

PAST INJUSTICES

Cancel culture mustn't diminish Boston's rich history

Having pride in one's country and its history is fundamental to patriotism, yet this is precisely what cancel culture is trying to destroy. Several hundred protesters, including New Democracy Coalition founder Rev. Kevin Petersen, gathered outside Boston City Hall on Aug. 10. Their goal is to rename Faneuil Hall, Boston's original meeting place, due to Colonial merchant Peter Faneuil's role in the slave trade. They wore T-shirts with the slogan "Change the Name." It's another skirmish in the culture war that is raging in the United States. Boston is quickly becoming a hotspot in this conflict, with the renaming of Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day and the possible revision of the 122-year-old Massachusetts state seal.

Throughout history, no other country has come



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close to matching America's level of greatness. We in Boston have particular pride of place with the nation's cradle of liberty right in our backyard. Five gallant men laid down their lives in Boston on March 5, 1770, 252 years ago — the first martyrs in the fight for American independence. One of them was Crispus Attucks, a Black man who was the first person to be killed in the fight for American independence. The Boston Tea Party, which took place on Dec. 16, 1773, was the first public act of resistance against the oppressive rules of the British Empire. Although the first shots of the American Revolution were fired in Lexington and Concord, Boston got into the game on June 17, 1775, with the Battle of Bunker Hill. It resulted in significant casualties for the British forces,



STUART CAHILL — HERALD STAFF FILE

TWO WRONGS DON'T MAKE A RIGHT: Although Faneuil Hall bears the name of Peter Faneuil, who was active in the slave trade, renaming it would be a mistake.

and marked the beginning of the British army's expulsion from Boston. Black and white men both fought in and died in these struggles for independence. Inspiring and energizing the rest of the colonies to join the fight. Boston set the stage for victory, and we reap this great bequest.

Our nation's founders, especially the Colonial heroes of Boston, were excep-

tional men who gave their all for a country whose full potential they never lived to see. We will always be grateful to them. The engagement in slavery, either as an owner or a trader, was, nonetheless, one of the worst flaws among these otherwise great men. Unfortunately, that practice was common in that era, leaving the participants with a stain on their

legacy. As historians, we are aware of these facts but place more emphasis on the contributions made by these important figures to history and the development of our nation.

Although Boston has a wealth of history, it is unfortunately no stranger to the waves of prejudice that have swept the country. In the early 20th century, Italians in Boston

were subjected to extreme xenophobia and discrimination. Italian immigrants Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were both wrongfully tried, convicted and executed in 1927. Boston's "No Irish Need Apply" sign was the welcome mat that greeted Irish immigrants in the 1840s and '50s. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Boston busing crisis made the city's treatment of African Americans look worse than the Jim Crow South.

Even though these horrific events occurred, we mustn't let them diminish our historic city. Cancel culture will never fix the mistakes of the past. Only learning from our mistakes will do that.

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