

the long and tortured history of cancel culture

The Long and Tortured History of Cancel Culture

the long and tortured history of cancel culture is a fascinating tale that stretches far beyond the social media hashtags and trending topics we see today. While many think of cancel culture as a modern phenomenon born from the rapid-fire world of Twitter and Instagram, its roots dig deep into centuries of social dynamics, public shaming, and collective calls for accountability. Understanding this evolution helps us grasp not only why cancel culture persists but also why it remains such a contentious and complex topic.

Tracing the Origins: From Public Shaming to Social Accountability

Before the internet era, societies had their own mechanisms for calling out and ostracizing those who violated social norms. Public shaming, a practice dating back to ancient times, served as a communal tool to enforce moral codes and punish wrongdoers. Stocks, pillories, and public humiliation were common in medieval Europe, reflecting a society's collective judgment.

Early Forms of Cancel Culture: Public Shaming and Ostracism

The long and tortured history of cancel culture includes these early methods of social regulation. For example, in Puritan New England, the "scarlet letter" symbolized public condemnation for adultery, marking individuals as outcasts. Although brutal by today's standards, these practices reveal a timeless human instinct: the desire to hold others accountable through communal pressure.

This historical backdrop shows that cancel culture, at its core, is not new. What has changed dramatically is the medium and scale through which people express disapproval.

The Digital Revolution: Amplifying Voices and Consequences

With the rise of the internet and social media platforms in the 21st century, the mechanisms for social accountability transformed. The long and tortured history of cancel culture accelerated as digital communication enabled instantaneous sharing of opinions and judgments. Suddenly, individuals could be "canceled" worldwide within hours, sometimes for actions or statements made years prior.

How Social Media Changed the Game

Platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram gave birth to a new kind of public square where anyone's voice could be amplified. Online communities mobilized around shared values or grievances, collectively deciding who should be held accountable. This digital environment often blurs the lines between genuine accountability and what some critics call "mob justice."

Moreover, the viral nature of social media made cancel culture far more unpredictable and difficult to navigate. A single tweet or video clip could trigger massive backlash, affecting careers, reputations, and sometimes mental health.

Examples from Pop Culture and Politics

The entertainment industry provides numerous high-profile examples of cancel culture in action. Celebrities accused of misconduct or offensive behavior frequently face boycotts and public calls for accountability. Politicians, too, have felt the sting of instant public judgment, with social media users demanding resignations or apologies.

These instances highlight how cancel culture serves as a tool for marginalized voices to challenge power structures, but also how it can spiral into punitive and sometimes disproportionate consequences.

The Complex Debate: Accountability vs. Censorship

The long and tortured history of cancel culture is marked by an ongoing debate about its implications. Is cancel culture a necessary evolution of social accountability, or does it threaten free speech and promote a culture of fear?

Arguments in Favor of Cancel Culture

Proponents argue that cancel culture allows historically silenced groups to call out systemic injustices and hold powerful figures accountable. It can be seen as a democratizing force, giving ordinary people a platform to influence societal norms and demand change.

- Encourages responsibility and reflection for harmful actions
- Amplifies marginalized voices
- Acts as a deterrent against unethical behavior

Criticisms and Potential Pitfalls

On the flip side, critics warn that cancel culture can lead to overreach, where individuals are punished without due process or room for redemption. The fear of being canceled may stifle open dialogue and promote self-

censorship, limiting the exchange of ideas.

- Risk of disproportionate punishment
- Potential for misinformation and rush to judgment
- Impact on mental health and personal growth

Lessons from History: Navigating the Future of Cancel Culture

Looking back at the long and tortured history of cancel culture offers valuable insights into how we might better approach this phenomenon today. While public accountability is essential, the methods and motivations behind canceling individuals deserve thoughtful scrutiny.

Balancing Justice and Compassion

One lesson is the importance of balance. Societies have historically struggled to find a middle ground between enforcing norms and allowing forgiveness. Today, this means fostering environments where people can acknowledge mistakes, learn, and grow rather than be permanently ostracized.

How to Engage Thoughtfully in Cancel Culture

For individuals navigating cancel culture, here are some tips to engage constructively:

- **Verify facts:** Avoid jumping to conclusions based on incomplete or misleading information.
- **Consider context:** Reflect on the intent, timing, and severity of the actions in question.
- **Encourage dialogue:** Promote conversations that allow for understanding and growth instead of immediate condemnation.
- **Support restorative justice:** Advocate for responses that seek accountability while allowing for redemption.

