

“Why Rethink Christopher Columbus?”

First of all, we don't need to “rethink” Columbus; what we need is to teach the Columbus story in its proper context.

Secondly, the word discovery goes without quotations. The word discover never meant “the first person to find uninhabited land” in Columbus' historical context. Columbus knew there were people there since the purpose of his exploration was to find a different route to the Indies to trade and to spread Christianity. But of course, Columbus was not in the Indies (Asia) but in another continent the Old World didn't know existed. That is what “Columbus discovered America” means. America is now on the maps.

Though not in the document, I want to say that the phrase New World should always go without quotations as well. Human civilization started in the Old World, so the New World was new to the Indigenous people who came here before Columbus, and the New World was new to Columbus and the Europeans in 1492.

Third, the school “experiment” where students raided classrooms stealing teachers' purses (to illustrate Columbus' discovery) is ridiculous. During Columbus' expeditions, he gave the natives presents, traded with them, and kept the Spaniards from ripping off the natives in their trading dealings. Columbus also would not allow the Spaniards to take anything from the natives without payment. If the natives were not present in their villages, Columbus would not allow the Spaniards to take anything either. The source for all this is Columbus' journal. See *The Voyage of Christopher Columbus* translated by John Cummins.

Rethinking Columbus (RC) doesn't mention that the Indigenous tribe known as the Caribs, were raiders and thieves who hunted the Tainos. They enslaved people, killed the men, raped their women, castrated young boys and later ate them. If pregnant women gave birth, they would eat their babies. The Caribs were responsible for the genocide of entire islands in the Caribbean! That's worse than any fictional story they can make up against Columbus. Source: *The Life of the Admiral* by Ferdinand Columbus, chapters 47-48, along with anyone who wrote from that era, including Peter Martyr, Las Casas, Oviedo, Amerigo Vespucci, etc.

RC claims that they are “pleased to be a part of a movement to question a myth that dismissed the very humanity of entire peoples.” That would apply to the Caribs, the Aztecs, Incas, Mayans, etc., and not to Columbus; since they were the ones dismissing the humanity of their fellow natives' neighbors, as they cannibalized them or offered them as a human sacrifice to their gods. Source: *De Orbe Novo* by Martyr, vol. 2, *Historia General* by Bernardino de Sahagun, *The Letters of Hernan Cortez*, etc, etc etc. Notice, RC never mentions the atrocities the natives committed against each other. They are the ones making myths about Columbus; not the other way around.

RC tries to make the discovery of America a racial or racist issue (“the encounter between two races”). That is called race-baiting. They claim that the typical children’s book on Columbus portrays the natives as “without thought or feelings.” I doubt that is true, but Columbus himself said otherwise. Columbus described the natives as handsome, good looking, gentle, kind, generous, good-hearted, intelligent, etc. (Source: “The Voyage of Christopher Columbus,” Newly Restored and Translated by John Cummins, pages 94, 95, 96, 100, 116, 137, 138, 141 and 148).

RC says, “And thus children begin a scholastic voyage that encourages them to disregard the perspectives, the lives of people of color.” That is not true. In fact, most of what we know today about the natives of the 15th and 16th centuries comes from Spaniard religious ministers, historians, anthropologists, etc., since most tribes did not have a written language. They care enough to put into writing their oral stories, mythologies, history, culture, etc. Some Spaniards even ideologized the natives, defended their rights, abolished their slavery and married them, creating my Hispanic race. That’s far from racism.

RC claims that to teach children about Columbus, is to tell them that it is acceptable for “whites” “to claim and control the lands of distant non-white others .” That is more race-baiting! Conquest was not exclusively “white,” but exclusively human. Conquest was practiced in every continent, including pre-Columbian America. Have they ever heard of the Aztec, Mayan, and Inca empires? How do they think they became empires? In addition, many tribes hated each other so much, that they joined the Spaniards to overthrow their own emperors. Montezuma II in Mexico and Atabalipa in Peru are two examples. In the case of Columbus, some of the battles he was forced to fight against some tribes, was done at the request, or with the assistance of other tribes.

A couple of paragraphs down, Rethinking Columbus says that their “goal is not to idealize native people [or] demonize Europeans” after they already portrayed Columbus and the Europeans as racists, thieves, haters, and murderers in the paragraphs before and after. More bold lies in our faces.

Debunking the “Columbus’s Legacy” section:

RC blames Columbus for modern-day poisonous chemical dumps, mining projects, oil spills, etc. when he died centuries ago and he had nothing to do with that! RC claims we are living on stolen land. If that is true, why don’t they leave America and return to the country of their ancestor’s origin as an example of penance, thus leading by example? If they choose to stay living on stolen land, then they are participating in theft. RC ignores that past civilizations believed differently than we do today. Whereas today we believe no nation should conquer another, past civilizations believed otherwise.

