

‘Cancel culture’ signals possible loss of collective minds

Not sure what to make of this “cancel culture” business that seems to be a growth industry right now, but just maybe it has come off the rails in recent months as we rush to correct every ill in society since the Druids stopped throwing maidens into the ocean to appease the gods of something or other.

Ellen DeGeneres, what little I know of her, always seemed a pleasant enough person, but I am apparently wrong. Enough people who worked for her said otherwise that she has been “canceled” by the “culture,” whatever that might mean.

Statues are being torn down and removed in some sort of an attempt to edit the history book. There is a plan afoot to rename military bases – Fort Hood, Fort Bragg and a half dozen others — because their namesakes were on the wrong side of history.

A few years ago the disciples of this sort of correctness visited Purdue University and erased the name of Earl Butz from an ag building on the West Lafayette campus, mainly because this much-respected Hoosier had committed the unpardonable sin of telling a very bad –

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A MOMENT
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and, frankly, unfunny – joke to the wrong people back when he was U.S. Secretary of Agriculture in the Nixon years.

Then, more recently, a truly iconic American Christian writer, Flannery O’Connor, has had her name chiseled from what was the Flannery O’Connor Residence Hall at Loyola University of Maryland. No time here to dig deep, but Ms. O’Connor who wrote magnificently of the Gothic nature of what she called “the Christ-haunted South,” is being held accountable long after her death for her

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views of race. No one seems to be taking into account that she was a mid-20th Century child of the American South and was the product of a culture which she took to task so meaningfully because of its bigotry.

And even more recently, high on a hill overlooking the Mississippi River in Dubuque, Iowa, a crane was brought in to remove the several tons of bronze that had formed the statue of Bishop Mathias Loras, the first Catholic bishop in the upper Midwest back in the 19th Century and the namesake of Loras College, which has stood atop that riverside hill since

1839.

Someone went trolling in the vault and found that this French-born immigrant in his youth, sometime around 1800, had ownership of a young African woman in New Orleans and apparently left her in bondage when he came north to bring his religion to the Midwest.

I’ll not pass judgment on either the writer or the bishop, but the zealotry of the “cancel culture” folks seems harsh.

And now, in San Francisco, the school board has taken it upon itself to erase the names attached to 44 public schools, about a third of the schools in the

city.

They have carefully defined the offenses. Here is their language intended to remove the names of those . . . “who engaged in the subjugation and enslavement of human beings; or who oppressed women, inhibiting societal progress; or whose actions led to genocide; or who otherwise significantly diminished the opportunities of those among us to the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

And who might these evil-doers and miscreants be?

Well, start with George Washington. He owned slaves, don’t ya know.

And Thomas Jefferson High School and Francis Scott Key High School must be rechristened for the same reason.

Abraham Lincoln? No, his prosecution of the Civil War and the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation are not enough. Lincoln High School must go because Mr. Lincoln, using his presidential authority, did not stand in the way of the execution of 38 insurgent Dakota tribesmen who had attacked white settlers in Minnesota under questionable circumstances.

Diane Feinstein, the lib-

eral Democrat former mayor and Senator from California? Sorry. Not good enough. Back in 1984, as San Francisco mayor, she allowed the replacement of a confederate battle flag that had been stolen from the city hall grounds. Feinstein Elementary School shall be renamed, Along with Herbert Hoover Elementary and Paul Revere and Robert Lewis Stevenson and a bunch more.

And you may agree with that; I don’t know. It can all be argued. But here’s the one that just simply goes too far, beyond where any reasonable culture canceler has reason to go.

That is Alamo Elementary School.

It has to go. It harkens to colonization. “Remember the Alamo” was a call for vengeance against Mexicans, they say, that was used as a rallying cry at San Jacinto in the endless squabbles between Texas and Mexico.

Some historian is going to look back a century from now and wonder just when it was we lost our collective minds. It was the day they renamed Alamo Elementary School in San Francisco, Calif.



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