The Evolving Landscape: Cancel Culture Beyond Social Media

While cancel culture is often associated with digital platforms, its influence extends into workplaces, educational institutions, and even government policies. Organizations now grapple with how to address past behaviors and statements of employees or public figures amid growing demands for accountability.

This broader impact shows that cancel culture is evolving from online outrage into a societal mechanism that shapes cultural norms and professional standards.

Corporate and Institutional Responses

Many companies have adopted zero-tolerance policies for misconduct, influenced by public pressure fueled by cancel culture. This raises questions about the balance between protecting organizational reputation and allowing fair processes for those accused.

Institutions also face challenges in defining what constitutes cancel-worthy behavior in a rapidly changing social climate, highlighting the ongoing negotiation of societal values.

The long and tortured history of cancel culture reveals a complex interplay between accountability, justice, and human fallibility. As society continues to grapple with these issues, understanding the past can guide more compassionate and effective ways to hold each other accountable without losing sight of empathy and growth.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the origin of cancel culture?

Cancel culture originated from social media platforms where individuals and groups began publicly calling out and boycotting people or entities for controversial actions or statements, aiming to hold them accountable.

How has cancel culture evolved over time?

Cancel culture has evolved from informal social shaming to a more organized and widespread phenomenon involving mass public backlash, often amplified by social media, affecting careers and reputations globally.

What are some historical examples similar to cancel culture?

Historical examples include public shaming, ostracism, and boycotts, such as the McCarthy era blacklists, which similarly sought to punish individuals for perceived unacceptable behavior or beliefs.

What are the main criticisms of cancel culture?

Critics argue that cancel culture can lead to mob mentality, lack of due process, disproportionate punishment, suppression of free speech, and a culture of fear rather than constructive dialogue.

Can cancel culture have positive effects?

Yes, cancel culture can raise awareness about social issues, promote accountability, and give marginalized voices a platform to call out harmful behavior and demand change.

Additional Resources

The Long and Tortured History of Cancel Culture: An Investigative Review

the long and tortured history of cancel culture is a narrative that stretches far beyond the recent social media trends often associated with the term. While cancel culture today is frequently discussed in the context of digital platforms and viral outrage, its roots trace back through decades of social accountability, public shaming, and collective calls for justice. Understanding this complex evolution requires an examination of its origins, transformations, and the multifaceted impact it has had on society.

The Origins and Evolution of Cancel Culture

Cancel culture, at its core, involves collectively withdrawing support from individuals, groups, or brands deemed to have acted inappropriately, often in response to controversial or offensive behavior. However, this mechanism of social sanctioning is not new. Historical instances of public censure, boycotts, and ostracism share foundational similarities with modern-day cancel culture.

In the early 20th century, for example, public figures who engaged in scandalous behavior faced career-ending repercussions through newspaper exposes and public condemnation. The rise of mass media amplified public scrutiny, setting a precedent for the collective enforcement of social norms. The civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s further showcased organized efforts to hold individuals and institutions accountable, often through protests and boycotts aimed at systemic change.

With the advent of the internet and, more critically, social media platforms in the 21st century, the dynamics of cancel culture shifted dramatically. The democratization of information dissemination empowered individuals to voice dissent and mobilize support rapidly. This digital transformation accelerated the pace and scale of public accountability, often blurring the lines between justified criticism and mob mentality.

From Social Accountability to Online Outrage

The transition from traditional forms of social accountability to the digital age introduced new dimensions to cancel culture. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram became arenas where public opinion could be swiftly galvanized. Hashtags, viral posts, and online petitions turned individual voices into collective movements overnight.

This shift brought both positive and negative consequences. On one hand, marginalized communities found a platform to expose injustices and demand change. Campaigns highlighting issues like workplace harassment, racial

discrimination, and environmental irresponsibility gained traction through viral mobilizations. On the other hand, the rapid spread of outrage sometimes led to disproportionate responses, misinformation, and the erosion of due process.

The long and tortured history of cancel culture in the digital era is marked by several high-profile cases where public figures were “canceled” following revelations of misconduct. These instances often sparked debates about accountability, redemption, and the ethics of online shaming.

