



The public comments in this document were collected from March 27 to May 11. They are in response to a call to a #monumentletters campaign, where Louisville Metro Government asked residents to write a letter to a monument and to express how they feel about the monument's current meaning.

1. Dear Castleman, I think you should stay but you need to be removed from the Civil War Monuments of Kentucky MPS and the plaques at your base should be re-written to give greater context to your existence. Instead of removing the statue, this could be a learning moment for us all—I initially leaned toward removal and have made assumptions about John Castleman the person without knowing more until now. For 53 years following the end of the Civil War, Castleman expressed regret for his time in the Confederacy and lived a life of service, becoming a brigadier general in the US Army (not the CSA). He championed rooting out corruption in Louisville's election system and provided a calm, steadying influence for Kentucky after the governor was assassinated in 1900. He never owned slaves (unlike many of our revered Founding Fathers), opposed slavery even while advocating states' rights (not an incompatible position) and supported racial integration of the military. If Castleman's statue depicted him in his CSA uniform and was erected to glorify his CSA role, I would say it should be removed. Instead, he is dressed in civilian riding clothes on his horse, Caroline, to emphasize his relationship with the American Saddlebred Horse Association which he founded and served as president for almost 25 years. He is looking out toward Cherokee Park, part of the park system he helped create during his 25+ years as Commissioner of the Louisville Board of Parks. Speeches delivered at the monument's unveiling attest to this. The statue was erected in 1913 very near Castleman's own home so it has a direct connection with the Cherokee Park neighborhood. Overall, I believe his full life and his contributions to Louisville, to Kentucky and to the US greatly outweigh his unfortunate 3 years in the Confederacy during his early 20s, which Castleman himself deeply regretted. So, yes, Castleman, I think you should stay (with the caveats noted at the beginning of this letter) but I do think it's important that we spend time and energy going forward in finding unsung heroes to memorialize that aren't white men. I'm sure there are plenty out there.
2. Dear George Prentice statue, I feel you no longer deserve to be displayed because your values are long gone among educated people and those who may wish to be educated through our library. The person you depict is to be remembered infamously as a high-profile promoter of 'fake news' as well as movements against Catholics, foreigners, and the liberation of people owned by other people. In short, you are a memorial to a bigot

who actively hates those who have to make the city that surrounds you. While it may be argued that in 2018 many people have come around to see your dim light—or never lost sight of it to begin with—it does not make it right. Please stop spitting on us with we seek to enlighten ourselves at this beautiful library you scowl at daily.

3. Dear Castleman Monument, I feel the Monument should stay and why should it stay? One it represents the History of the United States of America in many ways. First at a time when over 600,000 American died in the battlefield and in POW camps. Not to mention that at least 500,000 civilians died in riots and bombardments of American cities. Second, many Americans after this horrible civil war were pardoned by President Johnson as a way to heal the strife and division that was caused by a few idiot politicians from the North as well as the South. Second, many of those pardoned went on to serve in our Army and Navy in defending American citizens and fighting a foreign enemy. Third, those Americans learn to live together and work alongside those pardoned. All of these Americans also became lawyers, engineers, tradesmen and raise families that helped build America. Those Americans fought for their country like their ancestors before them and their descendants after them. Remember in 1654 the first slave owner in America was a black man Anthony Johnson who went to court in Virginia and got the law to rule that John Castor statue of an indentured servant to that of a slave. We should not tear down monuments because of it honoring a man who in his youth fought for the CSA. That fact should be noted at the age of 19, Castleman entered the Confederate service. He was opposed to the institution of slavery but an advocate of states' rights. As a senior citizen and reader of history, I feel strongly that destroying any monument because it offends those that lack tolerance is plain wrong.
4. Dear 1890 Tornado statue, I feel the 1890 Tornado statue, which previously occupied the northwest corner of 8th and Main streets, should be restored to a suitable location. I would suggest the Fort Nelson Park at 7th and Main streets. The statue commemorates the F-4 tornado that struck downtown Louisville on March 27, 1890, the disaster that resulted in the highest loss of life in Louisville's history. I understand it was removed at the behest of the new owner of the building where it was previously established, admittedly, not a good location, but has since languished in storage. The suggested location would be suitable, as it was the exact point where the tornado crossed into Indiana, destroying the Central train station at 7th and River roads. It is a valuable historical teaching tool for visitors.
5. Dear Castleman monument, I feel you should ride out of Louisville because you represent the ugly scourge of white supremacy and the reasons you were erected in the first place in 1913 to support a lost cause "nostalgic" narrative of the Civil War.
6. Dear Castleman, I support your presence in my city. I see a statue of the founder of the American Saddlebred Association on his favorite horse. I also see a man who contributed to our public parks system. I see a man who proudly served in the US ARMY after the Civil War and was eventually the Governor of Puerto Rico. The body of the life

