainly, Inskip is assuming that our decisions about whether a memorial to a figure should or shouldn't be removed is a function of the morality of the said figure or what the monument is "standing for."

Notably, preservationists can be moralists too. In his moderately preservationist essay for *National Review*, classicist and conservative commentator Victor Davis Hanson bemoans an iconoclasm fueled in no small part by historical ignorance about the figures involved. Hanson doesn't draw the line between Confederates and Founders, as Inskip does, but rather distinguishes among Confederates.

Does the statue of Confederate General James Longstreet deserve defacing? He was a conflicted officer of the Confederacy, a critic of Robert E. Lee's, later a Unionist friend of Ulysses S. Grant, an enemy of the Lost Causers, and a leader of African-American militias in enforcing reconstruction edicts against white nationalists. Is Longstreet the moral equivalent of General Nathan Bedford Forrest ("get there firstest with the mostest"), who was the psychopathic villain of Fort Pillow, a near illiterate ante-bellum slave-trading millionaire, and the first head of the original Ku Klux Klan? . . . When we wipe away history at a whim . . . we'd better make sure that our targets are uniquely and melodramatically evil rather than tragically misguided.⁶

The controversy around a monument to feminists Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Sojourner Truth, which was installed in New York City's Central Park in August 2020, is also instructive.⁷ As some have protested it because of Anthony's and Stanton's racially demeaning attitudes and their prioritizing of women's voting rights at the expense of black and immigrant interests, this memorial is, by this essay's terminology, a "racist monument."⁸ Its supporters—in this case, "preservationists" (or at least non-removalists), although probably mostly political progressives—are moralists insofar as they are quick to emphasize that white suffragettes were not *that* racist, compared to their contemporaries. Public philosopher Myriam Miedzian, who helped lead the nonprofit devoted to erecting the monument, writes: "U.S. history is tainted by the rabid racism of prominent

politicians, Supreme Court justices, and organizations. Stanton, Anthony, and the Suffrage movement do not belong on this list, or even in its vicinity.”⁹

In her “Duty to Remove Statues of Wrongdoers,” Helen Frowe doesn’t assume moralism: she argues explicitly for it, and in fact a particularly strident version.¹⁰ Frowe thinks, in contrast to moderate moralistic removalists such as Inskeep, that statues to figures who have committed serious wrongdoing should be removed *even if* the statue in question clearly memorializes some good act the figure did. I summarize her argument as follows:

1. We should erect or maintain public memorials¹¹ only to figures whom we think it fitting to admire.
2. Figures who engaged in serious rights violations are not fitting to admire.
3. So we should not erect or maintain public memorials to figures who engaged in serious rights violations.

Frowe’s moralism spans both premises, as on this argument, moral goodness is necessary to admirability, and admirability essential to apt memorialization.

The moralism of Inskeep, Hanson, Miedzian, and Frowe would doubtless amuse the bureaucrats shaping Mongolia’s commemorative landscape. Mongolia, which is experiencing a nationalist revival after communism collapsed there in the early 1990s, has been memorializing Genghis Khan at a frenzied pace. For instance, in 2008, it completed its 250-ton stainless steel Genghis Khan Equestrian Statue. Khan’s slaughter of tens of millions of innocent people in his empire-building campaign doesn’t appear to trouble the Mongolian people. As one *New York Times* article reports: “‘All Mongolian people are proud of this statue,’ said Sanchir Erkhem, 26, a Mongolian sumo wrestler living in Japan who was posing for photographs on the platform during a trip home. ‘Genghis Khan is our hero, our father, our god.’”¹² So, in contrast to the moralists above, Mongolian commemorative policy appears to be what I’ll call “sentimentalist” in nature. Sentimentalists erect monuments by much the same logic we use when we hang family portraits: to honor, to mourn, to remember, to encourage, to instill pride, to form a sense of belonging, and to make a place feel like home.

Sentimentalists are not amorlists. If your grandfather had murdered someone for drug money and you had his picture on your wall, we shouldn’t conclude from this that you have lax moral attitudes about murder. Nor is the sentimentalist an amorlist even about monuments. Sentimentalism as meant here is compatible with thinking that it would be immoral to install, remove, or fail to remove a monument to someone on any number of grounds. A sentimentalist may object to a (say) statue because the person represented didn’t accomplish enough, or didn’t sacrifice enough, or was a traitor, or mattered to the previous residents of that land but not to the current ones, or that the statue’s aesthetics don’t do justice to its object—such considerations may *morally* disqualify monuments in the

sentimentalist's mind. So the difference between the moralist and sentimentalist isn't that only the former thinks certain moral conditions must be met to justify erecting or maintaining a monument. Rather, moralists and sentimentalists part ways over the question of whether the object of memorialization must have been morally good to warrant memorialization.

It must be noted that, on some moral perspectives (such as communitarian ones, typical around the world), loyalty and sacrifice for the group is reckoned as *morally* good, so it might be argued that sentimentalism is just moralism but with a more traditional or conservative moral content. Perhaps. But I ask: If someone hangs a picture of their murderer grandfather because he was good to them, and/or sacrificed for their family, would they be doing so because of the *moral goodness* of the grandfather's benefaction or sacrifice? Typically, no: that would be one thought too many; the motive in such cases would be better described as sentimental rather than moralistic in nature.

Is sentimentalism plausible? One (not wholly reliable) indicator of a monumetary philosophy's plausibility is its actual use. Frowe, for instance, seems to accept this principle insofar as she thinks a point in favor of moralism is that it better reflects our commemorative landscapes than does (what she sees as) its main rival, the view saying that the purpose of memorialization is to mark history, not to honor.

If the historical record view were true, the dearth of public statues of, say, Hitler in Britain would be baffling. It's hard to imagine a more important historical figure in British history than Hitler. And yet the absence of such statues is far from baffling. Rather, it is straightforwardly explained by the fact that we do not tend to build statues to people whom we believe engaged in serious wrongdoing, even if those wrongs were of monumental historical significance.¹³

Frowe is correct that moralism does a better job than the historical record view of explaining why Britons wouldn't erect a statue to Hitler. But sentimentalism (which she doesn't consider) *also* has a ready explanation: to wit, there is little reason why the British should have sentimental attitudes toward Hitler. Overall, actual monumetary practice speaks more strongly for sentimentalism than moralism. For instance, Frowe's view requires monuments to colonialists and slave traders to be removed, but most Britons think they should be maintained.¹⁴ So if the choice of Britons *not* to erect monuments to Hitler is evidence *for* her moralistic position, why is their enthusiasm for monuments to colonialists and slave traders not evidence *against* moralism?

