



The former Sunnowriter: now a hair disadvantaged, horizontally challenged, body combating oriental American.

Politically correct news story published on processed tree carcass

By SCOTT REED
STAFF WRITER

What does it mean to be "politically correct"? These days, it seems as though everything we say is not politically correct. But does it really matter? Why should we bother with it?

To be politically correct is to be completely neutral in describing something. Although political correctness has been around for a while, we first heard of this term, it seems, when a certain percentage of the population decided they would rather be called "African-Americans" instead of "blacks." African-American is a more politically correct term to use. Okay, I have no problem with that. But then, the political correctness earthquake rumbled through our country with such force, wherever we turned there was a new politically correct name for each person, place and thing.

According to The Official Politically Correct Dictionary and Handbook, we have no more bald people in the world, we have the "hair disadvantaged." There are no more dead people. They have been replaced with the "terminally inconvenienced." Even "politically correct" is no longer the politically correct term to use. It has changed to "culturally sensitive."

How important is it to be 100% politically correct? Would have to think it's not important at all. I mean, how many people are going to get truly upset if

someone uses the word "puppet," rather than its politically correct counterpart, "hand-held American?"

The 1990s have so far blessed us with a lot of sociological fads, such as people suddenly remembering they were abused as a child, or claiming temporary insanity to try to weasel out of a guilty verdict. But this political correctness fad is for the birds.

The whole point of being politically correct, as I see it, is not to be overly judgmental when describing someone, something or someplace. But let's face it. There's no way of getting around the fact that however we describe something, or whatever words we decide to use, we are still labeling that object.

It is incorrect to call someone fat, but it is okay to say "horizontally challenged." It is incorrect to call someone poor, but it is okay to say "economically marginalized."

I'd just like to say to the person who created political correctness, "Do you honestly think that by changing the name of the condition or description, you'll somehow change the problem?" Let me give you the answer: "I don't think so!"

Here's a short, but very politically incorrect sentence: "My airhead secretary was dishonest with the paperwork." Translated into political correctness, that same sentence would read: "My cerebro-atmospheric personal assistant was ethically

disoriented with the processed tree carcass delivery person."

If we entered a world where political correctness dominated our language system, do you think anyone would be able to understand anyone else?

Here's a little political correctness quiz. I'm going to list five words that are politically correct. See if you can guess what they mean in English:

- 1)Temporarily metabolically abled.
- 2) PWA.
- 3) Parasitically oppressed.
- 4) Just happens to be.
- 5) Guest.

There are very few of these politically correct terms I can live with, even if they are still labels. But for the most part, I think life would be a lot simpler if we went back to the time when people were just people.

Here are the answers to the political correctness quiz:

- 1) Temporarily metabolically abled means "alive."
- 2) PWA means "person with AIDS."
- 3) Parasitically oppressed means "pregnant."
- 4) Just happens to be means "is."
- 5) Guest means "prisoner."

If you got all five right, you are too politically correct for your own good.

If you got three or four right, you watch too much trash TV.

If you got one or two, I hope they were just lucky guesses.

If you got them all wrong, congratulations! You passed! You're normal!

Letter to the Editor

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE STAFF AND STUDENTS OF ACC

I recently returned from the second of two field trips. The first was with some of ACC's journalism students, the second with some of ACC's art students. I'm very proud to have accompanied such exemplary cross-sections of our student body on their respective trips to Port Huron, Michigan, and Chi-

ago, Illinois. They were great representatives of ACC.

These areas of study as well as the advisers and instructors of these subjects are not always taken seriously on our campus. The students I traveled with have benefited greatly from the talented but underappreciated instructors and advisers of these "non-traditional" areas of study. I saw first-hand how these programs have stimulated the

students - some of whom may not have been interested in a post secondary education if it weren't for these subjects. I hope there will always be a place for journalism, the arts, and other "non-traditional" areas of study at ACC.

Sincerely,
Mark Ferguson
Administrative Technician
Alpena Community College

Congratulations graduating Class of 1994!

Incidents effect viewpoint of DUI

By SHAWN DEMPSEY
NEWS EDITOR

I screwed up again, and this time, if you can believe it, it didn't even involve the word "suck".

This time, it was serious and I failed to act. This time, it could have cost a life.

