

Proceeding on the PC treadmill

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

I don't believe that America requires further infantilization. Recently this paper asked its readers whether or not the word "Redskins" should be banned in reference to the National Football League team that plays its home games in Hyattsville, Md.

The answer should be: no.

The Seattle Times has already banned the word. Recently, as MSNBC prepared to air a story about the U.S. Patent Office's removal of the Redskins' trademark, it warned its viewers that the onscreen talent would actually have to enunciate the awful word in order to actually report the story.

Perhaps MSNBC should consider posting a warning before each program. "TV IMA: Warning. This program is intended for immature audiences only."

What would we replace it with when discussing the debate over the appropriateness of the Redskins football team? The R-word? Actually, that has already happened - in an op-ed column in the Washington Post. But, we'll get to that later.

We already have to endure the silliness of using "the n-word" when we all know precisely what the n-word really is. There is not a millimeter's difference between saying "the n-word" and spelling out sexually charged words when speaking in front of 3-year-olds. It's just that we're treating each other as children. And we're embracing our treatment as children.

That's not to say that the Redskins shouldn't change their nickname. They probably should. The Washington Lingerie Football League has already shown the way, changing their name from the Redskinettes to the Warriorettes. They didn't even have to change their logo.

But we don't need to give the word, Redskin, any more power than it already exerts.

I grew up in a hard-scrabble, mixed-race neighborhood that was in the process of transitioning to predominately black by the time I moved off to college. I grew up using the n-word in the same context as the black kids I grew up with. I only had to curtail my use of the word when I moved off to University of California-Davis, with its high concentration of rich, liberal white kids from well-to-do white neighborhoods.

Last year, the Philadelphia Eagles' wide receiver Riley Cooper found himself in a great deal of difficulty after a cellphone recording of him using the n-word at a concert was posted on YouTube. He was widely condemned and even threatened. But, frankly, I can't imagine an environment where one would grow more insensitive to the word than in a predominately black NFL locker room.

On the Navajo Indian Reservation in Arizona, you will find an all-Indian school, Red Mesa High School. The school's mascot is - you guessed it - the Redskins. So the name is not so offensive that the Navajos cannot cheer for the local sports teams.

And it's not as though we can rid ourselves of this nuisance by simply complying with this latest demand from the chronically indignant. As soon as the Redskins' team ownership or the NFL finally yields to the demands from the left, there will be another politically incorrect issue that they'll bring up. It's the treadmill that they expect us all to march on for all eternity.

Already, the left is sharpening its pitchforks and lighting its torches for the next battle. The aforementioned op-ed piece in the Washington Post didn't just use "R-word," it also argued for a plethora of forbidden words. In particular the author objected to the appropriation of Indian names for a variety of military weapons, platforms and operations.

Combat helicopters in particular are often Indian names. The Apache, the Comanche, the Chinook, the Lakota, the Cheyenne and the Kiowa are all Indian tribal names that have been applied to helicopters. The Black Hawk helicopter is named for a former chief of the Sauk tribe. And we fire Tomahawk cruise missiles at our enemies.

This tells us that the left has an entire arsenal of political corrections that they're just waiting to unleash upon us.

Were I the owner of the Redskins, I would change the name simply because I am a polite man. But I can sympathize with the current owner who refuses to bow to bullies. And I can understand his and other's frustration with the PC treadmill.

Can we have this debate without the moral exhibitionism?

How many grandstanding Democrats have attended Redskins' games as guests of lobbyists?

Can you imagine a greater irony than Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid lecturing anybody on etiquette?

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