Key Features and Mechanisms of Cancel Culture

To comprehend the complexities of cancel culture, it is essential to analyze its defining characteristics and operational mechanisms:

- **Public Exposure:** Central to cancel culture is the public disclosure of perceived wrongdoing, often through social media channels, news outlets, or viral content.
- **Collective Action:** Cancellation typically involves a group or community mobilizing to withdraw support, whether through boycotts, calls for firing, or social ostracism.
- **Accountability Demands:** The ultimate goal is to hold the targeted individual or entity accountable, pushing for consequences or changes in behavior.
- **Rapid Amplification:** Digital platforms facilitate swift and widespread dissemination of information, intensifying the impact.
- **Polarization and Division:** Cancel culture often polarizes public opinion, dividing communities between supporters of accountability and defenders of free expression or due process.

Understanding these features helps contextualize the ongoing debates about the role and repercussions of cancel culture in contemporary society.

The Pros and Cons of Cancel Culture

Like most social phenomena, cancel culture carries a spectrum of implications:

1. Pros:

- *Empowerment of marginalized voices:* Cancel culture can elevate issues that traditional media and institutions overlook.
- *Promotion of accountability:* It encourages public figures and corporations to adhere to ethical standards.
- *Social change catalyst:* Collective action has historically spurred

reforms and increased awareness.

2. Cons:

- *Risk of disproportionate punishment:* Sometimes responses exceed the severity of the offense, lacking nuance.
- *Potential for misinformation:* Rapid viral spread can propagate unverified or false claims.
- *Chilling effect on free speech:* Fear of backlash may deter open dialogue and honest expression.
- *Mob mentality dangers:* Online outrage can escalate into harassment and personal attacks.

These advantages and drawbacks underscore why the long and tortured history of cancel culture remains a contentious topic in public discourse.

Cancel Culture in Comparative Perspective

Examining cancel culture across different cultural and political contexts reveals varying manifestations and societal attitudes. In Western democracies, cancel culture often intersects with debates about freedom of speech, social justice, and political correctness. In contrast, in more authoritarian regimes, state-controlled censorship and social sanctioning may mimic or suppress grassroots accountability movements.

Furthermore, cancel culture's impact on industries such as entertainment, politics, and corporate sectors differs significantly. Celebrities and public figures face intense scrutiny, with social media serving as both a platform for backlash and potential redemption. In politics, cancel culture can influence electoral outcomes and policy debates. Corporations increasingly navigate reputational risks linked to consumer activism and employee demands for ethical conduct.

Notable Case Studies

Several high-profile instances illustrate the complexities surrounding cancel culture:

- **#MeToo Movement:** Originating as a social media campaign to expose sexual harassment, it led to the downfall of numerous powerful individuals but also sparked discussions about due process.
- **Corporate Boycotts:** Brands accused of unethical practices have faced consumer-led cancellations, prompting changes in policies and marketing strategies.

- **Political Cancellations:** Politicians have been “canceled” for controversial statements or actions, influencing public trust and political careers.

These case studies highlight how cancel culture operates at the intersection of ethics, power, and technology.

The Future Trajectory of Cancel Culture

As society continues to grapple with the implications of cancel culture, its trajectory remains uncertain. Emerging trends suggest a possible recalibration, where calls for accountability are balanced with calls for nuance and restorative justice. Platforms and institutions are also exploring ways to mitigate harm caused by online mobs while preserving the positive aspects of public discourse.

Technological advancements, including AI moderation tools and improved content verification, may influence how cancel culture unfolds. Additionally, educational initiatives aimed at promoting digital literacy and empathy could help temper the extremes of online outrage.

The long and tortured history of cancel culture serves as a reminder that social accountability is a dynamic and evolving process. Its future will likely depend on society's ability to foster open dialogue, critical thinking, and equitable justice in an increasingly interconnected world.

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the long and tortured history of cancel culture: Der Begriff "Cancel Culture". Seine Bedeutung, Funktion und Berechtigung Paulina Hopstock, 2022-01-19 Studienarbeit aus dem Jahr 2021 im Fachbereich Jura - Rechtsphilosophie, Rechtssoziologie, Rechtsgeschichte, Note: 12, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Veranstaltung: Grundlagenseminar, Sprache: Deutsch, Abstract: In dieser Arbeit wird neben der Bedeutung des Begriffes der Cancel Culture auch darauf eingegangen werden, welcher Maßstab bei der Bewertung einer Aussage als richtig oder falsch angelegt wird. Es werden verschiedene Tweets analysiert und eine Umfrage zum Thema durchgeführt. Die Bestrafung in Form öffentlicher Demütigungen ist tief in der Geschichte der Menschheit verwurzelt. Beispielsweise waren Kreuzigungen sowohl zur Erniedrigung des noch lebenden Opfers als auch als post-mortem-Demütigung gedacht. Das Ausstellen der nackten Person in Verbindung mit der Verweigerung eines Begräbnisses sollte die Entwürdigung verstärken und gleichzeitig eine abschreckende Wirkung entfalten. Eine im Mittelalter weit verbreitete Form der öffentlichen Bestrafung war das An-den-Pranger-Stellen. Die Betroffenen wurden auf dem Marktplatz öffentlich zur Schau gestellt, damit jeder sehen konnte, wer sich eines Vergehens

