

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC":  
TRIGGER WARNINGS and  
MICRO-AGGRESSIONS:  
Critical Thinking or  
Manipulation?**

By Stephen L. Bakke  September 10, 2015



*Here's what provoked me:*

*There are a lot of silly and absurd "politically correct" movements afoot in our world. Here are just two which were discussed in a recent "scholarly" essay published in numerous newspapers across the U.S.*

*Here's my response:*

**Trigger Warnings and Micro-aggressions: Critical Thinking or Manipulation?**

Professors Glassner and Schapiro shared their wisdom about "trigger warnings" and "micro-aggressions" in Opinion Exchange on 9/8. Their message: The extreme examples being cited give the wrong impression of college students' reaction to books, articles and speeches. These professors would say that we can learn from the sensitivity of the younger generation.

I understand that argument, except that even routine examples of trigger warnings and micro-aggressions seem to clearly be in the "kinda-silly" and absurd category. Here are two examples:

- Trigger warning: A published reprint of The United States Constitution and other founding documents is preceded by a disclaimer as to the current relevance of these documents. I quote: "This book is a product of its time and does not reflect the same values as it would if it were written today. Parents might wish to discuss with their children how views on ..... (whatever) have changed..."
- Micro-aggression: An oriental student gives the example of being asked "what are you?" as in "Norwegian" or "Japanese" or whatever. Her disgusted response was, "human, stupid." A fellow from Latin America was offended when someone got his last name wrong and introduced him as "Mr. Garcia." His response was, "not all Latinos are named 'Garcia.'"

These are routine examples of claimed "offenses." Skeptics of the true gravity of these transgressions aren't asking our youth to simply toughen up to survive in a cruel world. They are asking them to pull themselves together enough to survive just "day-to-day" challenges.