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Native American Mascots in Oregon
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Saturday, March 2, 2019, 4:07 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Native American Mascots in Oregon topic.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post. To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post, something that describes the questions you are addressing.
Do NOT simply leave it RE: Native American Mascots in Oregon

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Who gets to be an Indian
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 1:53 PM

Being Indian is an important distinction to some in the mascot debate. What classifies one as Native American and what gives them the right to be offended. Nowadays not everyone is sure about their racial background. It is very common to hear someone say I’m a mutt. Growing up I always had dark hair, eyes, and dark complexion. My family did not know much about our background beyond our grandparents. Many people thought I was Native American myself included. I grew up in Native American culture and faith. But with the advancement of science and DNA testing I found out that I did not have a single bit of Native American blood in me. The fact that my DNA contained no traces of Native American did not bother me. I still consider myself part of that culture after having been raised in it. I still attend ceremonies and events with the same tribe I grew up with. When someone asks me if I am “Indian” I say not by blood but by family. Just because I was not born with Native American DNA does not mean that I do not understand what it is like to be part of that minority and how these mascots could be offensive. I believe that growing up in the culture gives you the ability to classify yourself Native American for the purpose of the mascot debate. If you have grown up in the culture you will be able to understand why some feel that the mascots are offensive even if you don’t agree with them. Many people have studied the culture of Native Americans and have the knowledge to weigh in on this issue. But I think for your opinion to be counted as a “Indian’s” opinion one must have experienced and continue being immersed in that culture for a very long period of time.

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Re: Who gets to be an Indian
by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Thursday, March 7, 2019, 6:51 PM

Hi Kimberly,

Thank you for responding! I really appreciate your perspective because I think it more succinctly says what I was attempting to put to words in my original post. While there is a lot of focus on the genetic connection to indigenous communities, that doesn't really get to what it means to be native. I have friends that are read as white constantly but grew up with native culture and ARE native. I think that y'all have a much harder time getting people to understand that culture is largely the determining factor of identity. I think this is demonstrated in the generic answers that are given by the students at Oakridge High School. Their idea of what it means to be native is completely based in the stereotypes perpetuated by a false understanding of indigenous cultures. This quote stuck out to me as a good example of the stereotypes used to justify the mascot: "the high school's Warriors mascot evokes the best in sportsmanship — courage, respect, dignity, perseverance, discipline, integrity. They call it 'Warrior spirit,' said Don Kordosky, district superintendent." These traits aren't specific to one group of people, and are simply a projection of the positive qualities the administration of the school district would like instill in their students. While indigenous folks demonstrate all of these characteristics, that doesn't make the use of a caricature of their people as a mascot. It is clear that those in the position of power to change the mascot believe in a fabricated justification for keeping it.

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Re: Who gets to be an Indian
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 2:45 AM

Ashley I had the same thoughts while reading the article that the traits he had mentioned courage, respect, dignity, perseverance, discipline, and integrity were not characteristics of only Native Americans. I thought this about their mascot as well, a warrior does not have to be an Indian. According to Miriam Webster dictionary a warrior is a person engaged or experienced in warfare and the word has its roots in the 14th century Anglo-French. Nowhere in the definition do they say that a warrior is or has to be a Native American. As long as they have fought in a war they are considered a warrior. A warrior could be someone of any nationality and still represent all the qualities they would like to instill in their students. Why does it have to be the image of a Native American when they can pick any warrior from history or society?

