

Book review

The New York Times' 1619 Project and the Racist Falsification of History: A significant political and intellectual event

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The New York Times' 1619 Project and the Racist Falsification of History: Essays and Interviews. David North and Thomas Mackaman, eds. Mehring Books, 2021. Pp. xxvi, 339; 28 plates. \$24.95

The falsification of a society's history is a tyrant's weapon. As are mythologies of blood. In its ongoing mission to disorient and divide the American working class, the *New York Times* has wielded both these weapons with its 1619 Project, which asserts that the "true founding" of the United States dates back to the year the first African slaves arrived in Virginia rather than to 1776, the year of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

The 1619 Project debuted as a special edition of the *New York Times Magazine* in August of 2019. Promoted by the *Times* as "ongoing," the project originally consisted of 14 essays, including the lead essay by project founder and *Times* journalist Nikole Hannah-Jones, titled "Our democracy's founding ideals were false when they were written. Black Americans have fought to make them true," for which the author was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for commentary.

The common themes of the 1619 Project are that race is the primary division in American society, that anti-black racism "runs in the very DNA of this country," and that African Americans have been the sole progressive force in US history. For Hannah-Jones and her co-essayists, the American Revolution was actually a counterrevolution meant to establish a slavocracy, and the Civil War, the second American revolution, in which some 750,000 soldiers died and which ended chattel slavery in the US, was of no historical significance. Hundreds of thousands of copies of the 1619 Project have been distributed to school districts to be incorporated into high school curricula.

Yet, despite its demonstrably false claims, reactionary politics and deployment in the schools, the 1619 Project has faced serious criticism from only one source—the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS). The intervention of the WSWS against the 1619 Project, which began in the first week of September 2019, drew widespread media attention. It ultimately destroyed the credibility of the *Times'* "new historical narrative," though as a money-making venture and political project, the 1619 Project continues.

The release of *The New York Times' 1619 Project and the Racist Falsification of History* (Mehring Books, 2021), which collects the WSWS's writings on the 1619 Project into a single volume, is a significant political and intellectual event. The book is a powerful collection of essays, lectures, polemics, and articles, as well as eight interviews with world-renowned scholars of American history. The collective force of this material yields an irrefutable debunking of the racist and ahistorical foundations of the 1619 Project.

The volume begins with a trenchant foreword, penned by North, exposing both the ubiquity and reactionary character of identity politics within contemporary academia. This is followed by a section entitled "Historical Critique of the 1619 Project," which includes the WSWS's initial reply to the 1619 Project, written by North, Thomas Mackaman and Niles Niemuth, and then three lectures delivered at the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus in October and November of 2019 by Mackaman, Eric London, and Joseph Kishore. Next comes a section dedicated to interviews with leading historians, including James McPherson and Gordon Wood, and sections titled "Polemics," "Historical Commentary," and "The Crisis of the New York Times' 1619 Project," a series of articles on the evasive and disingenuous defenses the *Times* undertook as a result of the WSWS's exposures. The book concludes with an afterword on "Trump's 1776 Travesty," the former administration's opportunistic, right-wing response to the 1619 Project.

The Racist Falsification of History trains its fire on the first two essays in the 1619 Project, the lead essay by Hannah-Jones and an essay by Princeton sociologist Matthew Desmond titled "In order to understand the brutality of American capitalism, you have to start on the plantation." One would like to see more on other pieces in the 1619 Project—essays like journalist Trymaine Lee's "A vast wealth gap, driven by segregation, redlining, evictions and exclusion, separates black and white America" or the self-contradictory "For centuries, black music has been the sound of artistic freedom. No wonder everybody's always stealing it" by the *Times'* critic-at-large Wesley Morris.

But by concentrating on Hannah-Jones' and Desmond's essays, the WSWS writers and the historians they interview undermine the foundations of the remainder of the 1619 Project, namely its concepts of monolithic "black" and "white" Americas and its blinkered, anti-Enlightenment approach to history, culture and humanity. At 339 pages, *The Racist Falsification of History* can hardly be accused of lacking thoroughness on these fundamental points. From beginning to end the volume is characterized by objectivity and historical accuracy.

The same cannot be said of the *Times*. Hannah-Jones even admitted on Twitter that "the 1619 Project is not a history." It is rather "about who gets to control the national narrative, and, therefore, the nation's shared memory of itself." North, chairman of the International Editorial Board of the WSWS, underlines the destructive aim of such an approach to history in his foreword to the volume:

In this remark, Hannah-Jones explicitly extols the separation of historical research from the effort to truthfully reconstruct the past.

