

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC":**
IT DEPENDS ON WHOSE
"LEGEND" IS BEING "GORED":
Davis, Wilson, McKinley,
Jefferson, Jackson, Lee,
Battle Flags, Calhoun,
but ... uh ... not Sanger!



By Stephen L. Bakke  August 31, 2015

Here's what provoked me:

I haven't paid a lot of attention to the "rename and remove" movements across the country. Then the name of a local lake came under consideration for renaming, and I heard of a group of black pastors' unsuccessful attempt to have Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger's statue removed from the Smithsonian "Struggle for Justice" exhibit. Inconsistent for sure!

Here's my response:

It Depends on Whose "Legend" is being "Gored":

Davis, Wilson, McKinley, Jefferson, Jackson, Lee,
Battle Flags, Calhoun, but ... uh ... not Sanger!

Renaming or removing historic items has been popular recently, and it's even arrived here in Minnesota. But there's a contradiction in some of these developments. First, a recap of this "disinfecting" of American history:

- Statues of Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and President Woodrow Wilson, who segregated federal offices, have been relocated from prominent locations at the University of Texas in Austin.
- Mount McKinley in Alaska, named after President William McKinley, will be renamed by President Obama.
- Jefferson-Jackson dinners in several states are being renamed because both Presidents Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson were slave-owners.
- Many Confederate General Robert E. Lee statues and portraits are under pressure for removal.
- Confederate battle flags are systematically disappearing.
- And here in Minnesota, there's a movement to rename Lake Calhoun in Minneapolis because prominent politician John C. Calhoun supported slavery and relocation of tribal nations.

But then a group of black pastors from nine states unsuccessfully requested removal of Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger's bust from the Smithsonian's "Struggle for Justice" exhibit. They respectfully requested the removal stating: "Sanger may have been a lot of things, but a 'champion of justice' she definitely was not. Perhaps the Gallery is unaware that Ms. Sanger supported black eugenics, a racist attitude toward black and other minority babies...The obvious incongruity is staggering!..."

Taking no action, the Smithsonian believes the bust is important in order to "see the past clearly and objectively..."

I guess it makes a difference whose "legend" is being "gored"!