

New Book 'Monumental Controversies' Sparks Thought-Provoking Conversations About Public Memory and Identity

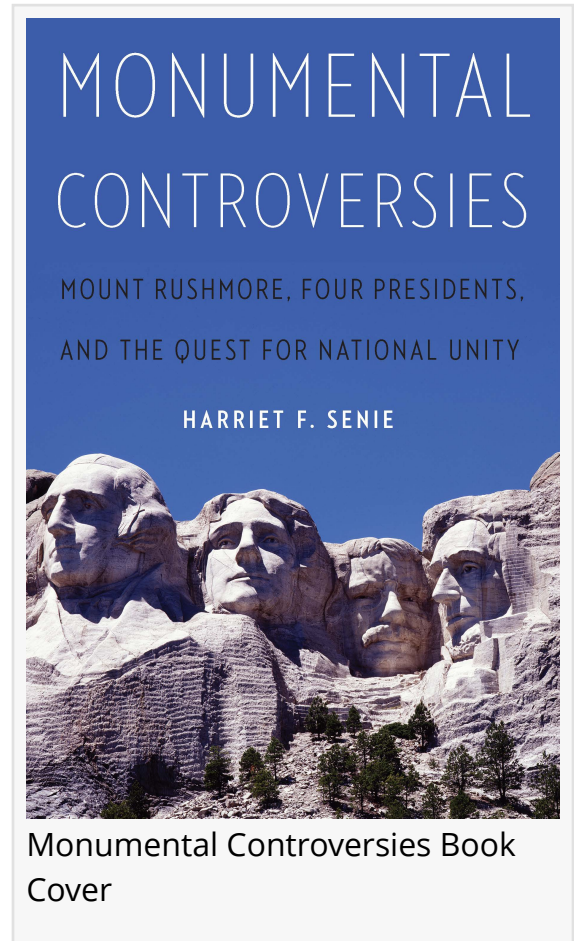
Mount Rushmore, Four Presidents, and the Quest for National Unity

SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY, UNITED STATES, April 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Noted art historian and professor emerita Harriet F. Senie has published a new book, [Monumental Controversies: Mount Rushmore, Four Presidents, and the Quest for National Unity](#), which examines the debates surrounding public monuments and memorials. The book, published today by the University of Nebraska Press on April 1, 2023, offers a nuanced perspective on the controversies surrounding Mount Rushmore as a public symbol of American history and heritage, particularly honoring presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt.

Through her extensive research and firsthand experience on important commissions dealing with controversial memorials, Senie navigates the complex terrain of public protest with nuance and sensitivity. Rather than simply asking whether these figures are "good guys or bad guys," Senie delves into the complicated histories of these presidential figures, acknowledging both their achievements and their shortcomings. She argues that these debates are not about erasing history, but rather about acknowledging the complicated legacies of our nation's past and grappling with their implications for the present.

Monumental Controversies is a timely and thought-provoking contribution to the ongoing conversation around the role of memorials in our public spaces. It has been hailed by critics as a "meticulously researched and richly informative" examination of the debates surrounding public monuments and memorials.

"I wrote *Monumental Controversies* to encourage thoughtful conversations about the role of



public monuments in our society," Senie said. "My hope is that this book will help readers to engage with the complex histories and legacies of these monuments and to think critically about how they shape our understanding of the past and our vision for the future."

Monumental Controversies is available now from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, the University of Nebraska Press, and other booksellers. For more information about the book or to schedule an interview with Harriet F. Senie, please visit harrietsenie.com.

About the Author:

Harriet F. Senie is a professor emerita of art history at the City College of New York and at the CUNY Graduate Center. She co-founded Public Art Dialogue, an international organization, and its journal, Public Art Dialogue. Senie is the coeditor of Teachable Monuments: Using Public Art to Spark Dialogue and Confront Controversy and author of Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11, among other books.



Harriet F Senie, Art Historian and Author



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Harriet F Senie

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