

“TIME TO GET REAL IN DIXIE”

On Dec. 1, 2012, an article written by John Jones and Dannelle Larson-Rife appeared in the Salt Lake Tribune under the title, “Time to get rid of the 'Dixie' in Dixie State.” Their primary reason for the opposition to Dixie was that they and those they represented were offended by the negative connotations of the term and “...the psychology of identity and marginalization.” They went on to say “...many people associate the term “Dixie” with a Southern cultural heritage that includes negative racial attitudes and the institution of slavery.”

After a quick survey of past yearbooks, they discovered a rebel mascot, a picture of a black faced minstrel, a picture of a Confederate flag and yearbooks entitled, “The Confederate.” Those discoveries would surely marginalize the psychology of one's identity.

Talk about intolerance, these people were hired by an institution on the basis of what they presented themselves to be. They have now declared that they are offended by the name of their employer and demand that the institution and the community change to satisfy their self-imposed marginalized identity.

Can we imagine how marginalized they will feel when they get sick and have to go to Dixie Regional Medical Center, when their eyes go and they have to go to Dixie Eye Center for care or the Dixie Shoe Repair for shoes? There is hardly a human need in the Dixie area that these people will not be offended by in their efforts to live here as happy, healthy human beings. What reaction will these offended people have when they are introduced to Dixie, the wife of a member of the faculty? I suppose it will not marginalize them more than drinking Dixie wine from a Dixie cup or eating Dixie salad on a Dixie plate. They might make the ride home in safety; if they don't go by the way of Dixie Drive or cross Dixie Downs Road. Can we imagine their shock when they turn on the TV and see Bing Crosby singing Swanee River with Louis Armstrong by his side playing Dixieland Jazz? I can't help but think how marginalized they will be when they switch channels and see ten black men in rebel uniforms playing basketball in Nevada or Mississippi. I suppose that the full extent of their marginalization will come on Memorial Day when Confederate flags fly by the Stars and Stripes to honor those who died. One can hope that they will get the message that the war is over, the thirteenth amendment has passed and the country has done and is doing what it can to heal the wounds.

Certainly, people of all shades in all places have participated in questionable actions pertaining to human relations, but naming Dixie College “Dixie” is not one of them.

A few fact for those still wading in the shallow waters of argument:

1. Utah's Dixie from which Dixie College got it's name was named before the Civil War. So the arguments about the war had nothing to do with the naming of Dixie College.
2. It was black people, yes slaves, who first used the term “Dixie” as a word for a place of endearment, a refuge, a place longed for, a place where they would be treated well.
3. The name of their longed for “Dixie” spread throughout the Southern states to include the area below the Mason and Dixon Line which divided the slave states from the free states.

4. Jefferson Davis used the song, Dixie, by D. D. Emmett for his inauguration and it became a popular Confederate song.

5. The North also had a "Dixie" song written by T.M. Cooley. All of these songs were adapted from the songs of black people.

Spin the argument as you will, but the facts will not support their spin on the "Dixie" in Utah's Dixie.

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