Of course, Frowe may claim that the relevant populations are unaware of the evils their honored members did, or that they don't see those evils *as* evil. But this is unlikely: it is highly doubtful that even 1 percent of Americans, or even 1 percent of "heritage" southern whites whose ancestors fought for the Confederacy,

are unaware of American slavery or think that slavery is morally permissible. I doubt many Mongolians would wish to duplicate the Mongol atrocities if they could summon Genghis Khan back to life, or that many living Britons think colonialism is morally permissible. In contrast, sentimentalism explains both why we'd expect Britons not to erect a monument to Hitler (as moralism does, and the historical record view does not) *and* why we'd expect a population that deplores colonialism to support maintenance of monuments to colonialists (as the historical record view might, but moralism does not).

Although Frowe's moralism doesn't explain the unpopularity of removalism, does moralism better explain why we don't see *new* monuments to colonialists and Confederates? Frowe writes:

We build statues only to those people whom also we think it fitting to admire. This plausibly explains why, just as it has never seemed appropriate to build statues of Hitler, we would not now build a public statue to Cecil Rhodes. Colonialism was widely admired when Oriel College, Oxford erected its now-infamous statue of Rhodes in the early 1900s. Rhodes was lauded for his part in the violent theft of land from native black Africans for 'civilising' use by white Europeans. By contrast, we now regard Rhodes' colonialism as part of a wider practice of serious rights violations. If statues are mere records, Rhodes' wrongdoing gives us no reason not to build new public statues of him. And yet his wrongdoing seems to give us decisive reason not to build new statues to him.¹⁵

And yet, in the United States, multiple private and public monuments to George Floyd have been installed in the past year. Given his violent criminality, Floyd statues wouldn't appear to pass Frowe's moralistic standard.¹⁶ Given his lack of positive accomplishments, Floyd statues wouldn't even pass more moderate moralistic standards that focus on the good the memorialized individual has done. Sentimentalism, on the other hand, does a better job of explaining new monuments to Floyd: many people sympathetic to police reform found his death galvanizing, traumatic, or symbolic, and they memorialize Floyd because of *that*.

Sentimentalism also explains why we might maintain a monument to a figure like Rhodes today but not erect a new one to him. If you had to redecorate your home from scratch today, you would redecorate it differently. But that doesn't give you much of a reason to redecorate now, or suggest you regret the decorations you have up now. I doubt anyone will put up statues to Floyd in a few years, but that doesn't mean it was a mistake to put up a statue to Floyd in 2020–2021, or that any Floyd monuments that have been installed should be removed in the future. Part of the charm and meaningfulness of a lived-in space is that it reflects our sentiments over time. In fact, nothing guarantees our future *dissatisfaction* with our home decor, its becoming "outdated," more than its reflecting our tastes and attitudes at one moment in our lives. (Concerns about who "we" are over time, and whether a new statue of a colonialist would be immoral because of its offense

to immigrant populations from colonized areas, have to do with universalism, not moralism, and will be discussed below.)

That sentimentalism better accommodates our monumentary practices than moralism does can also be seen when we consider monuments commemorating national hardships or calamities, such as an attempted genocide, natural disasters, or oppression. Granted, Frowe's argument as presented above is not committed to saying that *all* monuments must be about morally good things or morally good figures: she's saying only that monuments honoring figures must be honoring morally good figures. However, the fact that sentimentalism explains a wider class of memorialization than moralism does is a point in favor of seeing the function of monuments as more sentimental than moralistic in nature. Moreover, it seems sentimentalism does a better job of predicting the importance or prominence of monuments than moralism does. If there is a country where its most moral sons, daughters, and causes have the grandest monuments, I'd like to see it. Rather, the most prominent monuments go to people and events that are particularly beloved, dashing, galvanizing, traumatic, and poignant.

Of course, the mere fact that sentimentalism does a better job of *describing* monumentary policies historically and cross-culturally doesn't settle the question of which approach *should* govern them. For instance, most of my audiences seem convinced that monuments to Hitler (even in Germany—maybe especially in Germany) would be morally impossible. Since sentimentalism *per se* wouldn't blink at memorializing Hitler if the German people wished to, uncompromising sentimentalism about monuments might appear to go too far.

Perhaps it does. However, whether the intuitions against Hitler monuments are actually *moralistic* is not as straightforward as it could first appear. Imagine a distant future in which the German people, now weak and irrelevant, their culture denuded by a foreign and totalizing ideology, and casting about for anything to resuscitate national pride, decided that a monument to Hitler would serve as a reminder to themselves and their more powerful neighbors that Germans could be global players and cannot be trifled with—in other words, a German parallel to the Khan monument. If intuitions are murky here, as they may be regarding the Khan monument (about which my audiences seem unconcerned), then it cannot be that our intuitions are tracking moralism, since Hitler remains just as evil in the imagined possible world as he is in ours.

Intuitions against Hitler memorials are probably better explained by concern over them breathing new life into neo-Nazi movements, in parallel to a point made by Johannes Schulz about monuments to Caesar, which do not trouble us.¹⁷ It may also be that we feel it's wrong for monuments to insult certain demographics, and a Hitler memorial would do so in the strongest terms. Travis Timmerman's removalist objection to Confederate monuments is representative here: for Timmerman, the reason Confederate monuments should be removed is not due to their racist content or their commemoration of racist causes or racists themselves,

but rather the unavoidable harm to an undeserving group (black Americans) they cause.¹⁸ *To whom* monuments morally mustn't be offensive is a crucial question we'll revisit when we discuss the universalism scale. What is important to see for present purposes is that offense-based rationales for monument removal do not require or entail moralism.

