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Mascots

Although many Americans never give a second thought to the use of Indian names, symbols, and material culture in athletics, increasingly, Native American mascots have fostered controversy, protest, and conflict. The lyrics of "Mascot" by the indigenous hip-hop group Without Rezervations attest to the scope and significance of this conflict:

> I can't believe we're still on the sporting line,
> On the news each and every night.
> A Redskin massacre, a Braves scalping,
> Whose image do you think that's helping?[33]

During the course of the twentieth century, the use of Indian names, imagery, and cultural artifacts became a familiar feature of athletic competitions and an accepted way for fans, players, students,

and alumni to identify themselves, their sport teams, and their communities. At the height of their popularity, Native American mascots represented more than a score of professional or semi-professional teams, more than one hundred institutions of higher education, and several thousand high schools across the United States. Beginning in the late 1960s, in association with broader civil rights movements and a cultural resurgence in Indian Country, such mascots became increasingly problematic. As a result, numerous schools and sports teams have ended their use of Indian symbols. In fact, Suzan Shown Harjo, director of the Morning Star Institute, has estimated that more than 1,500 Native American mascots have been retired over the past 35 years.

This chapter seeks to explain where Native American mascots came from and how they became a problem for schools and communities. At root, it aims to clarify what is at stake in the use of Indian imagery in athletics. Conflicts over mascots are not simply, as some would have it, instances of political correctness; rather, they invariably entail the meaning of history, belonging, and opportunity, revealing what it means to be an American.

INDIAN IMAGERY IN ATHLETICS

Native American mascots, despite the claims of some supporters, have never faithfully depicted Native cultures and histories, nor communicated the humanity of American Indians. Instead, relying on and recycling stereotypes, they have assembled what historian Robert Berkhofer dubbed, "the white man's Indian," an imaginary creature that is useful to white society but that has little or no connections to the realities of Native life.[34] Consequently, they misrepresent Native Americans, rendering them as partial, unreal, and less than human.

Native American mascots reduce indigenous peoples to fragments wrongly thought to encapsulate or describe them. Most often in the world of sports, Indian imagery breaks down

the complexities of Native lives as lived, reassembling them through four dimensions: 1) physical features, invariably nose, skin color, or hair; 2) material culture, including buckskin,

The Tyranny of the Majority

Increasingly, politicians, school administrators, and journalists have turned to public opinion polls as a means of assessing Native American mascots. To date, the results of polls have displayed great variation and contradiction but nevertheless prove instructive. First, Euro-Americans are more likely than Native Americans to support Native American mascots. Second, the (overwhelming) majority of Euro-Americans endorse the use of Indian symbols and mascots. Third, Native Americans, like Euro-Americans, do not (nor should not be expected to) agree about mascots. Fourth, while many Native Americans disapprove of Native American mascots, other Native Americans are untroubled or even support them.

These patterns, in turn, raise fundamental questions.

To begin, how does public opinion about American Indian mascots matter? Would we settle concerns about other human rights issues or moral debates by taking a survey? For instance, if most Americans found nothing wrong with slavery, rape, or genocide, would that justify those practices? Unfortunately, attention to surveys tends to turn attention away from the moral concerns and human rights, reducing the tangible harms and the standing of others to matters of individual opinion, subject to dispute. Worse, supporters of such imagery often point to polling data—which suggests the majority of Americans find Native American mascots to be harmless, acceptable, or even respectful—to advance their claims that the controversy is unimportant, an invention of a vocal minority.

Of equal importance, what are we to make of the support for Native American mascots among some indigenous peoples? Many American Indians, exposed to the same media and messages as others in the United States, have internalized prevailing ideas and images: on the one hand, they may come to misinterpret Indianness, accepting popular fabrications as reasonable; on the other hand, they may settle for the available imagery because it is the only possibility that mainstream media affords them.

feathers, and/or headdress; 3) expressive forms, particularly dance and face painting; and 4) personality characteristics like stoicism or bravery. Moreover, Native American mascots trap indigenous peoples within well-worn clichés, derived from dime novels, Wild West shows, movies, scouting, and advertising. As a result, more often than not, such representations have more to do with Euro-American interpretations and preoccupations than with indigenous cultures. Indian imagery in sport, furthermore, tends to freeze Native Americans. Specifically, mascots confine indigenous peoples in the past (romanticized representatives from a golden age); they frequently restrict them to the plains (the Lakota and other nomadic horse cultures principally); and they refer to cultural conflict and military struggles between Euro-Americans and Native Americans. In the process, generic Indians emerge, which cannot be faithful to Native histories and traditions, precisely because what makes them possible, pleasurable, and powerful is reduction, fragmentation, exaggeration, and decontextualization.

