

have been unfit to interpret correctly the Constitution they contributed to writing?



Reporters had a few other topics this summer on their minds, such as the mindlessness of the universe — the media waged a vigorous campaign against “intelligent design” scientists — and the condition of the CIA. The latter enthusiasm was particularly novel for reporters. The same press that used to pride itself on blowing the identities of CIA agents and foiling their operations was very troubled by Karl Rove’s alleged assault upon the agency. “Covert operative” in the mouths of reporters was once an occasion for cursing and gnashing of teeth; but in defense of Valerie Plame they uttered it in the hushed tones of admiration.

They had been itching to nail Karl Rove for some time, lying in wait for something, anything, to buttress their sinister-schemer storyline about him. So even though they usually enjoy exposing CIA bumbler — as Michael Barone pointed out, the *New York Times* had no qualms about blowing the cover of a CIA-run airline earlier this year — the media suddenly became the agency’s most conscientious ally. Karl Rove, it would appear from their concerned coverage and talmudic reading of laws protecting the agency,

has done more damage to the CIA than the Church committee they championed in the 1970s.

Plame’s husband, Joseph Wilson, by the way, has written for that pro-CIA publication, *The Nation*. A media that loves to label conservative public officials according to the publications for which they have written never mentioned Wilson’s musings in this magazine that has operated as a sustained screed against the CIA for decades. “Joseph Wilson, who has written for the radical left-wing magazine *The Nation*,” wasn’t the beginning of a line in any of the major media’s stories. It was, instead, Wilson is a former ambassador who has worked for both Republican and Democrat presidents.

But for all the media’s straining, the controversy over Plame and the jailing of the *New York Times*’s Judith Miller didn’t go far in renewing respect for the media or its causes. Insofar as the controversy reminded the public of the old media’s tired attempt to place itself above the law and preen like a besieged priesthood, it became one more reason for people to tune out. A *New York Times* reporter went to jail and the public yawned. With that, Dan Rather’s post-forgery oblivion, Tom Brokaw’s retirement, and Peter Jennings’ death, 2005 is beginning to look like the old media’s final chapter.

CPR



## On campus

### The NCAA’s ham-handed ban on Indian mascots

*A once inspiring organization has allowed itself to be politicized by left-wing trouble-makers.*

MICHAEL P. DAVIDSON

**T**HINK OF the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) — does it conjure images of triumphant, hard working athletes, intensive training, and even more intense competition? It does for me. As a kid, I watched the NCAA wrestling championships and was always blown away by the intensity and competitiveness of

the athletes. Their commitment and determination exemplified strength, mental toughness, and, in a

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way, honor and principle. I tried to emulate it. They set athletic standards, raised the bar, gave little kids like me something toward which to aspire. They gave me strength, hope, and inspiration.

**B**UT TIMES, it seems, have changed. Now suddenly the NCAA seems a little sissified and wimpy — well, actually, that's a bit too weak to cover what has befallen this once-noble organization for student athletics. The accurate words are gutless, yellow, nebbishy, poltroonish, pusillanimous, weak-kneed, enervated — in a phrase: politically correct. My childhood inspirations have evaporated. They're gone. Toast. My life is turned upside down. They ruined everything.

The NCAA Executive Committee recently adopted a policy to "prohibit NCAA colleges and universities from displaying hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames, or imagery at any of the 88 NCAA championships." This, of course, has nothing to do with stopping hostility or abuse. It has everything to do with pushing people around and polluting amateur athletics with politics. The NCAA Committee says it is particularly concerned about ref-

erences to American Indians — but doesn't seem to have bothered to find out whether the targeted mascots are either intended or seen to be abusive and/or hostile by anyone, American Indian or not. [*As reported by G.B. Tennyson later in this issue, the NCAA recently announced an embarrassing reversal of its ban on the Florida State Seminoles, evidently after more or less the whole tribe informed the Association that not only do they take no offense at the mascot, but are proud of their association, through it, with the school — editor.*]


No — rather than find out whether any actual problem exists, the executive committee simply took aim at 18 schools that don't fit on their Procrustean bed; 18 schools to be forced to submit on threat of exclusion — in the name of inclusion — from NCAA championship events. To compete at the NCAA's highest levels now, evidently, it is not enough merely to excel athletically. You, your team, your school, and its supporters, must toe the NCAA nationally-dictated political line of the day.

Mascot names on the target list range from the "Braves," "Indians," "Fighting Sioux," to specific Indian tribes like Seminole or Choctaw. One mascot name might arguably be considered derogatory: the Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU) "Savages." Honestly, we don't consider people who don't speak Greek "barbarians," and we don't consider American Indians "savages." But that's for potentially offended tribes and SOSU to work out, not the NCAA or me.