RC claims they don't want to shame white kids, while they shame white kids. They claim one thing while they do another. RC says people "have a responsibility to learn from history," but what they are teaching is not history, but propaganda. They are propagating the Spanish Black Legend and the Myth of the Noble Savage. That is, the myth that Spaniards (or Europeans) were all bad, and Indigenous tribes were all angels. They want to "reverse" an imaginary "legacy of injustice," when they are the ones committing the injustice of lying about the legacy of Columbus and at the same time, brainwashing kids with lies.

Debunking the "No Monuments for Murderers section":

Bill Bigelow directly or indirectly blames Columbus for the Charlottesville, Virginia, murder, and the Confederate monuments issue, when Columbus died centuries ago and he never reached NORTH America.

Bigelow claims Columbus started the "trans-Atlantic slave trade" in 1494, but that is not true. Slavery was universally practiced for thousands of years before Columbus. Notice again, he never mentions that the natives practiced slavery too.

Bigelow quoted a letter Columbus wrote about slavery, but he did not notice that Columbus only proposed to enslave the Caribs (i.e. the cannibals). He may not even know why Columbus proposed such a thing. The reason was that the Caribs were terrorizing the Tainos in the Caribbean, and they would complain to Columbus about it. During the first voyage, the Santa Maria caravel shipwrecked and the tribe of chief Guacanagari helped Columbus to save the cargo. Because of the chief's kindness, Columbus promised him, he would get rid of their enemies, the Caribs, as an allegiance. (Source: Columbus' Journal, Wednesday, December 26, 1492). If Bigelow knows anything from history, he would know that it is what nations used to do back then. They would make alliances to fight a common enemy. When Columbus returned to the New World, for his second voyage, that is exactly what he did: he would either capture the cannibal Caribs or would destroy their canoes, so they would stop hunting Tainos. Source: De Orbe Novo by Martyr, vol. 1, p. 104. Bigelow "forgot" to tell us that Columbus' request for enslaving cannibals was denied by the Queen too.

Bigelow then claims that Columbus "initiated massive slave raids" in 1495, but that is not true either. During Columbus' second voyage, he went to explore Cuba and Jamaica, but when he returned to La Hispaniola, he found it in revolt. Columbus gave instructions (AND ALWAYS DID!) that the Spaniards were to keep peace with the natives during his absence; but they disobeyed. Several chiefs started to kill Spaniards, so Columbus arrested the chiefs and sent some natives, along with the cannibals, to Spain. He did that in order more stop more bloodshed. Source: The Life of the Admiral by F. Columbus, chapters 54-61.

Bigelow then wondered, "Where are the monuments to these first victims?" Except they were not the first victims of slavery, since the natives practiced slavery long before 1492. Bigelow is only "concerned" when whites enslaved non-whites, but he keeps silent when non-whites

enslaved other non- whites because he is either ignorant, biased, or just a race-baiter. In other words, he is not “concerned” with slavery, but with race. Besides, slavery was abolished long ago by the whites that he seems to hate.

Bigelow then quoted Columbus as saying that “ ‘Gold is a wonderful thing!... even possible to open for souls the way to paradise.’ Later in 1495, to effect this gold lust, Columbus initiated the policy of forcing Tainos... to deliver tributes of gold...”

Bigelow’s timeline and context are incorrect. The tribute happened first, the quote about gold came later. Columbus demanded a tribute, not because he was “lusting” for gold, but because of a battle:

After Columbus arrested the aforementioned chiefs, with some of their people, his ally, chief Guacanagari, came to Columbus and asked him to help him fight another chief, whose name was Caonabo. The reason was that Caonabo killed one of Guacanagari’s wives (chiefs were polygamous) and kidnapped another. Columbus accepted, since Caonabo was also responsible for the killing of 39 men Columbus left in Hispaniola during his first voyage, in addition to decapitating 20 more men, and he constantly harassed Columbus. Columbus arrested Caonabo and defeated an army he, or other chiefs, assembled against him and Guacanagari. Columbus fought them, defeated them, and made the rest to pay tribute. This was the normal custom back then during war, and the natives used to do the same. *The Life of the Admiral* by F. Columbus, chapter 61.

Columbus’ quote about gold and the Paradise was something he wrote years later under another context. Columbus saw something mystical in gold. That’s why he said that he who has gold has “the means of rescuing souls from purgatory.” (*Writings of Christopher Columbus* , p. 230). What Bigelow, and revisionists in general, left out from the quote was the next sentence, where Columbus says the natives of Veragua (South America) buried their kings with gold because they had similar beliefs of the afterlife and gold. Columbus was not alone, since many civilizations throughout history believed gold possessed some kind of divine religious value. Some native tribes believed the same and would fast and abstain from “the company of their wives” as they collected gold from “far off rugged mountains.” (*The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus* by F. Columbus, chapter 94, p. 250). If we are going to follow Bigelow’s logic, then all these tribes were lusting for gold, but he doesn’t say anything because he is judging people by the color of their skin and not by the content of their character.

