



## *Monumental Ideas in a Time of Crisis; Revisiting a Framework for Teaching with Monuments*

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### **Abstract**

*In 1999, Bruce Uhrmacher developed an analytical framework to promote the study of monuments. The framework introduced three points of analysis: 1) an analysis of referent, 2) an analysis of design, and 3) an analysis of reception. This framework focused on developing a curriculum that supported a critical, interdisciplinary study of monuments. In this paper, the authors review and reshape the previous framework, with attention on the aims of the framework (its strengths and gaps), and the role of social justice, in the wake of current events. This paper also presents a multilayered engagement with Eisnerian curriculum theory, while expanding the analytical frame to incorporate other education theorists in ways that extend the ideas into the present-day, when monuments have come to the fore of the public consciousness and debate.*

**Keywords:** *monuments, collective memory, anti-racist curriculum, art curriculum, social studies curriculum, aesthetics, Elliot Eisner*

### **Introduction**

*It may be well to ask...what society is like today and how the curriculum...is related to the kind of society that we have now and that seems to be emerging in the future.<sup>1</sup>*

**O**n July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A, a construction crew removed the 20-foot statue of Christopher Columbus that National Public Radio (NPR) described as “one of the most dramatic cases yet of a city reshaping how its monuments reflect its sense of history and community identity.”<sup>2</sup> What motivated the removal of this monument after 65 years in front of City Hall?

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd at the hand of police officers, Americans have been protesting for social justice and accountability, and against systemic racism. Recent events in the U.S. have highlighted ongoing issues of racism and inequality that are perpetuated by systems designed to reinforce the status quo as seen in the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). This spark has led to debates in

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1. Elliot Eisner. “Curriculum ideas in a time of crisis,” *Art Education*. V. 18 No. 7 (1965): 8.

2. Bill Chappell. “Columbus, Ohio, Takes Down Statue of Christopher.” NPR.Org. (2020).

depictions of race and racism in food products (Aunt Jemima), mascots (the Washington football team), and even renaming elementary schools (Abraham Lincoln). Yet, the most public, visible, and visual debate that has emerged as an outcome of these murders are found in surrounding monuments.<sup>3</sup>

As symbols of these oppressive systems, monuments have become flashpoints for resistance. Monuments are smashed, defended, and politicized. Which monuments should remain? Which ought to be taken down? And, relevant towards our work, how should teachers teach towards these current and perennial events? As educators interested in using monuments as sites of study, we explore how we can use the present moment to (re)conceptualize educative experiences in schools. This paper hopes to provide guidance for educators, scholars, and the general public as these events beckon one to make meaning of their surroundings.

### Purpose

In 1999, an analytical framework was devised and later revised to promote the study of monuments.<sup>4</sup> The aim of the framework was to consider how educators may analyze and critique monuments for their educative, historical, and aesthetic values.

This framework introduced three points of analysis: an analysis of referent; an analysis of design; and an analysis of reception. 1.) An analysis of referent focuses on the signified (object of reference) of the monument (meaning its historical importance and historical purpose). Monuments are created to represent historical figures or noteworthy events. Students need to understand who or what a monument is intended to represent and what is signified through that representation (in history and in the present). 2.) An analysis of design explores the artistic and visual design choices made from an historical, sociocultural, and aesthetic standpoints with the acknowledgment that each design choice represents a particular perspective. 3.) Finally, there must be an analysis of reception that explores the impact that the monument has on those who encounter it and the recognition of how that impact can shift over time. This analytical framework can be applied sequentially and/or iteratively in the study of monuments. In these initial papers, the authors concluded that monuments can be an effective way to actively engage students in history, art, and various other subjects, as well as involve them in the discourse of collective memory and debate around whose history is valued and represented.

The purpose of this conceptual essay is to re-examine and update the previous analytical framework in light of recent events with renewed and timely interest surrounding the roles of monuments in America (and the world) today. The previous framework focused on devising a curriculum that supported a critical, interdisciplinary study of monuments. In the same way that

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3. The American Educational Research Association has referred to the events taking place in the summer of 2020 as a dual pandemic, one a virus that has killed (at current estimates) about half a million Americans (within 1 year), and a racial pandemic where awareness of racial injustice has become very public due to wide-spread filming and sharing of the events (via social media and thanks to camera phones). AERA's statements have been made through email correspondence with members and surveys sent out to early career scholars and graduate students.

4. Uhrmacher, Bruce. "Community and Collective Memory: A Commemorative Curriculum for Democracy." Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Association for Teaching and Curriculum, Orlando, FL, October 1999*. Uhrmacher, Bruce and Barri Tinkler. "Engaging Learners and the Community through the Study of Monuments." *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 11, no.3 (2008): 225-238.

Columbus, Ohio is attempting to “reshape... [and] reflect its sense of history and community identity,” in this new essay, the authors reshape and reflect on the previous framework, with continued and renewed attention on the aims of the framework (its strengths and gaps), and the role of social justice, in the wake of current events. As Levinson noted, “All monuments are efforts, in their own way, to stop time.”<sup>5</sup> However, not only do they stop time, but they also represent a particular perspective of events at that time.