The purpose of history is declared to be nothing more than the creation of a serviceable narrative for the realization of one or another political agenda. The truth or untruth of the narrative is not a matter of concern.

In the racialization of “the narrative,” of which the 1619 Project is only one instance, North sees dire political consequences:

Under the influence of postmodernism and its offspring, “critical race theory,” the doors of American universities have been flung wide open for the propagation of deeply reactionary conceptions. Racial identity has replaced social class and related economic processes as the principal and essential analytic category.

With gathering force, North exposes the absurdity to which academia now stoops in its thrall to racialism, exposing bestselling “public intellectual” Ibram X. Kendi’s racist reading of the word “Enlightenment” (“the connection between lightness and Whiteness”) with a simple lesson in etymology, and finding similar irrationalist forays in the fields of music and even physics. Practitioners of such racist “scholarship” are, in North’s words, “loitering in the ideological territory of the Third Reich.”

Because they bring a genuinely Marxist perspective to bear on the arguments of the same two essays, the four chapters of the “Historical Critique” section of the book frequently harmonize, sometimes echo (for instance, Hannah-Jones’ revealing “DNA” metaphor is addressed by each writer in the section), but never repeat. The essays in this section are all distinctive, cogent analyses of particular aspects of the 1619 Project’s foundation, and all bring scholarship to bear on their topics.

In the first essay of the section, North, Mackaman, and Niemuth lay out the framework of the WSWS’s critique: its exposure of the racist nature of the 1619 Project, its defense of the American Revolution and Civil War as progressive undertakings in American history, and its analysis of the reactionary politics within and behind the Project. In the process, the authors adduce in the space of 14 pages—in addition to Karl Marx, James P. Cannon and Leon Trotsky—no fewer than six professional historians, often representing these historians in full-paragraph quotations.

By contrast, Hannah-Jones, whose pretension is to rewrite much of US history, makes only a couple of passing references to scholars: once to a sociologist and once to a trio of legal historians. The absence of evidence is not accidental. Assessing Hannah-Jones’ method, the WSWS authors note, “The invocation of ‘white racism’ takes the place of any concrete examination of the economic, political, and social history of the country” and that she provides “no examination of the historical context, foremost the development of the class struggle ...”

As in all the essays in this section, the WSWS authors’ argument is carefully constructed and rich in supporting materials. It is impossible to do it justice here, but one point of stress is Hannah-Jones’ obliviousness to politics in history. “There is no accounting for the role played in stoking up race hatred by the Democratic Party, a union of Northern industrialists and machine politicians wed to Southern slave masters before the Civil War and Jim Crow politicians after it,” the authors observe.

The authors also point out that in Hannah-Jones’ account of American history, which purports to place the experience of African Americans “at the center,” no mention is made of Martin Luther King Jr. As the authors state, King’s “statement following the murders of the three young civil rights workers in 1964 ... (two of whom were white), was an impassioned condemnation of racism and segregation. King clearly does not fit into

Hannah-Jones’s narrative.” This is because “King did not condemn the American Revolution and the Civil War. He did not believe that racism was a permanent characteristic of ‘whiteness.’ He called for the integration of blacks and whites, and set as his goal the ultimate dissolution of race itself.” King’s dream stands as anathema to the new segregationists like Hannah-Jones.

An analysis of the 1619 Project’s interpretation of the American Revolution is provided by Mackaman, the book’s co-editor, in his contribution, “Slavery and the American Revolution.” Noting Hannah-Jones’ claim about white racism being encoded “in the very DNA of this country” and her assertions that slavery is America’s “original sin” and “the root of the endemic racism that we still cannot purge from this nation to this day,” Mackaman asserts that white racism, “whether ordained by God or genetic code,” “serves, for the 1619 Project as history’s *deus ex machina*. There is no need to consider questions long placed at the center of historical inquiry: cause and effect, contingency and conflict, human agency, and change over time. History is simply a morality tale written backward from 2019.”

