

Notable quotations from Mayor Garcetti's Civic Memory Working Group Report, 2021

"We have for far too long in Los Angeles accepted a comfortable amnesia when it comes to reckoning with some of the most fraught aspects of our history"--Eric Garcetti.

"We do not suffer from a forgetting of normative history but from a systematic erasure of the history of oppression and resistance. We do not need any more statues. Let's not ask for marble or metal to fill those pedestals. Let's climb up on them and tell our own stories of survival and liberation."--Paul B. Preciado, translated from Spanish by Michelle Faguet.

"None of these should be perceived as fixed, static sites of history and memorial. Instead, they represent an opportunity to understand and reveal the dynamics and multifaceted strategies of power, as well as strategies of resistance, survival, and resilience. An effort to embrace civic memory will be most effective if it grows carefully from processes with the capacity to activate serious and frank discussion, truth-telling, and reconciliation."--Subcommittee 3

"Develop strategies to recontextualize outdated or fraught memorials as an alternative to removal—although removal will, in certain cases, remain the best option."--Among the key recommendations from the Civic Memory Working Group.

"There are many reasons to be wary of any act of memorialization that seeks to give any one perspective some eternal power, that surrounds any given memorial with an aura of imagined permanence. The future deserves to find our era's monuments—if they find them at all—malleable or elastic, able to be reimagined and rethought as perspectives on the past inevitably evolve."--Civic Memory Working Group, Subcommittee 1, chaired by William Deverell, Professor of History at USC.

"On a related note, when decisions are made to remove a certain monument or memorial, should the City consider, for a variety of reasons, allowing for partial removal? Might memorial ruins become sites for a kind of contemplation distinct from the moment when this or that commemorative piece was erected or enacted?"--Civic Memory Working Group, Subcommittee 1.

"The guiding principles behind all such models should be to challenge conventional notions of monumentality; to counter dominant traditions that fortify white supremacy and condone misrepresentation and cultural erasure; and to avoid top-down interpretations that are "fixed and fearful" (a phrase used by historians to describe how national parks have often watered down interpretation and been reluctant to change narratives once in place)."--Subcommittee 3: Process, chaired by Danielle Brazell.

"One axis in this conversation is about greater inclusivity—that is what Wendy and Brenda talked at length about. The other axis is about entities like the City of Los Angeles being willing to come to terms with the ravages of white supremacy, and to think about how to interrogate existing memorials or to create new memorials that actually begin to unspool these violent, supremacist legacies. Some things should be torn down, but I think there are ways we might productively leave old monuments in the landscape and consider ways to augment them to provoke education in another way."--David Torres-Rouff

"8. Monuments' afterlife. The meaning of a monument is neither singular nor static. Meaning changes as social, political, and financial contexts shift. As we trust artists to strategize and envision new monuments, so too should we invite them to intervene to reimagine existing ones. A monument is by nature didactic and presents an educational and artistic opportunity throughout its lifetime, including its potential removal. Perhaps a sunset clause or reevaluation milestone should be built into new commissions. A rigorous consideration around if, when, and how monuments are removed or "retired" should be included in any civic memory monument project."--Subcommittee 5