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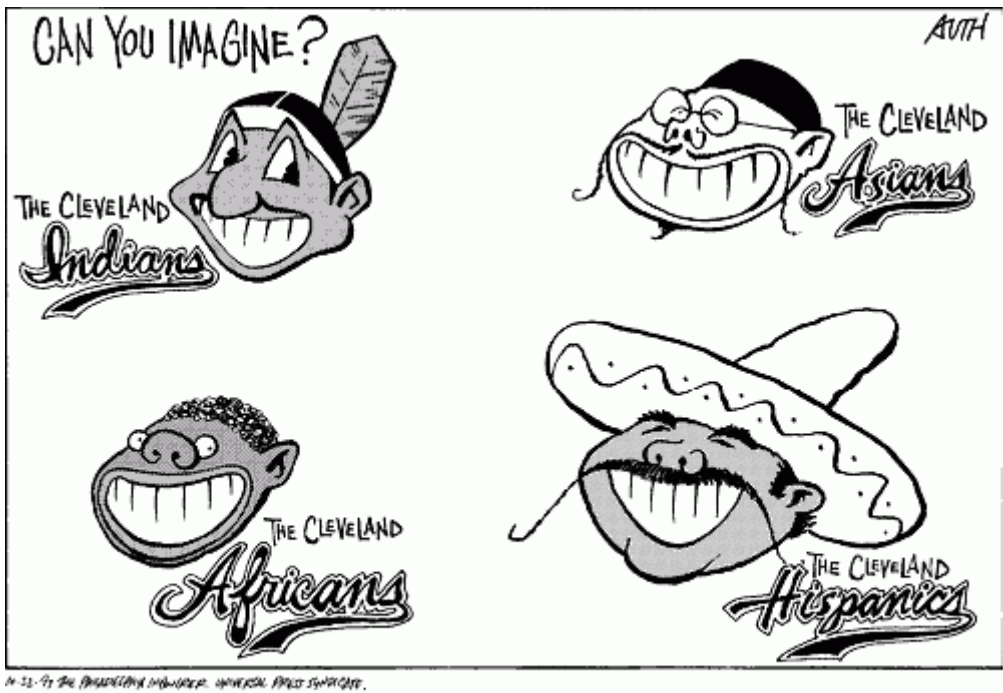
Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon
by [Miles Long](#) - Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 9:57 PM

Imagine if schools and athletic teams portrayed other races as they currently do Native American people. Teams based on Africans, Hipscanics, Asians, Disabled people, ect.? These would be instantly rejected and changed immediately. Why is it that we are still portraying Natives Americans in these mascots?

The only people that should really decide who should get to have Native American based mascots are the tribes and the people that belong to the tribes. That being said, using Native Americans as mascots promotes institutionalized racism and stereotypes that are still prevalent in communities at all levels. "It impedes Indian people from being seen in a real, viable, holistic way." The Register Guard article noted that school communities such as Marcola, Oakridge, North Douglas, and Reedsport did not want to change their mascots because they portrayed them in a respectful and dignified way. That being said, those communities are (mostly) not made up of Native peoples, the local tribes should have the say on what is okay and what is not for use.

Some tribes, such as the tribes from Coos, Umpqua, Siuslaw and the Cow Creek Band see the mascots as more of recognition. It seems that some of the tribes are divided on the issue. In the last article, one member from the Slitez tribe said that the ban on mascots in Oregon was a decision made by "people who have no knowledge of Indian communities" and "does nothing to address the real issues of racism." Why weren't the local tribes brought in to help make these decisions? While many of these mascots are inherently racist, the decision to change them should be made by the peoples who these changes are portraying.

I personally believe there should not be exceptions for these mascot changes. Some schools argue that there should be some exceptions, but I think Brenda Frank states it best. "Are we then accepting a certain level of discrimination? Are we accepting certain levels of dehumanizing somebody – a full race? We need to be consistent."



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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by [Alli Crank](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 1:29 PM

It was mentioned that the mascot changes should be made by the people these mascots are portraying. I would agree to an extent, but this got me thinking about why someone who is not a Native American would want to change the mascot in the first place. One reason that I think some who is not Native American could want to change these mascots is empathy. Though someone who is not Native American cannot experience the discrimination of actually being one, they can feel bad and understand how it may feel to be discriminated in general and not want that for anyone. If I were to put myself in the shoes of the people who are changing the mascots without being Native, I could understand why they would want change. Say you're the the principal of the school and you're close with and care for your students, if you saw a Native student who was by any means offended or hurt by their mascot you would feel bad. As a principal I would hope you wouldn't want any of your students to ever feel that way, and I think that could be where many of people who want change, but aren't Native could be coming from.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon: Pride or racism?