Incidentally, the NCAA announced the new policy from their headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana — so perhaps committee members will exclude themselves from appearing at future competitions pending politically correct editing of the names of their city and state.

Let's look at this issue with a circumspect eye, making sure, as the NCAA said, "the discussion springs from the same facts." A mascot is defined as "a person, animal, or object to bring good luck." In other words, mascots are something positive. In addition, bravery is a virtue; to be called a Brave is a compliment. For one's Indian tribe to be honored as a good luck charm and associated with the virtues of courage, endurance, patience, strength, wisdom, and all the other positive traits required of winning athletes, and as something for students and alumni to rally around is also a compliment. Shoot, the sight of an Indian-type mascot enriches our society's multiculturalism.

This is obvious as soon as we get away from the fevered-left's designated victim classes. The Fighting



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Irish of Notre Dame take pride in the caricature of the little Irish man with his dukes up, and even in the etymology of the name: it is, after all, a term once used pejoratively about Irishmen stereotypically dismissed and discriminated against as drunken rowdies. Who cares? Today, the Fighting Irishman rallies the spirit for Notre Dame fans everywhere. Why didn't the NCAA banish Notre Dame's mascot, which far more certainly than the Indian variety symbolizes historic "hostility," even "abuse"? And what of Oklahoma State's Cowboy, a mascot caricaturing cattle ranchers as scruffy-looking scrappers? Some real cowboys could be offended, presumably. The NCAA seems to discriminate, pardon the word, among possibly offensive mascots, working up righteous indignation over some but not others, the way lefties discriminate in favor of their notions of diversity while denouncing others.

The Florida State Seminoles actually have permission from the Seminole tribe in Florida to use the name. Their physical mascot is a battle-ready Seminole, as their sports team is battle ready for game day. The Seminole Indian is an example of strength, vitality, and victory to Florida State fans across the country.

Keep in mind what they're asking those 18 schools to do: In order to participate in certain NCAA-sponsored events, schools must undergo an entire re-branding: change uniforms, publications, written materials, and all paraphernalia said to be "offensive" to a small cadre of university presidents and chancellors. A costly endeavor, on top of being irrelevant to any real problem.

**T**HERE IS also the now-standard left-wing assault on freedom of thought and diversity of opinion. Affected schools are encouraged to educate "internal and external constituents" as to the "offensive" nature of their mascots and spread "knowledge of Native American culture through outreach efforts and other means of communication." Schools affected by the new rule are told to learn from schools like the University of Iowa, which won't schedule games against schools whose mascots bear Indian names. Of course, "Iowa" is the name of an Indian tribe. Go figure.

How exactly did the NCAA arrive at this decision? The NCAA says the "decision was made by a dozen chancellors and presidents from all three membership divisions appointed to represent their institutions, their conferences and the values of higher educa-

## Musings

**W**hen they come to write the story of the rise of the New Right as part of the growth of the conservative movement in the last half of the 20th century one of the names that will be writ large is Paul Weyrich. I have not always agreed with Paul. I am part of the libertarian fringe of the conservative movement. Paul is not. I am a Reaganite. Paul is not. You think I am set in my ways and beliefs? Meet Paul Weyrich.

Everybody has a right to be wrong and Paul has taken full advantage of that fact.

And yet I say without hesitation that few men have been as important to the growth of modern-day conservatism as Paul Weyrich. Without him there would be no Heritage Foundation. Without him the New Right likely would have floundered before it ever got off the ground.

Weyrich is one of those who puts principle before politics. On the surface that sounds great, but politics is a way of getting something done and unless you figure out a way to convert principle into action it (principle) ceases to have much meaning.

As a matter of principle Weyrich once decided Ronald Reagan was unfit to be president and he and a few others of like mind decided to find a more dedicated conservative to be the Republican presidential nominee. Their man was Indiana Rep. Philip Crain who foolishly seized the bait, lost big and quickly, and hasn't been heard from since. Worse, after Reagan was elected, Weyrich and his mates were left sitting on the outside looking in.

In a way that was too bad. In another way it wasn't all that bad; it left Paul owing Reagan nothing and free to second guess and criticize, the importance of which cannot be minimized.

Paul is one of those essential persons who operates better and more effectively on the outside.

A while back Paul had a nasty accident that left him crippled and in constant pain. Doctors decided that the only way to alleviate the pain was to amputate his legs. That was to be done this week.

If you can spare one, lift a prayer to the Lord on Paul's behalf. He is a brave man, a principled man and a man who has fought most of his life to make this a better country.

— by Lyn Nofziger, Aug. 12, 2005