



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 16, 2026

Wokeness Is Dead? Think Again: The Statue Serial Killers Are Still at It

“When Will They Blow Up Mount Rushmore?” I asked that rhetorically in 2017, alluding to the continual left-wing efforts to [clear cut](#) our American cultural landscape. And it was not three years later, in 2020, that a leftist *did* propose doing essentially that. In fairness, though, Oglala Sioux President Julian Bear Runner wanted to be civilized about it.

Mt. Rushmore should be “removed,” he [said](#), “but not blown up.”

That monument is still with us, of course (for now). And you may assume that statue-toppling was left behind with the heady George Floyd-sensitivity days of the early 2020s. Well, tell that to one Charles Collins, San Francisco Arts Commission president at large.



gregobagel/iStock/Getty Images Plus
San Francisco's Pioneer Monument

Complaining that “San Francisco’s monuments are stuck in the past,” he’s part of a well-funded group pushing to “deconstruct our history.” This essentially means engaging in a revisionism depicting American heroes as zeros and our victories as valueless. In particular and at the moment, however, Collins is targeting the Pioneer Monument in San Francisco’s Civic Center.

Dedicated in 1894, the monument is a large granite and bronze sculptural group celebrating California’s pioneer era and westward expansion. That’s not how Collins tells it, however. The work “has monumentalized the suppression of Native Americans,” [he claims](#). “It is a painful architecture of dominance positioned in one of the city’s most important public squares.” Of course, though, we haven’t actually observed San Franciscans proximal to it feeling pain. You’ll have to take Collins’ word for it.

“The Issue Is Never the Issue. The Issue Is Always the Revolution” — 1960s SDS Radical

Now, this may seem much ado about nothing. Why should anyone care about monument removal? Well, Elizabeth Rogliani, an actress who witnessed a socialist revolution in her native Venezuela, has her answer.

“Why do I even worry about some silly little statues coming down or some silly little street names changing? Why do I care?” she asked rhetorically [in a viral 2020 video](#).

“It’s because the last time I didn’t care about this, I was a teenager,” she explained. “I have already lived through this ... in Venezuela.”

“Statues came down, [socialist leader Hugo] Chávez didn’t want the history displayed,” Rogliani



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continued. “And then he changed the street names, then came the curriculum [in schools], then some movies couldn’t be shown on certain TV channels. And so on, and so forth.”

Revolution — against Western civilization — is what this is all about, too. Wise patriots understand that civilizations can be, to use a spin on an Otto von Bismarck line, like sausages. They may look good when served up, but you wouldn’t want to be there when they’re made.

Westerners once universally accepted a certain truth: Theirs is *the* greatest civilization to ever grace this blue planet. Perpetuating it is, therefore, not just a moral right but a *duty*. It is what we owe our posterity *and* non-Western nations: to not let the civilizational light of the world burn out. (This means not just preserving the West in name, do note, but in *virtue*.)

The world’s Collinses, however, simply don’t believe this. They consider the West a misbegotten and malign realm that must be erased and reprogrammed via a Year-Zero reeducation effort.

Ingratitude on Display

This said, Collins’ monument “deconstruction” (read: destruction) endeavor is instructive. It illustrates the falsehoods and fallacies underpinning cultural devolutionary thought.

First, consider the gripe about monuments being “stuck in the past.” They’re *supposed to be*. Why, it’s much like complaining that your family pictures are stuck in the past. The whole idea behind taking pictures or forging statues is to represent the past. And when displaying them we’re celebrating the past.

Next, Collins writes that San Francisco must “memorialize the neglected genocide of the Ramaytush Ohlone and the Indigenous people of Yelamu.” No such genocide occurred. Rather, most of those Indians died of diseases inadvertently introduced by settlers and for which they lacked immunity. This is no different from how medieval Europeans were decimated by smallpox and bubonic plague. The latter came from Asia, do note, and smallpox was spread primarily by Arab invaders.

Mostly, however, the ingratitude reflected in attacking the pioneers is striking. It’s far worse than criticizing powerful men (e.g., Thomas Jefferson) who sometimes made mistakes. The pioneers’ goal in traveling West wasn’t to destroy Indians. Blaming them for such is much like condemning Henry Ford for traffic deaths or the Wright brothers for airplane crashes. The pioneers were regular people — generally uncelebrated individually — who did the heavy lifting to create the civilization we now enjoy.

Their trials were severe, too. Just consider [the below testimonial](#) from an anonymous pioneer:

Those who crossed the plains...never forgot the ungratified thirst, the intense heat and bitter cold, the craving hunger and utter physical exhaustion of the trail.

Then, a settler [wrote](#) of the experience:

It is hardship without glory. A man must be able to endure heat like a Salamander, mud, and water like a muskrat, dust like a toad, and labor like a jackass. He must learn to eat with his unwashed fingers, drink out of the same vessel as his mules, sleep on the ground when it rains, share his blanket with vermin, and have patience with mosquitos. He must cease to think, except of where he may find grass and water and a good camping place.



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Finally, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History [sums up](#):

Accidents, disease, and sudden disaster were ever-present dangers. Children fell out of wagons, oxen hauling wagons became exhausted and died, and diseases such as typhoid, dysentery, and mountain fever killed many pioneers. Emigrant parties also suffered devastation from buffalo stampedes, prairie fires, and floods. Pioneers buried at least 20,000 emigrants along the Oregon Trail.

And now Collins & Co. would bury their memories, triumphs, and monuments. There is perhaps no greater example of being monumentally misinformed and morally misshapen.



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