

STATES OF JERSEY



JERSEY AND THE SLAVE TRADE (P.78/2020): THIRD AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 13th October 2020
by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade

STATES GREFFE

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (a) –

For the words “Benin Square” substitute the words –
“Trenton Lenape Square”.

DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as shareholder representative, to request the States of Jersey Development Company to rename Trenton Square as **Trenton Lenape Square**;
- (b) to request the Chief Minister to commission a report into establishing a permanent memorial which acknowledges Jersey’s part in the Slave Trade, to be presented to the States no later than 23rd August 2021;
- (c) to request the Chief Minister to commission, in conjunction with Jersey Heritage, the Jersey Community Relations Trust, Black Lives Matter Jersey and other potential stakeholders, an audit of all place names and memorials relating to former slave traders in Jersey, in order to inform work on understanding and explaining the full contribution of the slave trade to Jersey’s history, with the outcome of the audit to be presented to the States no later than 23rd August 2021.

REPORT

This amendment gives Members an alternative to the name ‘*Benin Square*.’ The new name would focus more on the lands of New Jersey itself and one of the indigenous peoples who inhabited New Jersey before their land was taken off them.

The new name 'Trenton-Lenape' does not do away with the links that St. Helier has sought to forge between itself and the Town of Trenton, but adds an extra element to it, which more completely signals the history of New Jersey and its original people. It also allows for links to be made with the Lenape and other native tribes of New Jersey.

As we know, the lands of North America were long inhabited by the Native American tribes, before their land was stolen or extorted off them, in most cases.

The earliest known inhabitants of the area, that is now called Trenton, were the Lenape Native Americans (also known as the Lenni-Lenape). Appropriately, the name means 'original people'. They had inhabited that area for some 10,000 years.

It is curious that many of us have (or had never) heard of the Lenape people (and I include myself in that category, until this year), given that we are supposedly taught from a young age in Jersey, about the history of New Jersey and its links to our island. Why were we not told about the original people of what became New Jersey, and how they were dealt with? It is because we were taught a selective and incomplete history. A victor's history. A white-washed history. A colonialist history.

Writing on the matter of the Lenape people, in the context of our current Jersey debate, Dr Stephanie Pratt - Associate Professor (Reader) of Art History (Plymouth University) – retired 2013, states:

“The mere act of gifting what was never one’s right to give is perhaps the first and gravest insult made to the peoples who already lived there. The continuing celebration of these originating events and those individuals who took part in them (often acts of land-grabbing, slaving and violence in order to take possession of the lands) is a negation of actual history. The Indigenous and other conquered or enslaved peoples who were involved in the creation of the present State of New Jersey are the untold parts of history.”

I believe we can learn a lot from the native Americans, not only about localism, but about reconnecting with nature and our natural environment.

I have attached the open letter sent by Kit Ashton to all States Members as Appendix 1 below. It provides useful background reading.

Financial and manpower implications

There are no significant financial and manpower implications arising from this proposition.

Appendix 1 - Open letter sent by Kit Ashton to all States Members

Hard work, bravery, and patriotism.

An open letter to the States of Jersey regarding proposition P.78-2020 'Jersey and the Slave Trade'.

Dear States Members,

No doubt this won't be the only email on the subject you will receive, but I felt that I may be able to offer certain insights that you might find helpful as I do have the privilege of a relatively rare perspective: I have spent the past three and a half years conducting in-depth research on Jersey culture and history as part of my PhD work. I felt that having received some funding for my university education from Jersey, which has led towards my doctorate (I'm currently funded by the UK tax-payer as it happens), this letter could be one way to 'give back'. Because some of what I have learned may be useful to States members in considering some of the complex matters of race and culture that you will be grappling with shortly. But I don't want to be just another 'white guy with opinions', so let me be the first to acknowledge that I am not an expert in critical race theory, and I'm not Black, so I am keen to emphasise the wisdom and experience of others in what I present below. I do not represent or speak for Black and Indigenous people in any way. But I continue to learn a lot from them, which is helping me to think more deeply and become a more rounded human being. In my research I have been lucky enough to be able to draw on some of the most significant scholarship that relates to the matter at hand, including many Black and Indigenous authors, but also relevant theory such as aesthetics and semiotics, so I'll try to draw some of these threads together for you as best I can. I am also keen to show why the issue of statues and monuments is so important, and certainly not something we can afford to ignore.

Perhaps the most practical aspect of this letter that will hopefully be of use is the beginnings of a framework which Jersey people in general, and the proposed monument audit commission in particular, could refer to in order to make more informed and fair critical judgements about local monuments, and what to do with them. The process by which you might apply such a framework is of course up for debate, though I will offer some thoughts on that too. So let's begin with the easy part and go over some useful ideas regarding aesthetics (how we evaluate creative works and the experiences they give us), and semiotics (how we understand the meanings of signs and messages).

I think the simplest place to begin is the semiotics of monuments. How do statues and other monuments come to have meaning? Bellentani and Panico¹ approach this by considering meanings from the perspective of the designers (who create the work) and the users (i.e. the public). Any 'text' or 'sign-vehicle' – in this case a monument – can be interpreted in different ways of course. Bellentani and Panico analyse this via four interrelated functions: 1) The cognitive function (“the kind of human knowledge monuments embody as well as the knowledge users have about the representations of monuments”), 2) the axiological function (“whether users value this knowledge positively or negatively”), 3) the emotional function (“which emotions and feelings monuments elicit”), and 4) the pragmatic function (“the practices of users within the space of monuments”)². So the meaning of a monument is not fixed but emerges in a

¹ Bellentani, Federico, and Mario Panico. 'The Meanings of Monuments and Memorials: Toward a Semiotic Approach'. *Punctum. International Journal of Semiotics* 2, no. 1 (31 July 2016): 28–46. <https://doi.org/10.18680/hss.2016.0004>.

