

It still hurts

Reprinted from Spilyay Tymoo

The public tends to get a little blase about the complaints by various minority groups that they are victimized by unfair, biased and distorted treatment in the entertainment and news media. Some objections are viewed as bordering on trivial.

Unless one is a member of such a group, however, he is not likely to know the humiliation they feel at being "put down." What to most of us is no more than innocent fun, or at worst a sense of humor gone astray, may be painful ridicule to those affected.

Viewed in that light, a protest lodged by a representative of an Indian youth group over the marketing of what appears to be a rather risque "adult" video game called "Custer's Revenge" cannot be shrugged off. To be repelled by the theme of the game, as described in a news story from Los Angeles, is not to be thin-skinned.

The game is said to depict, in cartoon form, an amorous General Custer, wearing only boots and a hat, and an Indian woman wearing even less, who is the object of his affections. The extent to which he succeeds determines the number of points earned by the player of the game.

M.R. Cook, head of United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc., of Oklahoma City, said this is worse than the stereotype of Indians in old Western movies. He said in a telegram to the manufacturer the marketing of "such an offensive product violates the dignity of American Indians."

But if the cartoon character depicted an Oriental woman, or a black woman, or a white woman, the game would be just as offensive. Unfortunately, it typifies the sexually permissive, anything goes, atmosphere that permeates society today. The casual attitude toward illicit sex and the sanctity of marriage exhibited in contemporary television programs, the movies and magazines has hardened the public so much that something like "Custer's Revenge" almost seems acceptable.

This is one marketing venture that should fall flat on its face, at least in Oklahoma. And in Alaska.