schuldig gemacht hatte. Wer am Pranger stand, wurde zu einem unehrlichen Mann und konnte im Anschluss keine öffentlichen Ämter mehr ausüben. Während diese Methoden der Vergangenheit angehören, existiert das Prinzip des Bestrafens durch öffentliche Demütigung weiterhin. Das Geschehen hat sich lediglich vom Marktplatz auf diverse Internetplattformen verlagert. Bereits im Jahr 1967 schrieb der kanadische Philosoph und Medientheoretiker Marshall McLuhan von diese[r] eine[n] Klatschspalte, welche unerbittlich ist, nicht vergisst und in welcher es keine Wiedergutmachung, keine Löschung früherer 'Fehler' gibt. McLuhan dachte dabei hauptsächlich an das Fernsehen und freilich noch nicht an Google, Facebook oder Instagram. Dennoch erscheint seine Aussage heute aktueller denn je in einer Welt, die vom Internet bestimmt wird. Wir leben in einer Zeit der totalen Beteiligung, in der sich jeder in das Leben aller einmischt. Zu differenzieren, was privat und was öffentlich ist, fällt immer schwerer.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Platforming Cancel Culture* Páraic Kerrigan, Elizabeth Farries, Eugenia Siapera, 2025-08-27 *Platforming Cancel Culture: Digital Media, Identity and Cultural Intersections* delves into one of the most polarizing phenomena of the digital age. Bringing together global, intersectional, and interdisciplinary perspectives, this edited collection unpacks the evolving dynamics of cancel culture, examining its practices and implications across diverse political and cultural landscapes. While some hail cancel culture as a tool for social justice, amplifying marginalized voices and calling out systemic inequalities, others critique it as performative virtue signalling or a form of censorship. This book navigates these tensions by analysing the complex interplay of digital platforms and governance mechanisms that shape cancel culture. It explores how platform architectures enable or resist cancel practices, how narratives and media discourses surrounding cancel culture are constructed and contested, and how these dynamics differ across national and cultural contexts. The contributors engage with cutting-edge research and offer localized insights from a range of contexts—including India, South Africa, China, Southeast Europe, the United States, and Russia—to challenge the universalizing assumptions often made about cancel culture. Methodologically diverse, the book employs sentiment and corpus analysis, digital ethnography, interviews, case studies, and critical cultural studies to provide a multifaceted examination of this volatile site of politics and cultural expression. By weaving together perspectives from the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies, *Platforming Cancel Culture* presents a nuanced understanding of how cancel culture functions as a driver of accountability and a locus of contested power. This collection is an essential resource for scholars, students, and anyone seeking to critically engage with the intersections of digital media, culture, and identity in the 21st century.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Cancel Culture* Eve Ng, 2022-03-23 "Cancel culture" has become one of the most charged concepts in contemporary culture and politics, but mainstream critiques from both the left and the right provide only snapshots of responses to the phenomenon. Taking a media and cultural studies perspective, this book traces the origins of cancel practices and discourses, and discusses their subsequent evolution within celebrity and fan cultures, consumer culture, and national politics in the U.S. and China. Moving beyond popular press accounts about the latest targets of cancelling or familiar free speech debates, this analysis identifies multiple lineages for both cancelling and criticisms about cancelling, underscoring the various configurations of power associated with "cancel culture" in particular cultural and political contexts.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *The Handbook of Social and Political Conflict* Sergei Samoilenko, Solon Simmons, 2025-03-25 Provides real-world insights into social and political conflict across disciplines *The Handbook of Social and Political Conflict* offers a comprehensive exploration of conflict from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, merging insights from fields including sociology, political science, psychology, communication, and conflict resolution. Bringing together original work by experts from around the world, this authoritative volume provides readers with a deep understanding of the mechanisms, causes, and consequences of conflict. Designed for those who wish to bridge academic disciplines, the Handbook both advances