In this morality tale, the *New York Times* and Hannah-Jones decry the American Revolution and its egalitarian and rationalist ideals as the “founding mythology,” with Hannah-Jones claiming that “one of the primary reasons the colonists decided to declare their independence from Britain was because they wanted to protect the institution of slavery.” Hannah-Jones cites no documentary evidence in support of this claim. Hannah-Jones has, however, since the publication of the 1619 Project, acknowledged that one of her sources for the idea that the American Revolution was an attempt on the part of the colonists to preserve the institution of slavery was the book *The Counter-Revolution of 1776* by Gerald Horne, a professor of history and African American Studies at the University of Houston. In a recent review on the WSWS, Fred Schlegel painstakingly decimates Horne’s book not only as shoddy scholarship but, to put it bluntly, a pack of lies.

By contrast, Mackaman’s essay places the American Revolution in its time and place, making this salient point:

Like other great revolutions—including the French Revolution of 1789 that it helped inspire, and later, the Russian Revolution of 1917—the American Revolution fused the most advanced political thought with economic conditions that had reached sufficient maturity to make the overthrow of an old order both possible and, from an objective standpoint, necessary.

WSWS writer Eric London (“The ‘Irrepressible Conflict’: Slavery, the Civil War, and America’s Second Revolution”) takes up the question of the 1619 Project’s virtual dismissal of the Civil War. He pays special attention to “the Democratic Party and its history, its use of racial politics—today and in the decades leading up to the Civil War.” London pursues these matters as they appear in Hannah-Jones’ and Matthew Desmond’s essays. His defense of Abraham Lincoln as a progressive figure in world history, contra the *Times*’ portrayal of a racist who drafted the Emancipation Proclamation merely as a military expedient, includes this fine sentence:

Fifteen years after Cavaignac in 1848 suppressed the Paris workers in blood and eight years before Thiers in 1871 would do the same to the Commune, Abraham Lincoln sat at his desk and wrote that four million human beings—with a market price of billions of dollars in today’s money—were “Thenceforth and forever free.”

In writing about the racial politics of the Democratic Party, London gives extensive consideration to the poor whites of the South. For Hannah-Jones and the *Times*, all whites, North and South, supported and benefited from slavery. Northern whites prior to the Civil War, and certainly abolitionists, do not figure in her history except under the vilified category “white people.” As London asserts, the *Times*’ use of this category “as unified in support of slavery is an insult to the heroism of many who gave their lives for the cause of abolition.” Concerning poor whites in the South, London cites historian David Williams’ book *Bitterly Divided: The South’s Inner Civil War* and historian Victoria Bynum’s book *The Free State of Jones*, books that detail unionist rebellions among poor and yeoman-class whites within the Confederacy. London demolishes Hannah-Jones’ and the *Times*’ fiction of a politically and socially cohesive white South.

London does away with the claim that all whites benefited from slavery and the Democrats’ Jim Crow segregation by pointing out that segregation drove down wages for all workers. More importantly, and again from an objective historical perspective, London makes this observation:

In a larger sense, regardless of what an individual poor white person thought (and racism was not the sole property of the rich), the Jim Crow system did not provide the majority of whites with “privilege” because segregation ultimately blocked the development of a united movement from below, which was the only thing that could have improved the living conditions of all workers and farmers.

The final essay of the section, “Race, Class, and Socialism,” by Joseph Kishore, the national secretary of the Socialist Equality Party in the US, is a concise analysis of the *Times*’ careful exclusion of the category of class in the 1619 Project, and locates this exclusion in a history of the Democratic Party and identity politics. Kishore pointedly identifies the *Times*’ insistence on the immutable categories of race and white racism with a rejection of Enlightenment thought and an affinity for reactionary politics:

Indeed, the irrationalist, anti-Enlightenment, anti-Marxist, and anti-working-class perspective developed over the past half century has brought the pseudo-left into increasing alignment with the conceptions and politics of the far right.

It is necessary for Hannah-Jones and the *Times* to ignore huge swaths of American history “and cover up the profound social and political developments that transformed the freed slaves into a critical section of the working class. ... In the *Times*’ account there simply is no working class. The word ‘class’ does not make an appearance ...” Kishore provides ample historical evidence to explode the *Times*’ contention that all of American history can be reduced to a conflict between “white Americans” and “black Americans,” terms that appear in various forms nearly 100 times in Hannah-Jones’ essay, as Kishore points out. Kishore also discusses the crucial role of the Russian Revolution—also not mentioned by the 1619 Project. This world-historical event “profoundly influenced a layer of black intellectuals, artists, and militants in the 1920s, associated with the ‘Harlem Renaissance,’” he writes.