² Idem. P.33

highly complex social experience initiated by the designers but occurring among the interpretants – the users. When people look at a monument they are having a holistic experience which is simultaneously embodied, cognitive, social, and aesthetic. The aesthetic elements of a work (the creative aspects of a text or signvehicle) link to ethics (beliefs, values, politics etc) in the course of the experience that we have when perceiving them. Creative works do this by giving us a particular kind of experience through which we engage our sense of self (our identities) and prior understanding of the world in that process of interpretation.

OK so that's the easy part. But why is this all so important? And how can we usefully apply these ideas to examples in Jersey?

The importance of course resides in the political nature of monuments, which can become socially problematic. Bellentani and Panico call these “hot” monuments³ - where meanings change over time, become contested, or indeed where the meanings are agreed but different ‘interpretive communities’ disagree on whether the values and ideas promoted are socially acceptable. Some clear examples of such shifting meanings would be what happened with certain Nazi monuments in Germany, or Stalinist monuments in post-Communist eastern Europe/the former USSR. It's not that every single associated structure was destroyed, but as the context changed key sites were dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Some things were symbolically destroyed, others were repurposed as memorials etc (e.g. Auschwitz). This was (and still is) a dynamic social process, with very real and sometimes high stakes. The consequences of not dealing with “hot” monuments properly can be obvious – violence and social discord – but they can also be damaging to societies in more subtle and ongoing ways. Whether that may be as a direct daily source of trauma, microaggression, and humiliation for victims; more widely in the form of reinforcing unspoken bias, erasure, and prejudice within a society; or even more widely in the form of the damage to the reputation and good standing of that society to outsiders.

One crucial consideration here is the priority of certain stakeholders who represent victims. Straightforward ‘polls’ and parish assemblies etc may not always be sensitive to the particular kinds of trauma that monuments can evoke for the people most affected by what they represent, some of which may be small minorities. A local example of this in Jersey would be the recommendation for a memorial garden in the wake of the Jersey Care Inquiry. A vital part of the public consultation process must be to listen carefully and take the perspectives of victims and their families very seriously in the design and implementation - i.e. due diligence. Taking the ‘heat’ out of a monument is therefore a process that inevitably requires dialogue, understanding, and proactive negotiation, working towards more harmonious or universally accepted interpretations. Of course, we won't always be able to find common ground and make everyone happy, but the challenge is to try as a society to find the most ethical balance.

So now we are moving towards a framework that we can practically use. We can analyse the four functions of monuments from the perspective of designers and users. Users themselves must be understood as diverse groups of interpretive communities which may include particular stakeholders that have a sensitive interest as victims or representatives of victims. And we can consider what kinds of dialogue and actions can work towards solutions.

³ Idem. P.34

Now let's begin to apply this framework to two examples in Jersey. First, Trenton Square. The 'designers' here are a combination of the government of Jersey (funders and commissioners), the architects and contractors (who made it), and the parish of St. Helier/Jersey Development Company (who named it, maintain it, and organised the twinning of St. Helier with Trenton). Arguably, a square without a name has a limited cognitive function but from the designers' perspective, once the name was given the cognitive function was to make a connection with New Jersey. It thus became the centrepiece around which a twinning relationship could be established, beginning with the inauguration that was attended by New Jersey politicians in 2019. Connétable Crowcroft hoped that "this small step may lead to all kinds of beneficial links between our Island and New Jersey in the future."⁴ The axiological and emotional functions were thus meant to be very positive, and a particular narrative was built around the potential social benefits of twinning. The pragmatic function of the square is straightforward: a green(ish) space in the public realm in which to meet and spend time, pass through, or even look at from within the surrounding buildings, and the agreeable aesthetic here lines up well with the intended social narrative of the twinning. So far so good.

But recent events have seen certain 'users' or interpretants amongst the public respond differently, when considering the notion that Trenton itself gets its name from William Trent, who was a prominent colonialist settler, merchant, and slave trader. Indeed, P.78-2020 proposes the square be renamed Benin Square, as an acknowledgement of slaves that were taken to New Jersey from Benin. In defense of the square's designers, the square wasn't named after the slave trader Trent, but Trenton, the capital of New Jersey. There are no current calls for the capital itself to be renamed – even from key stakeholders like the African American community of New Jersey⁵ – so if the association between Trent and Trenton is not so strong there, the question arises: is this worth jeopardising a potentially positive twinning relationship over? Personally, I think probably not, but the issue is not resolved there.

The 'dysphoria' (to use Bellantani and Panico's term) over the name is connected to the perceived lack of acknowledgement of Jersey's historical role in the morally objectionable colonialism of New Jersey which not only involved the enslavement of African American people, but the murder, abuse and displacement of Native American people (mainly the Lenni Lenape and Munsee nations in this case) in the theft of the land they had lived on for around 10,000 years. The legacies of these actions are still felt in the suffering of their Black and Indigenous descendants today (more details on that later). So in benefitting from an ongoing twinning relationship, above and beyond the historical benefits Jersey has already received via colonialism, there is a strong moral argument that suggests we should in fact turn the local dysphoria into an opportunity in the global fight against systemic racism. We can do this not by changing the name of the square I think, but by proactively building ongoing anti-racist activities into the twinning relationship. By fostering formal supportive connections with Lenni Lenape and Munsee nations, as well as specific African American organisations in Trenton our twinning relationship can be enriched. This could help reframe the axiological and emotional debate here in Jersey. I'll be writing to Connétable Crowcroft directly on this, but the important point is that we ought to begin an open-minded, empathetic, and creative dialogue here, and this is one potential way forwards.

