



Written by [Dr. Duke Pesta](#) on August 24, 2020

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Monumental Hypocrisy

In 1930, Spanish philosopher José Ortega y Gasset wrote *The Revolt of the Masses*, a prophetic work identifying and defining the appearance of the “mass-man,” a barbaric figure whose ignorance was a necessary precursor to the rise of the violent masses. When the collectivization of “mass-men” into a unified mob was finally achieved, then the seizure of power through destruction and cultural erasure was at hand.

Anticipating by less than a decade revolutionary elements that would manifest in the Spanish Civil War, Ortega warned that the mass-man could emerge from any social background, and that his behavior destructive to his own culture “does not represent a new civilization struggling with a previous one, but a mere negation.” This type of anarchist “did not care to give reasons or even to be right.” Ortega argued that cultivated irrationality is what set apart 20th-century fascist and communist movements from what came before: “the right not to be right, not to be reasonable: the reason of unreason.”

Ortega’s warning of this irrational and anti-rational unmaking of civilization finds its modern analog in the current riots and violent anarchy sweeping Western nations. Despite widespread prosperity, extensive social-welfare safety nets, universal access to educational opportunities and job training, generous benefits for unassimilated migrants, and numerous social-justice programs that privilege minority populations, large numbers among the younger generations have been conditioned to believe, without evidence or example, that Western culture is overtly and systemically racist, misogynist, and colonialist. Miseducated by radicalized public schools and universities, manipulated by unscrupulous Democratic politicians, and inflamed by the anarchic rhetoric of groups such as Antifa and Black Lives Matter, these burgeoning young radicals perfectly match Ortega’s description of dangerous and ignorant mass-men; his reminder that they might manifest from any social class is borne out by the fact that most of the violent rioters, looters, and arsonists are middle- and upper-middle -class white kids, supported and egged on by elite athletes, artists, entertainers, and one-percenter corporate and tech CEOs.



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Scratch a Social-justice Warrior, Expose a Marxist

The grinding ignorance that Ortega identifies as a condition of cultural erasure is everywhere evident during the current iconoclastic attacks on our history and shared cultural values. The self-contradicting statements, doublespeak, and message creep from those at the center of revolutionary groups such as Black Lives Matter (BLM) make it abundantly clear that the purpose of the newly unleashed anarchy is not about black lives, racial justice, reparations, or even equality, however vaguely defined. The push for ignorance and the rejection of reason are not simply populist ruses, they are a calculated strategy to accelerate rebellion and ratchet up the violence and chaos.

The last decade has seen an alarming spike in the number of educators and professors who argue that Western math is a racist construct designed to keep black and brown people under foot, that empiricism and the scientific method are inseparable from colonialism and white supremacy, and that an emphasis on individualism, truth, and liberty is the toxic byproduct of systemic racial discrimination. Recently, a Black Lives Matter-supporting graduate student at Rutgers University named Brittany Marshall took to Twitter to insist that $2 + 2 = 4$ only because of “western imperialism.” Marshall’s tweet went viral during a heated discussion about racism: “Nope the idea of $2 + 2$ equaling 4 is cultural and because of western imperialism, we think of it as the only way of knowing.” Marshall lists her occupation as “teacher, scholar, and social justice change agent.” Her bizarre statement is yet another example of the destructive ideology of “intersectionality,” a pseudo-intellectual concept pushed in universities that argues that when competing progressive ideologies clash — as in the case of feminism and transgenderism — both should unite, projecting their differences back onto the white racist culture that alone is responsible for all discrimination. Effectively, intersectionality is an anti-intellectual “get out of jail free card” for progressives when it comes to having to defend their beliefs in logically credible and consistent ways.

A visit to BLM and affiliate sites offers clear examples of the broader Marxist ambitions that are at the heart of civil unrest in America today. One stated BLM objective is to “disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear-family-structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and ‘villages’ that collectively care for one another.” The related Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) demands the demolition of prisons, the abolition of police, and the “progressive restructuring of tax codes at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure a radical and sustainable redistribution of wealth.” M4BL further demands the “retroactive decriminalization, immediate release and record expungement of all drug-related offenses and reparations for the devastating impact of the ‘war on drugs’ and criminalization of prostitution.”