by [Emilie Ormsby](#) - Tuesday, March 5, 2019, 11:00 PM

This is definitely a very sticky debate when observed up close in a situation with varying opinions, even between those of the same culture. That being said, it makes it difficult to ultimately agree with a single side; however, I do agree with the state of Oregon's decision to ban Indian mascots. I agree with the statement made by Brenda Brainard from part one of the Native American mascots in Oregon debate: "I don't believe there were bad intentions at the start," local American Indian educator Brenda Brainard said, referring to school districts' mid-20th-century embrace of Indian mascots. "But hanging on to it? That kind of feels like bad intentions ... Sixty years later, we know better." We do know better. We have progressed since that era with much more knowledge of how awful it was. If these schools were established today, I highly doubt there would be a major uproar against it because of our bloody, hateful, and greedy history with the Native Americans. I do, however, find it interesting that certain Native American tribes do not share the same opinion on the matter. Some saw it as a recognition of their tribes, while others find it racist. Regardless of the "recognition" the tribes may be receiving, is it worth literally holding up a sign of institutionalized racism for students and other tribe members to live with?

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon: Pride or racism?



by [Alli Crank](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 1:36 PM

I agree I think it is very interesting that different tribes have different opinions on this topic. I would think that any tribe would respect another tribe if they expressed that the mascot offended them because of their past oppression. I would expect there to be a mutual agreement that if it offended one tribe the mascot would be banned. However I think it is probably hard when there are tribes who feel empowered by these mascots, but I would still think that tribes who felt empowered would empathize with those who are offended.

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Large Majority Decides how Small Minority feels

by [Anna Rodriguez](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 1:21 PM

Once again, I think these events represent another example of a Majority deciding how a minority feels. Even though actual Native Americans, such as the Confederated Tribes of Siletz, stated that they actually like the mascots, but wish the curriculum was more accurate, the white politicians involved seemed to have completely ignored that and decided that it was offensive to Natives anyways. To answer the first question, I believe that Natives are the only people who get to identify as "Native" and have a voice in these types of issues. Our fundamental problem from the beginning of our relationship with Natives, was not listening to their opinions. Instead of pushing them out and taking their land, a deal of co-habitation and government-combination could have been made. We could have combined these cultures, instead of pushing the smaller one into hidden areas of society. I don't think it is too late to create this merger though. Instead of getting rid of these mascots, we could merge them with accurate native information and change the mascots to actual Native legends and Tribe names. Instead of the "Braves" the team could be called, "the Siletz Braves." This way, the school would be giving an accurate representation of the Natives in their area. Personally, I would be proud to live in an area with cultural history such as tribal history, and I would want to brag about that history as much as I could. To answer another question, I believe that how American Natives view the mascots should be the only view that matters. It is not up to us to decide how they feel. On another note, I would like to bring up another idea, involved in all of this, that bothers me. All of these people who gave quotes in these articles are extremely worried about offending even one person. But, in a lot of the quotes and statements, they used the term "Indian" to describe American Natives. I think that in order to change the misinformation our society is given about Natives, we need to change all the misinforming habit that we have developed since the U.S. began. A lot of natives have stated that the term, "indian" does not offend or confuse them. But, I think Natives and most White Americans do not spend a lot of time with actual Indians, from India. This narrows their perspective of the use of this term. People always only seem to be woried about how American Natives feel about this word. But, being married into an Indian family, I now see how the term seriously confuses actual Indians. Throughout a young Indian-American's school career, they have to hear this term used constantly to describe a group of people whom they don't identify with. And I am constantly making connections about Indian culture with other white people, then realizing that they thought I was talking about Natives the entire time. When people ask what tribe my husband is from, I like to respond that he is a member of the Punjabi Tribe and see how ignorant the people are. A lot of the time, people say, "oh lv'e never heard of that tribe. Where did they reside in America?" To be honest, I see Mr.Escobar and many other students in this class making this ignorant mistake, without thinking about the actual Indian people from India, and I am dissapointed. I think we should stick to the term, "American Natives", because that is the most accurate.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by [Alli Crank](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 2:56 PM

