

O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

On Thursday, June 27, Indivisible Sisters held an event to watch the second night of the Democrats' primary debates for 2020 presidential election with other locals. The debates were televised two consecutive evenings, each featuring 10 candidates. We served popcorn and cookies which were store bought and homemade. We mingled 5:30 to 6 p.m. and sat to watch. Commercials and commentator analysis were muted so we could chat and/or stand and stretch.

Although the Internet connection would at times sputter, it was interesting to watch with a large group for the various reactions, shared laughs, groans, and concerned glances. The time went fast. 2020 election and legislator references were provided to encourage citizens to make calls over the next days to their representatives on various topics.

The second round of Democrats' primary debates are July 30 and July 31 on MSNBC.

Please, join us Tuesday night, July 30, at the Sisters Library starting at 5:30 p.m.; debate starts at 6 p.m. and ends at 8 p.m.

We welcome citizens from all political parties to join us.

Susan Cobb



To the Editor:

Surviving summer traffic in Sisters (or: this is one of my least-favorite things)...

I drive into or through Sisters at least twice a day; west in the morning and east in the afternoon. Traffic in the afternoon during tourist season really sucks, but it is what it is. Unless and until ODOT comes up with a teleportation

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Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
PM Showers 70/59	Partly Cloudy 73/57	Mostly Cloudy 78/58	Partly Cloudy 78/58	Mostly Cloudy 76/56	Partly Cloudy 75/56

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Jonah Goldberg

Nike is doing it wrong.

I don't mean the shoe-making, though that thing with Zion Williamson was pretty bad, I have to say.

No, Nike is doing it wrong because it managed to do something that all the neo-Nazis, Klansmen, alt-righters and other denizens of the lowest coprophagic phylum of our political life could never do: It turned the Betsy Ross flag into a racist symbol.

By now you've probably heard that Nike decided to take the advice of Colin Kaepernick, the former NFL quarterback who ignited so much controversy by refusing to stand for the national anthem. Nike was all set to release a line of sneakers for the Fourth of July featuring the original Betsy Ross American flag with 13 stars in a circle.

According to reports, Kaepernick took offense because a handful of extremist groups like to brandish the original American flag to make some sort of point about something no one should care about.

The thing is, most Americans — and when I say most, I mean, like, nearly all of them — had no idea white supremacists were doing this. In countless news stories, reporters contacted experts who either didn't know about it or were only vaguely aware that this is one of the things these groups like to wear as capes during dress-up time.

The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism has a database with more than 150 "hate symbols." The Betsy Ross flag isn't among them.

"The Betsy Ross flag is a common historical flag," Mark Pitcavage of the ADL told CNBC. While it's been used by white supremacists "from time to time," he has "never once thought about" adding the Betsy Ross flag to the list.

Nonetheless, it's true that if you search through enough old photos of Klan rallies and neo-Nazi pageants, you can spot a Betsy Ross flag from time to time.

Do you know what else you can probably spot if you look long and hard enough? Nike sneakers. Does that make Nikes symbols of white supremacy?

Of course not. But what if these groups started wearing T-shirts with the Nike "swoosh" on them?

Frankly, I think it would be a brilliant move by these hate groups to do just that. Nike would freak out, giving these attention-seekers a bonanza in free publicity.

Innocuous or even noble symbols can be appropriated for evil purposes. But here's the thing: When evil people acquire symbols for their own ends, the only guarantee of success is when everyone else validates the acquisition.

If Nike had gone ahead with the special-edition sneakers, it would have been, in marketing terms, the equivalent of Godzilla versus Bambi. A few neo-Nazis and a few more social justice warriors would have complained, and everyone else would have gone about their day totally unconcerned.

Instead, Nike followed the advice of a man whose business model is to stir grievance and controversy for its own sake. Suddenly, millions of people who once thought the Betsy Ross flag was just an admirable bit of Americana now associate it with hate groups. Worse, other entirely decent and patriotic Americans will now likely start brandishing the flag to offend people who, until recently, had no idea some hate groups adopted the flag in the first place.

The ranks of the perpetually offended will misread this trolling-to-own-the-libs effort as an endorsement of hate speech, and the culture war will have yet another idiotic fight on its hands, and a symbol of the country's founding that should be a uniting image for all Americans will now be reduced to a weapon in that war.

Thanks a lot, Nike.

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