In 2015, Black Lives Matter co-founder Patrisse Cullors described herself and fellow organizers as “trained Marxists.” Cullors was mentored by Eric Mann, formerly of the Weather Underground terrorist group, who groomed her on Marxist/Leninist ideology. Cullors fondly describes her early work with the Labor/Community Strategy Center, a “grassroots” organization that focuses on “Black and Latino communities with deep historical ties to the long history of anti-colonial, anti-imperialist, pro-communist resistance to the US empire.” Despite the desperate attempts of the mainstream media to deny or conceal the Marxist foundations of Black Lives Matter — and by extension BLM’s partner in revolution Antifa (whether the association is altogether desirable to BLM leaders or not) — the truth is evident in the rhetoric and behavior of the groups as they operate in the streets. Even left-leaning Wikipedia, mired in controversy about leftist monopolies on editorial control and practice, nevertheless admits that



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Antifa members “hold anti-authoritarian and anti-capitalist views, subscribing to a range of left-wing ideologies such as Anarchism, Communism, Marxism, and Socialism.”

Actions Reveal Real Ambitions

The poorly camouflaged reality that the United States is in the middle of an existential struggle against socialist and Marxist anarchists who want to systematically destroy our constitutional republic can be observed most directly in what the rioters and protesters are doing on the ground. Ortega’s thesis that the mass-man, conceived in ignorance and dedicated to the proposition of anarchy, is most effective at erasing culture and canceling civilization once he has been collectivized — once the masses have seized license to become a mob — is nightly on display in America’s Democrat-governed cities, from New York City and Atlanta, to Portland and Seattle.

For a decade, many voices sounded the warning that our evolving war on Confederate monuments, especially the so-called Stars and Bars Confederate flag, was nothing more than the culture war’s first blast at Fort Sumter. If we as a culture acceded to the idea that these images and statues were in and of themselves racist — that there could be *no other interpretation or connotation* for those symbols — then we were also conceding that most, if not all, of the symbols of our founding, our development, and our shared cultural heritage could be found similarly suspect. For over a century, Marxists and fascists have gained footholds and toppled otherwise free societies by seizing control of symbols — images that should reflect an array of meanings and evoke a range of feelings — twisting and reducing them to simplistic avatars of hate, complicity, and, in the case of the examples we are discussing, white supremacy and “systemic” racism. You do not have to be a defender of, or even sympathetic to, the Confederacy or its symbols to recognize that the current flag of the United States, for instance, in previous iterations flew over slave states far longer than the Confederate flag.

Initially, the country was much more skeptical about the kneeling tantrum of Colin Kaepernick — mass-man transformed into mob leader — who made it clear that the gesture was directed at a racist flag that honored an unjust nation founded on white supremacy. His Marxist-inspired attempt to recast the flag as a symbol of racism — his Fidel Castro T-shirts and “cops-as-pigs” socks generated a good deal of negative press — achieved only a modest cultural foothold, with a handful of players joining him to kneel on the field. But once Kaepernick gained the backing of Nike — a company built on the manipulation of symbols and slogans — the tide turned. Nike, which gets rich in part on athletic shoes made in Communist Chinese sweatshops, gambled that their significant African-American market share would respond positively to Kaepernick’s brand and image. It was a very safe bet, given the obsession with athletic shoes in urban black communities, and the even greater preoccupation of urban black culture in white American suburbia. Nike’s corporate sponsorship of Kaepernick’s message put distance between Kaepernick and his nasty and historically ignorant Marxist rhetoric. Kaepernick, for his part, seemed unconcerned that his 20-plus million-dollar paycheck from Nike was earned off the brow-sweat of exploited Chinese comrades. Suddenly, it was fashionable and edgy for mass-men to disrespect the flag and anthem: Just do it.

