

# WE TOUCHED A NERVE AT THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the August 17 edition of the *New York Times*, Elizabeth Bruenig revisited the Serra controversy. Here is how she opened her piece.

“Last week, a few hours after publishing an essay about American Catholics’ reaction to the Black Lives Matter movement, I received a flood of ill tidings via email. My correspondents’ anger was unrelated to the subject of my article, but was instead inflamed by a mention of Junipero Serra, a canonized Franciscan friar who founded Spanish missions throughout California in the 18th century.”

Bruenig cited the sentence where she accused Serra of torture, but nowhere in her 1754-word article did she even attempt to disprove what Bill Donohue said. In other words, she provided zero evidence that Serra tortured the Indians. While her piece this time was much more balanced than her initial one, her failure—and the failure of the newspaper—to come to grips with Donohue’s single complaint is as revealing as it is disturbing.

Father Serra never tortured the Indians. It is a lie. And even now, the *New York Times* cannot admit it was wrong in 2015 when it first made this charge, and is twice wrong in 2020 for repeating it.

It is a tribute to our email subscribers who contacted the paper that it was forced to run another article trying to wiggle their way out of the jam they created.