

Cancel Culture Resembles Gang Mentality

by Gary S. Goldman | March 10th, 2021 | Opinion

Cancel culture has progressed into the normalized reaction towards opinion on so many different topics, from choice of clothing, movies from our past not to mention historical artifacts! We all know today that inequality should not be accepted, but can we erase the history that brought us here? Can we forget the hurtles that homosexuals, African Americans even white women have faced in years prior to bringing us to where we are today? I think not!

While movements such as the #metoo hold a high level of righteousness, respect, and equality among many other discussions to be had, the overall reaction can leave either party involved feeling powerless, attacked, and more often than not 'ganged on' without the opportunity for explanation. The amplification of current publicized discussions leads to a mentality of the right to create collective actions and reactions, mirroring the coterie behavior of a specific group.

On another note, the overuse of these attacks creates a widely spread feeling of anger and disapproval towards something or someone, and lest we not forget that this form of present-day exclusion is not as harmless as it sounds. It has been seen by many as a form of a cartel, herd mentality persecution, and it is no wonder this gang mentality of cancel culture has become a prominent part of recent news.

The latest debacle of last week's attack on Theodor Seuss Geisel, one of America's greatest authors of Children's books, a poet like no other, under attack over some of his most cherished children's literature pieces is being viewed by some as outrageous! There has been some backlash about his cartooning and rhymes, referencing people of different backgrounds for some time... but let us take a pragmatic approach on this issue. Is the public really deciphering a book that was written and illustrated for children by a young poet in 1937? Some will not only observe but will focus on the racial reference towards Asians in the artwork of the book 'And to think I saw it on Mulberry Street'. According to Dr. Dyan Hes, Medical Director at Gramercy Pediatrics in New York, The Dr. Seuss books are nothing short of a broader commitment to children's literature and should continue to be readily available. Her thoughts on the book being exposed to Cancel Culture lie in keeping those books circulating! She goes on to state in a recent interview with Scott Cohen, CNBC Special Correspondent, that in order to achieve a harmonious agreement on this issue and understand that we, our children and grandchildren have all grown up with these rhymes, the books should be kept on the shelves and simply have a disclaimer: "These books were written in this year and have stereotypes that we would like to change" to ease the mind of the offended ones.

The Dr. Seuss series are not the only historical art piece under the gun. The recent June attack on "Gone with the Wind", the 1939 movie adapted from Margaret Mitchell's famous 1936 novel by Director John Ridley, which resulted in the classic being pulled from HBO MAX has become a controversy to many. John Ridley criticized the movie for glorifying the antebellum period. This was an era and unfortunately, we cannot change that we have experienced slavery, wars, inequality of rights between man and women and so much more! But that is what makes us. Without the malicious point of view, the movie is a mere portrait of the hardships of African

Americans, white women, and the men that loved and tried to protect them during a time of war. This happened. Canceling classics that have made such an impact is an absolute outrage!

The transition to modern behavior has not always been so straightforward. There has been pain along the way... and although I get the attack on the confederate flags over the summer of 2020 because of the idolization of an era of discrimination, prejudice, and maltreatment of a specific race, can we really start erasing statues, historic monuments, and everything else that has anything to do with the past? Can we simply forget? Not only should we refrain from forgetting, but we should also continue to be exposed to the referencing of our history. Instead of collectively normalizing the Cancel Culture reaction and the growing the mob mentally associated with it, let us accept that the past is the past. We can only learn from mistakes, and hope that someday we will all be able to enjoy a feast of 'Green Eggs and Ham' together.