Deepening the historical analyses of the volume, the eight interviews with scholars are conducted at a high intellectual level and are a pleasure to read: Victoria Bynum, James McPherson, James Oakes, Gordon Wood,

Adolph Reed Jr., Richard Carwardine, Clayborne Carson, and Dolores Janiewski. All of the historians impress with their ready knowledge, the circumspection of their claims, and their provision of concrete evidence. Six of the eight interviews were conducted by Mackaman. These read as intellectually bristling conversations, not a series of questions read off a card, Mackaman’s erudition keeping pace at every step with his interlocutor.

It is impossible to give justice to the breadth and depth of these interviews, but a few excerpts give a sense of their overall quality:

- Victoria Bynum, on the uses of race and racism in history:

[C]reating a biracial society has also historically enabled those in power to destroy interracial class alliances among oppressed peoples. Whether it be Bacon’s Rebellion in 1676, Reconstruction during the 1870s, labor struggles in the 1930s, or the civil rights movement of the 1950s, interracial alliances have been crushed time and again through the exploitation of racism.

- Gordon Wood, on the impact of the American Revolution’s destruction of indentured servitude on the institution of slavery:

The elimination of servitude suddenly made slavery more conspicuous than it had been in a world of degrees of unfreedom. The antislavery movements arose out of these circumstances. As far as most Northerners were concerned, this most base and despicable form of unfreedom must be eliminated along with all the other forms of unfreedom. These dependencies were simply incompatible with the meaning of the Revolution.

- James McPherson, on racism and anti-racism in American history:

But the idea that racism is a permanent condition, well that’s just not true. And it also doesn’t account for the countervailing tendencies in American history as well. Because opposition to slavery, and opposition to racism, has also been an important theme in American history.

- James Oakes, on the 1619 Project’s minimization of the Civil War:

From our perspective, for someone who thinks about societies in terms of the basic underlying social relations of production or social property relations, the radical overthrow of the largest and wealthiest slave society in the world is a revolutionary transformation.

- Richard Carwardine, on the 1619 Project’s portrayal of Lincoln as a racist:

It’s not too much to say that Lincoln was a civil rights martyr. John Wilkes Booth shot him soon after hearing him propose, in what would be his final speech, full citizenship—with voting rights—for very educated blacks and those who had fought for the Union. Booth declared, “That means nigger citizenship. Now, by

God! I'll put him through."

- Adolph Reed Jr. on the politics of the 1619 Project:

What are the stakes that people imagine to be bound up with demonstrating that capitalism in this country emerged from slavery and racism, which are treated as two different labels for the same pathology? Ultimately, it's a race reductionist argument. What the Afro-pessimist types or black nationalist types get out of it is an insistence that we can't ever talk about anything except race. And that's partly because talking about race is the things they have to sell.

- Clayborne Carson, on the Founding Fathers and freedom struggles in history:

Obviously, they were being hypocritical, but it's also audacious. And that's what rights are all about. It is the history of people saying, "I declare that I have the right to determine my destiny, and we collectively have the right to determine our destiny." That's the history of every movement, every freedom movement in the history of the world.

All of the interviews in *The Racialist Falsification of History* are vivid and engaging and remind the reader not only of the vitality, but the responsibility of serious historical scholarship. A word must also be said about the courage displayed by these historians simply by appearing in the book, beginning with the first interviewee, Bynum, author of *The Free State of Jones: Mississippi's Longest Civil War*. To take a position critical of racialist identity politics in today's political climate is to stick one's professional neck out. Yet each of the scholars interviewed is fully forthcoming and candid, and while their individual perspectives may vary significantly, each carefully takes the *Times* to task for its historical carelessness.

The stand taken by these historians in the WSWS has altered the intellectual terrain, a fact attested to by nine supporting statements found in the first pages of the book, including from Bancroft Prize winners Sean Wilentz and Peter Kolchin and Pulitzer Prize winner Daniel Walker Howe. Taken together, these nine statements concur in finding "serious flaws" and "glaring factual errors" (Wilentz) in the *Times*' 1619 Project and applaud the intellectual honesty of the WSWS's critiques and interviews as well as its "brave and necessary" (William E. Weeks), and virtually solitary, stance in defense of such honesty.

