



The Battle Against The Outrage Circus

Publish Date:

December 2015

The censorious campaign by the far left to stifle debate in the guise of promoting 'equality' and 'fairness' has long passed being a joke and is now becoming a serious threat to free speech, writes James Bolt.

Blurred Lines by Robin Thicke is a popular song, despite being terrible. So popular is the song that it reached Number 1 on the American pop charts. So you can forgive a DJ at an Irish pub in North Carolina for playing the song in his set.

Actually, forgiving him would mean you are an active participant in establishing 'rape culture,' which is the phrase given for the modern culture that permits rape through attitudes about gender and sexuality. Actions such as playing the song must be stamped out, to promote tolerance.

Liz Hawryluk, a local college student, complained to the DJ in question that Blurred Lines could 'trigger' victims of sexual assault due to its explicit lyrics, and would destroy the 'safe space' the pub provided for 'the Carolina community'.



After Liz complained on Facebook, an online protest at the song selection formed and the DJ was fired by the bar not long after. Fired—for playing a song that reached Number 1 in the charts.

Examples such as this are littered through *End of Discussion*, a charming and thorough call to the ‘Outrage Circus’ to lay down their arms and ‘chill the hell out’. Authors Mary Katherine Ham and Guy Benson are rising stars in American political punditry. Ham is a contributing editor to influential conservative website HotAir.com, and Benson the political editor at the also influential Townhall.com.

Ham and Benson bring flair and style to the book, making it easily accessible and informative to all readers, but especially the younger readers this book is aimed towards. Their pop-culture savvy is as impressive as their knowledge of the issues at hand.

And they are funny, which is important as the censorious and puritanical campaign by the far left to stifle debate in the guise of promoting ‘equality’ and ‘fairness’ long passed being a joke, and is now becoming a serious threat to free speech.

‘The Outrage Circus’, a disorganised collection of (often far-left) radicals with an internet connection and a strong opinion of ‘How The World Should Be’, is growing stronger every day.

Their strategy is simple. **Step 1: Shame.** Find a viewpoint expressed online that opposes theirs, and attempt to shame the person responsible for that viewpoint into silence and retraction. By now, we have all seen at least one celebrity try desperately to retract a political statement that ruffled feathers, through either public apology online or by going on television and informing a sympathetic talk show host they have seen the error of their ways.

If that does not work, then the Outrage Circus moves to **Step 2: Expulsion.** Attempt to have the offending person expelled from polite society, often by forcing their employers to fire them. The CEO of internet browser Firefox was stood down by his board after it was revealed he donated to a protraditional marriage cause. The donation was made eight years previous to the outrage, and no employee came forward as having felt discriminated against, but off he went.

If their company will not fire them, then the Outrage Circus turns to **Step 3: Boycotts.** Chick-Fil-A—a sensationally popular sandwich chain in the United States—was subject to a boycott by the Outrage Circus over the founders’ conservative position on marriage.

But the most interesting is **Step 4: Move on.** The Outrage Circus is loud and belligerent, but it cannot sustain its momentum for long. The Washington Redskins have been under fire for the perceived ‘racism’ of the name Redskins. The Outrage Circus managed to pressure several television networks airing NFL games to stop using the word Redskins when referring to the team, but their target remained strong.

Through nothing but stubbornness of the team’s owners, the Redskins’ name remains the same. The Outrage Circus packed up and moved on to the next thing they could fake offence about.

This fourth step is rarely seen, because it is too easy to give in to the censors. Being on the wrong side of the Outrage Circus is a PR nightmare, and so we all censor ourselves to keep the peace, and give in to their demands when we have done wrong.

This is why *End of Discussion* is so important. Censors win when they do not have to censor. And we lose when it no longer becomes worth the risk to express our own opinions. Ham and Benson inspire the reader to stick up for themselves and fight back against the seemingly never-ending ocean of high brows and condescending smirks.

But *End of Discussion* is not just for the young and right-of-centre, because the targets of the Outrage Circus are no longer confined to these boundaries either. Just like countless ill-advised social revolutions before them, the Outrage Circus is now beginning to eat its own.

In areas such as feminism, free speech, racism and comedy, the Outrage Circus is destroying its own heroes. Benson and Ham explain this new reality in great detail, showing readers the modern day version of Martin Niemöller's famous words: 'Then they came for me for not holding every single view that my comrades found to be socially acceptable, and there was no one left to speak for me.'

Comedian Chris Rock famously will no longer perform his material in American colleges, as 'you can't even be offensive on the way to being inoffensive,' lest some eager student complain they were 'triggered' and offended by words. Feminist icon and pop superstar Beyoncé has come under fire recently for becoming Beyoncé Knowles-Carter after her marriage to rap mogul Jay-Z.

End of Discussion paints a vivid and concerning picture of the battle against the Outrage Circus. The fronts are numerous and growing, and the foot soldiers willing to fight back are growing fewer every day. Perhaps the Outrage Circus will dissipate, but it is not worth the risk to wait and see if that's the case.

What is needed is a strong defence of open discussion, the most valuable resource a liberal democracy has.

End of Discussion is witty, endearing and engaging. Readers will discuss and argue the book's points among themselves long after they have put the book down. They should. That's the point.