Importantly, the invented Indians who dance at halftime, mark the stationery of educational institutions, and appear on baseball caps and T-shirts are of two types: the warrior and the clown, mirroring the historic bifurcation of indigenous people into two types of savages—noble and ignoble. The warrior aspires to honor. Stressing bravery and bellicosity, the warrior exudes the character traits Euro-Americans have long prized: individuality, perseverance, pride, fidelity, and excellence. Numerous high schools, colleges, and professional teams have seized upon the warrior, real—Chief Osceola at Florida State University—and imagined—Chief Illiniwek at the University of Illinois. In contrast, the less common clown mocks, making Indians a joke, or a sideshow burlesque. The Cleveland Indians' Chief Wahoo is likely the most recognizable clown.

History of Mascots

Euro-Americans began using Indian imagery in athletics at the

close of the nineteenth century. In part, they seized upon Indianness in response to a number of major societal shifts, including the close of the frontier, the end of armed conflict with indigenous peoples, the quickening of urbanization and industrialization, the prominence of social Darwinism and an associated push to assimilate Native Americans, the expansion of the American empire, and a crisis in what it meant to be and become a man. At the same time, Indian imagery emerged from a long tradition of playing Indian in the United States. At least since the Boston Tea Party, Euro-Americans have sought to recast themselves by adopting the customs, regalia, and visage they associated with Native Americans. Playing Indian, in the absence of embodied Indians, allowed them to fashion a uniquely American identity, distinguishing their young nation, underscoring its democratic values, independent spirit, and historic birthright. Later, precisely as schools and teams were donning Indian imagery, scouting, woodcraft, and similar movements took shape in an effort to cultivate, redirect, and even save young white men from the feminizing perils of modern civilization. Of equal importance is the romantic image of the warrior so frequently embraced in the creation of Native American mascots derived from dime novels, advertising, journalistic coverage of the Indian Wars, and later movies. These features also account for the pronounced tendency of such mascots to draw on popular correlations between Indians and particular horse cultures of the Plains region. Finally, the emergence of Native American mascots reflected the trajectory of the American empire: On the one hand, such mascots are trophies, the prize of conquest, replicating the propensity of settlers to take and remake Native places and practices without permission; on the other hand, they encourage citizens and communities to affirm who they are and where they came from—the rightful heirs of once-proud people who valiantly fought against a superior civilization.

Although informed by broader social and political forces,

the selection of Native American mascots has always been a local affair. At educational institutions, almost invariably, students seized upon and elaborated Indian imagery. For instance, at the University of Illinois, a student in the marching band, drawing on his fondness for Native Americans and his experience as a Boy Scout, invented the school's mascot, Chief Illiniwek. And, when Florida State University became a coeducational institution after the Second World War, students voted to adopt the Seminoles as the school mascot. Other schools, such as Dartmouth College, which once assigned itself the mission of educating Native Americans, built upon historic relationships with indigenous peoples in their decision to use Indian imagery. And some teams, including the Cleveland Indians and several high schools, attribute the origins of the name and mascot to a desire to honor a specific individual of Indian heritage who formerly played for or coached the team. Regional connections were also important. Marquette University dubbed itself the Warriors in the early 1950s, after the Boston Braves baseball team moved to Milwaukee. More commonly, high schools and colleges have sought to commemorate Native nations with a local connection. The Fighting Illini of the University of Illinois, the Seminoles of Florida State University, and the Running Utes of the University of Utah all attest to this pattern, suggesting, at least in part, that the choice of name is about claiming land and identity from the aboriginal inhabitants subsequently displaced and dispossessed with the establishment of state and school. Finally, some schools, like St. John's University and Simpson College, established traditions of playing Indian largely by accident, because of the colors of their uniforms or a newspaper article comparing the play of the team to the fighting prowess of Indians.