A few weeks ago, I left school around dusk to have dinner in Rogers City with my parents. I hadn't even gone a block when some jerk pulled right out in front of me. Luckily, I noticed that the moron had no intention of stopping or he would have plowed into the side of my car.

I swore a couple of times, shrugged it off as a typical isolated incident of not looking both ways, and passed the idiot as soon as we turned onto M-23.

I drove without a second thought, until... the jerk started tailgating me, trying to pass me. He had been driving 45 m.p.h.; now he apparently wanted to do 70.

And he passed, to go 45 again... in both lanes.

After he drove on the other side of the road a couple of times, it didn't take a genius to realize this guy had had a few too many of something. And it was showing in every passing mile.

I was so angry. This [c]□ almost hit me. What right did this person have to endanger me this way? What right did this fool have to endanger anyone this way?

And this is the part where I screwed up. Besides fuming, I didn't do anything about it.

I should have, and could have, gotten his license plate number and called the police. As much information as I could have gotten, without endangering myself, is what they needed. With a description of the driver, the cops could even have gone to his house and questioned him,

if they hadn't caught him on the road.

Instead, I let the guy keep driving. He could have killed somebody; thank God he didn't.

It's hard to condemn the guy because I have sympathy for him. I have driven after drinking, and I have let others drive after drinking. But I'm not going to do it anymore because of a tragedy which struck too close to home.

I wish I could say the tragedy which convinced me not to drink and drive was the 1991 drinking and driving death of one of my friends. But I can't.

Bob was about 20 when he died. His was the first open casket funeral I had ever been to. It was so unreal to look at a friend, someone who I cared about, someone who was handsome, sweet, smart, and funny, just lying there - dead.

We dated a few months before his death. I liked him a lot. So did a lot of other people. He overlooked people's flaws and concentrated on their virtues. My family even liked him!

I knew it wasn't finished between us, but I never could have imagined our final date would be his funeral.

But no, his death didn't affect my behavior - it can't happen to me, right? His death was terrible but it was a fluke, something that happens to other people. And it did happen to someone else. In 1993, Labor Day weekend to be precise, another tragedy struck which actually did make me change my behavior, at least a little bit.

Kendra was killed in a single car accident. She was three miles from home and it was about 10 o'clock in the evening. She had been playing in -- and drinking through -- the Rogers City softball tournaments, along with dozens of other people. But Kendra was the unlucky one.

Kendra was about 27 when

she died. She had a special knack for making people feel at ease, and that's what she did for me when I was new to the area. She was happily engaged to be married to someone she loved who loved her back. She had reasons to live.

I am 24 - I'll be 25 the day this paper comes out - and I have things to live for. Kendra's death pointed this out to me, so I decided never to drive drunk again. But what if I only had one or two? I recently found even just having a few drinks can lead to a tragedy, a tragedy so terrible it made me swear off drinking and driving completely.

She was 29 when she went to jail. It was Halloween, and she was having a good time, taking it easy, and staying close to home when she was pulled over. She didn't drink that much, just one drink per hour. It thought that was legal! But it isn't.

She said going to jail was the most horrible thing she ever experienced. She had to spend the night in a place with criminals. She had to go to court. Her license was restricted to driving for work purposes only. Her car insurance bloomed.

The deaths of my friends seemed so unreal. They were just

gone, and their accidents were freak accidents which could never happen to me. But Sue sat down and told me about jail, and I realized, HYP, THIS JAIL THING COULD HAPPEN TO ME!

I could be with real criminals - robbers, rapist, and murderers. I would have to tell people I had been an offender. I vowed never to drink and drive again.

"Cool," I thought, "I'm safe." But then I saw that jerk driving drunk, and I realized I'm not safe. None of us are safe until we call the police when we see some one driving under the influence. Next time, I will.

Students SPEAK

What plans do you have for this summer?



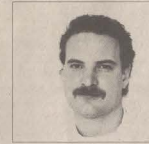
I'm going to North Dakota to visit family for most of the summer. - Traci Haugerud



I don't know, but whatever it is, it's going to be fun. - Richard Jenkins



I'm going to work two jobs so I can go to school in the fall. - Tara Rhoads



Working construction & developing a group support program for separated/divorced men. - Kurt Pokorzynski



Working extra hours and taking more classes at ACC to prepare for the Nursing Program. - Sue Cohoon

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