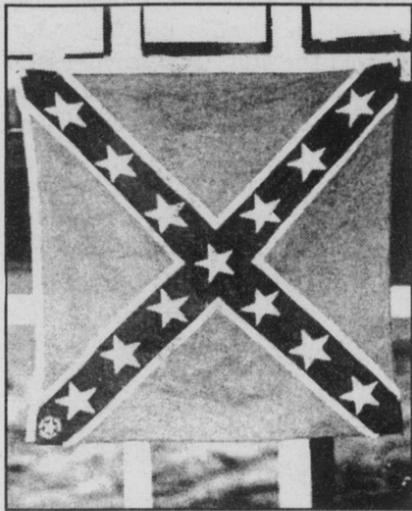


Forum

The Flag of Defeat You're not a racist, Charlie Brown



AARON THOMPSON

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STAFF WRITER

There are many that rally and support the Confederate flag. To Southern sympathizers it is a symbol of what was, and what they never could be. But to those, especially in South Carolina, who say that the flag is not a symbol of racism but a symbol of speech are not paying heed to its history.

Both the Confederate flag and the Confederacy are symbols of slavery; this is a fact that those who support the flag must realize and pay attention to. Between the years of 1830 and 1860, 300 white people, all of whom resided in the Confederacy, were lynched because they opposed slavery. Their only crime was speaking out against slavery and though their freedom of speech was federally mandated, it was in direct opposition to the Confederacy's livelihood: slavery.

Looking back in history, one knows that part of the reason for the Civil War was due to the slave-holding states and their desire to expand slavery into the territories and Cuba. This was Southern pride. This was Southern heritage. This was Southern culture. This was marked with a Confederate flag. A Northern army defeated all this.

Those who support the Confederate flag fail to consider many of the issues related to its history. Many cite pride and heritage in the flag and their ancestors who fought to maintain the Southern way of life. Going on this reasoning, should Germany allow the Nazi flag to fly over some of their government buildings because people have relatives who fought and died for them? If one uses this analogy to the South then the an-

swer seems clear. No.

There are many in the South who pose the argument that the Confederate flag is no more racist or intolerable for justice than the American flag. This may be so, but a justification for an injustice is not a justification.

It is time for Southerners, or should I say Americans, to remember that like it or not the Union won, fair and square.

It should be expressly noted that part of the terms of surrender were that the soldiers would "deposit their flags." This agreement was even agreed to by the South's own hero, Robert E. Lee. The flags had been deposited until groups such as the KKK and neo-Nazis decided to use the Confederate flag as a rallying cry for their "troops." A pro-segregationist group, the Dixiecrats, led by the governor of Mississippi, used the flag in defiance of Truman. In 1962, South Carolina decided to hang the Confederate flags as a direct counter-attack on the Civil Rights Movement.

For those who argue that the flag is not racist, I pose the following question. Can you name one activity that has occurred ever in our nation's history when both black and white people rallied around the Confederate flag, all in the name of America?

The fact is the Confederate flag was, and still is, a symbol of the Confederacy and, more importantly, a symbol of defeat. Union soldiers fought and died so that the flag of the Union—not the Confederacy—would fly over every state in the Union. When Robert E. Lee conceded defeat and surrendered at Appomattox he made a promise to salute one flag and align himself with our nation, America.

The Confederate flag is a symbol of failed insurrection, one which every eighth-grade U.S. History class discusses. While many died for the Confederacy, there were many more who fought for the Union. For those who rally around this flag, they must remember that there were millions who served and were treated as less than human, who were counted as 3/5ths and, even worse, not even considered citizens but merely identified as chattel. No matter how strong one's ties are to a way of life, the ties of bondage that resulted because of this flag should never, under any circumstances, be celebrated.

By Daniel Fleishman
STAFF WRITER

In very recent days, Charles Schulz ended his tenure as the esteemed chieftain of the syndicated cartoon world—a world in which only appropriate chords are picked, ethical messages sent, and clean fun had. I believe that Schulz's creation, the "Peanuts" cartoon, can serve as a role model for any humane person, and can lift up from despair the most tried of souls through the simple rhetoric of his beloved crew of lifelike characters. His style remains unique to this day: a touching of hearts through the commonplace agonies of Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the rest of the distinguished gang.

Ah, bliss. Our (scarily cartoonish) world is at peace with itself and we humans (its most intelligent habitants) love each other dearly. There exists no pain, no fighting, no unjust bias. All is so marvelously well.

Except for all the racists. Especially those who roam free at Guilford.

Especially those who openly use racist language with no thought of who might be within earshot.

Especially when the guilty parties have no clue, from sheer ignorance, that the words are offensive.

My fellow peaceable scholars, there exist among us devilish fiends who use derogatory

words in everyday conversation, words that truly offend others. Frankly, I cannot repeat what was said without appearing as a hypocrite. But I assure you that the words were extremely offensive.

These racists remind me of the Confederacy, the Ku Klux Klan, and Hitler. These people live among us, and it scares me. On a campus as equality-conscious as Guilford's, how can we so blindly miss those who are so openly wicked?

Charlie Brown failed at just about everything he ever did, but for sure he never offended his friends with appalling racist slurs.

I witnessed two separate racist remarks in the past few months, and at neither time did those people care about my feelings, or the feelings of other bystanders. How can Guilford College help rid itself of this problem? How can these people be weeded out? I wish I knew the answers.

Charles Schulz died the night before his last cartoon ran in newspapers across the world, and with him went a sense of moral righteousness, love, and many other important characteristics that are missing in a surprising number of people. His work demonstrated his understanding of the limits of which feelings you should suppress and which you should display. Keep an open ear and carefully correct those who make such mistakes.

SUPPORT THE HUMAN RACE

WHAT: a 5k walk to raise money for your local nonprofit organizations and Project Community

WHEN: March 25, 9:15 a.m.

WHERE: Binford parking lot

-or-

drop off donations in Project Community