theoretical understanding and offers practical conflict resolution strategies that can be applied in a broad range of contexts, from interpersonal disputes to international tensions. Each in-depth chapter tackles a unique concept while maintaining a coherent narrative that spans topics such as political polarization, the rhetoric of social control, the role of technology in shaping conflict behaviors, and much more. Presenting new theoretical perspectives and tools to address today's most pressing issues, the Handbook of Social and Political Conflict: Examines contemporary issues such as political polarization, social ostracism, cancel culture, and information warfare Contains in-depth analysis of critical contemporary issues such as the role of technology, artificial intelligence, and media in modern conflict Addresses both adversarial and cooperative approaches to conflict resolution Incorporates cutting-edge research and theoretical frameworks on contemporary social and political conflicts Offers practical approaches to fostering resilience, peacebuilding, and critical media literacy Whether examining the escalation of political tensions or exploring the potential for peacebuilding, the Handbook of Social and Political Conflict is ideal for graduate and advanced undergraduate students in conflict resolution, political science, sociology, and communication studies. It is also an invaluable reference for professionals working in conflict management, diplomacy, international relations, and social advocacy.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: Overdue Amanda Oliver, 2022-03-22 One part love letter, one part eulogy, *Overdue* tells the story of America's public library system . . . Amanda Oliver proves herself a vibrant new literary voice . . . This is a book for all book lovers. —Reza Aslan, author of *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth* When Amanda Oliver began work as a school librarian, fueled by a lifelong love of books and a desire to help, she felt qualified for the job. What she learned was that librarians are expected to serve as mediators and mental-health-crisis support professionals, customer service reps and administrators of overdose treatment, fierce loyalists to institutionalized mythology and enforced silence, and arms of state surveillance. Based on firsthand experiences from six years of professional work as a librarian in high-poverty neighborhoods of Washington, DC, as well as interviews and research, *Overdue* begins with Oliver's first day at Northwest One, the DC Public Library branch where she would ultimately end her library career. Through her experience at this branch, Oliver highlights the national problems that have existed in libraries since they were founded, troublingly at odds with the common romanticization of the library as a shining beacon of equality: racism, segregation, and economic oppression. These fundamental American problems manifest today as police violence, the opioid epidemic, widespread inaccessibility of affordable housing, and a lack of mental health care nationwide—all of which come to a head in public library spaces. Can public librarians continue to play the many roles they are tasked with? Can American society sustain one of its most noble institutions? Libraries will not save us, but Oliver helps us imagine what might be possible if we stop expecting them to.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: The Bloomsbury Handbook to Philip Roth Aimee Pozorski, Maren Scheurer, 2023-12-14 *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Philip Roth* provides a comprehensive, must-have survey of interdisciplinary scholarship on one of the major American novelists of the 20th and 21st centuries. *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Philip Roth* presents state-of-the-art scholarship on new research methods, current debates, and future directions in Philip Roth studies. It illuminates how Roth, one of the most influential American writers of the 20th and 21st centuries, not only reflected American history and culture in his important novels but uncannily anticipated our American future. Divided into six main sections, this Handbook considers such topics: - The full range of Roth's writing, from his novels and short stories to essays and life writing - Major interdisciplinary scholarly perspectives across literary studies, politics, gender studies, critical race theory, and ecocriticism - Roth's literary legacy across contemporary fiction, Jewish literature, the arts, and culture studies - Key contexts including American political movements since the 1950s, the American Jewish experience, and intertextual relationships Uniting scholars and artists who have built the field of Philip Roth studies from the ground up along with emergent scholars from around the world, this Handbook includes chapter summaries, study