Controversy over Mascots

In 1971, American Indian students at Marquette University denounced the school nickname (Warriors) and mascot (Willie

Wampum, a white student dressed in buckskin regalia, wearing an oversized Indian-styled head) as degrading and demanded an immediate change. Their message, which appeared in the school newspaper, stated:

> The mascot is definitely offensive to the American Indian. We as native Americans have pride in our Indian heritage, and a mascot that portrays our forefathers' ancestral mode of dress for a laugh can be nothing but another form of racism. Having a non-Indian play the part is just as degrading to the Indian. From the past to contemporary times there is little the White man has not taken from the Indian. About the only thing left is our pride, and now Marquette University threatens to take that away from us by allowing such a display of racism. . . .We did not give our permission to be portrayed for a laugh, and we are sure no other minority group would condone such flagrant degradation of their heritage and pride. We ask that the mascot be discontinued completely. . . . We are sure the absence of the mascot would not take away any of the effectiveness of the Number 1 basketball team in the nation.[35]

Although the university eventually retired Willie Wampum and introduced a new nickname for its sports team (the Golden Eagles), the students' public statement is perhaps more important as a measure of the marked change in public opinion. Indian nicknames and symbols, long-accepted elements of sport, and embraced as a source of identity and entertainment have—after the cultural and political resurgence of Native America—become problematic, a source of contention, offense, and controversy. In the wake of the civil rights movement and at the height of the military conflict in Southeast Asia, a growing number of Americans began to recognize mascots as stereotypical, false, and hurtful images. Importantly, while other racist symbols like Frito Bandito or Sambo disappeared from American culture, a consensus about the meaning of Indian

imagery in athletics did not take hold. As a result, over the past thirty-five years, Native American mascots have fostered intense conflicts about race, opportunity, and identity.

At sporting events, in public forums, in courtrooms, and in classrooms, individuals and institutions have challenged the continued use of Indian imagery in sports. Activists protesting may be the most visible sign of the controversy; of greater lasting significance, however, have been the countless political leaders, students, and everyday citizens who have openly expressed their concerns about Native American mascots. In response, political, religious, and professional organizations have taken a stand against such symbols. Groups who have spoken out against Native American mascots include the National Education Association, the United Church of Christ, the National Congress of American Indians, the Modern Language Association, the United Methodist Church, the American Anthropological Association, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, the United States Civil Rights Commission, and the American Indian Movement. Significantly, every major Native American organization with a national focus has voiced their opposition to Indian imagery in sports. Together, these public challenges have fostered heated discussions and policy reassessments in local communities and educational institutions across the country.

The past thirty-five years have witnessed remarkable changes. Many school boards, including the State Boards of Education of Minnesota and Nebraska and school districts in Los Angeles and Dallas, have passed resolutions requiring that schools change the Native American mascots. At the same time, some schools, such as the University of Utah, have altered their use of Indian imagery, while many others, such as Marquette University and Miami University (Ohio), have ended their use of such symbols altogether. In addition, litigation has proven important. Attorneys with the U.S. Department of Justice sought legal strategies to challenge mascots and remedy



In 2002, San Diego State University replaced its former mascot, Monty Montezuma, with Ambassador Montezuma (shown here). Anthropologists, historians, and community members offered their input on the new mascot's design and purpose.

their negative effects in court. Moreover, although overturned on appeal, the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board invalidated the Washington Redskins name in 2001 because it disparaged Native Americans and brought them "into contempt or disrepute." Finally, the media have taken a leading role in modifying public perceptions of mascots, as when the *Portland Oregonian* changed its editorial policy and refused to print derogatory team names.