I would argue that anyone of Native American heritage "gets" to speak about whether or not the Indians resent the mascot. I think it does matter how the majority of American Indians view mascots, but I think the part of American Indians that are offended by these mascots matter more. The Native Americans who take more offense to this topic matter more because like James Florendo said, the offense "stems from historical trauma" and that "if your people have been the victims of genocide, it's real hard to listen to anyone on the other side saying anything about respecting you." I agree with Oregon's ban of these mascots, if it offends one person of a greater people that has been oppressed in our country's history that person's opinion should be taken into consideration. And the reality is that it is not just "one" persons opinion, it a decent amount of peoples opinions, however that opinion just happens to be the smaller minorities. The most difficult setback I see is how one is supposed to navigate through this issue when there are Natives who actually like having these mascots and want them to be kept around. In my opinion I think the issue should be shifted from whether or not to ban all Indian mascots as a whole or not, to what types of mascots should be kept. It seems that this idea has been touched on because the mascot "Warriors" is being kept, but I think it should be touched on more. The polls that are being taken should not be focused on how many people are offended, they should focused on what terms are offensive and we should go from there.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by [Anna Rodriguez](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 10:26 PM

I see your point of view. However, when I was reading the articles, it seems like the only people who are offended are white people. If I am wrong, and there is even one Native who is offended, then I agree with you. However, in the article where they stated the "if even one person is offended.." statement, I nterpreted the author/speaker to be referencing the white students who go to the school, whom are "embarressed" by the mascot. In my opinion, the only reason a white person has to be offended by these mascots, is that it makes them uncomfortable to think about the horrible acts of our ancestors. I think there are two types of white people, the ones who cannot handle the truth of what our people did and choose to ignore/deny/or even fight it, or those who recognize that what we did was wrong and choose to live with the reminders. In my opinion, I think many Native people have realized what these mascots do to white society nowadays. They are horrible reminders of how racist we once were, after we committed immoral acts to a group of people. But, maybe we deserve these reminders. And maybe they will ensure that we do not fall back into the same racist views. These are just some thoughts I had when reading your post.

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Native Americans

by [Taylor Reid](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 7:58 PM

The people who are still apart of the tribe and living on reservations are who are considered the Indians that can have a strong opinion about schools using offensive names and mascots. It does matter if the American Indians feel negative feelings towards the mascots because it is their history and culture that is being publicized. As a small minority it could be hard to have your culture glorified after having a hard history and being so mistreated. I think if only one single person is offended, big changes don't need to happen but their feelings still need to be taken into consideration. I think we are handling it well right now. Changing jerseys to have just the school name and changing logos is good but changing a whole school's identity is a little too far.

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Re: Native Americans

by [Taylor Reid](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 5:29 PM

Adding on to my last post, I think that Oregon's ruling is a little harsh. I think that if a tribe has a problem with a certain school's mascot or name then something can be changed. If it is just an across the board change that no one cares about that is destroying a schools legacy. I understand why both of the tribes are disappointed with the decision. It would be frustrating to have reached out previously about wanting to educate students on the accurate history of the Indian culture and have that be declined, yet your culture is recognized in a different way that wasn't needed.

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Re: Native Americans

by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 3:42 AM

I agree with you that a blanket ban is not the answer. As you pointed out some schools and tribes were able to come up with a solution that worked for all involved. In fact, it would be beneficial for the tribes to be involved in solving the issue. After so long of domineering over Native Americans we need to show that we can have a relationship of mutual respect. They need to be finally acknowledged and given a choice what happens with their culture. This country has a long tradition of not being fair to Natives. As well as not taking what they have to say or what they want seriously. This is our chance to show that we respect and value what their choice is about their heritage and culture. If whatever they decide ends up being a problem down the road, they can open it back up for discussion.

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Genocide is NOT a Mascot



by [Ashley Tippins](#) - Wednesday, March 6, 2019, 8:08 PM

I will be perfectly honest, I find these questions to be quite absurd. "Who gets to 'be Indian' for the purposes of speaking about whether or not Indians resent the mascots?" "Does it matter how most American Indians view the mascots?" "How about the two tribes disappointed with the decision?" These questions are based in a few assumptions that I find extremely problematic and require a priori attention.