This process is two-fold. First, we further refine the three points of analysis: of referent, of design, and of reception. In this refinement the enduring strengths and gaps are analyzed considering how they continue to create educative experiences and conversations around the role of monuments in Social Studies and Art education. This paper is influenced by Eisner and is similar to what Eisner describes as “cognitive capacities” which notes “the capacity to feel and to act as well as the capacity to deal with the abstractions found in what are typically regarded as ‘intellectual’ subjects.”<sup>6</sup> Our work’s theoretical framework for critiquing the previous three points of analysis leans on the ideals set forth by Eisner which is meant to “embrace the variety of ways in which humans represent what they have cognized.”<sup>7</sup> Grounding an analysis of monuments within the curricular framework Eisner describes, this theoretical paper seeks to look at the analysis of monuments as a program designed to “promote the development of the broad conception of cognition” and for our work social and historical critique of the monuments in the past and present.<sup>8</sup>

Second, the authors consider what is missing and create a new point of analysis that takes to heart a critical lens that incorporates social justice. In order to best represent this process in action, we utilize exemplars, in particular the same Columbus statue (mentioned above) to consider how the three points (and an additional 4<sup>th</sup> point) play out educationally in practice.<sup>9</sup> As noted above we also consider the “cognitive capacities” and the ideals of curriculum described in the works of Eisner. Before we delve into the framework, the following section presents the scholarly literature related to monuments. For those interested in moving directly to the framework, please refer to the next section titled *Refining the Three Points of Analysis*.

### **Literature Review and Previous Scholarship on Monuments, (Education), Curriculum, and Critiques**

Monuments have been part of the heritage of the Western tradition dating back through the millennia and have been used to commemorate warriors, leaders, and events.<sup>10</sup> Some monuments focus on wars or war leaders, while others commemorate tragedy and help to remind us of the ramifications of violence. Still others are quiet and simple and point to individuals who have contributed to society through peaceful means.

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5. Stanford Levinson. *Written in stone: Public monuments in changing societies*. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 6.

6. Elliot Eisner. *The Centrality of Curriculum and the Function of Standards. The Arts and the Creation of Mind*. (Hartford, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 148.

7. Eisner, 148.

8. *Ibid.*,

9. Although our exemplars focus on the Columbus statue, we recognize that many confederate monuments have presented additional evidence of how the points of analysis could be applied (and have been featured in the news and covered in recent scholarship).

10. Françoise Choay. *The Invention of the Historic Monument*. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge: University Press, 2001).

Monuments are created by groups of people to memorialize persons and events. As such they represent collective memories<sup>11</sup> or public memories which may be defined as “a body of beliefs and ideas about the past that help a public or society understand both its past, present, and by implication, its future.”<sup>12</sup> These collective memories are part of the active past that lives on and shapes our identities. James Young, puts it this way:

[monuments] provide the sites where groups of people gather to create a common past for themselves, places where they tell the constitutive narratives, their ‘shared’ stories of the past. They become communities precisely by having shared [if only vicariously] the experiences of their neighbors. At some point, it may even be the activity of remembering together that becomes the shared memory once ritualized, remembering together becomes an event in itself that is to be shared and remembered.<sup>13</sup>

In all of these ways, monuments have performed an important role. However, in addition to scholars noting the historical import of monuments, there have also been critiques of monuments writ large. For example, historians Lewis Mumford and Martin Broszat both argued that monuments distort historical understanding.<sup>14</sup> Mumford’s critiques center on the fact that monuments remain fixed and thus present perceptions of the past as immutable, while Broszat raised concerns about the potential for monuments to “bury” events “beneath layers of national myths and explanations” rather than remembering them.<sup>15</sup>

Perhamus and Joldersma have most recently noted the impact of monuments in their recent article “What Might Sustain the Activism of this Moment? Dismantling White Supremacy One Monument at a Time” in the *Journal of Philosophy of Education*.<sup>16</sup> Their focus is on activism and the dismantling of White supremacy through the definitions of monuments as “ideological powerhouses.” Their work on analyzing racist monuments is valuable and has been discussed extensively; thus we highlight this essay and recognize where our work connects.

Within our paper, we plan to focus not on the erecting of monuments or the dismantling, (though we do have opinions,) but rather on the educational implications of monuments. As such, this paper considers not only the monuments that exist and are symbols of racism, but all monuments, making a claim that *if* they do exist, then *what* do we as educators do with these monuments?<sup>17</sup> This paper is not about being pro or anti monument and this work is not about specifically confederate statues which do indeed represent racist aims (versus a monument for a famous baseball player). This paper exists not only to argue for the utility of the analysis of monuments, but also to note the timely critique of monuments. While essays have been devoted to the critique of

11. Maurice Halbwachs. *On Collective Memory*. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992.)

12. John Bodnar. *Remaking America: Public memory, commemoration, and patriotism in the twentieth century*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 15.

13. James Young. *The Texture of memory: Holocaust memorials and meaning*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 6-7.

14. See Young, 1993.

15. See Young (1993), citing Broszat, 5.

16. Lisa Perhamus & Clarence Joldersma. What might sustain the activism of this moment? Dismantling White supremacy one monument at a time. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 54(5), 1314-1332. (2020).

17. Additionally, as monuments are removed how do we analyze these changes. The Robert E Lee statue was recently removed after this paper was composed, thus proving the importance of the theoretical framework we are suggesting for educators on the presence and absence of monuments. See Gregory Schneider & Laura Vozzella. “Robert E. Lee statue is removed in Richmond, ex-capital of Confederacy, after months of protests and legal resistance.” *The Washington Post*. September 8, 2021.