time of your accomplishments is more than what you did in a 4 years span of history. Thank you for showing me where to turn right when I'm in the Cherokee triangle area.

7. Dear Castleman...both the Mayor and the Committee have been provided with documentation that proves your statue was not an official Confederate monument. It was dedicated solely for your post-war service to the city, state and the nation. The Mayor et al also have contemporary Courier-Journal articles as well as Park Board Minutes that completely refute the charge that you segregated the Parks. In fact they reveal that you firmly resisted all efforts to ban African-Americans from city parks. Finally they also have copies of a letter published in the Courier-Journal after your death by a local black educator who praised you as a friend and benefactor to Louisville's black community. If we can get the local media, ESPECIALLY the Courier-Journal, to print the FACTS... sensible people will realize the controversy over your statue is groundless. And removing your statue in the name of "racial justice" is merely - an empty, meaningless gesture.
8. Dear Castleman, I feel you should stay because you represent the history of the parks system to many. As someone who grew up in the Highlands you also carry strong personal memories for me. I appreciate the concerns of those who feel like Castleman represents the Confederacy yet as a man he went on to do much more than just fight as a 20-year-old.
9. Dear George Prentice statue, I feel you no longer deserve to be displayed because your values are long gone among educated people and those who may wish to be educated through our library. The person you depict is to be remembered infamously as a high-profile promoter of 'fake news' as well as of movements against Catholics, foreigners, and the liberation of people owned by other people. In short, you are a memorial to a bigot who actively hated those who have come to make up the city that surrounds you. While it may be argued that in 2018 many people have come around to see your dim light -- or never lost sight of it to begin with -- it does not make it right. Please stop spitting on us when we seek to enlighten ourselves at this beautiful library you scowl at daily.
10. Dear Castleman, I feel you should stay, because you represent the history of our parks system." Along with this all of our statues should be left alone and anyone that vandalizes any one of them should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, I believe that is why we have laws in this country. Every statue or every placard or every street name is likely to upset someone but will make someone else happy so all statues and such should be left alone and protected.
11. Dear Castleman, The monument of you and your beautiful horse should be removed from public space (sorry about the horse) because it was created and placed in large part to honor your role in the Confederacy, as a leader in a war against the United

States of America to retain the legal ability to enslave people. We who have been privileged because of our skin color, often far beyond our awareness, owe an enormous debt to African Americans. Much needs to be done to counteract the impact of our laws, our banking practices, our housing policies, and our prejudices that made equality of opportunity a myth for people of color. But this thing, the removal of your statue and other statues that were placed to honor an individual's role in the fight to retain slavery, is a small but symbolic act of respect that can occur quickly and should occur now. Let Louisville be as strong in its efforts to remove our monuments to those who were on the wrong side of justice...and as compassionate...as Lexington.

