



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Censorship that may violate the First Amendment is reported in "Censorship Dateline." In the private sector, editorial, business, or social decisions that may affect the free flow of information are legal, but still worth noting "For the Record."*

BOOKSELLING Washington, D.C.

White supremacist and "pro-Confederate" books such as *The Politically Incorrect Guide to the Civil War* (2008) by H. W. Crocker III should not be promoted by mainstream booksellers, according to a campaign launched by the Council for American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), with headquarters in Washington, D.C., on December 9, 2019. Other titles challenged by CAIR include the nonfiction book *The South Was Right!* (1991) by James Ronald Kennedy and Walter Donald Kennedy and *The Turner Diaries* (1978) by William Luther Pierce, the notoriously racist and anti-Semitic novel about the violent overthrow of the US government, credited with inspiring the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

Robert McCaw, CAIR's director of government affairs, called it "inexcusable for internet retailers like Amazon, Google, Audio Books, and Barnes and Noble to profit from the mainstreaming of white supremacist historical revisionism that celebrates the treason of the Confederacy and excuses the abomination of slavery."

In CAIR's press release, McCaw said the retailers "should immediately remove all white supremacist and pro-Confederacy digital audio books and related social media ads."

Amazon, which sells or offers through its vendors any number of controversial titles, including *Mein Kampf* by Adolph Hitler, and the anti-Semitic tract *The Protocols of the*

Elders of Zion, referred to its policy on "Content Guidelines for Books":

As a bookseller, we provide our customers with access to a variety of viewpoints, including books that some customers may find objectionable. That said, we reserve the right not to sell certain content, such as pornography or other inappropriate content.

The publisher of *The Politically Incorrect Guide to the Civil War*, Regnery Publishing, based in Washington, D.C., issued its own statement:

Regnery strenuously objects to the insidious and dishonest smear campaign being waged by CAIR against our author, our book, and millions of Americans. Conflating "white supremacy" with "confederate" is a loathsome and despicable tactic, used to discredit and slander anyone who dares to voice support for the South or the ideals of liberty and self-determination embraced by so many patriots during the Civil War and ever since.

Reported in: *Washington Times*, December 11, 2019.

BROADCAST MEDIA Studio City, California

In a change of heart, the Hallmark Channel will allow television commercials produced by wedding-planning website Zola that show two brides kissing.

The cable network had pulled the ads in mid-December 2019 after the conservative group One Million Moms complained that the ads promoted "the LGBT agenda," according to the Associated Press.

That decision prompted an immediate backlash from people including Ellen DeGeneres and Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg.

The company has apologized and will reach out to Zola to reinstate the commercials, it said in a statement.

"The Crown Media team has been agonizing over this decision as we've seen the hurt it has unintentionally caused," Mike Perry, president and chief executive officer of Hallmark Cards Inc., said in a statement. "Said simply, they believe this was the wrong decision."

The wedding website had submitted six ads, and four featured lesbian couples, AP reported. After Hallmark pulled those ads, Zola canceled its remaining ads. Reported in: *bloomberg.com*, December 15, 2019.

MOVIES Universal City, California

Less than two months before the scheduled late-September 2019 release of *The Hunt*—in which "elites" hunt "normal" people for sport—Universal Pictures decided to indefinitely postpone it. Universal announced its decision one day after President Donald Trump tweeted a complaint about Hollywood, in which he claimed that movie makers "create their own violence, and then try to blame others."

A few hours before that tweet, Fox News anchor Laura Ingraham (whom President Trump is known to watch) expressed outrage over the premise of the film on her show. Thus it is likely that Trump was commenting on *The Hunt*, which may have been a factor in Universal's self-censorship.

The film, which had originally been titled *Red State vs. Blue State*, previously garnered a smattering of criticism from left-leaning social media accounts for its apparent intent to valorize violent protagonists similar to some of Trump's red state supporters.

In a carefully worded statement released August 10, 2019, the studio announced, "We stand by our



filmmakers and will continue to distribute films in partnership with bold and visionary creators, like those associated with this satirical social thriller, but we understand that now is not the right time to release this film.” (The statement did leave the door open to a future release.)

In its report on Universal’s decision not to release the movie, *Vox* commented,

Ostensibly, the move had something to do with recent mass shootings in

El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio (particularly because the El Paso shooting was apparently politically motivated). But even if (and it’s a big if) the timing was accidental—even if the plan to halt the film’s release was underway before President Trump’s thumbs started tapping—in the public eye, correlation seems awfully close to causation.

Movies have seen their release dates pushed before because of tragic news events, but a major movie studio putting the kibosh on a high-

profile release right after the president seemingly tweeted about it is something new altogether. And the precedent it sets—in which powerful government leaders can theoretically shut down a movie’s release because they heard something on TV about a trailer for a movie nobody’s seen—is a move toward government censorship that flies in the face of First Amendment freedoms.

Reported in: *Vox*, August 14, 2019.