White supremacy monuments, our paper's aim is to critique what is already present (without ignoring the issues of the monuments being built in the first place). We note in our work, not only the "bad" monuments, but also the monuments that portray an awareness of history (holocaust monuments or the Vietnam War memorial) or a commemoration of growth in history (the MLK Jr. monument in Washington D.C.).

### Monuments in the Curriculum

Monuments have already become part of the curriculum. One advocate of the study of monuments is James A. Percoco, a high school history teacher from Springfield, Virginia. Percoco, argued for the study of monuments in his book, *A Passion for the Past: Creative Teaching of U.S. History*, and he developed curricula, lesson and unit plans, designed around monuments.<sup>18</sup> Given the role of monuments in the creation of collective memory within the US, it behooves educators to make monuments part of the curriculum. Monuments, quite simply, are part of our national identity and have helped define our experiences as Americans.<sup>19</sup> These collective memories are part of the active past that lives on and shapes our identities. Percoco has written lesson plans and units based on the study of monuments, including: *Monumental Experiences: A Classroom Application of American Sculpture and Commemorative Sculpture in the United States: A Unit of Study for Grades 8-12*. Though Percoco promotes the thoughtful study of monuments, he does not articulate a framework in which to imbed the important questions students should address when studying monuments.

Another history teacher from the UK, Andrew Wrenn wrote about the use of war memorials and provides guidance for developing lessons that prompt students to think critically about memorials.<sup>20</sup> In a more recent piece, Waters and Russell, developed the case for using monuments to teach about controversial issues in U.S. history.<sup>21</sup> In addition to the field of history, educators in geography, such as Rodney Allen have used monuments to explore questions of representation and experience by exploring "representation patterns" and "spatial distribution."<sup>22</sup>

Most recently, Percy in *Stepping Stones and Robert E. Lee- Using Memorials to Explore Contested History*, building on our previous work/framework for analyzing monuments, provides Germany's reconciliation of their past using an intentional curricular model to present a potential model and case study for Americans presented with similar symbols of hate.<sup>23</sup> Additionally James Loewen in his book *Lies across America: What Our Historic Sites get Wrong*, considers how these monuments need to be problematized in our history classrooms as they portray a glorification of White supremacy.<sup>24</sup>

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18. James A. Percoco. 1998. *A Passion for the Past: Creative Teaching of U.S. History* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998).

19. Ibid.,

20. Andrew Wrenn. "Emotional response or objective enquiry? Using shared stories and a sense of place in the study of interpretations for GCSE." *Teaching History*, (1998) 91, 25–30.

21. Stewart Waters and William Russell. "Monumental controversies: Exploring the contested history of the United States landscape." *The Social Studies*, (2013) 104(2), 77-86.

22. Rodney Allen "Memorial geography: reflections upon a useful strategy for teaching middle school geography students." *Journal of the Middle States Council for the Social Studies*, (1992) 13, 10–18.

23. Mark Percy (2020) in *Stepping Stones and Robert E. Lee- Using Memorials to Explore Contested History*

24. James Loewen *Lies across America: What Our Historic Sites get Wrong*. *Lies across America: What our historic sites get wrong*. New York, New York: The New Press, 2019.

The study of monuments is not limited to the social studies classroom. Eisner would likely point out that the monument as a “form of representation” and as a form of communication invites art educators to utilize monuments in various ways.<sup>25</sup> For example, Richard Putney embedded the study of monuments within an art history course. In addition to studying and writing about an existing monument at Gettysburg, students created their own monuments as well.<sup>26</sup> In another piece, Buffington and Waldner, frame the exploration of civil war monuments as a means to examine human rights within the art classroom.<sup>27</sup>

This previous scholarship provides a space for our current work to complement previous work. We continue to build on this previous work considering this critical social justice lens paired with the educational utility found in analyzing monuments.

### Refining the Three Points of Analysis

#### Process for Updating our Prior Work

The process for updating our work began with an increased interest in monuments and our recognition of this increased interest. If scholars and individuals are seeking out educational information and/or critiques of monuments, where does the previous framework support these inquirers and where does this previous framework require revisions? For lack of a more “technical” form, we dialogued. We spent hours discussing and debating the work. We talked, we watched the news, we listened to ideas, and we reflected on our own experiences as former K-12 educators, as current members of different higher education institutions, and as scholars dedicated to scholar activism. In the tradition of historical analysis, we often historically contextualize events, and in that process we came up with other ideas.<sup>28</sup> In the tradition of philosophy, which is concerned with normative questions, we considered what inherent *good* monuments provide, and *why* we should have them. We asked questions connected to ethics and morality in education and society to come up with these ideas, as well as questions of aesthetics. The framework that guided this analysis comes from a philosophical Pragmatic tradition. This means that questions of utility, moral good, and consequentialism were considered, in addition to the inductive historical approaches that allow the primary documents (in this case the monuments) to guide the analysis (in contrast to deductive reasoning where the question guides research and controls the confines the analysis).

After spending time on the framework itself, in the pragmatic tradition we applied the framework to specific episodes. Considering the consequentialist future-oriented good found in the pragmatic tradition, this paper pulls on the ideas of John Dewey, both his conceptions of pragmatism and the role of democracy tied to education,<sup>29</sup> William James, as the progenitor of the

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25. Eliot Eisner. *Cognition and curriculum reconsidered*, Second Edition, New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1994.