The "Polemics" section includes important engagements with the *Times* over the 1619 Project, featuring essays by Bynum and Wood as well as writings by London, Mackaman and North. These polemical essays indicate, among other things, the degree to which the *Times* realized it had been exposed by the WSWS's ongoing critique through 2019 and 2020.

In "An Analysis of the *New York Times*' Reply to Five Historians," North and London dismantle a rebuttal written by *New York Times Magazine* editor in chief Jake Silverstein to a letter signed by historians Bynum, McPherson, Oakes, Wood and Wilentz, published in the *Times* on December 20, 2019. The historians had asserted their "strong reservations about important aspects of the 1619 Project" and stated that they were "dismayed at some of the factual errors in the project and the closed process behind it." After providing examples of major historical flaws in the project, the letter's signatories requested that the *Times* "issue

prominent corrections of all the errors and distortions" in the Project. They also requested transparency in the "process through which the historical materials" were assembled and authenticated.

As the authors of the essay note, Silverstein's response to these eminent historians' concerns was "evasive and disingenuous." North and London point out that Silverstein defends the claims made in the 1619 Project in a self-contradictory manner, as he states at once that the project "was intended to address the marginalization of African-American history in the telling of our national story" and that "We are not ourselves historians, it is true." North and London make the case that, in "eradicating the distinction between historiography and journalism, the *New York Times* violates the professional standards and ethics of both fields." When criticized for their shoddy historiography, the authors note, the *Times* pleads that they do not claim to be historians, but when criticized for failing to meet journalistic standards for presenting the opposing arguments in the debate over America's founding, "the *Times* proclaims that it is writing a new history."

The strength, and particular pleasure, of this essay lies in the way North and London use the *Times*' own words against Silverstein, reaching back in the *Times*' archives for glowing reviews of books by Wood and McPherson that directly refute the racialist, ahistorical arguments Silverstein attempts to defend by superficially decrying these historians.

Mackaman and North take up a critique of a similarly weak defense published in, of all places, the prestigious *American Historical Review* (AHR) on January 23, 2020. This time, the counsel for the 1619 Project defense is AHR editor Alex Lichtenstein. The reader will judge whether Lichtenstein, who is quoted at length and often in the essay, pays any more deference to standards of scholarship and responsible debate than Silverstein. But that a defense of the 1619 Project was mounted by the AHR at all is itself, as Mackaman and North say, "a very troubling development [that] reveals the extent to which racialist mythology ... has been accepted, and even embraced, by a substantial section of the academic community as a legitimate basis for the teaching of American history."

The six articles labeled "Historical Commentary" represent timely responses to events related to the publication of the 1619 Project, including defenses of the Founders, Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr., and an appreciation by Mackaman of American historian Bernard Bailyn, who died in 2020.

It is important to recall here the demonstrations of the summer of 2020, which protested the brutal police murder of George Floyd and police violence generally. In these protests, which involved more Americans than any other demonstration in US history, the ruling class could see its worst nightmare: a multiracial, multiethnic expression of generalized anger by workers and youth. It was in the context of these demonstrations that, goaded by Democratic Party operatives like the *New York Times* and Washington D.C.'s non-voting delegate to Congress Eleanor Holmes Norton, groups of people tore down, vandalized or demanded the removal of statues and monuments to Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant and even abolitionists such as Hans Christian Heg.

In essays titled "Hands off the Monuments to Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Grant" (Mackaman and Niemuth) and "The Second Assassination of Abraham Lincoln" (Niemuth and North), the authors mount a compelling defense of these historical figures against the *Times* and the Democratic Party, who "seek to confuse and disorient the democratic sentiments of masses of people entering into political struggle against the capitalist system and its repressive forces within the state ..." Niemuth and North diagnose the historical significance of the attack on figures associated with the American Revolution and the Union cause in the Civil War:

The purpose of lies about history, as Trotsky explained, is to conceal real social contradictions. In this case, the contradictions are those embedded in the staggering levels of social inequality produced by capitalism. These contradictions can be resolved on a progressive basis only through the methods of class struggle. ... Efforts to divert and sabotage that struggle by dissolving class identity into the miasma of racial identity lead inexorably in the direction of fascism.

Ultimately, the only “justification” for the removal of statues of the Great Emancipator Lincoln, Union general and Reconstruction president Grant, and the abolitionist Heg, who died fighting for the Union at Chickamauga, is that they were white. But what of Jefferson and Washington, who, as everyone knows, themselves owned slaves?

