

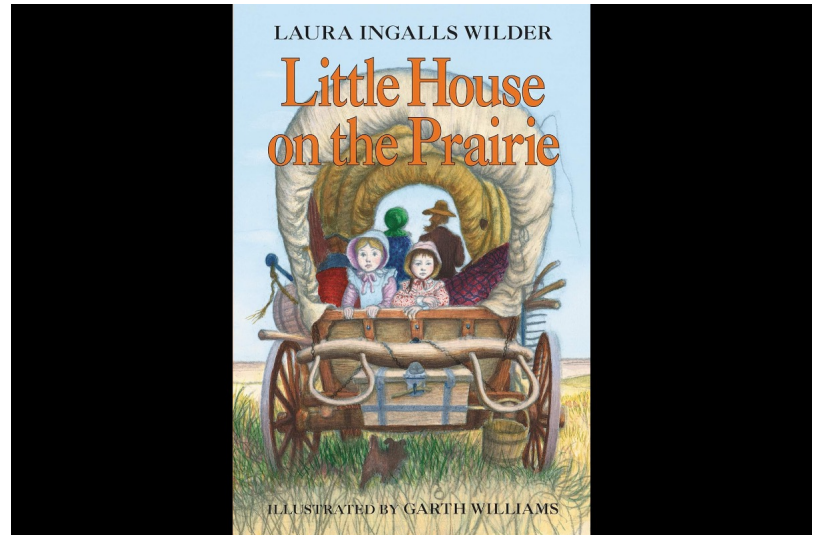


Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on August 9, 2025

To Nix a Classic or Not? Cancel Culture Just Can't Make Up Its Mind

It's ironic, but the same people who often don't even know what boys and girls are may seem to be cocksure about what should be canceled. Then again, awash in their characteristic relativism, some of them aren't even sure about that. Consider one Charlotte Gordon, "distinguished professor of humanities" at Endicott College in Massachusetts.

The book series *Little House on the Prairie* (LHP), she writes, is "beloved and troubling." Why the latter? Well, Gordon [tells us](#) that in 2018,



[Amazon.com](#)

the American Library Association took [series author Laura Ingalls] Wilder's name off the medal the group had created in her honor in 1954, declaring, "Wilder's legacy ... includes expressions of stereotypical attitudes inconsistent with [the association's] core values of inclusiveness, integrity and respect, and responsiveness."

Gordon found this mucho "troubling." In fact, she writes, "I put my Wilder books in the basement when I read the ALA's statement." For she was "deeply troubled by the racism that was clearly embedded in the series," she explained.

Value Signaling

Now, for the record, it's highly unlikely that, *institutionally* (there can be exceptions within the organization), the ALA cares a whit about the "stereotypical attitudes." But they certainly want to ensure that their cocktail-party-circuit invitations keep coming.

Whether or not Gordon really cares, though, she's now back on the wagon (the covered wagon, that is). As she writes:

I might never have looked at them [Wilder's books] again until I read Pamela Smith Hill's comprehensive new book, [sic] Hill offers a balanced analysis that will help readers — including me — make their peace with the series.

So, in summary, the ALA makes *one* statement against the work, and Gordon mothballs it. Someone else writes a book insisting you shouldn't, and she pulls it from storage. My, a person could get the crazy idea that this "intellectual" doesn't have a mind of her own.

(And if this reflects how fickle Gordon is generally, any prospective husband of hers had better craft a good prenup.)



Tackling a Fallacy With a Fallacy

Hill's book, *Too Good to Be Altogether Lost*, certainly does provide perspective on the United States' past, too. But is it the correct one?

Consider that when arguing for LHP, Hill argues that it is better "to know about America's racist history than to protect ourselves — and our children — from it," Gordon relates. The professor later adds:

"No 8-year-old Dakota child should have to listen to an uncritical reading of 'Little House on the Prairie,'" she [Hill] wrote. "But no white American should be able to avoid the history it has to tell."

Now, here's reality: America has no "racist history." That is, not in any sense that other nations don't. America, like all civilizations, has a history of people. Its people, like all people, are sinners (or are, as the "fashionable" may say, "dysfunctional.") And its sinners, like all sinners, have a history of sin. This includes all the Seven Deadly Sins: Greed, Sloth, Gluttony, Envy, Pride, Lust, and Wrath — and their subcategories.