26. Richard Putney. “The Civil War and its monuments: visualizing the past.” In P. B. Childers, E. H. Hobson and J. A. Mullin (Eds.) *ARTiculating: Teaching writing in a visual world*. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1998), 92-110.

27. Melanie Buffington and Eric Waldner . “Human rights, collective memory, and counter memory: unpacking the meaning of Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia.” *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education*, (2011) 29, 92-108.

28. Meaning, we consider the time, place, reception, reaction to the event as contextualized within that specific time period (in order to then understand the event today). This helps to avoid anachronistic analyses that are ahistorical.

29. John Dewey. *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. (New York City, NY: Macmillan, 1923).

philosophical movement,<sup>30</sup> and Cornel West,<sup>31</sup> a contemporary pragmatist weighing in on the discussions of racism as a uniquely public intellectual. As each pragmatic tradition emanating from these thinkers is unique, we refrain from seeking a totalizing theory and instead use the variety of ideas towards “specific ends.” West states our aim best: “American pragmatism is a diverse and heterogeneous tradition. But its common denominator consists of a future-oriented instrumentalism that tries to deploy thought as a weapon to enable more effective action.”<sup>32</sup> In addition to using these philosophic frameworks, we also used our own experiences and discussions of these experiences to help us think through the gaps and areas for extended conversation and debate.

In addition to the pragmatic tradition, the study of monuments requires attention to aesthetics and art. As such, we also utilized concepts from Elliot Eisner who proposed the term “form of representation” to refer to ways one may encode and decode communication.<sup>33</sup> In brief, monuments are textual and visual forms of representation that can be analyzed from varied points of view.

In this paper we update and further refine our analyses by *acknowledging* three current episodes (briefly) in which monuments were destroyed (or are being hotly debated as some were placed in museum storage) in the United States after the George Floyd murder. The episodes include the statues of Robert E. Lee, Christopher Columbus, and Abraham Lincoln. Then we focus on one monument exemplar, the same one that starts this article, in order to consider the pragmatic good in this process of applying the three points of analysis and, in the process, adding subthemes and a new point of analysis. In the section, *Expanding the Three Points of Analysis*, the three guiding questions that make up our framework for analysis inspired by the pragmatic tradition and historical tradition will be presented to clearly demonstrate a clear guiding framework.

## Exemplars

In order to present a concrete analysis of our process reevaluating the previous framework, grounding that analysis with specific exemplars strengthens our work and provides a more tangible means of translating these theories into practice. Briefly, there are three monument cases that have made national (and international news). The first is the Christopher Columbus statue that was removed from Columbus, Ohio in the summer of 2020. Below is modified image of this monument before and after (during its removal). (The image has been edited to avoid copyright infringement.)

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30. William James. *Pragmatism: A new name for old ways of thinking*. (New York City, New York: Holt, 1907).

31. Cornel West *The American evasion of philosophy: A genealogy of pragmatism*. (London, England: Macmillan, 1989), 5.

32. Cornel West, 5.

33. Elliot Eisner. *Cognition and Curriculum Reconsidered*. (New York City, New York: Teachers College Press, 2nd ed. 1994)

**Figure 1:** *Christopher Columbus, Before-Standing***Figure 2:** *Christopher Columbus, After-In Process of Removal*

NPR provides a brief history and overview of the monument best. “The monument stood at City Hall for some 65 years. The city of Genoa, Italy, the explorer’s birthplace, gave the statue to the Ohio city during festivities that coincided with the national holiday in October.”<sup>34</sup> In this article, the authors note how Columbus, Ohio has been going through its own racial reckoning. Columbus, Ohio is a city with one of the largest universities in America; The Ohio State University. This diverse population of students and scholars from across America (and the world) provides a setting ripe for progressive discussion and debate. Columbus, Ohio has been grappling with the fact that “Columbus’ name has become increasingly linked not to a legacy of exploration and discovery, but to the violent colonization that followed his arrival in the Americas and the catastrophic effect it has had on existing civilizations.”<sup>35</sup> Like a number of cities across the US, Columbus, Ohio has shifted away from observing the federal holiday of Columbus Day in October to a focus instead on “Indigenous Peoples Day.” We have chosen this monument as a focal point,

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34. Bill Chappell, (2020).

35. *Ibid.*,



although we recognize the value of using all three monuments and have provided the other two so that they can be brought into the conversation when needed to test the points of analysis

Since statues of Christopher Columbus are prevalent in America, and the city of Columbus recently removed their statue, it is worthwhile to analyze the three points within the framework with that monument as an exemplar (in addition to our new fourth point). Additionally, since Columbus's legacy is particularly controversial (though there is little debate about his legacy of genocide) this exemplar proves even more interesting, relevant, and accessible. Finally, we recognize the research that is focused specifically on confederate statues and believe our work can complement those articles well, especially as we include the lenses of aesthetics and curriculum and instruction.

