

Contested History in Public Spaces: Review of Public Assets post Colston

APSE Southern Region Seminar:
Diversity, People and Places

Councillor Asher Craig

Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Communities, Equalities and Public Health

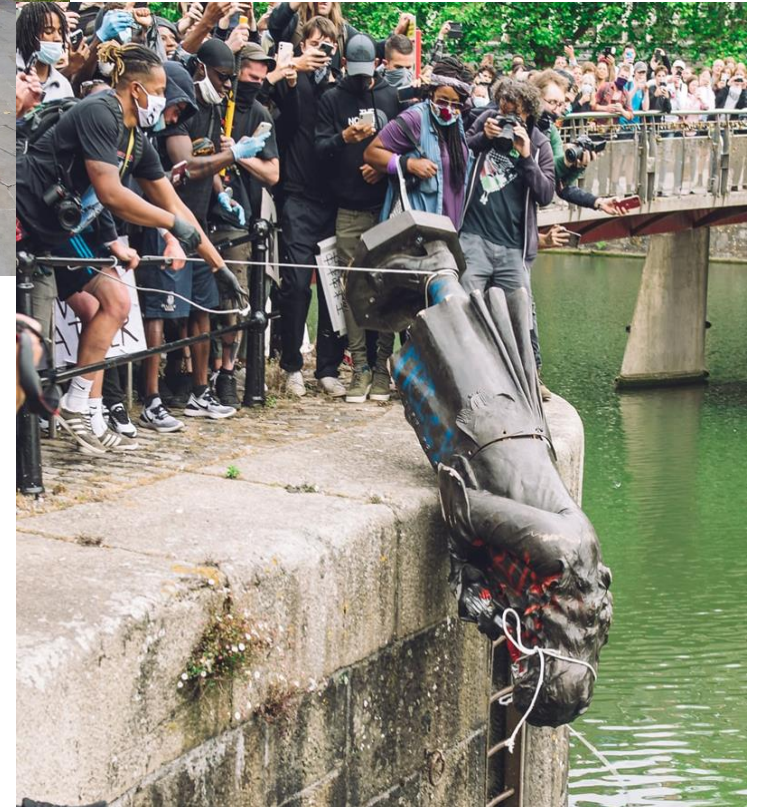
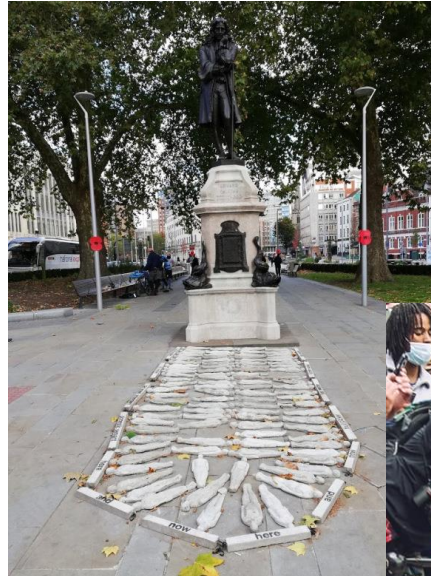


The Story of a Statue

In **1895**, a statue of Colston was erected in Bristol, effectively by a private citizen and gifted to the city.

Colston was (amongst other things) a trader in enslaved Africans & a MP

7th June 2020 the statue was toppled by BLM demonstrators protesting the killing of George Floyd, then pushed into the harbour daubed in paint .



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Worldwide Reaction

Bristol mayor wants 'citywide conversation' on future of Edward Colston statue

Marvin Rees urges discussion on memorials and places with slavery links



The New York Times
In an English City, an Early Benefactor Is Now 'a Toxic Brand'

Bristol was built with money from the slave trader Edward Colston. Tearing down his statue has reopened a painful reckoning with the city's racist past.



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What happened next



- History Commission
- Legacy Steering Group
- Project Truth - TTEA
- Reparations Motion
- 'Bristol Beacon'

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But... Bristol: A Tale of Two Cities

Bristol named best place to live in Britain

Bristol is now officially Europe's coolest city and in the Top 20 in the world

Bristol sees house prices rocket since 2005 as city becomes 'incredibly popular' place to live

Bristol crowned greenest UK city

BRISTOL RACIAL INEQUALITY RANKING 'SHAMEFUL'

- Black African young people are persistently disadvantaged in education compared to their White peers.
- Addressing educational inequalities requires attention to: the unrepresentativeness of the curriculum, lack of diversity in teaching staff and school leadership and poor engagement with parents.
- Bristol was ranked 55th for employment inequality between White British and ethnic minorities.
- People from Black African (19%), Other (15%) and Black Caribbean (12.7%) groups had persistently high levels of unemployment.
- Almost all ethnic minority groups in Bristol experience employment inequality when compared to White British people.

We only have 26 black teachers out of 1,346 in Bristol, and that's a problem

Bristol has been found to be the most segregated core city in Britain, and the problem starts in school

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Acting on Racial Inequality in the City

- **Race Equality in Education Group** devising the **One Bristol Curriculum**
- Produced the first **Public Sector Race Equality Data Product** for Bristol
- **Stepping Up** – award winning
- **City Leaders Programme**
- **Recruited new magistrates**



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Acting on Racial Inequality in the Council

On 14 July, Bristol City Council's cabinet heard a report on advancing equality and inclusion within the council.



Scale of the Challenge

- Mean ethnicity pay gap of 12.06%
- BAME staff statistically more likely to be subject to formal grievances and disciplinary processes.

How We'll Act

- Use positive action principles to increase diversity in staff and in senior roles.
- Introduce new grievance procedure with requirement for mediation.

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The Future

- Bristol is more than a statue. We will continue to tackle systemic racism where we see it – it is all our responsibility.
- All backgrounds challenge racism and inequality by listening to all community voices.
- Taking a One City Approach to all that we do.



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