Despite noteworthy advances, efforts to end the use of Indian imagery in athletics have met with opposition. Professional sports franchises have rejected calls for change. Consequently, prominent teams in baseball (Braves, Indians), hockey (Blackhawks), and football (Redskins) continue to profit from the stereotyping of indigenous peoples. And

though educational institutions have been more responsive, many with Native American mascots have found ways to retain "their" Indians despite public concerns: some institutions have sought to find more authentic and appropriate ways of playing Indian at halftime. Marquette University, in the late 1970s, after retiring Willie Wampum, turned to the American Indian community on campus for a new mascot. The resulting First Warrior dressed in regalia and performed traditional dances. Negative response from fans and Native Americans in the region ultimately forced the university to select a non-Indian mascot. More recently, San Diego State University replaced Monty Montezuma with Ambassador Montezuma, a mascot designed in consultation with anthropologists, historians, and community members to be respectful and authentic. More commonly, educational institutions hold hearings and conduct surveys, as if discrimination and racism were a matter of opinion. In 2000, the University of Illinois undertook an elaborate investigation of its mascot, Chief Illiniwek, hiring a retired judge to preside over what it termed a "dialogue" that guaranteed opponents and supporters equal time. The final report sought a compromise that has yet to materialize. A year later, Glen Johnson, the president of Southeastern Oklahoma State University, which has long been known as the Savages, initiated a self-study, stating:

> I have asked the strategic planning council to determine if any change would be appropriate based on the school's long-term goal and mission. At this time we are under no deadline to make a decision. We want to proceed slowly to ensure that all points of view are heard.[36]

A consequence of such bureaucratic strategies is that they allow false and hurtful images of Native Americans to remain profitable and pleasurable, while refusing to engage the deleterious effects such imagery may have for indigenous peoples and the prospects of education and equality in the contemporary United States.

The Mascot Debate

Not surprisingly, the controversy over the continued use of Indian imagery in sports has fostered intense debate. At both the national and local levels, supporters and opponents of Native American mascots have formulated powerful arguments about what mascots mean and why they should be retained or retired. This section briefly summarizes the contrasting positions on American Indian nicknames and symbols, highlighting the underlying importance of each.

In Defense

Supporters of mascots offer a number of arguments designed to make such images acceptable and to defuse the controversy. They stress respect, intention, fairness, and commonsense notions of symbols, play, and politics.

To many who support mascots, the use of Indian imagery honors indigenous peoples. It pays tribute to their bravery, strength, independence, perseverance, and prowess. Consequently, the use of American Indian symbols and nicknames in sports is a compliment, rather than an insult, and hence supporters continue. In turn, Native Americans should be proud of the positive regard and prestigious recognition embodied by representations. Furthermore, supporters often couple arguments about honor with discussions of intentionality. Native American mascots, they insist, were never intended to hurt, defame, or belittle indigenous peoples. In his defense of Indian imagery at Florida State University, in 1993, then-President Dale W. Lick wedded these arguments skillfully:

> Recent critics have complained that the use of Indian symbolism is derogatory. Any symbol can be misused and become derogatory. This, however, has never been the intention at Florida State. Over the years we have worked closely with the Seminole tribe of Florida to ensure the dignity and propriety of the various symbols we use. . . . Some traditions

> we cannot control. For instance, in the early 1980s, when our band, the Marching Chiefs, began the now famous arm motion while singing the "war chant," who knew that a few years later the gesture would be picked up by other teams' fans and named the "tomahawk chop?" It's a term we did not choose and officially do not use.[37]

Clearly, for Lick, and supporters more generally, if Native American mascots were not meant to be offensive or racist, to interpret them as such is unfair at best. Arguments in support of mascots, moreover, speak about race through analogies between Native Americans and other ethnic groups. Many supporters are proud to see "their heritage" displayed in an athletic context. It is not uncommon for someone with Scandinavian ancestry to declare their deep pride and satisfaction for the Minnesota Vikings or to hear others ask: Why isn't someone complaining about the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame? Unable to grasp the concerns voiced by opponents, defenders of mascots dismiss them as silly, examples of political correctness, and a diversion from other, more serious or genuine, problems demanding attention. They encourage detractors to "lighten up," "to get over it," "to grow up," "to get a life," "to get a grip," or "to get real." In part, this derives from a collective sense of sport as playful, set apart from everyday life. Moreover, this refusal to take mascots seriously arises from a common belief that symbols are unimportant—"it is just a name!" In a sense, supporters are suggesting both that it is all in fun and reiterating the accepted wisdom that while sticks and stones may break your bones, words can (or should) never hurt you.

