

# How Racism Became the Worst Possible Sin

Given cancel culture's daily attacks on anyone and everyone who exhibits the slightest deviation from anti-racist norms, one suspects it was calumny that gave up the ghost and handed over the title of Worst Sin Ever. The new title holder is the fuzzily conceived concept that the slightest hint of discrimination, mockery, or even simple generalization directed at a person of color by a Caucasian is tantamount to sin against the Holy Spirit.

I recently discussed the now-famous Nick Sandmann incident of a few years ago with a liberal friend of mine, in which a Native American was filmed singing and playing the drum into Sandmann's face on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. My friend conceded that, yes, the original interpretation claiming Sandmann deliberately put himself in the path of the Native American man so he could smirk at him was factually wrong. Video revealed Sandmann was standing in place when the Native American charged up to him and began his concert, and that Sandmann's "smirk" was nothing more than a bemused response to the ludicrous situation.

And yet, my friend concluded, the incident was not so clear cut. Why? Because film of the event showed Sandmann's schoolmates in the background delivering "tomahawk chops." Those teenagers were mocking Native Americans with a humorous stereotype, or so goes the allegation. That made them guilty of racism, an evil far worse than mere deceit—such as the media's misleading report of the event—and much more despicable than the destruction of a young man's reputation based on a lie.

A shocking number of people will take that last sentence seriously. It is uniformly held by the left that racism holds

the title of Worst Sin Ever, even when it is expressed by kids via a cultural stereotype. But even many conservatives assume this to be true. Laura Ingraham, in an offhand comment the other night on her Fox News show, referred to some event as "worse than racism, if there is such a thing." I recently heard another conservative media personality raging against someone who had called him a racist. "And that's the worst thing you can be," he added.

Is it really? Obviously it is idiotic to judge people as members of a race or ethnic group rather than as individuals. Yes racism has led to murder and destruction every bit as much as deceit, betrayal, and calumny have. But it is not the sole sin by which we judge all actions.

Like other ungenerous attitudes, racism can turn deadly when it leads to hate, illustrations of which can be found in the histories of most peoples. But in most instances currently cited by the politically correct, the racism is simply imputed and may not exist at all.

In the current climate, eating chop suey, an American dish made in imitation of Chinese food and deliberately given a silly name, could be construed as a jibe against Chinese culture, and therefore be deemed a racist act. But is eating this dish really an act of moral turpitude? Someone who puts on blackface for a party is showing bad taste but nothing more, and a writer who uses the terminology of his time, as Mark Twain used the "n" word in *Huckleberry Finn*, is hewing to aesthetic realism. An acquaintance who works for American Express tells me the company recently issued a language guideline including a prohibition on using the phrase, "black and white." I can assure American Express that until they issued the prohibition, none of its employees, whatever their color, had ever associated that phrase with racism.

A person betrayed sees betrayal everywhere, a person deceived is unlikely to trust, and a society racked with racial

division may find the words “black and white”—as well as a host of other irrelevant phrases—to be racist. It’s the business of all well-intentioned individuals to recognize this as reaction, not reason, and to stop looking for racism everywhere.

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