

EDITORIAL

# Florida's governor is a harbinger of chaos

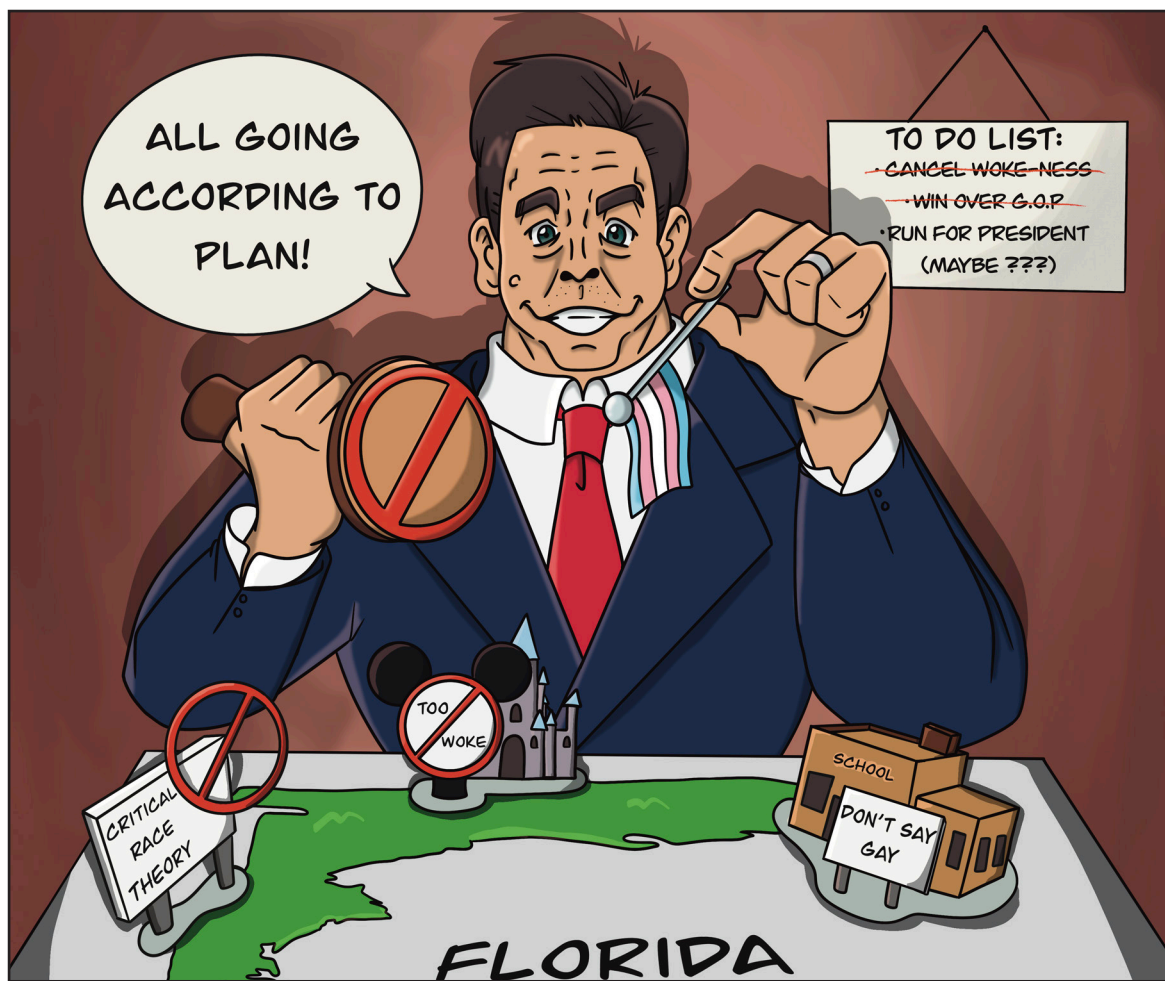
Florida's recent trend of hard-right leaning legislation is worrying for the future of Texas' and America's democracy.

The great state of Florida has always been crazy. The tales of the alligator wrestling by the local Florida man of the week are always entertaining, but the headlines from Florida lately haven't been as funny especially regarding the legislation passed by Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Under DeSantis' leadership, the state of Florida has become a beacon of Republican values. In June 2021, it seemed every week there was a new topic that DeSantis was addressing with bills. He led efforts to ban the teaching of critical race theory, a set of ideas holding that racial bias is inherent in many institutions due to being primarily designed for and implemented by white people, in Florida schools, even though it wasn't even a part of the curriculum.

Later that year, he instituted the Individual Freedom Act, more commonly known as the Stop Wrongs to Our Kids and Employees (WOKE) Act, which gives parents the ability to sue the districts they believe teach critical race theory to their children.

This "war on wokeness" is something DeSantis has promoted for the past two years. With each policy, another group's rights get run over. In 2022, DeSantis passed the Florida Parental Rights in Education Act, more commonly known as the "Don't Say Gay" bill, which would prohibit any discussion of gender or orientation in grades kindergarten through third



Tj Favela/The Collegian

grade. This bill was seen as incredibly harmful by the LGBTQ+ community due to the censoring nature of the bill. How can you have a war on wokeness and then start censoring people?

These bills set frightening prec-

edents. DeSantis is determined to go after whatever groups he believes are a threat to his image of a "perfect America" and is signing bill after bill to ensure that they are kept quiet. He even added an "anti-mob" extension

to the stand-your-ground law during the Black Lives Matter protests in 2021 for that exact purpose.

