

Totalitarians Gloat

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For generations, even millennia, boys read *The Iliad* with admiration for Achilles, and men referenced the clever Odysseus from that other Homeric epic, *The Odyssey*.

By my day, neither were required reading. If I've read *The Odyssey*, it was the same version the Coen Brothers referenced when concocting their terrific film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2000) — the Classic Comics version.

Nowadays, teachers gloat, online, about expunging the poem from the canon.

It's not a conspiracy if they boast about it on Twitter.

Rod Dreher, in "Cancel Cult Comes For Homer," explains the context for this latter development: the politically correct "intersectionalism" of public school teachers in the "#DisruptTexts" movement. "Be like Odysseus and embrace the long haul to liberation (and then take the Odyssey out of your curriculum because it's trash)," tweeted Shea Martin in June. 'Hahaha,' replied Heather Levine, an English teacher at Lawrence (Mass.) High School. 'Very proud to say we got the Odyssey removed from the



curriculum this year!"

Why? All that ancient racism and sexism.

Expelling the classics from schooling is absurd, of course, exposure to a diversity of ideas and historical achievements being what we used to call a "liberal education." But today's canon controllers are not *liberal* activists. They are, Dreher insists, *totalitarian* ones.

And they are quite emboldened — their ground-up, crowdsourced movement gets the usual pat approval by tax-funded educational institutions. It's not a conspiracy if they boast about it on Twitter.

Here is a fun fact about *The Odyssey*: Samuel Butler, author of *Erewhon* (1872) and *The Way of All Flesh* (1903), conjectured that the real author of the poem was a woman. Yes, an "authoress."

Nevertheless, that would not likely convince woke cultists to put *The Odyssey* back on your kids' reading lists.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.