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Chicago Sun-Times Editorial Submission for Italian Heritage Month 2026

The following was composed and sent to the Chicago Sun-Times on Friday October 9, 2026 in response to an opinion piece, and to date the Sun-Times has not bothered to publish it:

Here we are, October, Italian Heritage Month, and Columbus Day is right around the corner. And sadly, the misinformed and history revisionists continue to malign the Columbus legacy. Since the early 1990's well-meaning folks began to repeat the alleged atrocities of the famous navigator, apparently without benefit of their own research of the man and the myth. For years, the Italian American Human Relations Foundation of Chicago has suggested to the media, educators, and naysayers that before making blatant, un factual statements, they should refer to the works of Carol Delaney, "Columbus and the Quest for Jerusalem," and Rafael Ortiz, whose ancestors were of the Taino Tribe that Columbus encountered during his initial landing in the "New World." Surely, mandatory reading should be Mary Grabar's, "Debunking Howard Zinn: Exposing the Fake History that Turned a Generation Against America." That title pretty much describes the main source of revisionist history of the Columbus legacy and the disastrous effect such writing has played upon the educational system in the United States.

Much of what you will read in this essay will be from studies of the Italic Institute of America, Robert Royal, PH.D., President of the Faith and Reason Institute; Joseph Scafetta, Jr., David Curfman, M.D., President of the National Columbus Celebration Association in Washington D.C., Thomas A. Bowden, and Jeffrey Hart. Columbus Day celebrates the unification of the globe in 1492. It is a national, legal holiday that Italian-Americans have adopted to celebrate their heritage, just as black Americans have adopted Martin Luther King Day to celebrate their heritage. Congress says that the celebration of Columbus is about expanding knowledge and about human daring. Author Stephen W. Stathis has stated, "The Columbus Day celebration would provide an annual reaffirmation by the American people of their faith in the future, a declaration of willingness to face with confidence the imponderables of unknown tomorrows." Make no mistake, Columbus did not land in the Garden of Eden. Most of the cultures of the Indigenous that he encountered were practicing human sacrifice, rape, slavery, cannibalism, the abandonment of the sick and elderly, and inter-tribe wars was common, long before his arrival. There was enough misery in the Americas before Columbus. The Carabs terrorized the Tainos. The Iroquois and Algonquin fought each other before the English and the French arrived. Wars were fought for territory and hunting interests back to the Stone Age. Negating Columbus's

world-changing feat by holding him responsible for everything after 1492 is a dangerous game. For example, Gandhi is revered for freeing the Subcontinent from European rule in 1947, yet that accomplishment led to a religious war that killed a million Hindus and Muslims. Abraham Lincoln may have freed the slaves, but Native Americans suffered their worse massacres during his presidency, including the hanging of 39 innocent Indians in Minnesota by his direct order in 1862.

The prosecution of the "Columbus atrocities," is based entirely on European sources, mainly Bernal de las Casas's History of the Indies. All the crimes against the natives witnessed by las Casas occurred after Columbus. Las Casas only arrived in the New World in 1502, the year Columbus departed Hispaniola for further exploration and two years after he was governor. He admired Columbus, but his knowledge of him came from the Admiral's logs and secondhand accounts. Las Casas ignored the numerous observations of cannibalism in Columbus's logs and minimized or omitted massacres of Europeans by the natives. Curiously, las Casas blames all native deaths on Spanish cruelty giving very little blame to disease, which was more rampant. Nowhere in any source is Columbus accused of initiating the African slave trade. In fact, las Casas, once a slaveholder, supported Black slavery to relieve the burden on natives.

We could not imagine the Western hemisphere as we know it today without horses, metal instruments, and farming- all of which were introduced to the Indigenous as a result of Columbus's landing.

Christopher Columbus was one with the sea. His experience before 1492 included voyages down the West African coast, the Mediterranean, and the North Atlantic to Iceland. Navigation, chart-making, and leadership were only some of his skills. In the days of sailing, he was the master of winds, tides, stars, and currents. He spoke 3 languages, read Latin, and was a man with a sense of mission. His courage came from his deep Catholic faith and his unyielding belief in science. He was the personification of Renaissance.

Some of Columbus's accomplishments include: Proving that it was possible to safely cross the Atlantic Ocean, founding the first permanent European settlement in the Western Hemisphere, Hispaniola (Now Haiti and the Dominican Republic), he was the first European to realize the full importance of the Atlantic wind pattern called the prevailing Westerlies, which blew steadily west and east, which convinced him it was possible to sail west with the Trade Winds to the New World and return to Europe with the Westerlies. Columbus' trans-Atlantic route lay the foundation for future navigation in the region. His maps were used by Amerigo Vespucci (after whom the American continent takes its name), whose maps were used by later explorers of South America. The route across the Atlantic Ocean that Columbus charted in the 15th century is still used by sailors today. Columbus introduced the principle of compass variation (the variation at any point on the Earth's surface between the direction to magnetic and geographic north) and observed the rotation of the Pole Star.

Since 1992, however, the reputation of Columbus has suffered at the hands of special interest groups who have used this 15th century Renaissance navigator to further their 21st century political and social agendas. To heap upon Columbus, the woes of centuries, misleads us and denies the long term good that Columbus' voyages brought humanity.

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