INTERPRETIVE DOMINANCE-INDEPENDENCE

Here are some commonplaces regarding interpretation. Any "text" can have multiple interpretations. Some interpretations are good, and some bad. Often, multiple incompatible interpretations will be reasonable. Sometimes even the best interpretations will contradict each other in important ways. The study of literature, history, or law is humbling insofar as we frequently find that two radically different interpretations of some text or event seem equally justified, especially after we consider the many factors that ground interpretations: authorial intent, the common meaning of language or symbolism at the time of authorship, the common meaning of such language or symbolism nowadays, the meaning of such language or symbolism in the particular genre (poetic, mythic, academic, legal, etc.), the purpose of the document, and so on.

Monuments are particularly difficult items to interpret, and their meanings, especially when controversial, often multiply as they age.¹⁹ Let a "disqualifying" interpretation be an interpretation that, if it were the only good one, would render the monument *prima facie* unsuitable for installation or maintenance, or "disqualified" for brevity. Which interpretations should count as disqualifying are irrelevant. They may or may not be moralistic in nature. What this dimension measures is not what reasons make a monument disqualifying, but what our *response* to those disqualifying interpretations should be, since it is to be expected that monuments will quite often "mean" or "represent" or "say" both disqualifying *and* qualifying things.²⁰

Take Confederate monuments. For most of their supporters, they honor ancestors who fought for their political autonomy, or mourn the loss of hundreds of thousands of young countrymen. For most of their detractors, they are icons of white supremacy and bemoan the Lost Cause of an antebellum white aristocracy supported by racist chattel slavery. For instance, in a 2019 Elon University poll of 1467 North Carolinians, about 75 percent of respondents felt their Confederate monuments "honor Confederates who died" (84 percent of whites agree, and 49 percent of blacks), and 50 percent felt they "glorify what the Confederacy fought for" (45 percent of whites, and 59 percent of blacks).²¹ Assume both interpretations are reasonable and that the former is qualifying and the latter disqualifying: What should we do? One philosophy I'll call "interpretive dominance" holds that, if a monument has a reasonable interpretation that would morally disqualify it, and one that would not, policy should respond to the disqualifying interpretation, or

treat the monument as disqualified. At the other end of this scale, however, we have “interpretive independence,” which says it remains an open question about what to do with monuments in such cases. On this view, a monument may easily deserve preservation even if it has a reasonable disqualifying interpretation.

I suspect many readers will find interpretive dominance intuitive, at least with regard to racist monuments. To push back on this assumption enough to make it at least debatable, let us remember how routinely we choose to interpret texts charitably, which means responding to their *non*-disqualifying interpretations. Let us start with *faux pas*, which might be the best cases for charitable interpretation. Recall then-candidate Joe Biden’s remark that “we have this notion that somehow if you’re poor, you cannot do it. Poor kids are just as bright and just as talented as white kids,” adding, after a pause, “wealthy kids, black kids, Asian kids.”²² To his critics, Biden’s slip was Freudian and revealed that he conceives of blacks as an underperforming underclass. To his supporters, the statement may have been clumsy and insensitive, but nonetheless accurately represented the unfortunate effects of systemic racism. Moving from *faux pas* to calculated politics, consider Nelson Mandela’s 1992 singing of the oath of the uMkhonto we Sizwe (or “MK,” the African National Congress’s militant wing, which Mandela led), an oath that repeatedly pledges loyalty to the MK and “killing whites.”²³ To Mandela’s critics, this was a patently racist and hypocritical act.²⁴ But given Mandela’s precarious political position in 1992 not only with whites but also with his black base, his aspirations, and the occasion—a funeral for twenty-four ANC demonstrators killed by South African security forces²⁵—his supporters could see his decision to sing the song as not actually expressing the wish to kill all white South Africans. Remarkably, those politically aligned with Biden and Mandela studiously chose to respond to the charitable or qualifying interpretations of these texts, while their political opponents seized on the uncharitable or disqualifying interpretations. So it certainly seems possible to respond to the reasonable qualifying interpretation of a text, and ignore the reasonable disqualifying one—if one wants to.

Of course, the question of whether interpretive dominance or independence is preferable doesn’t arise if the only reasonable interpretations are disqualifying. Sometimes that’s the case, even with regard to monuments—New Orleans’s now-removed monument to the Battle of Liberty Place, which once sported an inscription literally calling for white supremacy in those exact terms, comes to mind.²⁶ But usually things are not so clear-cut. In my experience, people suddenly become more skeptical about the possibility of ambiguity when politics enters the picture: one hears that the text in question is “obviously” F or “just says” p (“Black Lives Matter” is patently racist!—or anti-racist!; “All Lives Matter” is clearly racist!—or anti-racist!). In monument debates, it is routine to observe an interpretive absolutism that intelligent people would never articulate in an art appreciation, literature, or law course. For instance, removalists sometimes claim that the (alleged) racist purpose of a monument’s installation fixes the racist

significance of it in perpetuity, even though these same critics could rattle off a number of objections to “original intent” as a theory of legal interpretation, such as that a group act (such as passing a law) might be motivated by contradictory aims among its multiple performers, or that the intuitive meaning of a text (such as a law) often diverges from the intent of the utterer (or legislator), or that utterers (legislators) might even *intend* a text (law) to *change* meaning over time. This sort of subtlety is rarely seen in discussions of a Confederate monument’s meaning. Or consider how many removalists point to the mere decade in which a monument was erected as evidence of the monument’s racist significance today.²⁷ For instance, the Southern Poverty Law Center’s widely cited “Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy” has made heavy weather of the fact that many Confederate monuments were erected long after the Civil War, especially between 1900–1920, and were installed near public buildings, and conclude that this is because of the Cult of the Lost Cause and amounts to a concerted effort to intimidate blacks (it’s worth bearing in mind that the aforementioned statue of the abolitionist Heg, which stands on the Wisconsin capitol grounds, was erected in the 1920s).²⁸ Few philosophers would endorse a general principle saying that texts should be treated as if their only reasonable interpretation is the one fixed by their original purpose (supposing they have *one* purpose). But such is regular practice in monument debates.

