



Oklahoma Diminishes Christopher Columbus

With the signature of Governor Kevin Stitt on SB 111, Oklahoma has joined a growing list of states and municipalities that have opted to diminish the significance of the man who ended the disconnected histories of the Old and New World in 1492 — Christopher Columbus. It is yet another of an expanding assault on western civilization that shows no signs of stopping any time soon.



The bill moves Oklahoma's Native American Day from the third Monday in November to coincide with Columbus Day, which is celebrated on the second Monday in October in the state. Bluntly put, Oklahoma already had a day set aside to honor its significantly large population of American Indians, but chose to make that day the same as the day that has recognized the achievements of Christopher Columbus. While not explicit in the language of the Oklahoma bill, this pattern of moving Native American Day, or Indigenous Peoples Day, to the same day is common, with some states or local governments making it quite clear that the purpose is to diminish Columbus while honoring tribal people.

Congress created Columbus Day in 1934 as a federal holiday, and federal employees get a day off work to observe it. Oklahoma does not give state employees the day off, ending that practice when the state voted to make the birthday of Martin Luther King a state holiday with paid time off for state workers.

The very word Oklahoma comes from a Choctaw Indian word meaning "red people." The land was known as "Indian Territory" before 1889, when Oklahoma Territory was created. The twin territories existed alongside each other until statehood in 1907. Considering this history, it seems appropriate to honor the state's unique Indian heritage with a day, but it is not necessary to trash Columbus in order to do it.

After the House of Representatives passed the Senate bill on Monday by a vote of 87-11, it was inevitable that Governor Stitt would sign the bill, however. Stitt is a member of the Cherokee Nation, with its headquarters in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, and leaders of the Five Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole) who were removed to what is now the state of Oklahoma in the 1830s and 1840s, all urged Stitt to give his approval.

Expecting politicians who are desirous of avoiding being tarred as "racist" is perhaps expecting too



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much. Better to throw Columbus, or the Founding Fathers, or anyone else to the liberal hounds of Hell so as to avoid such an attack.

But the bill — setting the day to honor the state’s indigenous peoples on the same day as what has historically been used to honor Columbus — is based on either a misunderstanding of what Columbus did, and in some cases, it is a just a lie. In either case, the result is an attack not only on the great explorer from Genoa, Italy, but also on Christianity and western civilization.

Once hailed as one of the greatest men of all time, Columbus has fallen victim to 21st century political correctness, in which persons of European ancestry, especially those who are unabashedly Christian, are automatically considered suspect.

Among the falsehoods leveled against Columbus are that he was a racist killer, who enslaved Indians, started the slave trade, and even used captured Natives as dog food! James Loewen, a left-wing former college history professor even argued in his book, *The Lies My Teacher Told Me* that the pre-Columbian population of Haiti was eight million, but, “When Christopher Columbus returned to Spain,” the number had been reduced to a little over one million. In his book, *48 Liberal Lies About American History*, Larry Schweikert said, “To think that any pre-modern civilization could eliminate seven million people in just over two years defies all logic, not to mention history.”

Yet, these accusations — which have little to no basis in fact or logic — are the basis of diminishing Columbus by honoring Native Peoples on the same day as we have honored Columbus for centuries.

Pre-Columbian America is usually pictured as a paradise by those who wish to denigrate Columbus. It was not. Before Columbus set foot in the Western Hemisphere, slavery was already hoary with age, widely practiced by indigenous peoples upon other indigenous peoples. The Aztec Empire was a brutal tyranny that was unrivaled by anything seen in Europe before the days of Stalin and Hitler. Aztec priests offered up human sacrifices in the thousands, usually drawn from the populations of other native peoples who were slaves, or had been taken in war. They also practiced cannibalism on a regular basis.

The Spanish put a stop to both practices. If Columbus is to be blamed for injustices (and there were injustices) inflicted years after his death, then fairness would dictate that he should be applauded for ending such barbarism, as well.

While not taught much today, Columbus did not set out to discover America. His intention was to reach Asia by sailing west. His principal goal was to convert the heathen of Asia to Christianity. This goal is no doubt one of the reasons he is now to be considered a villain of history in our modern politically correct textbooks.

Because of Columbus, the Christian religion was brought to the New World. While this is, for some, at best a non-issue, and for others a downright negative, it carried both eternal and temporal positive consequences for the indigenous peoples of America. Human sacrifice and cannibalism soon came to an end. In Europe, life was improved dramatically by the introduction of new foods, such as okra, tomatoes, Indian corn, squash, and more.

Indeed, if one were to make a “short list” of the persons in history who had done the most to improve the lives of more human beings, a name that would have to be on that list would be that of Christopher Columbus — a man that the state government of Oklahoma has chosen to diminish.

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Steve Byas is the author of [History’s Greatest Libels](#), which includes chapters defending such



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personages as Columbus, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Marie Antoinette, Joseph McCarthy, and Clarence Thomas from what he considers libels told against them.



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