⁴ States of Jersey, 'New Jersey Delegation Visits Jersey to Inaugurate Trenton Square in St Helier'. (<https://www.gov.je/News/2019/Pages/TrentonSquare.aspx>)

⁵ See also: <https://tonymusings.blogspot.com/2019/06/trenton-square-new-jersey-connection.html>

Now let's turn to a more emotive example – the statue of Sir George Carteret in St. Peter. Statues of historical figures are unique types of monument that do particular kinds of semiotic and aesthetic work (much of which we don't have room to discuss here). Statues venerate and celebrate significant individuals, but they also symbolise and point to certain values, ideas, and narratives that are associated with them; and they are a form of icon (both in semiotic terms and potentially in the wider figurative sense). Indeed, their major practical function is to serve as a 'sign-vehicle' to support the cognitive, axiological, and emotional functions intended by the designers who wish to convey such meanings, ideas, and feelings.

Once again the 'designers' here are really a combination of people including John Refault (Connétable of St. Peter in 2014 who came up with the idea and drove the project forwards), Laury Dizengremel (the sculptor, along with her technicians in China), those that were consulted and involved in the design process (including several historians, technical advisers, engravers, and a descendent of Carteret), and – possibly – some of the funders (other than John Refault himself who in his role as a Minister for Treasury and Resources managed to secure about 70% of the money from public funds), though it is unclear whether the private funders (who gave about 30%) had any real influence. The intended cognitive function of the designers is summarised by the Souvenir Booklet produced in 2014: "to recall and celebrate this prominent Jerseyman... and to recall the impact of his life, not only in Jersey, but in England, and ultimately New Jersey."⁶ Key facts presented here are Carteret's influential naval and political career (both locally and nationally), one of his international business exploits (being vice-president of the Hudson Bay Company), but most importantly his faithful adherence to the Royalist cause. According to the statue's plaque, Carteret was "a pivotal factor in the survival of the monarchy"⁷, largely via sheltering King Charles II during the English Commonwealth or 'Interregnum'. His faithfulness was recognised with royal favours and rewards including a silver gilt mace, property and lands in Cornwall, Devon, Carolina, and the land that subsequently became New Jersey. Aesthetically, the statue is meant to portray Carteret in an "imposing, thoughtful yet approving mood, as if he is aware that his statue is the catalyst for a rekindling of lost friendships between Jersey and New Jersey"⁸. Of course, being erected in 2014 the statue was timed to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the naming of New Jersey and establishment of Carteret's colony in 1664.

So the statue's booklet, plaques, inauguration ceremony, and public statements from John Refault and others since 2014 all paint a picture of a hugely significant figure in Jersey history who deserves to be permanently venerated with such a prominent statue, and indeed is apparently "a role model for youngsters".⁹ What kind of role model, one might wonder? It is clear that the designers' intentions from an axiological and emotional perspective are centred on the projection of a supremely positive image of an inspiring, dedicated, and somewhat heroic man who worked hard, acted bravely, and loved his country. So, hard work, bravery, and patriotism seem to be the central lessons Jersey youngsters are meant to take from this statue, and most of us would agree that these would be good lessons to learn.

However, once we consider the important perspectives of other interpretive communities and look a little deeper it soon becomes clear that the image that the

⁶ <https://decarteret.org.uk/2014/11/sir-george-de-carteret-statue-jersey-channel-islands-uk/attachment/90/>

⁷ <https://decarteret.org.uk/2014/11/sir-george-de-carteret-statue-jersey-channel-islands-uk/attachment/91/>

⁸ <https://decarteret.org.uk/2014/11/sir-george-de-carteret-statue-jersey-channel-islands-uk/attachment/92/>

⁹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-25650850>

designers have presented is not history. It is mythology. Once the cognitive function of the statue has changed by virtue of understanding a more rounded, more honest actual history of Carteret's life and his deeds, it is no surprise that for many people in our community (and beyond) the axiological and emotional functions of the statue are very much at odds with the designers' intentions. As we shall see, there are other sides to the story. I'm going to examine this via a process of listening some of those other voices, and critiquing the typical responses given in defense of the statue.

But first a little more historical context. A closer look at historical records reveals the less savoury narratives that were deliberately diminished and erased in the distorted, whitewashed 'history' told by the official narratives. As Bellentani and Panico discuss:

Political elites use monuments to represent their dominant worldviews in space. Consequently, monuments represent selective historical narratives focusing only on events and identities that are comfortable for political elites... whilst marginalizing what is discomfiting.¹⁰

Before we even get to Carteret's involvement in the slave trade and colonialism we can see the kind of man he was from the way he governed our island. Far from "governing firmly but objectively"¹¹ as claimed in the statue's souvenir booklet, Carteret was in fact a violent, volatile tyrant who treated the common people of Jersey with contempt, not to mention any notion of proper democracy. Even Balleine's history of Jersey, which is in itself a conservative telling of history, titles a chapter relating to the period unequivocally: "Sir George Carteret – Dictator".¹² In 1643, when he arrived in Jersey to take up his role as Bailiff and Lieutenant-Governor (and thus take the island back into Royalist hands), he required a military force. The majority of Jersey people at the time supported the Parliamentarians, so Carteret violently rounded the men up and made them to swear allegiance to the Crown, although "Sundry, however, absented themselves, and the common people attached little importance to his oath, because it was obtained by force."¹³ Women didn't get away lightly either - being put in stocks or imprisoned for talking out of line. He couldn't even bribe locals to help him retake Guernsey (and when you can't bribe Jersey men to attack Guernsey that really says something). He imprisoned and deported countless political enemies, seizing property and incomes, and would have killed them were it not for Parliamentarian threats of reprisals. One priest was imprisoned for eleven months for a political sermon. As local Royalist diary keeper Jean Chevalier noted: "The people's bodies were under control but their hearts had not been won",¹⁴ indeed eventually the public became "disgusted with him because of his taxes which he levied on the poor people who had been tired for a long time".¹⁵ Chevalier goes on:

