

Dear Julie

Thank you for sharing the details about the *Statue of Liberty*. I was not aware about the shackles and chains at her feet until you pointed that out. I also took photos with a smaller version in Daiba, Tokyo back in 2010.

You made a great point about the historical reality about both the civil rights of the people of color and the suffrage movement at the time of the building of this artwork. However, I think we need to consider different aspects of such monumental artworks. Is it supposed to summarize the liberty accomplishment the United States already built? Or should it project a grant vision for the United States to work toward? Is it a celebration of what has been achieved? Or is it casting a blueprint for us to create for our children? For example, the Contemplation of Justice and Guardian of Law sculptures, displayed in front of the U.S. Supreme Court Buildings (Craven) are not a sign stating all the courts in our country are always already fairly contemplating justice and guarding our law, but rather serving as a function to remind all the justices to do so. In the same way, the Statue of Liberty was never a symbol to show that our country has achieved true liberty, but rather to cast a grand vision to remind all our citizens we need to work hard to preserve and maintain the liberty in our country (Glassberg).

As for the issue of “the double standards of governmental propaganda and promises” I think we need to be careful about the linkage here. First of all, this massive artwork was never initiated, designed, financed, nor commissioned by the government of the United States. In fact, the project was proposed by the French historian and abolitionist Édouard de Laboulaye, not even an American (Gary). It was designed by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi (Bartholdi), a French sculptor and painter who was educated in Lycée Louis-le-Grand and Beaux-Arts de Paris both in Paris, France (Mitchell). It was the French citizens in France, not American citizens nor the US government, who fundraised to pay for its approximately \$250,000 (in 1880 dollars) building cost (Blanchet). Therefore, the building of the artwork itself, has nothing to do with any “governmental propaganda and promises” of the United States government, nor any American citizen. Because of this, we should not view this artwork as part of any propaganda or promises from the US government at all. Rather, it is a symbol of what the French wishing our country moving toward- a true liberty.

Works Cited

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Frank with the scaled down version of Statue of Liberty in Daiba, Tokyo, Japan