During the summer of 2020 there were multiple other monuments that were featured in the news. In addition to the Columbus monument, there was a monument of Robert E. Lee in Richmond, Virginia. The image below demonstrates how the community of Richmond responded to this monument: instead of removing the monument, the community chose to deface it. This process of interaction with the monument is valuable for understanding how to enhance our three points of analysis and consider what may be missing, regarding the process of interacting with, reflecting on, and actively defacing a monument with intention. Most recently this monument was removed.<sup>36</sup>

**Figure 3:** *Robert E Lee, Richmond, Virginia*

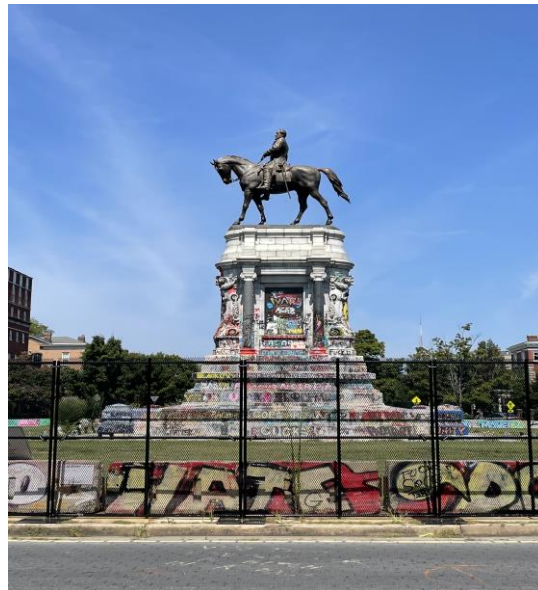


Photo taken by friend of author. Full permissions granted for usage.

A third example of a monument that received attention was the Emancipation Memorial in Washington D.C., which presents a seemingly positive portrayal of the end of slavery. Counter to the Columbus monument which has been removed and counter to the Robert E. Lee monument which has remained as a point of activism against the history of the monument and the man (the

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36. This paper began before the removal of the Robert E Lee monument. See Gregory Schneider & Laura Vozzella. "Robert E. Lee statue is removed in Richmond, ex-capital of Confederacy, after months of protests and legal resistance." *The Washington Post*. September 8, 2021.

referent), the Emancipation Memorial has been critiqued for its depiction of the two figures (see image below). With a “critical” lens, this monument, is transformed from Abraham Lincoln standing above a freed slave in shackles to the more realistic analysis of Abraham Lincoln, a statue with clear detail and attention from the artist, hovering with power and a White savior-like complex over a nameless slave (breaking free of his shackles) whose artistic depictions are less developed (less detailed and refined) and remains forever in a place of subservience. Upon closer examination, the statue of Abraham Lincoln emancipating a slave may perpetuate racism and oppression: From the dehumanized view of the slave who remains nameless on the plaque to the posture of Lincoln standing above the man in shackles seemingly as a savior.<sup>37</sup> This juxtaposition of art critique and historical whitewashing have become one central debate that has arisen in light of the protests across America for social justice.

Thus, the intersection of social justice, social studies, and aesthetics converge on this unique time in American history, a time ripe for renewed discussion and analysis of monuments especially in connection to education.

**Figure 4:** *Emancipation Memorial—Washington, D.C.*



Photo taken by author.

### **Expanding the Three Points of Analysis**

As mentioned, the previous framework has three points of analysis. As we move forward, within each point, three questions will be addressed to guide our analysis: 1. Is this point still relevant and useful for educators? 2. How might a critical lens that takes to heart the aims of social justice and anti-racist pedagogy be incorporated or supported by this point? 3. How does each

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37. Another point of irony is that the funding for this monument came from the Freed Slaves. <https://www.nps.gov/places/000/emancipation-memorial.htm>

point consider the current attack on/scrutiny of monuments and their removals? (Extending 3, how can this framework be used to analyze monuments in the absence of the *physical* monument?) After an analysis of the three points with the reflective questions, a final point will be added to the framework that explores creative and social justice responses.

### Analysis of Referent

First, let's examine the analysis of referent, which prompts students to explore the significance and subject of the monument. Since monuments are developed to represent individuals or events, students need to understand the historical context, regarding the three questions above. Using this point of analysis to evaluate the referent in the monument (we believe) is still relevant and useful to educators. Considering this point of analysis with an aim of social justice, we consider how this can be enhanced. Regarding the analysis of referent, we suggest the two (new) subthemes of "multiple sources" and "Reflexivity." The former points to an understanding of a referent utilizing multiple sources that yield varying points of view, thus incorporating an intentional critical lens. Reflexivity refers to the idea of making sure students reflect on the sources themselves and fits a process used in critical multiculturalism.<sup>38</sup> This term is regularly employed in multicultural education and specifically critical multiculturalism. Leavy describes reflexivity as "constantly examining your own position in the research endeavor, including your assumptions, feelings, and decisions".<sup>39</sup> Leavy's definition provides a powerful frame to what students could do in analyzing monuments. Finally, we consider how an attack of the monument (i.e., disfiguring or graffiti or new debate and discourse) or removal impacts this process of analysis of referent.

How does this revised analysis of referent connect with the Christopher Columbus monument? This monument was removed, but the reasons for its removal align with the original aims of evaluating the history, figure of the depiction, and the reason for removing that depiction connected to the analysis of referent. Extending that analysis using the two new subthemes, the multiple sources demonstrate that the history of the referent transforms from the man of discovery and explorer to a man of genocide. As some history books have become more popular and are written for a general audience, such as *Lies My Teachers Told Me* by Loewen<sup>40</sup> and *A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn<sup>41</sup>, conversations that were once reserved for historians are now mainstream and being debated.<sup>42</sup> These debates play out publicly with the examples of Columbus, Robert E. Lee, and Abraham Lincoln (Emancipation Memorial). With Columbus, in his absence, one of the authors drove through downtown Columbus to see the emptiness. What she saw was people going to the pedestal to take pictures with it. There was still an analysis of referent even in its absence. The new referent became the empty pedestal, a victory against oppression.