The desertion of the Militia at the first opportunity seems to prove that the Royalist cause found little favour among ordinary islanders and that the government of Sir George Carteret inspired disgust. The arbitrary actions of this Governor and his extortions alienated the people and one finds that at the time

¹⁰ Bellentani and Panico, 2016, P.29

¹¹ <https://decarteret.org.uk/2014/11/sir-george-de-carteret-statue-jersey-channel-islands-uk/attachment/91/>

¹² Syvret, Marguerite, Joan Stevens, and George Reginald Balleine. Balleine's History of Jersey. Phillimore & Company, Limited, 2011. P121

¹³ Ibidem

¹⁴ Idem. P.124

¹⁵ [https://www.theislandwiki.org/index.php/Extracts_from_Chevalier%27s_diary_\(20/10/1651\)](https://www.theislandwiki.org/index.php/Extracts_from_Chevalier%27s_diary_(20/10/1651))

of his surrender he attempted to obtain money from his friends saying that it was to pay the soldiers, but they saw none of it.¹⁶

Women were put on trial for witchcraft, and some executed, which says a lot about Carteret's worldview.¹⁷ Carteret began to enrich himself by becoming an actual pirate (for six months), and then a privateer (an official pirate), mostly attacking Parliamentary ships (and yes of course those Parliamentarians were no angels themselves but on the basic idea of democracy you have to admit they had a point). Even fellow Royalists called Carteret a “reprobate”¹⁸ for his self-serving, unprincipled, and devious acts. When he lost Jersey once more in 1651 he cut a sweet deal for himself but left his friends and allies out to dry. There's plenty more 'bad press' if you keep looking but for time's sake I'll let you do your own research. He was certainly no hero.

Carteret's commitment to the Royalist cause was eventually to be rewarded, which brings us to slavery and colonialism. Many claim Carteret 'saved the monarchy' but again if you look closer the picture is more complex – what kind of monarchy did he save, and what was the true “impact of his life” in the end? There would have been no need to 'save' anything if Charles I had not rejected the Parliamentarians' proposals of a constitutional monarchy (much like the one we have today) so contemptuously. Indeed, he really lost his head on that one. So Carteret ended up saving Charles II – a corrupt and self-indulgent king who not only ended up founding the transatlantic slave trade but dissolving parliament altogether to make himself an absolute monarch. He is said to have been 'popular' in England but only after manoeuvring and rigging courts to exclude, exile or execute opponents. As Grabas points out:

Men like Berkeley and Carteret did not follow the exiled boy king for some altruistic love of monarchy. It was their hope that they would continue to profit from the patronage system that had served them so well for generations. Carteret would later be considered one of the wealthiest men in England.¹⁹

Ritchie puts it succinctly: “Berkeley and Carteret seemed to spend much of their time and influence working for the welfare of Berkeley and Carteret.”²⁰

Charles II had many lusts in life, but Carteret was driven by a lust for power and glory, leading him to his adventures in America, bringing slave labour from Africa. As you may know, he was one of the founders of the Company of Royal Adventurers into Africa, and then a member of and consultant to the brutal Royal African Company – the single most prolific trader of slaves, that transported tens of thousands of African people under Carteret's watch, killing thousands in the process. Carteret's son James was directly involved in taking slaves from Benin to New Jersey, and the company enjoyed a monopoly until 1698, trading slaves up until 1731. Added together, Carteret and his friend Berkeley were 'given' land almost twice the size of England (including Carolina) over which they were “granted the right of soil and the right to govern”.²¹ In turn, Carteret then gave additional access to land to New Jersey settlers for each additional

¹⁶ Ibidem

¹⁷ Syvret, Stevens, and Balleine, 2011, P.124

¹⁸ https://www.theislandwiki.org/index.php/Sir_George_Carteret_2

¹⁹ Grabas, Joseph A. *Owning New Jersey: Historic Tales of War, Property Disputes & the Pursuit of Happiness*. Arcadia Publishing, 2014

²⁰ Ritchie, Robert C. *The Duke's province: a study of New York politics and society, 1664-1691*. UNC Press Books, 2012. P.16

²¹ Grabas, 2014

slave they bought. So you can see he was very much a proactive and ambitious investor and participant in England's slave trade and colonial empire, adding to his personal wealth and influence in the process. European colonialism was beginning to profoundly reshape the modern world in the image of white supremacy,²² causing countless genocides that altogether dwarf the Nazi holocaust more than ten times over, leaving a legacy of incalculable devastation and systemic racism that is still with us today. Thus Carteret enthusiastically took part in some of the greatest cultural and moral crimes of human history. But let's not euphemise in abstract terms. As Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote:

All our phrasing—race relations, racial chasm, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, even white supremacy—serves to obscure that racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth. You must never look away from this. You must always remember that the sociology, the history, the economics, the graphs, the charts, the regressions all land, with great violence, upon the body.²³

And so we come to the heart of the matter, where we will need to listen very carefully to what members of our black community are saying. Indeed, to attempt to marginalise, patronise, or ignore these voices would not just be irresponsible and arrogant – it would of course be an act of racism in itself. We have seen examples of this in some of the public defences of the statue. Some have even ridiculed the idea of debating whether we ought to remove the statue or not – reducing the legitimate concerns of black and indigenous people to ‘snowflakes’ or comparing the idea to removing the Liberation Monument, as if Carteret’s connections to slavery are somehow ‘tenuous’. Not all of these comments were intended as acts of interpersonal racism as the authors were probably thinking of other targets – but it is in the forgetting, the not even contemplating black voices that systemic racism is revealed. These commentators may be examples of what Young calls 'unconscious perpetrators' of racism.²⁴

The following four statements are from black friends and acquaintances living in Jersey, some locally born, some not. The fact that three of them have chosen to remain anonymous is revealing in itself. I'm told that many black people worry about the repercussions of speaking up about racism in Jersey - and some of those who are not British citizens even fear losing their jobs and thus their visas if they rock the boat. This is truly shocking, and proves we have a lot of anti-racist work to do.

