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Political Analyst Says Conservatives Have Their Own Version Of Political Correctness

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A political analyst of a libertarian think tank says both political tribes have their own version of political correctness that is stifling debate and wedging people apart.

Political correctness has become the pejorative term du jour and a rallying point for conservatives against liberals. It's often seen as regulating what kind of speech and behaviors are considered acceptable.

College campuses are becoming common sites for tug-of-wars between free speech and the belief that safe spaces should be provided to students of various backgrounds, particularly minority groups in the United States.

Alex Nowrasteh, immigration policy analyst at The Cato Institute, recently wrote about how the political right also has its own way of regulating what's an appropriate way to behave or what's acceptable to say. He calls it "patriotic correctness."

"What's interesting is everybody seems to be aware of the left-wing variety of political correctness," Nowrasteh said. "But when it comes to talking about the right-wing variety, the patriotic correctness side, almost nobody is aware of it, especially those people on the political right."

Some examples of patriotic correctness Nowrasteh highlights include the so-called war on Christmas, which he said doesn't exist, and the strong blowback against public-sector unions.

"I think another double standard is the common idea amongst the patriotically correct that unionized public employees are bad, and especially bad when they can't be fired. Except for police and border control, which they sort of hold up on this higher plane of existence," Nowrasteh said.

He also pointed to conservatives who have criticized the Black Lives Matter movement for not embracing all lives. And yet, he said, many of these same critics will put a Blue Lives Matter sign in their front yard, which, according to their own logic, narrowly defines whose lives are valuable and worth protecting.

Another example involves the outrage surrounding Colin Kaepernick, the quarterback of the San Francisco 49ers who has been kneeling during the national anthem throughout the football season.

For a textbook example of patriotic correctness, Nowrasteh cited Tomi Labren's appearance on "The Daily Show," in which the conservative commentator voiced her disgust against athletes who are kneeling during "The Star-Spangled Banner."

"I know what that flag means to me, I know what that flag means to those fighting for our country right now, it's bigger than a piece of cloth, it's a symbol of patriotism. Our national anthem means a lot to a lot of people. It's got a lot of people through some very hard times. And this country, it's got its scars, it's got its wounds, it's got its history, but I still believe it's the greatest nation on the face of the earth, and I believe if you live in this country you can want to better it but to disrespect our flag and our anthem in that way cannot be your outlet to get out whatever aggression you have, whether it be passive or active aggression. I disagree with it."

Nowrasteh called Labren's comments "childish" and "pathetic."

"The notion that this is somehow disrespectful to everybody who has ever served in the military or disrespectful to the country as a whole, or that you don't want to better it by not standing during the national anthem is kind of an extreme leap of logic," he said.

He added that it reminds him of some of the scenes playing out on college campuses across the nation in which people are getting "really upset for not using the right pronoun or there's a perceived injustice against a race that are just silly."