Next, Bigelow misquoted “The Spanish priest Bartolome de las Casas,” by claiming Columbus was spreading terror by cutting the hands off the Tainos. If you noticed, Bigelow did not say where he got the quote from, but I will. The quote comes from “History of the Indies” by Las Casas, Book Two, Chapter 8, page 94; and the quote is not even about Columbus, but about the Nicolas de Ovando administration. Columbus himself criticized and condemned the Ovando administration for their inhumane treatment of the natives because some of them were stabbed, others were killed by beatings, while others died of hunger. This information (about Columbus’

complaint) also comes from the same "Spanish priest Bartolome de las Casas." (Historia de las Indias by Las Casas, Tomo III, Lib. II, Cap. XXXVII, p. 190)

In the very same book (History of the Indies), the very same Spanish priest (Las Casas) described Columbus as: "... imposing, good natured, kind, daring, courageous, and a pious man... God had endowed him good judgment, a sound memory and eagerness to learn... as a God fearing man... he must have avoided exaggeration." p. 15. "I think Christopher Columbus was the most outstanding sailor in the world, versed like no other in the art of navigation, for which divine Providence chose him to accomplish the most outstanding feat ever accomplished in the world until now." p. 17. "Christopher Columbus, to whom all Christendom is so greatly indebted." p. 18. "... he was well-mannered, handsome man and a church going Christian..." p. 19. "... well spoken, wise and prudent." p. 29. "... "Many is the time I have wished that God would again inspire me and that I had Cicero's gift of eloquence to extol the indescribable service to God and to the whole world which Christopher Columbus rendered at the cost of such pain and dangers, such skill and expertise, when he so courageously discovered the New World." pp. 34-35. "My limited understanding and poor eloquence prompt me to think that the fruit of Columbus's labor speaks better for itself than I do... God gave this man the keys to the awesome seas, he and no other unlocked the darkness, to him and to no other is owed for ever and ever all that exists beyond those doors." p. 35 "It is fitting to stress that God most sublimely favored all of Spain over other Christian nation, when he chose Christopher Columbus to give to Spain such a golden opportunity in every sense of the word." p. 36. "... that most worthy man Christopher Columbus was the cause, second to God but first in the eyes of men, being the discoverer and only worthy first admiral of the vast territory known as the New World..." p. 37. "What more universal pleasure had ever affected the whole Christian world, a pleasure which, surely, was caused by God's acceptance of the discovery?" p. 39. NOTICE LAS CASAS DID NOT SPELL DISCOVERY IN QUOTATIONS! "... it is clear that Columbus discovered the continent... Which should have been called Columba and not as it is unjustly called, America." p. 62. "Honor and titles he well deserved and well earned, for no services so famous were ever rendered to any other earthly King... he is owed the praise." pp. 134-135. "The King received them [Columbus and his brothers] graciously, although not as graciously as their long peregrinations, hardships and experience deserved." p. 139. "... his exploits so unjustly forgotten..." p. 143. "... he was a good Christian..." p. 143.

There were a few times that Las Casas harshly criticized Columbus, yet the anti-Columbus crowd has been so lazy with their research that they never quote those citations because they don't know they exist. However, ALL of Las Casas' criticisms (about Columbus) were rooted in Las Casas' belief of St. Augustine's "Just War Theory." If Las Casas had believed Columbus' handful of battles against native tribes were just, he would not have criticized him. The reason why Las Casas believed Columbus' few battles were "unjust" was because he believed the natives went to hell for not believing in Christ as they died in war. Yet, Las Casas believed Columbus was a godly man and sometimes defended him (after criticizing him), saying that in spite of it all, Columbus intentions were good.

Suggestions on how Columbus should be taught in the schools

In my opinion, children should still be taught the traditional “Columbus sailed the ocean blue” story. As for older kids, *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus* book by Ferdinand Columbus should be a requirement to read. Ferdinand’s account is the best and most complete biography and primary source about Columbus and is still in print. Teachers HAVE to teach about Columbus in his historical context, like they do with any other historical figure. For example: They should not lead the children to believe that Columbus was an idiot for thinking he was in “India,” when everyone in the Old World did.

The word DISCOVER should be explain better. This is very important because even revisionists know it, since they give the credit of discovery to someone else. Notice that the picture in the Zinn Education Project, have a picture of two kids, one of them holding a sign that says, “Columbus, we discovered you.” Notice they did not spell DISCOVERED in quotations.