Arguments in defense of mascots reveal a set of deeper assumptions as well. First, they refuse to engage or take seriously the concerns of living Native Americans in their defenses of "their" imagined Indians. Second, they exhibit a propensity to tell Native Americans how it is or how they should feel (namely respected and honored). Third, supporters display an

inability and unwillingness to see or talk about race. When race does enter into their discussions, moreover, they qualify and constrain it. On the one hand, they suggest that racism is meaningful only when it is intentional, guided by ill-will, and truly significant (that is in the real world). On the other hand, many supporters claim parity between their ethnic heritage and racial condition and that of Native Americans, arguing that Irishness, for instance, is equivalent to Indianness in terms of the privileges, possibilities, and histories.

In Opposition

Opponents seek to undermine mascots and the arguments advanced in defense of them. Questioning supporters' familiarity with Native America and their knowledge of American history and society, opponents dispute assertions that mascots honor Native Americans. In particular, they highlight race, history, and power in their efforts to challenge the continued use of Indian nicknames and symbols.

Arguments against mascots pivot around race. Almost universally, opponents stress that Native American mascots are racist symbols that stereotype, demean, dehumanize, and injure indigenous peoples. Furthermore, some note with sadness that Americans embrace stereotypes of Native Americans that are no longer acceptable for other racial and ethnic groups. For instance, one cannot imagine a team called the Blackskins, but the professional football team in the nation's capitol is named the Redskins; one cannot reasonably conceive of an educational institution appropriating the religious artifacts or practices of Catholics or Jews and then using them for halftime entertainment as is presently done with objects sacred to indigenous peoples; and one has difficulty explaining why black face is problematic but playing Indian is not and why Frito Bandito was retired while Chief Wahoo continues to make money. These disparities, in turn, provoke others to actively strive to make the racial content of mascots tangible,

linking them to a more palpable and familiar version of race. Commonly, opponents offer racial analogies, comparing Native Americans with other racial groups. Frequently, they invent new and intentionally provocative team names.[38]

In contrast with supporters, opponents of mascots stress history and power, situating nicknames and symbols in a broader context of oppression. They direct attention to the ways in which the continued use of Indian imagery in sports resonates with and derives from earlier, power-laden forms of disrespect and dehumanization, including stereotyping, forced removal, and assimilation. Others go so far as to link the history of American Indians with the Holocaust to emphasize the death and destruction at the heart of the American experience and underscore the disconnect between the historic mistreatment of indigenous peoples in the United States and the present desire to enshrine imaginary Indians as sport team mascots. Arresting the use of Indian imagery in sports, many opponents assert, would be an initial step to validating and respecting Native Americans.

Arguments advanced against Native American mascots turn on three key assumptions. First, they direct attention to racist images and their effects. Second, they actively racialize the debate over mascots, making analogies between the experience and condition of Native Americans and those of other racial groups, particularly African Americans. Third, they historicize the use of American Indian nicknames and symbols, connecting them with broader patterns of discrimination and oppression.

Significance of the Mascot Debate

Supporters and defenders of mascots clearly disagree about the significance of mascots. Whereas supporters insist that mascots foster respect and are meant to honor Native Americans, opponents assert that they denigrate Native Americans, perpetuating historical patterns of discrimination and dispossession. The

distinct positions advanced in the unfolding debates point to deeper differences: Supporters stress text (honor, intention), while opponents emphasize context (history and racism). Supporters isolate; opponents make connections. Supporters argue for intent; opponents argue for effect. Supporters think of symbols and names as flat and more or less unimportant; opponents think of symbols as powerful cultural forms that reflect social relations and reinforce historical inequalities. Supporters deflect and deny the import of race; opponents highlight the centrality of race.

