



Written by [James Heiser](#) on October 12, 2009

Celebrating Columbus Day

Columbus Day — once a time to celebrate one of the heroes of modern Western Civilization — is dying a slow death. Besieged by leftwing loons and of little apparently utility to the shopping malls, the day to remember Christopher Columbus may simply fade away. According to a Columbus Day article in the Wall Street Journal:

Philadelphia's annual Columbus Day parade has been canceled. Brown University this year renamed the holiday "Fall Weekend" following a campaign by a Native American student group opposed to celebrating an explorer who helped enslave some of the people he "discovered." ...



In California, Columbus Day is one of two paid holidays getting blown away by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger as part of a budget-cut proposal. In Washington, D.C., Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid canceled this year's weeklong Columbus Day recess so the senators can buckle down on health care. (They still get Monday off, though.)

Another obstacle: Columbus Day hasn't transcended its original purpose, as some other holidays have. Sure, Columbus Day celebrates one of the world's great explorers. But Memorial Day and Labor Day also do double duty as summer's official bookends, whereas Columbus Day is stuck in mid-October, halfway between summertime and Christmas. And many Americans apparently prefer more days off around Christmas.

The wild-eyed antagonism directed against the celebration is not without a certain irony; the celebration was once an opportunity for Italian Americans, in particular, to affirm their place in the narrative of American history. As an [examiner.com](#) article noted regarding the Denver Columbus Day parade: "One hundred years ago, in 1909, Italian Americans were still a target of anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic sentiment that had raged throughout the United States since the mid-19th century. It was under these circumstances that the first Columbus Day parade was held in Colorado, two years after the state became the first to adopt it as an official holiday. The Italian American community embraced the day as a way to celebrate their heritage and contributions to U.S. American culture." Now, this 'inclusive' holiday is subjected to naked hostility:

At the intersection of Colfax and Broadway around 15 protesters held signs, waved banners and heckled the passing parade. While they have nothing against Italian Americans, they said, the legacy of Columbus is one that lead to massive injustice that continues to this day. Hector, a Denver resident who held a "Death to Empire" sign, commented on the sparse turnout for this year's event, "But it's been pathetic for years. It's a racist holiday, regardless of whether there is a parade or not. Columbus coming to this part of the world really represents a genocide of the entire continent. Literally thousands of civilizations were forcibly removed- that's why we're out



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here today.” As the parade continued, the demonstrators beat a home-made Uncle Sam piñata and chanted “go away” to marchers. They were met with a wail of car horns as the parade procession attempted to drown out the interruption.

Meanwhile, the [American Indian Movement of Colorado](#) railed, “Colorado AIM advises all Native elders and children to avoid downtown Denver, especially the area near the Columbus Hate Speech Parade, on Saturday, October 10, 2009.” That this post was in English, the language of the “[deceitful and murderous English parasites](#)” who are remembered on Thanksgiving, is simple one more bit of Columbus Day irony.

Neglected by its friends and loathed by its foes, Columbus Day is still a time to remember the age of discovery, the opening of the New World, and the spread of the Christian faith into the Americas. The event which is celebrated on Columbus Day began a chain of other events which led to a blossoming of Western Civilization, and the solemn protection of the civil liberties of all citizens, even those who would mock and disparage the memory of the man who dared to set out on his voyage of 1492.



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