questions, and an author biography and timeline that includes key dates in Roth's life and publication history. It also contains a bibliography of secondary sources for further reading as well as an overview of film and television adaptations.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *The End of the Church?* Hannah Marije Altorf, John Reuben Davies, Tibor Fabiny, Michael Fuller, Trevor Hart, Alison Jack, Elisabeth Jay, Lori A. Kanitz, Vassiliki Kolocotroni, Ann Loades, Margaret Masson, Donald Orr, Jeremy J. Smith, Heather Walton, 2022-12-01 These 14 essays by scholars who have worked with David Jasper in both church and academy develop original discussions of themes emerging from his writings on literature, theology and hermeneutics. The arts, institutions, literature and liturgy are among the subject areas they cover.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *The Routledge Handbook of Non-Ideal Theory* Hilkje C. Hänel, Johanna M. Müller, 2024-10-15 Made popular by John Rawls, ideal theory in political philosophy is concerned with putting preferences and interests to one side to achieve an impartial consensus and to arrive at a just society for all. In recent years, ideal theory has drawn increasing criticism for its idealised picture of political philosophy and its inability to account for the challenges posed by inequalities of, for example, race, gender, and class and by structural injustices stemming from colonialism and imperialism. The Routledge Handbook of Non-Ideal Theory is the first handbook or reference source on this important and fast-growing debate. Comprised of 34 chapters by an international team of contributors, the Handbook is divided into three clear parts: Methodological Challenges Intersections Applied Issues and Contemporary Challenges Within these sections key topics are addressed including: the question of whether non-ideal theory is methodologically linked to ideal theory; its intersection with feminist philosophy, critical race theory, decolonial theory, and critical theory; its characteristic features; the role of the non-ideal theorist; its relation to activism; and its application in the context of disability and health studies, climate justice, global injustices, colonialism, and many more. As well as a comprehensive introduction which provides important background to the debate between ideal and non-ideal theory, the Handbook also features a contribution by the late philosopher Charles Mills on non-ideal theory as ideology. The Routledge Handbook of Non-Ideal Theory is essential reading for students and scholars of political philosophy, ethics, and political theory, and will also be of interest to those studying and researching related subjects such as gender, race, and social justice.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *When Comedy Goes Wrong* Christopher J. Gilbert, 2025-04 While conventional wisdom has it that humor embodies a spirit of renewal and humility, a dispirited form of comedy thrives in a media-saturated and politically charged environment. *When Comedy Goes Wrong* examines how, beginning in the late-twentieth and carrying into the early twenty-first century, a certain comic dispirit found various platforms for disheartening cultural politics. From the calculated follies on talk radio programs like the Rush Limbaugh Show through the anticomedie in the movie *Joker*, the charades of cancel culture, the carnivalesque antics of participants in the Capitol insurrection, and ultimately to so-called Alt-Right comedy, the transgressions and improprieties and ego trips endemic to a newfangled comic freedom produced entirely unfunny ways of being. To understand these unfunny ways, Christopher J. Gilbert challenges the prevailing belief in humor's goodness, analyzing radio personalities, meme culture, films, civil unrest, and even the language of ordinary individuals and everyday speech, all to demonstrate what happens when humor becomes humorless. As such, Gilbert puts forth a nuanced sense of humor with regard to a tumultuous world. *When Comedy Goes Wrong* challenges assumptions about comedy's unequivocal benefits to democratic praxis. It goes beyond partisanship to explore the uglier parts of American culture, imagining the stakes of doing comedy, and being comical, as a means of survival.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Literature and the New Culture Wars: Triggers, Cancel Culture, and the Teacher's Dilemma* Deborah Appleman, 2022-09-06 Can educators continue to teach troubling but worthwhile texts? Our current "culture wars" have reshaped the politics of secondary literature instruction. Due to a variety of challenges from both the left and the