Indeed, they advance competing visions of race. Supporters, who might be described as advocates of a more-or-less dominant, if not reactionary, notion, hold that "we are all more or less equal," that the ill intentions of prejudiced individuals produce racism, and that discussions of discrimination should be confined to "real" and "important" social domains. In contrast, opponents advance a perspective that reads the social relations and cultural categories against the grain, exposing the power and meaning embedded within accepted norms, ideologies, and behaviors. They argue that race and racism are central to the American experience, that the effects of racial hierarchy cannot be ignored, and that symbols such as mascots—far from being frivolous—are significant measures of race relations. In this light, the ongoing controversy over mascots is as much about conflicting interpretations of race as it is a series of arguments over the appropriateness of Native American images in popular culture.

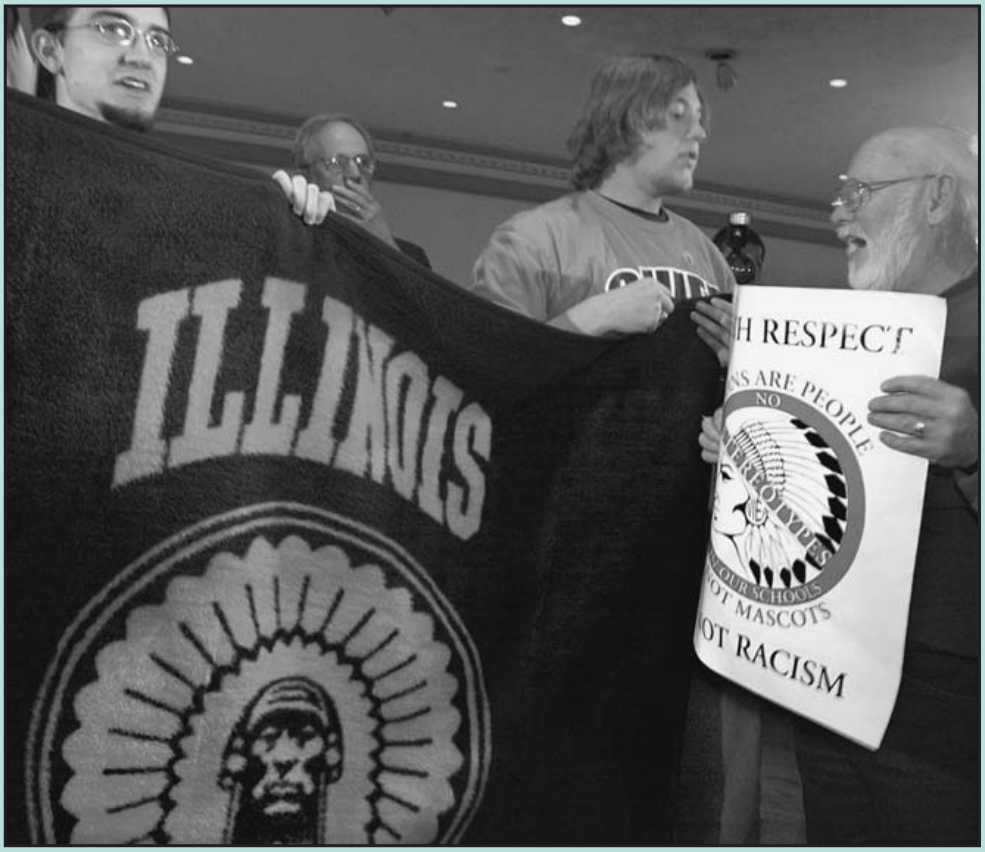
Mascots and Educational Institutions

Even if one accepts that the use of Indian imagery in sports derives from a sincere desire and well-intentioned effort to celebrate the ideals and consecrate the memory of indigenous peoples, such motives neither erase nor excuse the deleterious consequences often associated with Native American mascots. Such symbols diminish indigenous peoples. On the one hand,