If the above sounds like an explanation fit for a seven-year-old, it's because the anti-American critics continually disgorge juvenile analyses. It shouldn't have to be explained that humans in general are a rough lot. But it apparently does.

What also should be noted is that our civilization has "racism on the brain." "Racism" is merely a subcategory of Wrath, not the end-all and be-all. Its presence in a people does not make them uniquely evil. Nor does its absence in a person make him uniformly good. (Serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer emphasized that he was non-racist in his choice of victims.)

"Racism" is handy in one respect, though. Focusing on the sins of the past can conveniently distract from the sins of the present.

The Rap

And what are the supposed issues with LHP? Gordon writes that the phrase "'the only good Indian is a dead Indian,' for instance, is uttered by multiple characters." An eight-year-old Sioux girl was so disturbed by this in 1998, too, that her mother wanted the book banned. (It wasn't.)

Osage tribe members are also "depicted as 'animals,'" claims Gordon. And character "Laura Ingalls's mother, Caroline," she adds, "tells her daughters that she does not like Indians."

Yet perspective is needed here. The character making the "dead Indian" remark, Mr. Scott, is, Gordon relates,

one of the most unlikable people in the book. Pa does not agree with him, and clearly, Wilder herself does not endorse Mr. Scott's position, but she does hint at the context of Mr. Scott's racism. When Pa tells Mr. Scott that the Indians are more interested in hunting buffalo than warring with White people, Mr. Scott says: "I'll be glad to tell Mrs. Scott what you say. She can't get the Minnesota massacres out of her head."



The Reality

Of course, it's understandable that the small Sioux girl might be upset by the "dead Indian" comment. What's not reasonable is the idea that if someone, somewhere in our country of 347 million is offended by something, we must rejigger society. Instead, it should be a teaching moment.

Here's a good place to start, too: That lass' tribe's name, "Sioux," is a derogatory term meaning "little snakes." The implication is that they were deceitful enemies, of course.

Oh, and the name was given to them by the Ojibwe/Chippewa tribe.

More examples:

- "Comanche," meaning "enemy forever," was originated by the Utes.
- "Iroquois," meaning "snake," was originated by the Algonquin or Huron.
- "Mohawk," meaning "eaters of men" (cannibals), was originated by the Algonquin.
- "Navajo," meaning "thief," was originated by the Apache or Tewa.

This is, of course, why these tribes generally have different names for themselves than the above. But a question: Will these tribes now teach *their* children about their "racist history"?

The point is that when groups (or individuals) clash, they tend to say bad — and often bigoted — things about each other. That's human nature. Now, wouldn't this more balanced view soothe feelings, ease inter-group relations, and encourage unity better than the anti-white/American/Western narrative does?

Of course, the Indians aren't as likely to have books documenting their bigotry. But this is largely because they didn't have a written language or the technology to create books until the white settlers introduced such things. The pre-Columbian Indians were living in the stone age — they hadn't invented the wheel.

Educational Malpractice

More perspective could be offered, too. For example, as Professor Thomas Sowell [wrote](#) in 2003, a question American schoolchildren might be asked in class is:

How would you feel if you were a Native American who saw the European invaders taking away your land?

Now, one could mention the destructiveness of focusing on "feelings." But then, we could also ask: How would you feel if you were a Marcomanni tribe member who saw the Romans, and other Germanic tribes, taking away your land? Lousy, I'm sure.

But what's the point?

As Sowell emphasized, taking land by force was the unquestioned norm the world over for most of history. "The Indians no doubt regretted losing so many battles," he wrote. "But that is wholly different from saying that they thought battles were the wrong way to settle ownership of land." In fact, tribes often fought with each other over land and resources.

Returning to Gordon, she also puts a unique onus on white people for environmental degradation, for "pollution" and "destruction." But this is also ahistorical. As [I illustrated last year](#), Indians sometimes ravaged the environment and wasted resources as well — just like everyone else.



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The bottom line? The real racism is practiced by those who portray Westerners as uniquely flawed. What's unique about them, in reality, is that they created [the greatest nation the world has ever known](#). And it's not just that Gordon, Hill, and the rest of their co-ideologists couldn't have done it. It's that they won't even be able to perpetuate it — unless they change their civilization-destroying ways.



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