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38. Stephen May, ed. *Critical Multiculturalism: Rethinking Multicultural and Antiracist Education*. (Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press, 1999.)

39. Patricia Leavy. *Method Meets Art: Arts-based Research Practice*. (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2015) 282.

40. James Loewen. *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything your American History Textbook got Wrong*. (New York City, New York: Touchstone Press, 2007)

41. Howard Zinn. *A People's History of the United States: 1492-present*. (New York City, New York: HarperCollins, 2003.)

42. Specifically with the history of the Columbus monument, different stakeholders may feel "attacked" such as Italian immigrants who were initially marginalized and found pride with this "new" interpreted history of Columbus as a positive Italian figure in history, even as the "real" history is indisputably tied to genocide.

## Analysis of Design

Previously, the analysis of design was one that is often considered in art education and as the literature review reveals, in social studies education as well. Considering our three questions for analyzing our previous framework, we start with the relevance and utility. The removal of Columbus requires us to consider how an educator should analyze design when the referent is now absent. Does the educator now analyze the pedestal? Or consider the aesthetics and symbolism of the second image of Columbus. This image of a 20-foot statue hovering parallel to the ground almost resembling a body being placed in a grave, becomes a new point of aesthetic consideration. The photograph can supplant the physical monument requiring the educator to consider monuments not as “stopping the past”, but as something fluid; presenting that there is now a “before” analysis of design (the old monument) and the “after” or current analysis of design (the pedestal or the image of the removal of the monument).

In the analysis of design, we recommend the subtheme of “the null design.” Here we suggest an examination of a) designs not considered, b) designs considered but not used, or c) designs removed and designs that are ephemeral. What follows presents a mixed approach to applying these subthemes, such as Columbus being removed c), the creative response which incorporates a) and b), and the interactive demonstration of artist protest through graffiti with Robert E Lee, b).

When applying these ideas to the other examples of monuments these suggestions point to the relevance of the point of analysis with Columbus, but also with Robert E Lee, and the process of evaluating this monument and new “defaced” monument with a critical lens. Connecting the Emancipation memorial to this analysis of design, the focus on the actual design of the two figures opens up critical conversations about racism and social justice. As mentioned before, a seemingly positive portrayal requires the educator and student to revisit the point of referent with a new critical lens that also considers the analysis of design.

Within the process of analyzing design, there are the questions of who has designed it and who funded that design? The question of economics tied to the monument provides a place of overlapping analysis in the analysis of referent (considering the historical implications- i.e. Daughters of the Confederacy erecting statues decades after the Civil War in an act of intimidation) and with design, as considered in the over-simplified design found in the slave’s face of the Emancipation memorial, contrasted with the sophisticated metal work of Lincoln’s features.<sup>43</sup> With these ideas of economics come new questions to consider. Who funds the monument, how is the community involved in the decision, and how are the populations within the community represented within the monuments in their communities? How can students connect the important concept of being a critical consumer of knowledge with being a critical consumer of goods, meaning one should ask, who funded this “art”?

## Analysis of Reception

Next, in the analysis of reception, we recommend the subtheme of time. That is, how have monuments been perceived at various points of time since their creation? How does time/period of time impact the reception? When contemplating the relevance of this previous point of analysis, we think that it is (still relevant), and even more so when the additional subtheme of time is presented. As mentioned in the previous section, the absence of the Columbus monument comparing

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43. As noted before, this was paid for by the Freedman Association.

its original reception to the reception today is educative. The Emancipation memorial, first meant to provide a story of progress, now is received as potentially an empty gesture. Due to the interactions with monuments (removal or defacing), this third point of analysis connects with the second question of how an educator may use a critical lens and how the absence becomes part of the analysis of considering the current reception which is centered around scrutiny.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> (New) Point of Analysis: The Creative Response

Finally, we introduce a new category (or point of analysis) that for the moment we call “the creative response.” In this category we examine creative solutions to complex problems concerning monuments. Students themselves should come up with creative solutions. As one example, rather than destroying a monument dedicated to Robert E. Lee, it might have been possible to add to it by creating a new plaque or object referring to Lee’s nefarious actions. As seen in the example above of Lee, people came together to collectively deface the monument connecting to our previous point on an analysis of this new reception. These ideas have already been taken to heart with specific monuments in America and England- where activists use projectors to cast images of the realities of these historical figures, or use graffiti on statues to keep the monument present and raise awareness, almost like keeping an object present as a representation of shame that is not to be forgotten.

Performance art (and art writ large) provides another point of inspiration in creatively reimagining monuments. Similar to art museums which house art, perhaps monuments are removed from the public and placed in a museum on racism (further discussion regarding the scope and purpose would be needed of course). Or perhaps a passersby would be welcomed, after reading a brief notecard, to hammer a nail in the statue, thereby participating in a set of ideas in a controlled environment. (This is similar to the performance art of Yoko Ono, when she asked viewers to take scissors and cut pieces of fabric from her clothing that she was wearing on stage.)<sup>44</sup> The example of Robert E Lee above being destroyed or defaced becomes an act of reflection and reflexivity and creativity.