Here are the statements about the statue:

First contributor:

From a black person’s perspective when I look at George Carteret statue (I drive past it every day, several times a day) I don’t see an island’s benefactor that

²² See, amongst others: Aníbal Quijano (2007) COLONIALITY AND MODERNITY/RATIONALITY, *Cultural Studies*, 21:2-3, 168-178, DOI: 10.1080/09502380601164353; Walter D. Mignolo (2007) DELINKING, *Cultural Studies*, 21:2-3, 449-514, DOI: 10.1080/09502380601162647; and Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2007) ON THE COLONIALITY OF BEING, *Cultural Studies*, 21:2-3, 240-270, DOI: 10.1080/09502380601162548

²³ Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the world and me*. Text publishing, 2015. P.10 xxiv Young, Evelyn Y. "The four personae of racism: Educators’(mis) understanding of individual vs. systemic racism." *Urban Education* 46, no. 6 (2011): 1433-1460

²⁴ Young, Evelyn Y. "The four personae of racism: Educators’(mis) understanding of individual vs. systemic racism." *Urban Education* 46, no. 6 (2011): 1433-1460.

should be remembered for the good he has done to the island. I see yet again the statue of another person who ascended to great power and financial wealth on the back of slave trade. Many can talk about all the great things he has done for Jersey. But I only remember that he consciously supported England's slave industry during 1660s which in turn gave him access to political power. Did he facilitate and took part in the exploitation and destruction of human black lives for his and others like him personal material and political gain? Yes.

Do I believe his statute to be offensive and for that reason it should be removed? Yes.

Do I feel that Jersey should educate themselves further and understand why Carteret statue is so offensive to black people like myself and should have no place in this present time if Jersey truly wants to be seen as being part of this international human rights movement which supports and campaigns against systemic violence and racism towards black people? Yes.

Second contributor:

Belonging is all anyone and everyone ever desires. Whether it's in a community, a corporation or a prison. The George Carteret statue rapes this society of its unity, for all who lives here in Jersey. It serves no purpose! Stand up and against oppression! Peace be with you. And you. And you.

Third contributor:

Anyone who thinks a plaque is enough is naive, if the statues are not completely removed the least and probably the best thing that could possibly happen is to put them into a museum or at-least make some kind of move to turn them into a formal point of education on local history.

Fourth contributor, S. Stewart:

I believe that statues of people involved in the trade of enslaved people should not be sitting in pride of place in our community. Slavery was never acceptable. That excuse centres the beliefs of slave traders. The people whose lives were ruined never found it acceptable. This statue (and others like it) have no place in 2020. It certainly shouldn't be used as an opportunity to honour someone who doesn't deserve to be honoured and have his role in history whitewashed. If it does stay, information should be displayed giving a full and accurate representation of his reprehensible role in the slave trade. Any money that George Carteret contributed towards Jersey was money acquired and effectively stolen from the lives of people who were kidnapped and sold into slavery or killed. This isn't just a controversial bit of his story, his story is the story of ruined lives and a genocide against a race of people. Removing the statue doesn't erase history, it removes what the statue represents. I have found Jersey generally to be an inclusive community full of lovely people and this is a great opportunity for the island to pull together in the spirit of cohesion and rebuke the atrocities of the past.

Strong words indeed, which cannot be dismissed and must be considered with profound respect and self-reflection. Another black friend pointed out something that white

people will struggle to appreciate: that seeing a statue of a slave-trader so prominently displayed can contribute to racial trauma, which functions like PTSD (particularly for those who have experienced moderate or severe episodes of interpersonal racism). Here is a link to some important research on racial trauma, evidencing its psychological, emotional, and physiological effects: <https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2019-01033-001.html>. So whilst of course John Refault didn't set out to create a racist monument, it is now very clear that spending over £36,000 of public funds on such a statue without even a basic level of due diligence was a grave mistake.

But there is another perspective missing here too - that of Native American people. Even in critiques of the statue this aspect of colonialism is often overlooked, but of course the impact on the lives of Native Americans that were so brutally displaced to make way for European settlers was also tragic and permanent. Hiding under a veneer of respectability via the land being 'gifted' to Sir George Carteret, as well as the deceptive legal basis of 'ownership' prior to that, is the stark reality of what happened to the indigenous residents, and the shameful legacy of structural racism that continues to this day. As mentioned, Native American people had lived on this land for 10,000 years. They had no concept of land 'ownership' in the capitalist sense, so they were systematically murdered, forcibly displaced, tricked, and assimilated via enslavement and rape. Carteret would have been well aware of all of this of course - and took an active part at least in the violence. Judging by his dictatorship of Jersey people, who knows how badly he treated black and indigenous people. Indeed, it is worth thinking about how the scroll of parchment in the statue's hand - representing the grant of the land of New Jersey - might have been seen by the indigenous locals. In Native American cosmology it is common to ascribe spiritual power - or soul - to objects. Settlers would often angrily wave contracts about in disputes as if they have great power, and Native Americans could only imagine their significance. It is quite possible that Native Americans might have thought Carteret's grant perhaps contained some kind of curse - and of course in a sense they would be right. It contained the curse of colonialism. This violation and occupation of ancestral lands set into motion the cycles of abuse that destroyed a huge proportion of Native American culture, language, sacred traditions etc, hemming them into the appalling conditions of 'Reservations', forcibly 'educating' them into European modes of being. They were treated as sub-human, and the legacy of this is that many if not all Native American/Inuit and First Nations communities have suffered an extreme social and economic disadvantage, in spite of their resilience, often living in appalling poverty, beset by drug abuse, domestic violence and sexual trafficking; experiencing the phenomenon of some of their women, young people and LGBT+ members being murdered or missing with no recourse to the justice system. They are frequently victims of racist abuse, discrimination and police brutality. This is the legacy of colonialism, its long curse. This, along with the slave trade, is the price paid in blood and suffering for the fruitful cultural links between Jersey and New Jersey today.