One sign that a polemic is assuming interpretive dominance is its use of purity language: applied to the present topic, a monument is “sullied” or “tarnished” by its racism to the effect that the qualifying interpretation is trumped by the racist, disqualifying one (see recent essays by Ten-Herng Lai, Chong-Ming Lim, and Johannes Schulz, each of which uses the phrase “tainted monuments”).²⁹ If racism “taints” a monument, then the racist interpretation bleeds through, so to speak, any non-racist interpretation. Whereas on interpretive independence, racist monuments can be racist ducks or non-racist rabbits, for the interpretive dominance theorist, there can be no such gestalt shift: it just *is* a racist duck, and must be treated as such.

Alfred Archer and Ben Matheson turn the tables on the contagion dynamic of racist taint: for them, admirers of ambiguous figures are all too likely to allow qualifying interpretations to *redeem* features that should be disqualifying in a (so to speak) “eucontagious”³⁰ manner.

Given admiration’s spreading tendency, admiring one feature of a person sometimes leads people to admire other features as well. For example, a teenager’s admiration for her favorite footballer’s sporting abilities may lead her to admire her political views. A graduate student’s admiration for his supervisor’s intellectual abilities may lead him to admire the way he talks and dresses. Once admiration spreads to these features this may then lead to a desire to emulate these aspects of the person as well. Given that we pick immoral artists out as people we ought to admire when we honor them, we

have reason to worry about such honors, as they may lead people to emulate such artists in other ways.³¹

Likewise, in his more monuments-focused discussion, Benjamin Cohen Rossi worries that, because of our psychological discomfort with ambiguity and need for consistency, monuments with (what we're calling) qualifying and disqualifying interpretations will—at least for many who recognize their qualifying interpretations—tend to minimize the evils of the memorialized figure or cause.³²

Perhaps eucontagion is a serious worry: as I remarked above, our ability to diagnose genuine ambiguity in texts becomes more difficult when politics enters the picture. If it is, *and* if we adopt a policy of interpretive dominance to forestall trivializing the evils of the memorialized persons or causes, then it seems we'll be left with either very few monuments or far more ideologically homogenous states and institutions. This is because a policy of interpretive dominance threatens a total extirpation of the heritage landscape—it goes even further than moralism does in explaining the puritanical nature of removalist campaigns. After all, many possible interpretations will be disqualifying (supply your own criteria of what disqualifies a monument). Since almost any monument *can* mean something disqualifying, if we accept interpretive dominance *and* wish to keep any monuments up at all, then we must endlessly wrangle over what monuments “really” mean. For instance, almost no statues anywhere are to figures who approved of transgenderism, so one might conclude that all public statuary celebrates transphobes and thus affirms transphobia. This is a silly interpretation, I think we can agree. But although I'd be willing to argue that this interpretation is silly, I'd rather *not have to*. As anyone with a background in literary studies can confirm, debates over what texts can reasonably be said to mean are manifestly inconclusive and require a level of discernment that is sadly rare. So for consequentialist reasons, at least for those who value rich commemorative landscapes *and* are leery of totalitarian ideological regimes, it might be better for us to adopt a policy of interpretive independence. Interpretive independence allows us to resist a puritanical iconoclasm both on the beaches and in the hills: not only as regards the question of whether the relevant disqualifying interpretation is reasonable, but also whether some reasonable *qualifying* interpretation justifies preserving the monument in question.

One wrinkle here that a removalist may argue is that they are not *generally* a dominance theorist, or even *usually* a dominance theorist, but are one only when it comes to racist monuments. Why? Because racism is special in some way that renders reasonable disqualifying interpretations especially significant. For instance, grant that Dublin's sexy statue to fishwife Molly Malone has two reasonable interpretations, one patriotic and one salacious,³³ and that South Dakota's Mount Rushmore monument, carved in stolen land especially sacred to the Lakota, has two reasonable interpretations, one patriotic and one racist. Our

imagined removalist may say that salaciousness isn't deeply harmful, either because of the nature of salaciousness or due to the pertinent social conditions, and thus that, because the Malone statue *also* has a reasonable qualifying interpretation, it may remain installed. This removalist may nonetheless hold that racism is deeply harmful, either because of some intrinsic feature of racism or due to the current social conditions, and because of this, the racist interpretation of Mount Rushmore trumps the patriotic one—and thus Mount Rushmore's figures (*prima facie*) should be blasted away.

Although many removalists might adopt this account—interpretive independence for monuments in general, but interpretive dominance for *racist* monuments—preservationists are likely to wonder why racism is an especially morally weighty evil that uniquely endows reasonable racist interpretations with this trumping power. Furthermore, how likely is it that once the racist monuments are down, some other evil—sexism, xenophobia, blasphemy/heresy of some future dominant religion, and so on—won't suddenly appear unacceptably vile and propel the next iconoclastic crusade, despite the correctness of interpretive independence in general? (This rebuttal is not a straw man: in a recorded presentation of this material, a philosopher expressed that, in her estimation, almost all existing memorials to humans should be removed because those honored by them disregarded animal rights and welfare.) Although I sympathize with this response on behalf of preservationists, it is, of course, possible that racism *is* the only, or one of the only, exceptions we should make in a general policy of interpretive independence.

UNIVERSALISM-PARTICULARISM

The universalist assumes that monuments need to be *for* the polity (or relevant entity, such as an institution) “as a whole” or *reflect* the values of the whole polity, or at least the values the whole polity *should* have. One hears universalist assumptions and appeals frequently in the monuments debate. For instance, historian David Priestland has argued that Oriel College's embattled statue to Cecil Rhodes should be replaced “with somebody more appropriate for a 21st-century international university.”³⁴ Or consider how, at one point in South Africa's transition to democracy, it was the philosophy of the Pan Africanist Congress (a more radical breakaway from the African National Congress) that, although most existing monuments to and for whites in South Africa should remain as an object lesson, future monuments “should represent the population as a whole, as opposed to a certain section thereof.”³⁵

