



Written by [Steven Neill](#) on September 9, 2020

Trump Threatens Funding for Schools Teaching 1619 Project

President Trump appears to be fighting attempts by the Left to erase American history.

A Washington, D.C., working group called District of Columbia Facilities and Commemorative Expressions (DCFACES), formed by Mayor Muriel Bowser, released [findings](#) and [recommendations](#) for changes to city facility names on August 31. The group was tasked with determining how many of district-owned, or federal-owned, facilities bear the names of people “inconsistent with DC values and, in some way encouraged the oppression of African Americans and other communities of color or contributed to our long history of systemic racism.” Besides making recommendations to change the names of many D.C. schools, parks, and other public building, on page 22 of the report, DCFACES offered recommendations for the federal government to “remove, relocate or contextualize” a group of national memorials and monuments, including the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, the Christopher Columbus Fountain, and the Benjamin Franklin Statue.



The Trump administration reacted swiftly, with Interior Secretary David Bernhardt [tweeting](#):

Not on my watch. Never going to happen. <https://t.co/WdSQx3ZCes>
[pic.twitter.com/xHKekThBAA](https://t.co/WdSQx3ZCes)

— Secretary David Bernhardt (@SecBernhardt) [September 1, 2020](#)

Following that, Trump responded to a [tweet](#) on September 6 about California implementing the *New York Times*’ [1619 Project](#) in their public schools:



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Department of Education is looking at this. If so, they will not be funded!

<https://t.co/dHsw6Y6Y3M>

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [September 6, 2020](#)

Trump [stated](#) at a press conference the following day:

I want people to know everything they can about our history. I am not a believer in cancel culture. If you don't study the bad, it could happen again. I want it studied very, very carefully, and studied accurately. But we grew up with a certain history, and now they are trying to change our history, revisionist history. That's why they want to take down our monuments, take down our statues. I saw something the other day which was absolutely horrendous — the Washington Monument, they want to rename it the D.C. Committee, but the D.C. Committee is all Democrats. Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, I mean, we are talking about this is the big stuff now. This is the big stuff, and they want to rename it? They want to redesignate it? They want to take some down? No. We don't do that. Never going to happen with me.

Reaction to Trump's statements varied from support to resistance, with [Nikole Hannah-Jones](#), the Pulitzer Prize-winning *New York Times* journalist responsible for the 1619 Project, responding with, "Do those concerns about cancel culture and McCarthyism and censorship only apply to the left or do they apply to the POTUS threatening to investigate schools for teaching American journalism? Silence is deafening here"

Further attacking Trump's stance on the 1619 Project was Seth Cohen. In a piece written for *Forbes*, he stated:

On Sunday morning, President Trump tweeted an attack on the 1619 Project, threatening to withhold funding from California schools teaching the popular journalism project focused on the rise and impact of slavery in the United States. With his newest tweet, the President's actions raise a troubling question:

Why is the Trump administration threatening to censor the way schools teach about the history of slavery and racism in the United States?

But perhaps most troubling of all, Trump's tweet and the arguments of his administration and allies demonstrate a belief that history should be taught in a way that limits criticism of the United States. Further, Trump himself has shown that he is willing to take action to constructively censor those whose views of history conflict with those of the administration.

That's not teaching history that is shaping national propaganda.

For those unfamiliar with the [1619 Project](#), it is a collection of essays, short fiction, and poems forming an "ongoing initiative from The New York Times Magazine that began in August 2019, the 400th anniversary of the beginning of American slavery. It aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of our national narrative."

The Project has received [accolades](#) from those who seem to be [intent](#) on [rewriting](#) American history, and significant [criticism](#) from those [concerned](#) with historical [accuracy](#). For liberals, the Project helps



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unify their message that America is and always was a [racist](#) country. In the words of Nikole Hannah-Jones, “It is time for this country to pay its debt. It is time for [reparations](#).”

Considering the 1619 Project’s deep-rooted [historical](#) inaccuracies, undisguised hatred of capitalism, embrace of celebrity and identity politics, President Trump is entirely correct to [defund](#) the Project and its [rewriting](#) of American history; it is an [attack](#) on America itself. As [George Orwell](#) wrote in 1984: “Those who control the present, control the past and those who control the past control the future.”

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