Within this “creative response” there are also the larger anti-racist and social justice oriented questions. We introduce the larger conversation on the *value* of monuments writ large and the ethics. Do (new) monuments need to exist in America in 2021 in order to provide an educative source of experiences in social studies and art, or are the ideas monumental enough to dismiss the value of the physical monument moving forward? Recently, artist Ada Pinkston asked people what an ideal monument to all people might look like.<sup>45</sup> This discussion was propelled by the removal of monuments leaving pedestals empty. She suggested that since society is always changing, ideally a monument should change with the times and a 3-D printed--voted on by the community--monument might be a creative solution.

The final fresh point to consider within the 4<sup>th</sup> analysis titled creative response is a new term; *critical creativity*.<sup>46</sup> Within this process of “critical creativity,” students would engage in a

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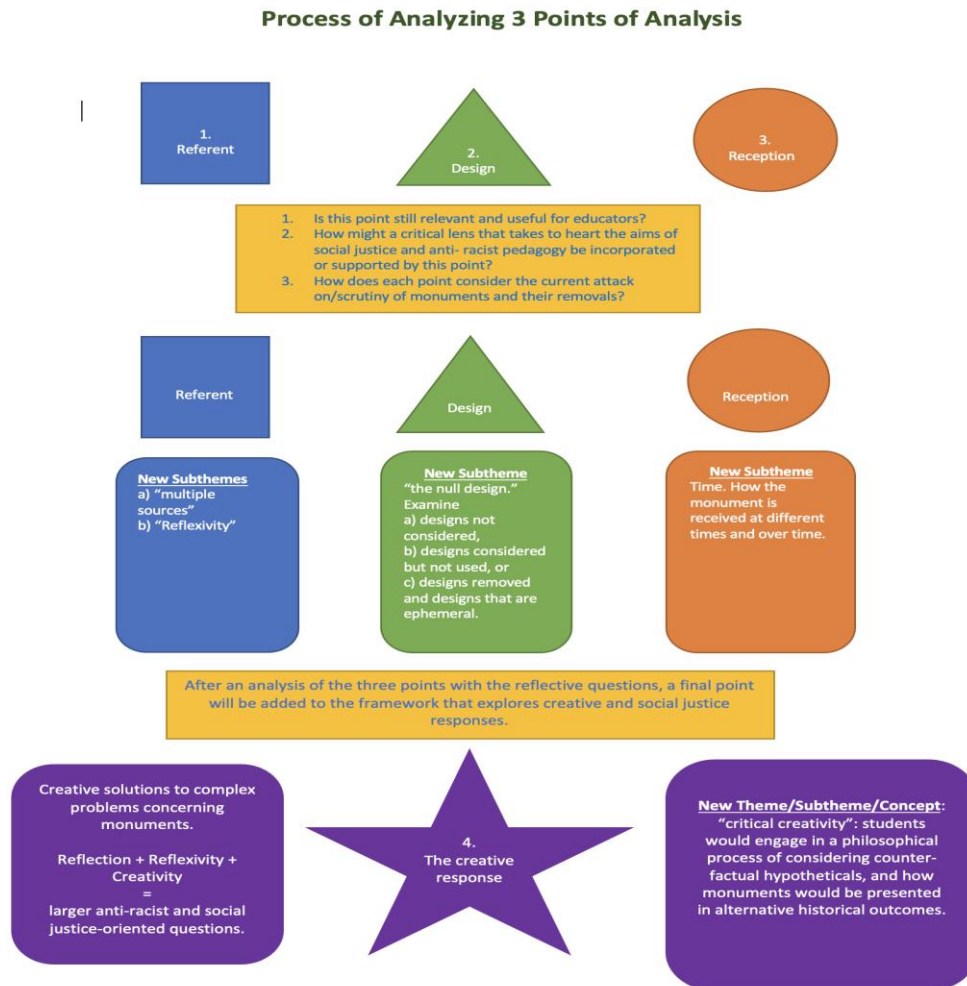
44. Yoko Ono. *Cut Piece*. (Yamaichi Concert Hall: Kyoto, Japan, 1964).

45. Mosley & Hagan, (2020) Artist Ada Pinkston Asks: What Would a Monument to All People Look Like? WBUR.Org. 2020.

46. We are coining this new term for multiple reasons. The intersection of art and having a critical lens in education is key, but we must also educate students and teachers to take seriously the value of creativity in education. This is a term that should be introduced into pre-service teaching curricula to move American education forward with an intentional focus on anti-racist pedagogy. The aim would be to push back against teaching teachers to be *technicians* and instead revisit the idea of teacher as *artist*.

philosophical process of considering counter-factual hypotheticals and how monuments would be presented in alternative historical outcomes. The aim of the process would be to value the creative process, but also consider how creativity provides a space for social justice and anti-racist engagement to exist. The process is intersectional.