The first is that these questions deny the diversity of ideas for indigenous populations. Asking students to speculate on which opinions should be recognized as "Indian" assumes that there can only be one opinion held by indigenous populations. The answer to the first question is that every single indigenous person is indigenous regardless of their opinion on the matter. The only people forcing the singularity of opinion are white folks who are insistent that there can be only one correct answer. Why do non-indigenous folks need a 100% consensus on the issue? Especially considering most of the laws passed by the US Congress are only passed by majority rule, demanding a complete consensus among native populations in the United States is an absurd and impossible standard. If five black folks came out tomorrow and said that slavery was totally fine and justified, would that put into question the issue of slavery? I certainly hope not. A good example of this is the Kanye West quote that seemed to indicate that he thought slavery was a choice because it went on for so long. Kanye is black, there is no denying that, but there is historical evidence that proves him completely wrong. While there are a lot of indigenous folks that feel as though the mascots represent them favorably, the very notion of a mascot involves heavy stereotyping. You cannot have a mascot without reducing an entire population down to a single interpretation of what it means to be a Warrior, Brave, or Chieftain.

There is no one voice for indigenous folks, there a multitude. It's time that instead of asking that indigenous folks to have a unanimous verdict on whether indigenous mascots are offensive or not, white folks should start asking themselves why they need so much "proof" to stop doing something that a SIGNIFICANT number of indigenous folks have asked you to not do? It's not hard to change a mascot. It's not impossible, but it is slightly inconvenient. Why is the convenience of American schools worth more than the fact that these mascots force native students to encounter and celebrate the genocide of their ancestors?

The second issue with the questions is that they are predicated on the notion that non-indigenous folks have anything important or impactful to say about whether indigenous stereotypes should be used as mascots for non-indigenous schools. This comes from the assumption that anyone should be able to develop and share their opinion and subject, and that those opinions should be valued on a similar level to those presented by anyone else. This assumption is the actualization of color blindness: pretending as though the perspective that informs the opinions does not significantly influence the opinion of an individual. Excellent example is the high school students from Oakridge High School. Non-native students said that they felt pride in the mascot and were "proud to be a Warrior." However, these students don't have any idea what it truly means to be from a native tribe. Native history is not taught in school, and what is taught is all that is left from a two century long genocide of indigenous peoples and culture. However according to American Indian educator Brenda Brainard, native, "students despised [native mascots], across the board...They despised it, they were embarrassed by it, they wanted it changed." While the paragraphs above explain the importance of a diversity of ideas in the indigenous community, a significant number of native folks agree that there isn't any way that a mascot could be seen as positive or empowering.

Even if we had an idea of the political, spiritual, and personal perspectives of these indigenous ancestors, the information we have would be limited and distorted by time and genocide. What I am trying to say is that these students to love the cultural practices of indigenous folks, they love this archetype that American society has created of the "proud, noble Indian." You can tell that this is pure stereotyping by noting the deep sorrow and resignation in the words from Chief Joseph, "I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I fight no more forever." Is that what the students from Oakridge are celebrating? The destitution of the Nez Perce? Maybe it was the stealing of the Sioux's land after the Dawes act privatized property? Maybe they are proud of the gallant way that indigenous folks died in the thousands due to starvation because they were pushed off their lands by white settlers hungry for land and money? The fact that every single American does not feel shame and guilt anytime they even THINK about what Americans

have done to North American indigenous populations is an indication that folks here do not understand the depth of the pain that the settler colonial project called the United States has inflicted on these populations. From this perspective, the notion of an indigenous mascot is adding literal insult to injury.

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Re: Genocide is NOT a Mascot
by [Alli Crank](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 2:47 PM

It was mentioned that "students don't have any idea what it truly means to be from a native tribe" and I would argue that some students do know and could be part of a tribe, but it happened that the only students willing to speak up were non-Native. However what is also worth mentioning is that a main student voice we hear is that of the student body president whom which is pushed to speak up on issues like these. I feel that there is an important piece in your argument missing which is why I believe the changing of the mascots could be difficult. The piece of this argument that is overlooked is the voices of Natives we hear saying "We see it as kind of more like a recognition, in a way" and "I'm proud of my heritage, I'm proud that you continue to honor Native American culture and that you're naming your team after a teenage warrior". It is a much harder issue to navigate when there are opinions of Natives that actually support current mascots and do not want them to change.

