



## Is cancel culture a problem? That depends on who you ask

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Acknowledging one's missteps and moving on is a normal part of life. Unfortunately, when those missteps are done in the public eye, they can lead to ruined reputations and livelihoods.

Just ask Ilya Shapiro, a legal expert and analyst, formerly of the Cato Institute. A poorly worded tweet regarding President Joe Biden's possible Supreme Court nominations started an avalanche of controversy. Now, gutless administrators at Georgetown Law School are kowtowing to students who wish to punish Shapiro for wrongthink. Some students are even demanding such nonsense as reparations and places to cry. Here's to hoping these individuals never become practicing attorneys.<sup>3</sup>

Never mind that Shapiro reviewed and regretted his tweet. He is now on administrative leave, pending an investigation. The entire saga is more proof that the woke mob rules, especially in academia.

In the media sector, Whoopi Goldberg is in hot water for her statements regarding race and the Holocaust. Goldberg erroneously said, "The Holocaust isn't about race. It's about man's inhumanity to man. That's what it's about. These are two white groups of people. Let's talk about it for what it is. It's how people treat each other."

Goldberg apologized but did more damage during her appearance on the Stephen Colbert show by stating: "As a black person, I think of race as being something that I can see." Racism is alive and well, and it is not just about injustices done to those with a dark skin tone. Thinking otherwise leads to the dismissal of actual incidents of racism. Goldberg is now on a two-week suspension from *The View*.

You don't have to agree with the perspectives or politics of either Shapiro or Goldberg to admit they deserve a measure of grace. This also doesn't require you agree with the content or tone of their statements. It's obvious that neither Shapiro nor Goldberg were looking to harm others with their language, no matter how regrettable their words may have been.

As much as the focus is on them right now, they are but temporary fixtures in the spotlight. Sooner rather than later, someone else will publicly do or say something that goes viral and elicits hatred.

In this divided country, mistakes are unforgivable, so long as it's your ideological opponent committing the wrong. If it's an ally, mercy is at the ready. At least that's how culture, especially the online variety, operates. Instead, when there is regret, remorse, and/or apologies, social stumbles should be met with leniency. Period.

Some still insist "cancel culture isn't real." This is the overwhelming narrative from those on the Left, not the Right. That's because individuals on the Right are much more likely to face organized backlash. Shapiro is experiencing what Goldberg isn't: demands from a loud contingent that won't settle for anything less than severe punishment.

On the Wednesday edition of MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, Mika Brzezinski exclaimed, "Everyone knows Whoopi Goldberg. She's been on TV for decades ... If you don't know her heart, then you haven't been watching ... This cancel culture is getting so out of hand!"

Interestingly enough, few people on the right side of the aisle have said Goldberg should step down. There is no demand to fire her. On the other hand, there is a bitter crusade to unseat Shapiro before he begins his tenure at Georgetown Law. Cancel culture is alive and well, and it disproportionately affects conservatives and those who dare to entertain differing views. The push to cancel Joe Rogan comes to mind.

Regardless of who is at the center of an uproar, our collective first response shouldn't be one of punishment. After all, we're just as likely as anyone else to find ourselves against a mob. Each of us is human and prone to blunder now and again. Grace may not be fashionable in the current culture wars, but it's the one thing we all desperately need.