some have suggested that the uses of imaginary Indians in association with athletics contributes to the denigration of American Indian mental health. On the other hand, Native American mascots conspire with other negative stereotypes to deny indigenous peoples cultural citizenship, limiting their capacity to claim equality or exercise full personhood in everyday life. Sadly, educational institutions with Native American mascots provide clear and powerful testimony to the harmful effects associated with the continued use of Indian imagery in sports. To begin, such mascots miseducate. They teach students what American Indians are like; and because they rely on stereotypes and caricatures, they misconstrue the cultures and histories of Native nations. As a result, institutions charged with cultivating complex, humane, critical, and grounded understandings instead offer superficial, racist, normative, and fictional renderings. Moreover, because mascots encourage students, faculty, administrators, and the broader community not to recognize or understand American Indians for who they really are, they contribute to the continuing marginalization and exclusion of indigenous peoples. They cannot see actual Native Americans and hence exclude them from their institutional visions. It is not uncommon, for instance, for school board members to dismiss questions about a local mascot issue because the school district faces other, more pressing issues. Similarly, administrators at a predominantly Latino high school in Iowa have asserted that their mascot is not a problem because they do not have Indian students, overlooking the fact that a majority of their students from Latin America have Indian ancestry.[39]

The continued use of Native American mascots also has an adverse impact on curriculum. In a statement denouncing Chief Illiniwek, the University of Illinois Department of Anthropology succinctly summarized the way the mascot negatively affected its academic mission. Chief Illiniwek

(i) promotes inaccurate conceptions of the Native peoples



The debate rages at the University of Illinois over whether Chief Illiniwek (shown here on a banner) should remain the school's mascot. In 2000, the university undertook an elaborate investigation of its mascot, but the issue has yet to be resolved. In May 2005, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) requested that thirty-one member institutions, including the University of Illinois, send reports detailing the primary reasons they support and oppose the use of their mascots.

of Illinois, past and present; (ii) undermines the effectiveness of our teaching and is deeply problematic for the academic environment both in and outside the classroom; (iii) creates a negative climate in our professional relationships with Native American communities that directly affects our ability to conduct research with and among Native American peoples; and, (iv) adversely affects the recruitment of Native American students and faculty into our university and department.[40]

The continued use of Indian imagery in athletics works against the ideals of educational institutions. It produces false knowledge, fosters hostility and discomfort, and undermines the creation of inclusive, democratic learning communities. Perhaps the most chilling examples of the hostile environments created by mascots emerge in the testimony of students of color (particularly, but not exclusively, Native American) at historically white colleges and universities with Native American mascots. They speak of how they feel silenced and misunderstood in the classroom, marginalized in the community, excluded from social life, and harassed by team boosters. Worse, Native American students often receive direct threats. Leaders in the movement to retire Chief Illiniwek in the late 1990s were subject to menacing phone calls, often describing physical harm, while boosters at the University of North Dakota posted handmade placards telling American Indian students to stop complaining, remember who won the war, and go back to the reservation where they belonged. Although condemned by administrators, such actions underscore the dehumanizing, undemocratic, and anti-Indian consequences that arise at schools with Native American mascots.

SUMMARY

Despite the established opposition of American Indian leaders, harmful effects, and ongoing controversy, educational institutions and sports teams likely will retain Native American mascots for the foreseeable future. Indeed, there are at least six reasons such nicknames and symbols will remain prominent for some time to come. First, there is not a shared understanding about what it means to use Indian imagery. In fact, most Americans have limited appreciation of the history of stereotyping and racism and why they still matter today. Second, the ongoing debate is not, as suggested above, a dialogue, but a cultural battle between entrenched positions. Third, almost invariably, individuals and institutions have fashioned

elaborate traditions that make mascots powerful as ways to know oneself, recall the past, have fun, and bond with others. Fourth, the demands placed on colleges and universities—to please alumni, to attract donors, to recruit students, to value diversity, to teach critical thinking, and to market themselves as a distinct brand—make it difficult for them to do the morally right thing. Fifth, Native American mascots are profitable, well-known names and symbols that continue to be marketed to eager fans, and hence remain lucrative for teams and schools. Sixth, as long as movies and journalism, not to mention educational institutions themselves, continue to shape public opinion about American Indians through partial, superficial, inaccurate, and even stereotypical accounts of indigenous peoples, Native American mascots will thrive.