

[Opinion]...and a P.S.

Speaking or printing *the* word is generally regarded as virtually taboo as *the* word is considered to be a viciously hostile epithet.

So vile, in fact, that one is hard-pressed to think of a time this century that it has appeared in the print media or been uttered in a televised or broadcast news program. And when it is used, it's often identified by a single letter followed by a few spaces or as a single letter followed by a word.

And even if uttered by a public person, *the* word would likely still be camouflaged in quoted code.

But while *the* word is frequently spoken by one segment of American society, its very utterance is blacked out by "progressive" members of the majority society.

Not only is this entire process rather cumbersome, but it also defies logic that the media adhere to such an ill-defined process for only *the* word, while other offensive words warrant no such "thou shalt never use" status.

And yes, there are any number of words in this society and in other nations that are truly equally despicable. Crude names for Indians (or Native Americans), Italians, Japanese, Chinese and Puerto Ricans, still appear in print protected by quotation marks. The same goes for misogynistic slurs, even when uttered by prominent political figures. Too, a professional football team from the nation's capital gets a bye, as Zachary Sapienza *explains in the previous GJR article*. But not *the* word. Even though used in an iconic 1895 American literary work read by decades of American children, some English classes have banned this book, or edited it so the word is camouflaged.

This is not to argue that *the* word should be used. Rather,

that the media should be consistent. Either all such harmful words need similar media expunging, or there should be consistent policies for when and how to use all such hateful words, including *the* word. Until there is vile-words parity, the media should not award *the* word with a unique non-disclosure status.

Anything less indicates the media's *the* word practice to be not only inconsistent, but also unethical.