If statues to Confederate Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson had to go, then so too would George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and all the Founders who owned, or even just failed to free, slaves. Because all men were not equally free in 1789 — however equally created — there could be no freedom at the heart of the Constitution, only oppression. (Ironic in so many ways, with leftist radicals



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supporting the fact that Christians are being fined huge amounts for trying to live their beliefs, police who are innocent of any wrongdoing being subjected to random violence and murder, children in the womb who are developed enough to be born and thrive being carved to pieces if a mother so chooses, etc.) And because our anthem celebrates the founding ideals of an imperfect America, it was time to kneel, with calls to replace the anthem with one of Woody Guthrie's socialist hymns about communal ownership of the land, or even the black national anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." This little ditty contains the following lines:

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chastening rod
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died

For an American minority community that aborts black babies at a staggering pace — a constituency that has no voice in the Black Lives Matter hierarchy — it is perhaps morbidly fitting that the NFL plans to play this anthem to open the football season: maybe a sly tip of the hat to those many black babies sired out of wedlock by professional athletes across the various pro leagues?

In short, by allowing the Marxist Left to hold history and morality captive to an absurdly simplistic, shallow, unintellectual, and extremely ideological form of *presentism* — judging the past by today's standards, devoid of all historical context — we guaranteed that the tactics and terrain on which this culture war raged would be dictated exclusively by the anti-history Marxists. We abandoned George Orwell's caution that "who controls the past controls the future" and allowed leftist radicals to implement Marxist theoretician Antonio Gramsci's method to control society: "Man is above all else mind, consciousness — that is, he is a product of history, not nature." In other words, if the cultural status quo is challenged and torn apart, a new history can be installed and a new culture instituted: socialism. And if we are simply products of random, materialist cultural forces, not nature, then that also means we are not products of nature's God.

In July, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to remove from the Capitol the statue of Roger Taney, the chief justice who wrote the majority opinion in the 1857 *Dred Scott* case, as well as 14 other statues connected to the Confederacy or slavery, including a statue of Robert E. Lee. Seventy-two Republicans joined the unanimous Democrats in voting out the offending statues. House Majority Leader Democrat Steny Hoyer boasted, "It's time to sweep away the last vestiges of Jim Crow and the dehumanizing of individuals because of the color of their skin that intruded for too long on the sacred spaces of our democracy."

Doubtless, the Marxist presentism cited above is the reason that politicians such as Hoyer — who take oaths of office promising to defend the Constitution and the Republic it establishes — pretend that we are a sacred democracy. It was Marx himself who insisted that "democracy is the road to Socialism." And because Gramscian historical alterations have been allowed to become dogma, the fact that 13 of the 15 offending statues to be removed from the Capitol honored Democratic politicians has no bearing on — and requires no further atonement from — the Democratic Party. (Republican Louie Gohmert worked to highlight the hypocrisy through introduction of a bill that would ban the Democratic Party for having supported the Confederacy and propping up slavery.) Meanwhile, 50 buildings constructed with taxpayer funds remain that are named after Senator Robert C. Byrd, the late Democrat and former



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member of the Ku Klux Klan.

This hypocritical double standard is a feature, not a bug, of the Marxist/Gramscian view of history. Those figures in history who support, or whose biographies can be contorted to support, the ongoing march of Marxist ideas though the institutions can be rehabilitated if not outright venerated, regardless of their racial animus. Yet to the progressive Left and their uneducated drones on the streets, there is no difference between Christopher Columbus and Hernán Cortés: the one an imperfect explorer who behaved with remarkable restraint by his world's standards, and the other a cold-blooded conquistador who was much closer in word and deed to the bloodthirsty Aztecs. In an era of racial scapegoats who are offered up as sacrifices by bigots, Columbus has become the demonized racial scapegoat for the crimes of all those subsequent colonizers whose names the rioters cannot be bothered to remember and who have no statues to tear down.

No such harsh criticism dogs our fascination with the Aztecs, however, who once murdered an estimated 84,000 Native American prisoners over a period of four days in their great pyramid in Tenochtitlan. The Washington Redskins have been bullied into canceling their supposedly offensive logo, while the Aztecs continue to grace football helmets on the woke campus of San Diego State University. Lori Lightfoot, mayor of the black-on-black killing field that is Chicago — a site of black carnage that is never adopted as a cause of protest or even acknowledgment from Black Lives Matter crusaders — desperately needed a scapegoat to distract from all that black blood on her administration's hands: over 100 shot on Father's Day weekend alone. She decided that rather than risk the anger of the woke mobs by demanding that blacks stop killing other blacks, she would instead preemptively remove two statues of Columbus from the Chicago landscape in the middle of the night. All to placate a vengeful mob of racial-justice warriors more concerned with bronze statuary than the deaths of actual black children. *Mon-tezuma's revenge* indeed.