I'm not aware of any Native American people living locally, but given the fact that the Carteret statue celebrates our connection with New Jersey of course we have a heightened responsibility to our friends across the pond. I wrote to the Nanticoke Lenape people²⁵ and also to Dr. Stephanie Pratt - a Native American scholar who has (amongst other things) specialised in European perceptions of Native American culture. Dr. Pratt sent me the following powerful statement:

²⁵ <https://nanticoke-lenape.info/>

Commentary on the case of Vice Admiral Sir George Carteret, 1st Baronet (c.1610—18 January 1680 N.S.) and his statue in Jersey, erected 2014 By Dr Stephanie Pratt* - Associate Professor (Reader) of Art History (Plymouth University) – retired 2013

***Disclaimer:** Dr Pratt is a Native American (Dakota) and Anglo-American scholar and consultant who has lived in the UK since 1985. She does not speak for any specific group of Indigenous North Americans but bases her comments on research and study of colonial North American history.

The example of Vice Admiral Sir George Carteret, 1st Baronet appointed one of the Lords Proprietors of 'New' Jersey in 1664 and personally gifted with acres of lands in North America by King Charles II, is an oft repeated one in the histories of North America's colonisation. Time after time, soldiers who fought in the North American colonial wars which took place over the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were gifted with the lands of those Indigenous peoples who they fought with violently to conquer. We might say for that era it was fair play, but was it truly fair? Indigenous peoples did all they could to stay ahead of the flow of intruders into their lands; and who wouldn't fight for their lands and lives? Today, we might not know that the specific communities who occupied and were keepers of Carteret's gifted land and all its life are the Lenni Lenape, Munsee and other nearby Indigenous American peoples, some of whose descendants are still living in the areas we now refer to as New Jersey, New York and Delaware. The mere act of gifting what was never one's right to give is perhaps the first and gravest insult made to the peoples who already lived there. The continuing celebration of these originating events and those individuals who took part in them (often acts of land-grabbing, slaving and violence in order to take possession of the lands) is a negation of actual history. The Indigenous and other conquered or enslaved peoples who were involved in the creation of the present State of New Jersey are the untold parts of history of which this statue to Carteret can never speak.

In fact, this statue does not tell a complete history at all. Its current interpretation on a plaque presents a very one-sided view of events and the consequences. It could do with a re-imagining of what all the Jersey population feel about their historical association with New Jersey. How do they wish to remember this era and the historical connections? When those who would support the maintaining of this monument to Carteret in Jersey claim that taking it down 'erases' history, I wonder what history they are referring to and whose history do they mean? What baffles me most about this recent project to memorialise this man is that they erased history to erect it. In 2014 and today, it is simply not justified to claim that the narrative gets to be told by the victorious. History needs to be told 'in the round' from all sides or as many as can be accommodated. It is no longer good enough to point to a few individuals and make them stand for the whole.

I agree wholeheartedly with Dr. Pratt. She raises some crucial questions and challenges we must consider. Given all of the above, it is sadly telling that many responses to the statue debate from certain people in Jersey were characterised by reactionary defensiveness based in pride, rather than empathetic listening based in humility. So here's a quick-fire round critiquing some of those defensive arguments:

1) "You can't erase history"

As we've seen this statue is not history but a gross distortion of the truth, and a shameful attempt at erasure in itself. As Sam Hitchmough wrote, regarding the decades-long movement addressing the myth of Columbus in America:

Physically pulling down a statue of Columbus does not erase him from history, it removes a symbol that publicly and officially celebrates a particular historical narrative... It is clearly no longer acceptable to nationally honour a man who represents a celebratory settler narrative that continues to ignore indigenous histories.²⁶

We should not be afraid of a more honest examination of Jersey history and our very selves, for as the great African-American intellectual W.E.B DuBois once wrote "There is but one coward on earth, and that is the coward that dare not know."²⁷

2) "Why should we judge historical figures by the values of today? Slavery and colonialism were the norm back then."

Dr. Matthew Sweet had a great point when he said this is "absolutely the wrong question. We should use history to judge the morals of today."²⁸ The way we understand, deal with, represent, and learn from history says a lot about who we are and what our values are now. Slavery and colonialism were of course despised by the communities that were destroyed by them - do those voices mean nothing? Why should we look at history through the eyes of the oppressor? But even in England there were many dissenters in the 1600s who were against all forms of slavery, including working-class and progressive Christian movements like The Diggers, The Levellers, and some Quakers.²⁹ What we can say is that it was 'the norm' for wealthy elites to rationalise the slave trade by using church doctrine³⁰ that designated Africans and indigenous people as subhuman - 'the wretched of the earth'.³¹ Sir George Carteret would have followed his peers in this belief and thus he was obviously profoundly racist. If we ignore black and indigenous voices and just leave the statue as is, what would that say about our society?

3) "It's just a statue. Get over it. Moving it isn't doing anything for black people".

As we've seen from the above statements from our black community - dealing with the statue is the only real way to 'get over it' properly. This would send an important message that we are antislavery, anti-colonialism, and anti-racist.

4) "How is this helping starving Africans today? What about modern-day slavery?"

As Professor David Olusoga points out this bad faith argument is often just "a convenient way of trying to stop black people talking about their history".³² Of course we don't have to choose between playing a responsible role in addressing the ongoing

²⁶ <https://theconversation.com/columbus-statues-are-coming-down-why-he-is-so-offensive-to-native-americans141144>

²⁷ Du Bois, William Edward Burghardt, and Henry Louis Gates Jr. *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept: The Oxford WEB Du Bois, Volume 8. Vol. 8.* Oxford University Press on Demand, 2007. P.32

²⁸ Sweet, M. <https://twitter.com/drmattthewsweet/status/1270713793383817219>

²⁹ See, amongst others: Di Lorenzo, Anthony, and John Donoghue. "Abolition and Republicanism Over the Transatlantic Long Term, 1640-1800." *La Révolution française. Cahiers de l'Institut d'histoire de la Révolution française* 11 (2016), and 'Quakers in the Abolition Movement' https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quakers_in_the_abolition_movement

³⁰ Cannon, Katie Geneva. "Christian imperialism and the transatlantic slave trade." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 24, no. 1 (2008): 127-134.