North directly addresses this challenge to the legacy of Jefferson, Washington and other revolutionary Founders in an essay titled “July 4, 1776 in World History.” Noting that Jefferson’s “personal ownership of slaves and his compromises with slavery represent the great irony and even tragedy of his life,” North insists that these facts express in Jefferson’s personal life “the existing social conditions and contradictions of the world into which he was born.” Taking to task “the moralizing philistines of academia” whose condemnations of Jefferson “do not alter by one iota the revolutionary impact of the Declaration of Independence,” North makes a critical point about historical thought:

The incomplete character of the first stage of the American *bourgeois-democratic revolution* [italics in original] was determined by the existing objective conditions—and not simply those that existed in North America. ... The conditions for a decisive settlement with slavery did not yet exist.

Nor would those conditions, economic and political, exist for another fourscore years.

What is a statue, a memorial, of a man or woman? Must it be an idol, the icon of a deity or saint? A kind of moral superhero according to the tastes of the present? Such is the demand of the philistine, as North sees the matter. Rather we must see what the given historical figure memorialized made of the world they were given and what has flowed from their efforts. And therein, the past, like the present, must be understood in terms of class struggle:

Only through the establishment of workers power, the ending of capitalism, and the building of a socialist society on a world scale can the scourge of racism and all forms of social oppression be overcome. And in this fight, the words and deeds of both Jefferson and Lincoln will continue to inspire. All that was historically progressive in their lifework lives on in the modern socialist movement.

After a year of withering criticism by the WSWS, the *Times* itself appeared to splinter. This is the theme of the final section of the book, “The Crisis of the *New York Times*’ 1619 Project.” The articles chronicle the implosion of the credibility of the *Times*’ Project, from Hannah-Jones’ acceptance of sponsorship by Big Oil firm Shell, responsible for horrific crimes in Africa, to the revelation that the 1619 Project muzzled its own fact-checkers, to the *Times* secretly dropping its central claim: that 1619 was America’s “true founding.” By the autumn of 2020, the

controversy boiled over on the pages of the *Times* itself.

On October 9, 2020, *Times* opinion writer Bret Stephens, a conservative, penned a column titled “The 1619 Chronicles,” in which he quoted at length from the WSWS interview with James McPherson, going so far as to provide a link to the interview. As North and Mackaman point out in the book, “Stephens concluded that the 1619 Project was ‘a thesis in search of evidence.’” In the *New York Times Magazine* of October 16, 2020, Jake Silverstein attempted a defense of the 1619 Project in an essay titled “On Recent Criticism of the 1619 Project.” The criticism Silverstein referred to was that of the WSWS and of Stephens. In his essay, Silverstein backtracked by claiming that the central claim of the 1619 Project, that the “true founding” of the country took place in 1619 and not 1776, was merely a metaphor. The WSWS responded on October 23, with Mackaman and North identifying Silverstein’s essay as “a convoluted lawyer’s argument that attempts to palm off historical falsification as merely minor matters of syntax, punctuation, and a somewhat careless use of metaphor.”

The book’s Afterword, “Trump’s 1776 Travesty,” by WSWS writer Tom Carter, demonstrates the way in which the 1619 Project offers an opening to the fascist-minded far right to posture as defenders of America’s revolutionary heritage. In his close reading of the 1776 Report, which “was prepared by a hand-picked commission that did not include a single professional historian,” Carter documents the reactionary nature of the report. The real “binding” force of the nation, the 1776 Report claims, is what Carter identifies as an “essentially fascistic insistence on the necessity of cultural and linguistic homogeneity.” Carter sees the 1619 Project and the 1776 Report as two sides of the same ruling-class coin, neither side able to “articulate the democratic legacy of the American Revolution and Civil War.” As his pox on both their houses, Carter quotes Leon Trotsky to stirring effect:

The bourgeoisie has shamefully betrayed all the traditions of its historical youth, and its present hirelings dishonor the graves of its ancestors and scoff at the ashes of its ideals.

It is certain that *The New York Times*’ 1619 Project and the *Racist Falsification of History: Essays and Interviews* will find a wide audience. For its powerful explication of major themes related to the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the emergence of the working class, the book will be of interest to all readers of American history. For high school teachers and college professors, and their students, it is essential as an answer to the *Times*’ blatant historical falsifications. Most of all, it will be a crucial tool for American workers to fight off the attempt by the ruling class to impose and exploit racial divisions among them.



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