And if more evidence is needed to confirm that these marauding bands of BLM rioters and Antifa thugs are not fighting simply for racial justice, consider the widespread pulling down of statues and monuments dedicated to individuals and causes that actually supported racial equity. Over the Independence Day weekend, a statue of iconic black intellectual Frederick Douglass was ripped down in Rochester, New York. If the mob had any sense of irony — or understood what the word meant — its members might have been chastened to realize that their brainless vandalism occurred on the anniversary of Douglass' speech "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July," delivered before the onset of the Civil War.

Indeed, so ignorant and indiscriminate are our mass-men mobs that they have taken to pulling down and defacing statues of abolitionists, including the monument to Matthias Baldwin outside City Hall in Philadelphia. Baldwin was a fierce critic of slavery during the 1800s and opened a school for black children. His statue was defaced with messages reading "colonizer" and "murderer." In Boston, rioters defaced the *Glory* monument dedicated to the sacrifices of black Civil War soldiers. The monument was inspired by the film *Glory* — honoring Robert Gould Shaw and the black 54th regiment. This was an inconceivable instance of vandalism where protesters for racial justice took their rage out against a memorial to black soldiers who died to confer such freedoms on other African-Americans.

Even statues of Abraham Lincoln, who was dubbed the "Great Emancipator," have also been toppled and destroyed, while protesters threatened the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. In Madison, Wisconsin, student mobs demanded the removal of the seated Lincoln statue on Bascom Hill. While the



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statue still stands (for now), protesters did manage to remove two other statues from the Madison area, including the statue of abolitionist Hans Christian Heg and a generic female statue who represents Wisconsin's "Forward" motto. Evidently, abolition and progressivism are not things around which BLM activists are willing to rally. University of Wisconsin Chancellor Rebecca Blank wrote that she believes Lincoln's legacy "should be both celebrated and critiqued." As heartening as it is that the chancellor offered a backhanded defense of the statue, notice what she did not do. She did not offer to defend the statue from vandals, nor did she suggest there would be any penalties for students who took matters into their own hands. As a professor in the UW system, I can say with complete confidence that if students were to go ahead and attack the statue, Blank would not permit campus police to intervene, nor would she dare punish the iconoclasts.

Angry student activists were not happy with Blank's decision to leave the statue up. Nalah McWhorter, president of the Black Student Union, lamented: "For them to want to protect a breathless, lifeless statue more than they care about the experiences of their Black students that have been crying out for help for the past 50, 60 years, it's just a horrible feeling as a student, as a Black and brown student on campus." The idea that McWhorter sees these two perspectives as an either/or proposition — remove the statue or you don't care about us — is a sad commentary on the type of critical thinking skills taught in campus classrooms. Such myopia is very much in keeping with the creation of the next generation of mass-men and mobs dedicated to razing Western culture. Summing up the irrationality and rejection of reason described by Ortega 90 years ago, one student wag, when asked why he was attacking a statue of Lincoln of all people, responded: "Just because he was anti-slavery doesn't mean he was pro-Black."

Notice also the capitalization of "Black," but not "brown," in McWhorter's response, even though she appears to identify as both. According the influential Associated Press style guide — and in solidarity with BLM causes — the AP will now in every instance capitalize the word black when referring to the race, while keeping the lower case "w" when referring to white people. When questioned about the double standard, the AP replied that white people in general have much less shared history and culture, and don't have the experience of being discriminated against because of skin color. In a memo to staff, John Daniszewski, the AP's vice president for standards, wrote: "We agree that white people's skin color plays into systemic inequalities and injustices, and we want our journalism to robustly explore these problems.... But capitalizing the term white, as is done by white supremacists, risks subtly conveying legitimacy to such beliefs."