This trend in Republican politics is worrying considering that Texas is bleeding red itself. DeSantis has

emphasized in the past that Texas and subsequently Gov. Greg Abbott partnered with Florida against the "woke" left and said that without the two titans of Republican states that America would be a neo-Marxist dumpster fire.

There is no reason that a Texan should be worrying about what happens in Florida, but now we have to. Because what if those incredibly restrictive laws pass through the Republican pipeline and make their home here. This feels like the worst case of catch-up where the losers are the populations in these states.

What's scarier is imagining what a DeSantis presidency would look like. Thankfully, he hasn't put in his bid yet, but many speculate that he will and with former President Donald Trump's historic indictment, DeSantis might be their next nominee.

If he bans everything he sees as "woke" in his own state, then what would he ban nationally? What gives him the authority to define what normal American values are versus the "woke" mentality he's trying so desperately to fight.

The future of Florida and the future of Florida are held in the hands of a maniac who has the percentages of the GOP who don't like Trump anymore in his back pocket, and this recent indictment will send even more to him on a silver platter. If this country somehow falls into DeSantis' hands as well, there won't be fun headlines of crazy Florida men anymore, but a crazy United States dictator focused on eradicating the rights of everyone not like him.

VIEWPOINTS

## Asian hate is perpetuated through your informality



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TikTok has been under scrutiny after security concerns and its affiliations with the Chinese Communist Party. Or just simply, its Chinese affiliations.

In recent years, there has been a resurgence of hate crimes towards Asian Americans. The pandemic was essentially a scapegoat to discriminate against all Asian people. The virus was even named the "China virus" by former President Donald Trump.

It seems TikTok is the newest excuse to say inflammatory things about Chinese people. In several conversations about the recent proposals to ban TikTok, many people drop the "Communist Party" part of the CCP and simply reduce the blame to the Chinese.

People may say "potato potato" and guffaw about the sensitivity of our generation, yet blissfully ignorant of how dropping two words perpetuates hate crimes against Asian people.

Being half Japanese, I have been the brunt of jokes at the lunch table a plethora of times. A boy once told me it was my fault that World War II happened.

I've had people pull their eyes taught against their face to mock the shape of my

eyes or even say they've "switched races" after waking up with puffy eyes.

Among the most jarring encounters I've had are people who are completely unapologetic towards the atomic bombs and the bombing of Tokyo, which resulted in the death of my great grandfather. Their reasoning: we "deserved it" as retribution for Pearl Harbor.

I didn't know that there would ever be justification for killing hundreds of thousands of civilians.

The magnitude of the situation finally hit me about two months ago. My mother, a Japanese immigrant, was talking to me about how she feels safer walking our pit-bull in case someone tries to attack her.

It's truly an unexplainable feeling realizing that the chance of being subjected to a hate crime is increasing exponentially. The sad reality of a minority in America is watching your chance of survival fluctuate as you flip through the news channels.

Because to racists, who cares if you're not Chinese or the ethnicity on the roster to target? To them, we're all the same.

The irony in all of this is the population of non-Asian people who so fervently consume Asian culture do not speak up when it comes to protecting the population they derive their pleasures from.

Listen to all the K-pop, eat all the pho and watch all the anime you want. But when we speak up about the injustices our community is facing, the least you can do is wipe off your questionable eyeliner and lend an ear.

For the meantime while TikTok becomes scrutinized, and therefore Chinese Americans as well, check your language. Speak carefully and most of all, listen.

## A world without social media would look like what?



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With the Restrict Act on the horizon, social media could see major changes. Though, that begs the question of whether social media is even needed.

It's obvious that social media has changed the way society operates since its inception, and perhaps even conception. A place where real people can go to follow the lives of other people whenever they want? That's the kind of crazy idea that would certainly forever alter the way people interact, right? Yes. Yes, it would. It absolutely would.

It's difficult to imagine a world where social media platforms didn't exist. They've become millions of people's go-to source for news, updates, drama, memes – the works. Just think about it, if it weren't for the existence of Twitter, we wouldn't have been blessed with tweets from former President Donald Trump talking about Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart's relationship or how bad Coca-Cola tastes.

Jokes aside, the stranglehold social media platforms have had on people's daily lives is inconceivable. Realistically, it's as important and prominent in many folks' lives as their jobs at this point. One could argue that's hyperbolic, but – is it though?

Society has grown largely dependent

on social media platforms like Twitter, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, etc. Not to say that's inherently a negative thing, but there's no denying that it's likely impossible for us as a society to ever truly go back to the way things were before the dawn of MySpace, or if you're a 90s kid, Six Degrees.

If it weren't for Facebook or Instagram, building and maintaining relationships with people familiar and unfamiliar would become increasingly difficult at a time when it seems many people have grown tired and weary of others.

If it weren't for TikTok, Reddit or Quora, new and old generations may have a harder time opening their minds to multiple lifestyles, languages, locations, cultures, backgrounds, likes, dislikes, positives, negatives, historical events and current events.

If it wasn't for Twitter, chances are a lot of folks wouldn't have to lose brain cells reading awful tweets, who'd want to miss out on that?

On second thought, maybe Twitter should go actually.

Additionally, politicians, businesses, celebrities, news outlets, schools, etc., have used the available media platforms as an invaluable way to communicate information about themselves to build a stronger image to encourage more people to engage with them.

Despite Senator Mark Warner and his spokespeople declaring otherwise, it's a bit hard to believe this Restrict Act thing won't have a large impact on numerous citizens.

Though we'll just have to wait and see what happens. If social media succumbs to the power of the Restrict Act, what will happen to our society?

Letter Policy



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