³¹ Fanon, Frantz. "Les damnés de la terre, préface de J." P. Sartre, Paris (1961)

³² <https://twitter.com/DavidOlusoga/status/1280982954026680320>

inequities of global systemic racism and exploitation (which Carteret helped establish) on the one hand, and getting our own house in order at home. We can and should do both because they are profoundly connected. Let's not be hypocrites - we should fight racism everywhere at all times, which is a process that begins in our own hearts.

5) "This is all ancient history. Why drag it all up?"

Again, as we've seen this is a very real daily issue for people in Jersey. The statue was erected in 2014 so it's hardly ancient history. Indeed, this recent statue actually drags up the past in itself. If someone wanted to insult the growing Black population of Jersey the Carteret statue would be one way to do it. And if you need specific examples of Carteret's contemporary legacy of systemic racism look no further than New Jersey itself. The median net worth for white families is \$352,000, the highest net wealth in America. But it is just \$6,100 for New Jersey's Black families.³³ Yes you read that right - six thousand one hundred dollars. Black people fare worse by all common measures of structural racism: wealth and income, education, health, criminal justice, housing etc.³⁴ Native Americans across the USA are also in the worst category by these same measures.³⁵ There is a very obvious reason for this: the structural racism that Carteret and other colonialists established. Our twinning relationship therefore suddenly takes on a new dimension of responsibility - to support anti-racist work in New Jersey today.

6) "It's a parish matter, let the Connétable decide."

The fact that over £36,000 of public funds were spent without public knowledge or consent - and without even the minimum of due diligence - makes this an all island issue. Especially when we consider the fact the statue is in a prominent position on a main road which most islanders pass regularly (indeed that's the point of why it's there). Furthermore, this affects our international reputation and of course the 'bottom line' - in recent years Jersey has been building business links with Africa, and as one 2014 report from Capital shows, those links are already significant:

We estimate that only between 1.0 and 1.8 per cent of stock into Jersey comes from African clients. This equates to between £11.4 billion and £20.5 billion, although given our survey methodology, we suspect that it is towards the lower end of this range.³⁶

We have a responsibility in these relationships to be actively decolonial - a huge challenge which few have begun to grapple with in Jersey. What would our new African business partners make of our statue to slave-trader, colonialist, and dictator Sir George Carteret? This is far more than a parish matter.

7) "It's impossible to know where to draw the line. What's next, the Royal Mace?"

As I've shown, a semiotic approach, coupled with sensitive dialogue and community consultation can serve as a practical framework which an audit commission can apply

³³ www.njsj.org/closing_nj_s_shameful_wealth_gap_between_whites_people_of_color

³⁴ <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2020/06/black-community-leaders-make-black-lives-really-matter-in-newjersey.html>

³⁵ Findling, Mary G., Logan S. Casey, Stephanie A. Fryberg, Steven Hafner, Robert J. Blendon, John M. Benson, Justin M. Sayde, and Carolyn Miller. "Discrimination in the United States: Experiences of Native Americans." *Health services research* 54 (2019): 1431-1441

³⁶ 'Jersey's Value to Africa: The role for international financial centres in delivering sustainable growth in developing countries', A report by Capital Economics for Jersey Finance, November 2014. P.68.

on a case-by-case basis. The mace has much greater historical, ceremonial, aesthetic, and material value, and does not directly depict Carteret or any other slave trader, so it is less offensive. I'd guess it's pretty safe, but that's not for me to decide. We should not be afraid of taking an honest look around once in a while.

But as with Trenton Square, there may be creative solutions that can bring some cognitive, axiological, and emotional balance to the situation with the statue of Carteret. I recently heard about one potential creative compromise with the statue which the commission could consider: move it to the Maritime Museum, where Carteret's remarkable Naval career and other achievements can be put in proper historical context, along with the problematic aspects of his life. That would be one possible solution that might take the "heat" out of the situation. Just leaving it in such a prominent place, even with an edited plaque, will not suffice. Whatever happens, we have a responsibility to act with wisdom and compassion.

As the author Dwayne Reed recently said: "White supremacy won't die until White people see it as a White issue they need to solve rather than a Black issue they need to empathize with."³⁷ Indigenous scholars such as Anibal Quijano, Walter D. Mignolo, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres, have revealed the profound ways in which European Colonialism still structures the way we think and act - including how we categorise beings and things (ontology), and how we view the world and make knowledge (epistemology). Other writers like Frantz Fanon, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs have shown how our ideologies of language have been shaped by colonial thinking, with tragic consequences (one culprit being philosopher John Locke - a contemporary of Carteret and fellow investor in slavery, by the way).³⁸ These combined effects are called 'coloniality', and I'm afraid Jersey is steeped in it, as we've seen in the statue fiasco. It's time we reckon with our past and do some real work on our present. The poet Wisława Szymborska once wrote a poem called 'In Praise of Feeling Bad about Yourself' which contained this striking final stanza:

*On this third planet of the sun
among the signs of bestiality
a clear conscience is number one.*³⁹

Not that we should wallow in guilt here, but instead recognise our historical failures and current responsibility to act, for if we do not then we are complicit in the perpetuation of injustice. Maria Tumarkin described this well when she said that "guilt is to responsibility (and change) what pity is to love—a pathetic substitute."⁴⁰ And as Professor David Olusoga says, "statues are a symptom of the problem, not the problem itself. The real conversation has to be about racism and how we confront it."⁴¹ If Martin Luther King was right to claim that "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends

³⁷ <https://twitter.com/TeachMrReed/status/1268559506809786368>

³⁸ See: Fanon, Frantz. *Frantz Fanon: Black skin, white mask*. San Francisco, Cal.: California Newsreel, 1995; Wa Thiong'o, Ngũgĩ. *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. East African Publishers, 1992; and Bauman, Richard, Charles L. Briggs, and Charles S. Briggs. *Voices of modernity: Language ideologies and the politics of inequality*. No. 21. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

³⁹ <http://www.unbearablebookishness.com/2016/12/poetry-for-dark-times-szymborskas-in.html>

⁴⁰ Tumarkin, Maria M. *Traumascapes: The power and fate of places transformed by tragedy*. Melbourne Univ. Publishing, 2005. P.93

⁴¹ Olusoga, D. 'The 'statue wars must not distract us from a reckoning with racism'. <https://bit.ly/2BNlzRv>

toward justice”⁴² then we must accept the challenge to play our part, however painful. It's time to take a long hard look in the mirror. Derrick Johnson, president of the NAACP recommends a threestep process to fight systemic racism. We must acknowledge that racism actually exists, get involved with organizations that are fighting it, and finally elect leaders and policy makers who won't reinforce or support structurally racist policies.⁴³ If our current States members are such leaders, then supporting proposition P.78-2020 would be a good start in proving it. We should also move towards better community education, proper research and action on racism reporting and responses, as well as institutional reviews, and potential official apologies and reparations for starters. If you want an example par excellence of a museum and education centre that deals with sensitive racial and historical issues then take a look at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture for inspiration.⁴⁴ I heartily agree with Gurminder K Bhambra in stating that “a mature political community addresses historical wrongs by recognizing and acting upon the just claims of others. In the process, it tackles the contemporary inequalities that flow from those histories and comes to a more expansive self-understanding.”⁴⁵ Indeed, if we fail to do this we are diminished as a society. Angela Davis was right to remind us that, "it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist.”⁴⁶

It is vitally important that the States assembly is unified to do something positive and support proposition P.78-2020 (perhaps with an amendment on the name of Trenton Square). If we care about our island with an inclusive patriotism that genuinely loves the community of Jersey, rather than an exclusive nationalism that elevates some above others, then we should be brave enough to acknowledge where we have got things wrong, followed by doing the hard practical work of putting things right.

So - hard work, bravery, and patriotism. Are we really ready to live up to these ideals? As we say in Jèrriais, "La fin du temps f'tha tout vaie" - time will tell...

Yours sincerely,

Kit Ashton

As an open letter, this letter will be published online. Huge thanks to all the contributors to this letter, and other friends who helped me edit it.

Error note: Constable John Refault was not an Assistant Minister at the Treasury at the time that the funding of the statue was secured.

⁴² Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution.” National Cathedral, speech, 31/3/68

⁴³ <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2020/06/15/systemic-racism-what-does-mean/5343549002/>

⁴⁴ <https://nmaahc.si.edu/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/opinion/edward-colston-statue-racism.html>

⁴⁶ <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>

Appendix 2 – Background information

The Lenape have three clans, each of which historically had twelve sub-clans:

- Wolf, *Tùkwsit*
 - Big Feet, *Mä an'greet*
 - Yellow Tree, *Wisawhìtkuk^l*
 - Pulling Corn, *Pä-sakun'a'-mon*
 - Care Enterer, *We-yar-nih'kä-to*
 - Across the River, *Toosh-war-ka'ma*
 - Vermillion, *O-lum'-a-ne*
 - Dog standing by fireside, *Pun-ar'-you*
 - Long Body, *Kwin-eek'cha*
 - Digging, *Moon-har-tar'ne*
 - Pulling up Stream, *Non-har'-min*
 - Brush Log, *Long-ush-har-kar'-to*
 - Bringing Along, *Maw-soo-toh*

- Turtle, *Pùkuwàнку*
 - Ruler, *O-ka-ho'-ki*
 - High Bank Shore, *Ta-ko-ong'-o-to*
 - Drawing Down Hill, *See-har-ong'-o-to*
 - Elector, *Ole-har-kar-me'kar-to*
 - Brave, *Ma-har-o-luk'-ti*
 - Green Leaves, *Toosh-ki-pa-kwis-i*
 - Smallest Turtle, *Tung-ul-ung'-si*
 - Little Turtle, *We-lung-ung-sil*
 - Snapping Turtle, *Lee-kwin-a-i'*
 - Deer, *Kwis-aese-kees'to*

- Turkey, *Pële*
 - Big Bird, *Mor-har-ä-lä*
 - Bird's Cry, *Le-le-wa'-you*
 - Eye Pain, *Moo-kwung-wa-ho'ki*
 - Scratch the Path, *Moo-har-mo-wi-kar'-nu*
 - Opossum Ground, *O-ping-ho'-ki*
 - Old Shin, *Muh-ho-we-kä'-ken*
 - Drift Log, *Tong-o-nä-o-to*
 - Living in Water, *Nool-a-mar-lar'-mo*
 - Root Digger, *Muh-krent-har'-ne*
 - Red Face, *Mur-karm-huk-se*
 - Pine Region, *Koo-wä-ho'ke*
 - Ground Scratcher, *Oo-ckuk'-ham*

Reference <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lenape#Territory>



[Lenape - Wikipedia](#)

Traditional Lenape lands, the Lenapehoking, was a large territory that encompassed the Delaware Valley of eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey from the north bank Lehigh River along the west bank Delaware then south into Delaware and the Delaware Bay. Their lands also extended west from western Long Island and New York Bay, across the Lower Hudson Valley in New York into the lower Catskills and ...

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