

Is the Gadsden Flag Racist?

The “Don’t Tread on Me” flag just got trod upon—by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The EEOC is investigating whether the Revolutionary War-era Gadsden Flag could be considered a racist symbol in the workplace. In recent years, the yellow flag with its coiled snake has also become a symbol of the Tea Party.

“Whatever historic origins and meaning of the symbol, it also has since been sometimes interpreted to convey racially-tinged messages in some contexts,” the EEOC report states.

The distinguished writer Eugene Volokh first exposed this absurd story in the pages of the Washington Post. Here’s the back story:

In 2014, a black government worker filed a complaint alleging he had been discriminated against by a coworker who wore a ball cap that bore an insignia of the Gadsden Flag.

The aggrieved government snowflake “found the cap to be racially offensive to African-Americans because the flag was designed by Christopher Gadsden.”

The EEOC report goes on to identify Gadsden as a “slave trader and owner of slaves.”

The overly-sensitive employee maintains that the Gadsden Flag is a “historical indicator of white resentment against blacks stemming largely from the Tea Party.”

The EEOC conducted a “thorough review” and found there was no evidence that the flag was created in a non-racial context.

“Moreover, it is clear that the flag and its slogan have been used to express various non-racial sentiments, such as when it is used in the modern Tea Party political movement, gun rights

activism, patriotic displays, and by the military,” the EEOC report states.

You can almost feel the “but” coming, can’t you, good readers?

“However, whatever the historic origins and meanings of the symbol, it also has since been sometimes interpreted to convey racially-tinged messages in some contexts,” they declared.

Citing the “ambiguity in the current meaning” of the Gadsden Flag, the EEOC has decided to investigate to “determine the specific context.”

The government’s ruling is going to open up a great big can of worms, folks. They are basically suggesting that if an item is used in a racially-tinged context or if a worker thinks something may be racist—it is therefore racist.

What happens if a white guy shows up to work with fried chicken and collard greens in his lunch pail? Could he be accused of cultural appropriation—even if he simply enjoys finger-licking good cuisine?

As Mr. Volokh pointed out—there was no evidence the gentleman who wore the Gadsden Flag cap said or did anything racist to his coworker.

The worker’s sole objection “was apparently just to the wearing of the flag, and the ideology that he thinks has become associated with the flag,” Mr. Volokh surmised.

Well, using the government’s logic, they could very well ban white bed sheets and reruns of the “Dukes of Hazzard.”