Turning to America, the late 2015 decision of New Orleans mayor Mitch Landrieu and city councilmembers to remove several prominent Confederate monuments was a particularly pivotal moment in the recent monument wars. Speaking of the monuments in deliberation before a vote on their fate, city council

president Jason Williams is quoted as saying: “I know what it means to look up at those monuments and feel less than.” Likening the city to a loving parent, he argued that “no decent mother would ever memorialize one child harming the other.”³⁶ Williams’s evocative metaphor is used to suggest that monuments shouldn’t memorialize some citizens while harming others. A similar idea, put more abstractly in terms of unity, is the leitmotif of Landrieu’s own celebrated speech on the issue, which was reprinted in the *New York Times*:

All we hold dear is created by throwing everything in the pot; creating, producing something better; everything a product of our historic diversity. We are proof that out of many we are one—and better for it! . . . That is what really makes America great and today it is more important than ever to hold fast to these values and together say a self-evident truth that out of many we are one. . . . Because we are one nation, not two; indivisible with liberty and justice for all . . . not some. We all are part of one nation, all pledging allegiance to one flag, the flag of the United States of America.³⁷

Early in the speech, Landrieu reminds his audience that Confederates were, after all, rebels fighting against the United States, and thus in that cause at least, not patriots. And he challenges us

to consider these four monuments from the perspective of an African American mother or father trying to explain to their fifth grade daughter who Robert E. Lee is and why he stands atop of our beautiful city. Can you do it? Can you look into that young girl’s eyes and convince her that Robert E. Lee is there to encourage her? Do you think she will feel inspired and hopeful by that story? Do these monuments help her see a future with limitless potential?³⁸

Sometimes it appears monuments must reflect multicultural ideals. For Landrieu, “if we take these statues down and don’t change to become a more open and inclusive society this would have all been in vain.”³⁹ And in a widely cited *Vox* piece, historian W. Fitzhugh Brundage asks:

So how should we move forward to dismantle the Confederate commemorative landscape? We should begin by acknowledging that the American South is now a pluralist society for the first time in its history. Whereas the current commemorative landscape of the South is a product of white privilege and power, the future landscape should be crafted after inclusive public debate and through democratic procedures.⁴⁰

Likewise, historian and journalist Joshua Zeitz voices a widespread removalist argument from analogy that compares Confederates to Nazis when he notes that “when armies are defeated on their own soil—particularly when those armies fight to promote racist or genocidal policies—they usually don’t get to keep their symbols and material culture.”⁴¹

There are subtler forms, or at least statements, of universalism. One often hears the argument that racist monuments have no place in public spaces or shouldn’t

be funded by the public. Lionel Kimble, vice president for programs at the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, is quoted as saying that

we essentially want to cancel these Civil War generals and monuments, which I think is a mistake. Tearing these things down should not be the goal. . . . But there is a place for these statues and the place is in some sort of museum and not in the public space, which is meant to be shared by all people.⁴²

And according to one American Bar Association publication, the illegality of maintaining monuments that “taunt and demean people of color,” as Stone Mountain is said to do, is premised on the principle “that taxpayer dollars should not be used to support what many believe are symbols of hate.”⁴³

These talking points—that it’s bizarre for Americans to commemorate *losers*, and losers who *fought* or *rebelled* against America, and who fought for *anti-American* or *anti-multicultural* values—are commonly seen in social media debates on the issue. Such statements seem to assume the following principles in the universalist constellation:

Exclusion: It’s a strongly *prima facie* disqualifying feature of a monument for it to memorialize anyone or any cause expressly opposed to the memorializing institution or polity.

Inclusion: It’s a strongly *prima facie* disqualifying feature of a monument for it to memorialize someone or some cause expressly opposed to the said institution’s/polity’s cause, including (at least including with full rights, etc.) some subset of its present population.

In contrast to the universalist, the particularist sees nothing *prima facie* wrong with monuments that are “for” only some demographic, or memorialize events or causes positively that other demographics condemn, or even monuments to those who fought against the memorializing polity. To take some examples that readers may find sympathetic, consider four statues recently added as a group to the Castle of Good Hope, an (originally Afrikaner) Cape Town fort that today serves as a museum.⁴⁴ The four statues commemorate four African leaders who were, at various times, each imprisoned at the Castle. The first is of Doman, a seventeenth-century Khoisan leader who resisted the Dutch settlers (it is to be remembered that the Khoisan are Indigenous to Southern Africa, having been displaced by Bantu-speaking Africans not long before European colonization began). A second is of Zulu king Cetshwayo, who fought against British South Africa in the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879. The third is Langalibalele, a Hlubi king who was apprehended in 1873 because of skirmishes over demands that his people register their guns (the Hlubi had migrated earlier because of conflict with the Zulus of Cetshwayo’s father’s day). Fourth is Sekhukhune, a Pedi king who fought very effectively against Dutch and British colonialists in the 1870s.

The statues of these men are presented side by side in a prominent area of the museum's courtyard. What is unsaid in these installations is that each of these men were ethnonationalists, that each was opposed in his way to the formation of South Africa, and that the people each man led fought over territory with the peoples his statue stands beside. Why would Castle of Good Hope administrators install monuments to such men? Firstly, because they recognize four culture heroes of peoples who compose a significant portion of the South African population. Secondly, these statues help close a vast racial gap in that land's commemorative landscape. Thirdly, the installation serves to unify the incredibly diverse "rainbow nation" of South Africa: people of a certain moral stripe become more, not less, cooperative when they are portrayed as agentic and dangerous as opposed to conquered or accommodating. Thus, as paradoxical as it may appear to some, narratives that (accurately or not) present diverse nations as fusions of noble warring factions can actually promote cohesion.