It is stated that "These questions are based in a few assumptions that I find extremely problematic and require a prior attention", however there are many assumption within this argument that causes it to be flawed. "The fact that every single American does not feel shame and guilt anytime they even THINK about what Americans have done to North American indigenous populations is an indication that folks here do not understand the depth of the pain that the settler colonial project called the United States has inflicted on these populations." This is an assumption that is most certainly not true for "every single American" and can be seen through all the responses within this forum. "The only people forcing the singularity of opinion are white folks who are insistent that there can be only one correct answer." I would argue that this topic wouldn't be an issue, but you are correct in that it is an issue because there is not only one correct answer. However it is important to note that it is not only an issue because of the "white folks who are insistent that there can be only one correct answer", it is also an issue because of the difficulty navigating which Natives voices "matter" more, the ones empowered or the ones offended?

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Walking a fine line
by [Letitia Hadix](#) - Thursday, March 7, 2019, 12:27 AM

This is a difficult topic to discuss for I believe it is mostly consisting of a large gray area where there is no right or wrong answers; nothing is clear-cut like black or white. I agree with some of these items but disagree with others and am very understanding in both points of view. Although only partially, I am part Cherokee and Blackfoot (along with some other mixed genes) and I grew up learning about Native American culture through a program at my school. Unfortunately, I cannot confirm some facts about what I learned because history is not always as it seems, so some information may have changed over time. I can say that although I feel there is some conflict about it, I agree with Oregon's decision in regards to their mascots.

Although a tough situation, I can see why some people would want these mascots changed. Now to part of the human population these mascots may seem harmless or positive, but to others they can be seen as disrespectful. One student said, "...he decided to go to the board after his school played the Molalla High Indians. During the game he saw a student dressed in buckskin and fake feathers performing stereotypical Native American dance moves." I can only guess at how this student felt upon seeing this, but I find myself greatly upset. I was taught Native American dances and the specific steps for years and I was always told that each held great meaning. In cases like this one, the student in question probably meant no disrespect, but many could take it that way. In turn, this could have a debilitating effect on students. To some, "It is racist. It is harmful. It is shaming. It is dehumanizing. (Edmo)" In an effort to prevent these feelings from having negative effects on members of the populace, (especially in adolescents) I think it was in everyone's best interest to experience this change so no misunderstandings or unfortunate mishaps occur. There were a few tribes who were disappointed in this decision and I can understand why, but I still am in agreement with this change because to many people it is not okay for there to be a "reinforcement of stereotypes." I believe that in Oregon's case, it was a matter of the few causing mishaps for the many. If one school has an issue, all of them will undergo changes due to the subject matter. Simply a matter of walking a fine line and when something occurs that crosses it, making stricter changes.

Sincerely,
Letitia Hadix

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon: Who says?

by [Emilie Ormsby](#) - Thursday, March 7, 2019, 7:56 PM

To add to what I posted previously, the only people speaking up in favor of keeping the indian mascots (besides the few Indian tribes) seem to be from the non Native American minority. Should someone NOT of native american descent have a say as to whether or not it's offensive? Personally, I don't think so. I understand a Native American being proud of the symbol of a warrior for a mascot because that is in his heritage; however, historically there is a particularly bloody connotation. According to the text, "Warriors began to speak openly of reclaiming ancestral hunting grounds. Then, on August 17, a robbery in which five white settlers were murdered seemed to open the floodgates. The warriors persuaded Chief Little Crow to take them on the warpath, and over the next few weeks, at least 500 white Minnesotans were massacred." (Murrin pg. 608) Katie Zimmerman from Oakridge High School, president of the student body, says it's "the responsibility of each person to respond to others in a manner that assures mutual dignity and respect." Perhaps she didn't take into account the severe lack of mutual dignity and respect towards Native Americans during the time white settlers banished them from their own lands. I wouldn't be able to "see it as an honor" to be a Warrior if I knew that people of MY heritage were guilty of such inhumane treatment. Accordingly, the message from Steve Bowers included in the debate article further leads me to believe that those pushing for the mascots to remain are not considering the horribly offensive aspects that naturally come with it. If we were a High School in Germany, would we name it after Auschwitz? Absolutely not. Steve Bowers states that he is offended as a taxpayer, and this to me is not enough of an argument to say no to the students and individuals who are made uncomfortable by the mascots.