It is startling that the AP can argue with a straight face that for the purposes of their style manual white people are too historically disconnected and diverse to have any single culture or cultural identity. Whites are too heterogeneous and have widely differing cultural experiences to allow the AP to see their many cultures as one. If that statement is true — and it would seem to be true of almost any race of people living in America today — then how is it possible to unilaterally and collectively assign to "white" people such social plagues as white privilege, white fragility, and inherent white supremacy? By aspiring to be scrupulously politically correct, the AP undercuts the foundational (and racist) arguments at the very center of critical race theory.

All white people and white cultural subsets are not the same, nor have they all participated in racial oppression. Further, the AP's claim that whites have not experienced racial persecution is also undercut. Just consider the racial discrimination against the Irish, Italians, and Jews over various periods of American history: For the AP, they are all racially "white" subsets of a larger white culture



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that does not exist. The notion that all white people are the same — equally privileged, equally responsible, and equally benefiting from whiteness — is a hard sell indeed if the explanations and definitions provided by the AP are accurate. The whole scapegoating edifice of modern identity politics crumbles. If we take the AP seriously (never a good thing these days), we would have to conclude that the derogatory term “white male” — as employed by social-justice warriors to mean the collective embodiment of all that is evil — is itself a racial slur almost as demeaning and dehumanizing as the “N” word.

While justifying the decision not to capitalize “white” — in part because that’s what “white supremacists” do when daring to suggest that the white race exists — Daniszewski strongly implies that black culture, on the other hand, is indeed unified by a shared and thereby *less diverse* identity, a homogeneity based, in large part, on the collective experience of racial oppression. This allows the AP to assert that genuine “Black” culture does exist. To suggest that black peoples across the world have no genuine differences, to intimate that there is no significant diversity of culture, religion, mores, and traditions that would differentiate the peoples of sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, and more recently, North and South America, is the type of thing that gets people canceled these days, especially white employees of hyper-woke corporations such as the Associated Press.

For the AP, the relative lack of diversity and shared suffering qualifies blacks as an authentic race, unlike whites, who are, for all intents and purposes, not a race at all. From that warped perspective, would it not be *only* the black race that could be held responsible for collective racial injustice, being an actual unified race, capable of speaking in one voice and acting from one collective will? Whatever way you wish to parse it, the AP is engaging in some seriously Adolf Eichmann-grade, Naziesque verbal eugenic gymnastics. All of it lost, of course, on the progressive pathfinders at the AP, smug in their Tass-like double-speak and racist anti-racist manipulation of language.

Preserving Tyrants, Canceling Liberators

It’s not just what anarchists are doing that confirms the prescience of Ortega’s analysis. As statues of explorers and Founders come down — from Columbus to Washington — statues of murderous Soviet dictators remain in vogue. The statue of Lenin that has stood in Seattle since 1995 remains unmolested, still residing on a prominent street corner in the Fremont neighborhood, while rioters purge monuments to Jefferson. In Gelsenkirchen, Germany, a 1950s-era statue of Lenin was just installed, next to a billboard declaring: “Give anticommunists no chance!” Meanwhile, in Russia, 10 statues of Stalin have been erected since 2009. This in a country where less than 50 percent of Russian students are even aware of Stalin’s crimes against humanity.

And speaking of educational malfeasance, not only are ignorant mass-men destroying monuments, they are also nominating replacement statues. After removing Confederate memorials in Louisiana, more than 40,000 people signed a petition to install statues of Dolly Parton and Britney Spears. Actor Ben Stiller argued that a statue of Theodore Roosevelt, recently removed from the American Museum of Natural History, be replaced by a statue of Robin Williams, who played Roosevelt in the *Night at the Museum* films. A New Jersey petition with 95,000 signatures seeks to replace Columbus with a statue to Marsha Johnson, a black trans activist.

Ortega understood the consequences, as well as the causes, of rapid cultural erasure. His observations offer a chilling prediction of what we can expect unless state and federal governments reinstate the rule



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of law, and the American people reassert their commitment to shared government, republican values, and the integrity of our history and culture:

If you want to make use of the advantages of civilisation, but are not prepared to concern yourself with the upholding of civilisation — you are done. In a trice you find yourself left without civilisation. Just a slip, and when you look around everything has vanished into air. The primitive forest appears in its native state, just as if curtains covering pure Nature had been drawn back. The jungle is always primitive and, vice versa, everything primitive is mere jungle.

Photo: AP Images

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