Another good illustration of these points is found in the so-called "Indian Memorial" at the Little Bighorn battlefield, a site of a significant US defeat where a few hundred American soldiers and around thirty Native American warriors died. As the National Park Service carefully puts it,

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument near Crow Agency, Montana, commemorates one of America's most significant and famous battles, the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Here on June 25 and 26, 1876, two divergent cultures clashed in a life and death struggle. Four hundred years of struggle between Euro-Americans and Native Americans culminated on this ground. . . . Until recently, no memorial had honored the Native Americans who struggled to preserve and defend their homeland and traditional way of life. Their heroic sacrifice was never formally recognized—until now.⁴⁵

The Indian Memorial itself is a raised mound accompanied by a few plaques and topped by a sculpture called "Spirit Warriors" depicting in outline three charging horsemen. So again, we have a monument to people and peoples who not only opposed the formation of the nation who honors them but also (it must be noted) hardly could be said to be allied to the values the memorializing nation currently accepts or is supposed to accept: Native American tribes often kept slaves when they could, were ethnonationalists, and so on.⁴⁶

Examples can be multiplied. Not far from the Little Bighorn battlefield is one America's largest memorials, a gigantic carving of the Lakota chief Crazy Horse. This monument is private, true—but only because its trustees have declined government sponsorship, and in any event, few advocates for removal of racist monuments would be opposed to the United States purchasing it or commissioning a similar memorial to one of America's most daring enemies. Or consider the many monuments to Indigenous Europeans who resisted the modern states memorializing them (and who would be appalled at their current values): for

example, Hastings's statue of Anglo-Saxon King Harold Godwinson, who died fighting the Norman invasion in 1066, or Norway's striking Sverd i fjell monument, composed of three monumental swords standing 10 meters tall, which commemorates not only Harold Fairhair but also the lesser chieftains he defeated to unite Norway.

If it seems silly to condemn these memorials on the grounds that the figures being honored "were not patriots," or opposed "pluralist society," or don't inspire the children of other demographics of the nations who erected their monuments, then these examples are pulling you in a particularist direction. If *these* monuments do not seem to undermine the equal standing, freedom, and equality of those constituting their polities, then it must be asked how racist monuments do so merely for being particularistic in their turn. Thus, since particularism would be more accommodating of Confederate monuments in America or of colonialist memorials here and elsewhere, any case against racist monuments assuming universalist principles is significantly undermined.

But of course, things are never so simple. For instance, universalists can qualify their universalism to allow monuments for peoples or figures who are defeated, marginalized, oppressed, or unthreatening to national cohesion—this would allow them to countenance the counter-examples above while maintaining their removalist stance for monuments to Confederates and European colonialists. Arguments to this effect are not difficult to imagine and need not be evaluated here. What is important is noting that these are different arguments from the removalist ones above, which fashioned themselves as premised upon this-or-that version of principled universalism.

To conclude this section, recall it was suggested that these three assumptions are best thought of as scales between two extremes. Although I personally believe that some position more on the particularist side of things conforms best to common sense as well as to common practice (especially in diverse societies), I myself do not subscribe to extreme particularism. In fact, I am sympathetic to versions of the "exclusivity" and "inclusivity" principles. For instance, whereas Priestland conceives of Oxford as an "international university" that, for what appear to be universalist reasons, must cater to the sensibilities of international students and foreign onlookers, an extreme *particularist* may say, for particularist reasons, that it's Oxford's prerogative to craft its commemorative landscape to cater to its international clientele. In contrast, I think only in very rare circumstances, such as memorials to American servicemen in Normandy, should a nation erect monuments to other peoples or bend over backward to accommodate the sensitivities of foreigners, which is a sort of "exclusivity" principle. Furthermore, it can be argued that, although particularism can justify maintaining monuments to co-nationals who fought each other, the aesthetics of those monuments must not be antagonistic.⁴⁷ For instance, it seems wrongly antagonistic to northerners if a Lee monument presented him riding down Union soldiers, even though

Lee is responsible for tens of thousands of Union dead. A monument to Crazy Horse is perfectly acceptable on particularist grounds, but it would be wrongly antagonistic to non-Native Americans for his monument to present him stuffing the severed genitals of dead American troops into their mouths, even though such desecrations happened at Little Bighorn and were not uncommon in victories by either side in the Indian wars.⁴⁸ In my opinion, it is morally imperative to honor the heroism or struggles of such subjects without antagonizing co-nationals—a concession to a form of “inclusivity.” That’s my opinion, at least—again, I mention these first-order positions not to argue for them, but to draw attention to the wide middle between extremes on the Universalism-Particularism scale that, itself, is rather multi-dimensional in nature.

CONCLUSION

This essay has no aspirations of moving any political needles. First, as noted in the introduction, my purpose has not been to draw readers to the preservationist banner: this is a “meta” discussion about assumptions one hears in racist monument debates, and not the morality of removalism as a first-order question. Second, it’s probably true that these “assumptions” are, in many mouths, more on the order of rhetorically effective talking points rather than sincerely held background beliefs anyone feels committed to apply consistently or else abandon. Nonetheless, my hope is that “problematizing”—I do not claim to have refuted—the widespread assumptions of moralism, interpretive dominance, and universalism can be of some use for philosophers in both the removalist and preservationist camps who have a disinterested intellectual desire to form more rigorous and consistent positions on the fate of racist monuments.

University of Minnesota, Morris

NOTES

Thanks to an anonymous referee, my audience at the 2021 Rocky Mountain Ethics Congress, and David McPherson for helpful comments. Generous funding allowing me to conduct research on this topic in the UK, Europe, and Africa was provided by the Templeton “Immortality” grant (administered by UC Riverside) and University of Minnesota’s Grant-in-Aid and Imagine Fund awards.

1. The statue was restored. See “Statue of Hans Christian Heg” (Wikipedia entry).
2. Haidt, “Emotional Dog.”
3. Demetriou, “Ashes of Our Fathers.”
4. Inskip takes himself to be refuting a slippery-slope argument by then-president Trump, which was a claim about what would happen, not whether removalist principles

extend to the American founders. So it's not clear how Inskeep can be addressing Trump's concern merely by making a claim about principles.