12. Dear Castleman statue, I feel you should stay because you represent an unsavory but valuable past. I find it interesting that most people take offense to the fact that you were a Confederate soldier but seem almost entirely unaware that you instigated if not primarily facilitated Bloody Monday. Which was the worst anti-immigrant riot in American history. Official death count was 20+ people but Spalding of Spalding University claimed to have had over 100 friends killed. My ancestors were German Catholics living in Germantown at the time but for some reason they chose to stay in Louisville. Many others left and this is how Cincinnati, St. Louis, Memphis and Nashville came to Germantowns of their own. In fact Bloody Monday represents the last of a series of financial collapses in Louisville that directly correlates to why we have and enjoy so many historic buildings in Louisville. Most other cities could afford to tear down their old buildings and build anew but in Louisville we had shopfronts that sat vacant for one hundred years in some cases after Bloody Monday. In the course of 80 years leading up to that day Louisville lost over half of its population and industry and we simply couldn't afford to rip our buildings down. One crisis was the riverboat industry being usurped by the locomotive industry. The other big financial crisis was when Congress abolished the African slave trade in 1807. Basically after that point all slaves had to be born on U.S. soil so Louisville as the "Gateway to the South" was no longer a crucial player in that industry. Slave traders had long been marginalized and had to live in the shadows of society, but regardless of that we were neck and neck with Chicago up to this point in population growth. The term "shipped down river" is a reference to Louisville from those days. I grew up with the knowledge that some of my ancestors were likely slaves. This was recently confirmed for me with a DNA test. At least two of my ancestors within the last eight generations were 100% African. What makes it more interesting is that my ancestor I can attribute this lineage to was married to a Confederate soldier who later became a notable Confederate guerrilla in western Kentucky's history. I grew up being acutely sensitive to this perceived contradiction and the fact that race relations in the pre-Jim Crow South were probably more nuanced than cinema and pop history books let on. Some examples might be how Abraham Lincoln originally asked his close friend Robert E. Lee to head the Union Army but Lee decided to stay loyal to his direct neighbors and home state of Virginia. His plantation became Arlington Cemetery. Another example would be how after the Trail of Tears there was a great degree of guilt and sympathy for Cherokee Indians in the U.S. Sam Houston for instance as a Senator often endured harsh criticism on the Senate floor (none the less!) for insisting on

dressing like a Cherokee and indeed the Cherokees had politicians of their own and had achieve a middle class status by all accounts in American society. There were many culturally affluent Cherokees in those days and they were considered mainstream. However with the Civil War, they had to choose sides and since the Cherokee nation was predominantly in the south they sided with the Confederacy. For this reason Congress threw the book at them during Reconstruction and they never achieved the same level of status again, in fact it could be argued that things became worse than ever before for them. So based on these personal anecdotes, the Castleman status doesn't really bother me. It doesn't bother me that he openly persecuted my German-Catholic ancestors that resulted in the open murder of many in their community in the middle of Broadway. They persevered and within 20 years Louisville had a German-Catholic mayor. I'm also grateful that Louisville was too broke to tear down their historic places like Old Louisville, the largest Victorian neighborhood in America. But you know in spite of this so much of American's history has been lost. I would honestly like to see more statues not less. It's a shame that we can't find a nicer way to commemorate all of the people who were sold like cattle in Butchertown. We know where the slave stockyards were at. But I understand that it is much easier to white wash history than to acknowledge it. I realize that history is political and it is impossible to see it outside the prism of our own time. History is painful in many ways. But I also wonder if anyone will remember Bloody Monday hardly at all going into the future if we take down that Castleman statue...I still feel you should stay after giving it some considerable thought because I really find it hard to see you in the same line as Nazis, Mussolini, Stalin or Saddam Hussein whose statues were torn down shortly after they were defeated. It's true that there were many more Confederate statues than Union statues but then again they did lose the war so they may have struggled a little more coming to terms with their losses and comforting their elderly veterans. To a general observer they might represent the same sort of thing as the Nazis etc. and it is true that modern racists rally around them but that's really unfortunate. If you go to Europe you will find next to no representations of Nazism but what you will find is numerous statues of Crusaders who are probably responsible for even greater genocide than the Nazis. It is up for debate anyway. They would go into the Middle Eastern cities and kill every living thing. There are many accounts of them walking in blood up to their knees and thighs. Another issue I have with tearing down many Confederate statues is I find it hard under scrutiny to distinguish any difference between their beliefs and that of America's Founding Fathers. When will your general observer realize that as well? There may come a day when we tear down all of Washington DC along the same lines we are drawing now. If we do tear down the statue of Castleman I think we should ultimately tear down the statue of Muhammad engraved in the U.S. Supreme Court building. Not only does it violate Muslim doctrine simply by being a representation of Muhammad but Muhammad himself was a well-documented slave trader. It's a shame that more Americans aren't aware of the Barbary slave trade which by all accounts was more far reaching, extensive and longer lasting than the African slave trade in the Colonies. It might help them to put the abomination of slavery more into perspective. In my mind,

all of this controversy over the Confederate statues should probably land in the Supreme Court.