

The “N” word through the years

DURING SLAVERY

1619
-1865

During the time of slavery, the “N” word was used as a derogatory term for African American slaves. It was commonly put in front of the slaves names. Even with the end of slavery, many songs and games had the ‘N’ word featured in them.

MODERN

The “N” word has come to mean something completely different than it did several hundred years ago. It’s now used synonymously to mean friends or family by any races and ethnicities.

1865
- now

...had no choice but to answer to the “N” word, but we, in 2017 don’t have to. And we shouldn’t. Public organizations such as the NAACP and NFL, have explicitly banned the use of the “N” word, stating that its offensive background shouldn’t be celebrated. The NFL even has a set punishment of a 15 yard penalty every time the word is used.

In 2014, Seattle Seahawks wide receiver Doug Baldwin stated that the NFL banning the use of the “N” word was “absurd” and that, “we’ve turned it into a term of endearment.” Of all the words to describe the “N” word, endearing shouldn’t be one of them. It wasn’t endearing as slave owners yelled it while beating their slaves senseless, and even years later it wasn’t endearing as it was being yelled at African Americans being hosed down, having tear gas thrown at them, being kicked and beaten senseless yet again.

Another Seahawks player, cornerback Richard Sherman, told ESPN banning the word was “an atrocious idea” and that, “it’s weird that they’re targeting one specific word. Why wouldn’t all curse words be banned then?” An ‘atrocious idea’ is gathering a group of people, forcing them to leave the only homes they’ve ever known and make them work for slave owners. It’s an ‘atrocious idea’ to profit off of selling humans like they are animals. The history and meaning that the “N” word holds is what makes it one of the most disgusting words in the English language.

American culture would not be where it is today without the help of African Americans. Regardless of whether or not a person has contributed to America, they deserve respect.

And the ongoing fight about the “N” word is further separating us from that.

BY KLARIA HOLMES

THE “N” WORD

And why its existence is still an issue