right—to language or subject matter, to potentially triggering content, or to authors who have been canceled—school reading lists are rapidly shrinking. For many teachers, choosing which books to include in their curriculum has become an agonizing task with political, professional, and ethical dimensions. In *Literature and the New Culture Wars*, Deborah Appleman calls for a reacknowledgment of the intellectual and affective work that literature can do, and offers ways to continue to teach troubling texts without doing harm. Rather than banishing challenged texts from our classrooms, she writes, we should be confronting and teaching the controversies they invoke. Her book is a timely and eloquent argument for a reasoned approach to determining what literature still deserves to be read and taught and discussed.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Education in a Cultural War Era* Mordechai Gordon, 2022-04-28 In the past couple of years, much has been said and written in the media about the notion of cancel culture and the way in which various celebrities, journalists, politicians, ideas, and monuments have been cancelled. Yet, the conversations taking place on this issue have been largely uninformed, lacking intellectual rigor, and devoid of the historical and cultural context that could help make the contested debates more enlightening. Mordechai Gordon investigates the phenomenon of cancelling historically as well as how it became an issue recently. The book presents some compelling philosophical arguments against the practice of cancelling and highlights various educational dangers and risks that emerge from this practice and deserve our attention.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Teaching Anti-Fascism* Michael Vavrus, 2022-05-06 This timely book examines how fascist ideology has taken hold among certain segments of American society and how this can be addressed in curriculum and instruction. Vavrus presents middle, secondary, and college educators and their students with a conceptual framework for enacting a critical multicultural pedagogy by analyzing discriminatory discourse and recommending civic anti-fascist steps people can take right now. For teacher education programs and policymakers, anti-fascist civic assessment rubrics are provided. To help clarify contemporary debates over what can be taught in public schools, an advance organizer highlights contested and misunderstood terminology. Featuring historical and contemporary patterns of fascist politics, this accessible text is organized in four parts: “Good Trouble,” Unpacking Ideological Orientations, Indicators of Colonial Proto-Fascism and U.S. Fascist Politics, and An Anti-Fascist “Reading the World.” Readers will come away with a deeper knowledge base that marshalls a century of anti-fascist actions in response to contemporary acts of racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, gender and sexuality discrimination, bias against Latinx and migrant populations, and other actions that undermine our democracy and harm marginalized students and their families and communities. Book Features: A groundbreaking framework for incorporating anti-fascist pedagogical concepts into multicultural education. Descriptions of common characteristics of historical fascism, far-right extremism, and anti-fascism. Anti-fascist assessment rubrics for teacher educators. Guidance to assist classroom teachers in contextualizing current anti-democracy events. Recommended and annotated anti-fascist background readings informed by critical, theoretical, and intersectional perspectives.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: *Postcolonial Practices of Care* Hellena Moon, Emmanuel Y. Lartey, 2022-07-18 This anthology seeks to theorize a method of a radical, decolonial spiritual-care paradigm that can chart a new course in defining—or reframing—what is “spiritual,” what is theological, and what is “care.” *Postcolonial Practices of Care* presents voices of educators, chaplains, students, human-rights and disability activists, and other professionals to highlight the problems of disciplinary divides and binaries—such as pastoral/spiritual or ordinary/sacred. In focusing on the practices of care during the pandemic, the editors see their book as contributing to ongoing paradigm shifts and the importance of decoloniality as a method in the field of pastoral care. The praxis of spiritual care addresses—and interrogates—the history of spiritual violence and its imbrication with modernity/coloniality, colonialism, racial capitalism, neoliberalism, and (conscious and unconscious) white Christian supremacy that constructed not only the pastoral and the spiritual but also its divide: the pastoral/spiritual. Such a framework focuses on “religious” difference without probing or critiquing how those differences have reified hierarchies of

superiority or sustained ideologies of Euro-centric monocultural ethnocentrism. We want to emphasize the shared practices that bring us together as human beings on Earth rather than to prove we are better, or more unique, than one another.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: Higher Ground Brian P. Tilley, 2023-04-24 As quickly as an American, anti-racist consensus formed in the wake of George Floyd's death, it seemed to evaporate under the pressures of a highly polarized political system. How do we escape the trap of polarization to reconstruct a consensus for meaningful action against racism? In this book, the lessons of history, problems understanding modern racism, and American political parties' approaches to racism are analyzed from a person-centered, psychological perspective. The author prioritizes arguments and research findings that emphasize humanity and carry "moral weight:" the perspective must demonstrate how racism violates our fundamental sense of right and wrong. The author's analysis of research and history concludes that morality, humanity, and racism are interrelated and mutually influential. The author shows that moral conviction against racism increases the likelihood of meaningful change; this conviction is nurtured through a deeper understanding of the human costs of racism for all Americans. This is the path to higher ground where Americans can unite to pursue true equality.

the long and tortured history of cancel culture: Ethics and Advocacy Harlan Beckley, Douglas F. Ottati, Matthew R. Petrusek, William Schweiker, 2022-03-25 Ethics and Advocacy considers the connections and differences between critical reflection or moral arguments or narratives and advocacy for particular issues regarding justice and moral behavior and dispositions. The chapters in this volume share an interest in overcoming polarizing division that does not enable fruitful give-and-take discussion and even possible persuasive justifications. The authors all believe that both ethics and advocacy are important and should inform each other, but each offers a divergent point of view on the way forward to these agreed-upon ends. Our shared goal is to avoid academic withdrawal and to speak relevantly to the important issues of our day while halting—or at least mitigating—the disruptive discourse—almost shouting—that characterizes our polarized current society.

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