**Figure 5:** Visualization of Process of Analyzing the Previous 3 Points of Analysis with a new 4<sup>th</sup> Point



### Application of Four Points of Analysis for a Classroom

While the purpose of this paper was to provide a theoretical analytical model for analyzing and critiquing the integration of monuments into curricula, the specific application may still require more details. In this section, key guiding questions provide a roadmap for classroom integration for teachers. In Social Studies education, inquiry-based models and pedagogy are commonly used to help students interrogate the past, historically contextualize the past, and make

meaning of the past when considering the present.<sup>47</sup> In that same process, when applying the four points of analysis to a classroom studying monuments, there are key questions that can be used to help guide/nudge/inform the discourse.<sup>48</sup>

Going back to the examples of monuments provided above, here are key questions that could be used to guide a discussion. Because this work can be applied to a variety of educational settings; public history, museum studies, art education, and social studies education, we will narrow the focus to a Social Studies classroom 7-12. Continuing to expand on the examples given above, the focus will be on the Robert E Lee monument that has since been removed/dismantled. Because the monument itself has been removed, the teacher would need to start (materials needed) with an image of the monument, then present a picture of the monument with graffiti, and then the removal of the monument.

Here is a potential script/guide to support teachers and students:

You (students) have now looked at 3 images of a monument. Using Monte-Sano and Wineberg's inquiry models, along with our 4 points of analysis please consider the following questions:

1. Referent Questions:

Who is depicted in this monument? What is the referent? When was this built? Who funded this project? How is the figure depicted (posture, angle, consider power, and audience). Describe everything that you see. What additional examples (multiple sources) can be used to compare this monument to others and how might this consider the concept of reflexivity? What is the title of this monument? Does this title convey the message presented? Consider what is present or absent from this monument (for example is there is a "soldier on a horse" why is there a horse? If there is a soldier alone, why is there no horse?")

2. (Null) Design Questions:

What does the design of this monument evoke in you? Is there an emotional feeling that emerges when you gaze upon it? Is this aesthetically pleasing? Are there presentations of power or implied power (think about the answer, the placement of the figure(s) the posture and location).

3. Reception Questions:

How was this monument originally received? Was there controversy surrounding the construction of this monument? Why did people protest this monument after George

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47. Sam Wineberg. *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts; Charting the Future of Teaching the Past.* (Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 2001).

48. As new culture wars emerge attempting to erase Black history in American schools, these conversations are even more timely and crucial to helping educate an informed populace.

Floyd's murder? Why was there graffiti? Is there beauty in the defacing of a monument that represents a hateful figure in history? Is there a feeling of control and vindication? How is this monument received at different times?

#### 4. New: Critical Creative Response Questions:

In the absence of this monument, what could be done to educate other students like yourself as to the impact of this monument in history? How can there be an opportunity provided to move the engagement of this art from a passive unidirectional model to an active, reflective, and reflexive process? How does the presence or absence of this monument create an alternative historical outcome (have students engage in counterfactual hypotheticals)? Can the history still exist and be taught without the monument? (think about monuments that do not exist in America, but are taught regularly in schools- i.e., WW2).

Ideally, these questions can be used as a guide, placed in worksheets, built out into full day lessons, or even short units. These can be used during field trips. These can be used to teach debate in history courses. One of the aims is to help students leave in a partial state of aporia so that they want to learn more.

### **Scholarly Significance of the Work and Current Application**

This inquiry, which began decades ago, focused on the classroom's integration of monuments in curriculum, reflects the current, public debate found in news articles and family conversations in America. In this unique space, this inquiry becomes a place for public intellectualism and public discourse (both in the school and outside of the school). We attempted to contribute a more expansive, inclusive, and disruptive/critical framework that assists teachers and students to find solutions in ways that promote social justice and anti-racist curricula. The discourse surrounding monuments in education and in public discourse is especially timely as changes are made to the landscape clearly indicating the public importance of the scholarly work (see literature review above and continued public debate around monuments). With the time span of developing this paper to now, the third monument was removed, thus creating even more of an exigency to consider the scholarly significance of the development of a framework that is pedagogically helpful in an educational space, and pragmatically helpful in a public space.

This inquiry also contributes to Eisner's ideas about paying attention to the nuances of curriculum.<sup>49</sup> Political actions are rarely about nuance. Monuments are either saved or destroyed. Curriculum matters need to move beyond the political and promote deep reflective thought. In addition, our paper also provides a language whereby to assess monuments as a form of representation. Finally, and most importantly, our paper provides ideas for educators on how to take this moment in history and reflect on its educational significance and move towards a stance on social justice. Our work on social justice complements the previous scholarship from Gloria Ladson-

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49. Elliot Eisner. "Curriculum ideas in a time of crisis" (1965).



Billings<sup>50</sup> and Paris and Alim<sup>51</sup> and lends itself to a culturally responsive and culturally sustaining pedagogies. Culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings), culturally responsive (Geneva Gay), and culturally sustaining (Paris and Alim) pedagogies speak to the importance of creating spaces where voices are heard and diverse perspectives are seen and valued.<sup>52</sup> They additionally speak to the importance of developing an inclusive environment and a sense of belonging in the classroom. By extension, when monuments (in the public outside of the classroom) are considered and included, the classroom has no bounds. The monuments' presence and absence represent shared spaces that speak to who is valued, whose voices are included or excluded, and how the general identity of the American student or public navigates these contested spaces. By looking at a framework for teaching critically about monuments, the focus transcends the anti-racist pedagogy into the critical and anti-racist curriculum.

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52. For an additional and related pedagogical model see the "perceptive pedagogies" in Christy et al. (2020). *Lesson planning with purpose: Five approaches to curriculum design*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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