5. Inskeep, "Fact Check."
6. Hanson, "Our War against Memory."
7. My thanks to Travis Timmerman for this example.
8. McGreevy, "Why the First Monument"; Jones, "How New York's New Monument."
9. Miedzian, "Suffragists Were Not Racists."
10. Frowe, "Duty to Remove."
11. Frowe means to limit her critique to memorials or monuments that honor or glorify the object.
12. Levin, "Genghis Khan Rules."
13. Frowe, "Duty to Remove," 4–5.
14. For instance, in a large poll of Britons about memorialization conducted in 2020, 90 percent of those polled supported maintaining Nelson's Column, and 65 percent supported maintenance of statues even to slave traders. See Policy Exchange ("Polling-Deltapoll").
15. Frowe, "Duty to Remove," 5.
16. For instance, Floyd was an armed home invader: see "George Floyd" (Wikipedia entry). On two formal monuments memorializing Floyd at the time of this writing, see Cook ("George Floyd Statue Unveiled"); and Ramos ("Newark Pays Tribute").
17. Schulz, "Must Rhodes Fall?"
18. Timmerman, "Case for Removing."
19. Sneddon, "Polysemy in the Public Square."
20. Because I am interested in portraying a neutral framework, I understand interpretive dominance as holding between two equally good interpretations. But interpretive dominance's less conciliatory cousin—a principle on which a monument is to be removed even if the racist interpretation is absurdly weak—seems operative at the moment. For instance, the University of Wisconsin–Madison just removed a 75-ton boulder, Chamberlain Rock, which was named after a former UW–Madison president. Why? Because activists discovered that a *Wisconsin State Journal* article called it an "n*****head" in 1925. To my knowledge, the boulder had no racist associations in living memory. I take it as obvious that this form of interpretive dominance is absurd. Nonetheless, we shouldn't rule out the possibility that interpretive dominance may be justifiable when the disqualifying interpretations are reasonable. To avoid burdening the position, we can restrict it, as I do, to reasonable interpretations.
21. See Elon.edu ("Confederate Monuments and Symbols," 11).
22. Edelman and Memoli, "Biden Says."
23. The oath was also sung at Mandela's funeral; see *Nelson Mandela Sings* (YouTube video).
24. McCarthy, "Remembering Mandela."

25. Baker, "In Brief."
26. "United States troops took over the state government and reinstated the usurpers but the national election November 1876 recognized white supremacy in the South and gave us our state"; discussed in Demetriou and Wingo ("Ethics of Racist Monuments," 342).
27. See this inference discussed in Timmerman ("Removing Confederate Monuments").
28. See SPLC's "Whose Heritage?" Andrew Valls is the only philosopher I am aware of to push back on this flimsy inference; see his "What Should Become." A comparison study of when Union monuments were erected would be relevant to establishing the alleged purpose of Confederate monuments, but to my knowledge, that research has not been done, nor the question asked.
29. Lai, "Political Vandalism"; Lim, "Vandalizing Tainted Commemorations"; Schulz, "Must Rhodes Fall?"
30. Cultural psychologists sometimes call positive contagion "transvaluation"; see Rozin and Nemeroff ("Laws of Sympathetic Magic").
31. Archer and Matheson, "When Artists Fall," 254.
32. See Rossi ("False Exemplars," 62–63).
33. "Molly Malone," Wikipedia entry.
34. Priestland, "University of Cape Town."
35. Quoted in Marschall (*Landscape of Memory*, 26).
36. Grace, "Removing Confederate Monuments."
37. Landricu, "Mitch Landrieu's Speech."
38. Landricu, "Mitch Landrieu's Speech."
39. Landrieu, "Mitch Landrieu's Speech."
40. Brundage, "I've Studied the History."
41. Zeitz, "Why There are No Nazi Statues." For a more sympathetic discussion of this rationale and additional examples, see Burch-Brown ("Is It Wrong to Topple").
42. Quoted in Carrega and Allen, "Historians Debate."
43. American Bar Association, "Confederate-Monument Removals."
44. DeKlerk, "Famous Prisoners."
45. National Park Service, "Indian Memorial."
46. Native American tribes usually kept slaves won from war; chattel slavery of blacks was mostly a phenomenon of the five Civilized Tribes; see Krauthamer (*Black Slaves*).
47. Our aesthetic obligations are discussed in Demetriou and Wingo ("Ethics of Racist Monuments") and Demetriou's rebuttal to Timmerman in Demetriou ("Ashes of our Fathers"). Valls also discuss the importance of aesthetic characteristics when considering the fate of Confederate monuments in his "What Should Become."
48. See, for example, Perrottet ("Little Bighorn Reborn").

REFERENCES

- American Bar Association. "Confederate-Monument Removals Slowed by Knot of Legal Issues." December 19, 2019. <https://www.americanbar.org/news/abanews/publications/youraba/2019/december-2019/efforts-to-remove-confederate-monuments-slowed-by-knot-of-legal-/>.
- Archer, Alfred, and Ben Matheson. "When Artists Fall." *Journal of the American Philosophical Association* 5, no. 2 (2019): 246–65.
- Baker, Travis. "In Brief." *Kitsap Sun*, September 8, 1992. https://products.kitsapsun.com/archive/1992/09-08/278637_in_brief.html.
- Brundage, W. Fitzhugh. "I've Studied the History of Confederate Memorials: Here's What to Do about Them." *Vox*, August 18, 2017. <https://www.vox.com/the-big-idea/2017/8/18/16165160/confederate-monuments-history-charlottesville-white-supremacy>.
- Burch-Brown, Joanna. "Is It Wrong to Topple Statues and Rename Schools?" *Journal of Political Theory and Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (2017): 59–88.
- Carrega, Christina, and Karma Allen. "Historians Debate America's History of Racism and Confederate Monuments." ABC News. July 18, 2020. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/historians-debate-americas-sordid-history-racism-confederate-monuments/story?id=71486827>.
- Cook, Lauren. "George Floyd Statue Unveiled as Brooklyn Celebrates Juneteenth." PIX11, June 19, 2021. <https://pix11.com/news/local-news/brooklyn/george-floyd-statue-unveiled-in-brooklyn-ahead-of-juneteenth-rally/>.
- DeKlerk, Aphiwe. "Famous Prisoners Are Now the Kings of the Castle of Good Hope." *Sowetan Live*, December 9, 2016. <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2016-12-09-famous-prisoners-are-now-the-kings-of-the-castle-of-good-hope/>.
- Demetriou, Dan. "Ashes of Our Fathers: Racist Monuments and the Tribal Right." In *Ethics, Left and Right: The Moral Issues That Divide Us*, edited by Bob Fischer, 523–30. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Demetriou, Dan, and Ajume Wingo. "The Ethics of Racist Monuments." In *Palgrave Handbook of Philosophy and Public Policy*, edited by David Boonin, 341–55. Cham: Palgrave, 2018.
- Edelman, Adam, and Mike Memoli. "Biden Says 'Poor kids are just as bright and just as talented as white kids.'" NBC. August 9, 2019. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/biden-says-poor-kids-are-just-bright-just-talented-white-n1040686>.
- Elon.edu. "Confederate Monuments and Symbols: Survey of North Carolina Residents." November 4–6, 2019. https://www.elon.edu/u/elon-poll/wp-content/uploads/sites/819/2019/11/2019_11_20-ElonPoll_Report.pdf.
- Frowe, Helen. "The Duty to Remove Statues of Wrongdoers." *Journal of Practical Ethics* 7, no. 3 (2019): 1–31.
- "George Floyd." In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Floyd (accessed August 1, 2021).
- Grace, Stephanie. "Removing Confederate Monuments in New Orleans the Right Thing to Do." *The Advocate*, December 20, 2015. https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/opinion/stephanie_grace/article_ec8af895-9943-5383-b6c6-fb3c8248b9df.html.
- Haidt, Jonathan. "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail." *Psychological Review* 108, no. 4 (2001): 814–34.

