

SASHA HUBER, *AGASSIZ DOWN UNDER*, TE WHARE HERA GALLERY, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND, 2015.

# AGASSIZ DOWN UNDER



The Agassiz statue, Stanford University, California. San Francisco earthquake of 1906. Credit: ID. Mendehall, 715.

IN MEMORY OF THE NINE AFRICAN-AMERICAN VICTIMS IN CHARLESTON,  
SOUTH CAROLINA, UNITED STATES, WHO WERE SHOT DEAD BY A RACIST ON JUNE 17, 2015,  
AND OF THE MANY OTHER VICTIMS OF RACIAL HATRED IN THE UNITED STATES OF TODAY.

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“IT WAS IN THAT VERY SAME CHARLESTON, S.C., WHERE IN 1847 LOUIS AGASSIZ FROM SWITZERLAND DECLARED IN A PUBLIC LECTURE: “THE BRAIN OF THE NEGRO IS THAT OF THE IMPERFECT BRAIN OF A SEVEN MONTHS’ INFANT IN THE WOMB OF A WHITE.” IT WAS IN CHARLESTON, S.C., TOO, WHERE AGASSIZ EXPLAINED TO AN 1850 AUDIENCE THAT BLACK AND WHITE AMERICANS BELONGED TO SEPARATE “ZOOLOGICAL PROVINCES” AND THAT THEY WERE BARELY THE SAME SPECIES. IN FACT, SAID THE PIOUS PROFESSOR, ONLY WHITES WERE DESCENDED FROM ADAM AND EVE. IT WAS THOSE SLAVE-OWNING SOUTHERN STATES, WHOSE FLAG ADORNED THE CAR OF GUNMAN DYLANN ROOF, FOR WHICH AGASSIZ PROVIDED VALUABLE INTELLECTUAL SUPPORT WITH HIS RACIST THEORIES. AND IT WAS SOUTH AFRICA’S APARTHEID REGIME, WHOSE FLAG WAS STITCHED ONTO DYLANN ROOF’S BLACK JACKET, WHICH PUT LOUIS AGASSIZ’S IDEAS MOST RIGOROUSLY INTO PRACTICE IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY.”

- HANS FÄSSLER, FOUNDER OF THE “DEMOUNTING LOUIS AGASSIZ” CAMPAIGN, JUNE 20, 2015