If an Indigenous person had taken three ships to discover new lands and peoples they knew nothing about, and in the process discovered Europe, it would be proper to honor that person. I would bet the Indigenous people would be offended if the credit of the discovery was minimized, given to someone else, or spell in quotations. To give the credit to Columbus is not to ignore the Indigenous tribes or their contributions to the world, since most of what we know about those tribes and their contributions came from Columbus himself, and other explorers. Most Indigenous tribes in America did not have a written language.

Columbus should be celebrated and honor, regardless of race. If he was Indigenous, Asian, Black, etc. I would still honor him; and that is not because of his race, but because of the content of his accomplishments.

I want to remind anyone reading this, that I myself I’m Indigenous, since Hispanics are a mixed race of Europeans, Blacks, and Indigenous. I’m Puerto Rican, and we are descendants of the Tainos. That is still something we are proud of. Years ago, when I heard about the alleged atrocities Columbus committed against the Tainos, I was curious, since my understanding as a kid was that Columbus was their friend, and not their enemy. My philosophy was that if the allegations against him were true, then we should not celebrate him.

I was in shock the first time I’ve read the Columbus’ journal. I did not know that Columbus was a pious man. I was surprised to know how loyal he was to the king and queen, even though he was not a Spaniard. I became fascinated by his story and his character as a man. I also became infuriated with those who are lying about him today, because their lies are not just lies, but bold lies.

Other Suggestions

The anti-Columbus propaganda has been out there for decades. What we are now seeing is the results of their restless work. Howard Zinn and his followers reached and propagandized schools, Hollywood celebrities, mainstream media people and the news. He is the source behind many tv shows, the Huffington Post, The Christian Science Monitor, etc.

Latin comedian John Leguizamo also used Zinn's book as a source for his Netflix comedy special, where he mimics Columbus as an Italian gangster. The irony is that like me, Leguizamo is of Puerto Rican descent, and like Mr. Gallo, he is of Italian descent as well. In addition, he was born in COLOMBIA, which is a country in South America named after COLUMBUS!

My suggestion is that we do the same things propagandists have done. The advantage we have is that the truth is on our side. We need to go to the schools and talk to the kids proving that the modern day arguments against Columbus are false. We need to talk to principals, teachers and school unions too. We should reach the mainstream media with our message, whether is radio, tv news, entertainment. Our message should go national. Our message should point out the false claims made by anti-Columbus activists and why Columbus is important to honor. We need to also discredit Howard Zinn for the good propagandist that he was.

I would suggest to reach out for celebrities (like Zinn did) who can influence the masses with the truth. I know Joe Piscopo is on our side since he had Andre DiMino (IAOVC) several times on his radio show defending Columbus Day.

Another idea (for the future) is maybe making a documentary debunking all the lies against Columbus. Right now, there is a lady director making a documentary about Columbus. I don't know where this director is going with her project. If her documentary ends being a lukewarm politically correct version of Columbus, I would suggest we make our own.

I would suggest that in every Columbus parade or Italian American festivals, they have someone at some point giving a speech to the audience that addresses and debunk the lies against Columbus, also telling people why we celebrate him.

We should send a letter to the every 50 governor in the USA, telling them that some of their states and cities are renaming Columbus Day over a hoax; the hoax that Columbus committed genocide. I could help with this letter since I already wrote a draft. After making our case, the letter should end telling them that if Columbus did not commit genocide, and if there is an actual Indigenous Peoples' Day in November (which is true), then it should not be a problem for them to acknowledge Columbus Day in their respective states, cities, and schools. Otherwise, they will publicly show the American people they don't care about facts. This letter should be made public in papers nationwide putting those politicians in the spot.

We could also have public debates. Whoever you send to the frontlines to defend Columbus honor should be knowledgeable about him and the strategists of the opposition. Notice that many revisionist talking points are not even rational. I mentioned many of them in my books. My

first book (Christopher Columbus The Hero) also mentions Howard Zinn by name. My second book described revisionists strategists and how they also distort American history in general. I'm willing to help by sending a PDF copy of my first two books to any pro-Columbus group leader who wants to debate or fight the propagandists, as long as they don't share the PDF with others without my permission. I can't send the actual books, because they cost me money too, but as I said, I could send the PDF version. I'm also available if anyone has any hard questions about Columbus and the alleged atrocities.

You can contact me by email, phone or text. My phone number is (843) 945-0187.

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https://www.amazon.com/Rafael/e/B001KCXNV0/ref=dp_byline_cont_book_1

I'm a member of the NCCA (National Christopher Columbus Association). I was their guest author for Columbus Day, 2018, in Washington DC. I've been featured in radio, tv and blogs including Breitbart and ABC affiliate. I'm also the admin for:

<http://www.officialchristophercolumbus.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/officialchristophercolumbus/>

<https://twitter.com/Official1492>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqBG6m7thTjFW4STbMg6vTQ>