- Hanson, Victor Davis. "Our War against Memory." *National Review*, August 22, 2017. <https://www.nationalreview.com/2017/08/erasing-history-censoring-confederate-past-rewriting-memory-mob-vengeance/>.
- Inskip, Steve. "Fact Check: 'Whatabout' Those Other Historical Figures? Trump's Question Answered." NPR. August 16, 2017. <https://www.npr.org/2017/08/16/543881696/fact-check-whatabout-those-other-historical-figures-trumps-question-answered>.
- Jones, Martha S. "How New York's New Monument Whitewashes the Women's Rights Movement." *Washington Post*, March 22, 2019. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/03/22/how-new-yorks-new-monument-whitewashes-womens-rights-movement/>.
- Krauthamer, Barbara. *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.
- Lai, Ten-Herng. "Political Vandalism as Counter-speech: A Defense of Defacing and Destroying Tainted Monuments." *European Journal of Philosophy* 28 (2020): 602–18.
- Landrieu, Mitch. "Mitch Landrieu's Speech on the Removal of Confederate Monuments in New Orleans." *New York Times*, May 23, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/23/opinion/mitch-landrieus-speech-transcript.html>.
- Levin, Dan. "Genghis Khan Rules Mongolia Again, in a P.R. Campaign." *New York Times*, August 2, 2009. <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/03/world/asia/03genghis.html>.
- Lim, Chong-Ming. "Vandalizing Tainted Commemorations." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 48, no. 2 (2020): 185–216.
- Marschall, Sabine. *Landscape of Memory: Commemorative Monuments, Memorials, and Public Statuary in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Boston, MA: Brill, 2009.
- McCarthy, Andrew. "Remembering Mandela, without Rose-Colored Glasses." *National Review*, December 14, 2013. <https://www.nationalreview.com/2013/12/remembering-mandela-without-rose-colored-glasses-andrew-c-mccarthy/>.
- McGreevy, Nora. "Why the First Monument of Real Women in Central Park Matters—and Why It's Controversial." *Smithsonian Magazine*, August 26, 2020. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/monument-controversy-women-pioneer-central-park-180975662/>.
- Miedzian, Myriam. "The Suffragists Were Not Racists." Medium. August 19, 2020. <https://medium.com/@myriamm2000/the-suffragists-were-not-racists-5f608fc33fa5>.
- "Molly Malone." In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Molly_Malone.
- National Park Service. "Indian Memorial Little Bighorn Battlefield." September 1, 2019. <https://www.nps.gov/libi/learn/historyculture/indian-memorial.htm>.
- Nelson Mandela Sings about Killing Whites?* YouTube video, 2:34. Posted by Malagænt. December 6, 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGzuyCtb_Ms.
- Perrottet, Tony. "Little Bighorn Reborn." *Smithsonian Magazine*, April 2005. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/little-bighorn-reborn-79240914/>.
- Policy Exchange. "Polling-Deltapoll." June 29, 2020. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/historymatterspolling/>.
- Priestland, David. "The University of Cape Town Is Right to Remove Its Cecil Rhodes Statue." *The Guardian*, April 13, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/apr/13/cape-town-remove-cecil-rhodes-statue>.
- Ramos, Andrew. "Newark Pays Tribute to George Floyd with 700-Pound Bronze Statue." PIX 11, June 16, 2021. <https://pix11.com/news/local-news/new-jersey/newark-pays-tribute-to-george-floyd-with-700-pound-bronze-statue/>.

- Rossi, Benjamin Cohen. "False Exemplars: Admiration and the Ethics of Public Monuments." *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy* 18, no. 1 (2020): 49–84.
- Rozin, Paul, and Carol Nemeroff. "The Laws of Sympathetic Magic." In *Cultural Psychology: Essays on Comparative Human Development*, edited by James W. Stigler, Richard A. Schweder, and Gilbert Herdt, 205–32. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Schulz, Johannes. "Must Rhodes Fall?" *Journal of Political Philosophy* 27, no. 2 (2019): 166–86.
- Sneddon, Andrew. "Polysemy in the Public Square Racist Monuments in Diverse Societies." *Philosophy and Public Issues* 10, no. 2 (2020): 235–70.
- Southern Poverty Law Center [SPLC]. "Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy." February 1, 2019. <https://www.splcenter.org/20190201/whose-heritage-public-symbols-confederacy>.
- "Statue of Hans Christian Heg." In Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Statue_of_Hans_Christian_Heg.
- Timmerman, Travis. "A Case for Removing Confederate Monuments." In *Ethics, Left and Right: The Moral Issues That Divide Us*, edited by Bob Fischer, 513–21. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Timmerman, Travis. "Removing Confederate Monuments." 1000-Word Philosophy. June 19, 2020. <https://1000wordphilosophy.com/2020/06/19/removing-confederate-monuments>.
- Valls, Andrew. "What Should Become of Confederate Monuments? A Normative Framework." *Public Affairs Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (2019): 177–94.
- Zeit, Joshua. "Why There Are No Nazi Statues in Germany." *Politico*, August 20, 2017. <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/08/20/why-there-are-no-nazi-statues-in-germany-215510>.