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Yes their View Matters, But can they Agree on One

by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 2:50 AM

It does matter how the Native Americans view Indian mascots. Who but the minority that we are talking about can say whether something is offensive to them. This works for all matters of cultural appropriation. But as with all things this will always have mixed results. Despite sharing race and culture no two human beings are exactly alike or think exactly alike. What is offensive to one is not to the other. You could pick out a Two Native American's, one that finds the mascots offensive and one that doesn't, in fact one that supports them. They could argue among themselves for hours over the issue and still not come to a truce. So even though I believe that the way Native Americans view mascots is important it is also impossible to say how the Indian's as a group feel about this matter.

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Work towards a resolution together

by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 2:59 AM

Schools who make an effort to work with local tribes to ensure that their mascot is not being offensively portrayed. Such as Roseburg High School changing their image to a feather. As well as to understand the culture, to avoid future offensiveness and cultural appropriation should be allowed to keep their mascot. Possibly change up the name or image they use. Local tribes can come together and reach a conclusion. While there are some who will still not agree with this. I believe that the schools and tribes can work out a deal that makes everyone comfortable. As well as being able to reopen the discussion if ever anyone feels offended. Beyond that I believe it is important to finally give Native Americans a say in the matter considering that right was taken away from them so often in the past.

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Making a change

by [Brianna Shelley](#) - Friday, March 8, 2019, 9:13 PM

I must admit, I did not read the Native American Mascot forum materials before I posted in the Professional Sports, Data and Image forum. With that being said, I do stand by my other post. I believe the Redskins team name should be changed, simply because that is a racial slur and I do not believe something like that should be a team moniker. On the other hand, the changing of team names like "warriors" or "braves" are a tougher decision to make and I can see both sides. I think most students would respect the Native American influenced team names. Katie Zimmerman, from Oakridge High School was quoted saying "I see it as an honor to be a warrior." (Symbolic Debate Article) But

within every school there unfortunately always seems to be kids who think it is funny to disrespect a culture that is different from theirs. When I was in High School, we had a group of Native Americans come to do a presentation for our entire school during an assembly. A group of students thought it would be funny to mock them by putting their hands over their mouths and mocking an Indian war cry. It was extremely offensive and just embarrassing for the rest of the student body. I know that I felt horrible, I can't even imagine what it felt like to have your culture mocked like that in front of hundreds of people. If the Native American Tribes in Oregon and around the country believe these team names to be offensive, then I think they should be changed. The material stated that a lot of the tribes refused to weigh in, so that does make the debate more challenging. But I would agree with James Florendo, the coordinator of Native American programs at LCC, and more importantly a member of the Warm Springs tribe, he said "If Indian Mascots affect even a single student in a negative way, they should go." He went on to add "If your people have been the victims of genocide, its real hard to listen to anyone on the other side saying anything about respecting you." (Symbolic Debate Article) I do think it is hard to please everyone, especially now a days, it seems like everyone is offended over something. But when there is justifiable reasons and a long history of dehumanizing and demeaning Native Americans, I think the burden should fall on the schools to make a change. I think the real change should take place in the curriculum, what we teach our youth should be an accurate representation of American Indian culture and their history.

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Education to Combat Ignorance
by [Brianna Caridio](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 3:18 PM

It does not seem that there will be a blanket decision that will please everyone on the issue of Native American mascots. In some ways it seems that a complete ban is best thing to do if it affects any single student in a negative manner as James Florendo expressed. However, Steve Bowers made a good point that many other mascots used in schools and sports are offensive to someone. So then how is it decided which kinds of offensive stereotypes are acceptable and which are not?

There are a lot of people with opinions on the issue of mascots, but of all the articles referenced, most of the people giving writing or being interviewed were on the school board, some were tribe members, but those whom the ban would affect the most, Native American school students seem to be vastly underrepresented. In all of the articles in Part 1 of the forum, one of the only direct references to the feelings of the students was from Brenda Brainard of the Eugene School Board "who has worked with American Indian students throughout the area for years, said she's heard a different message from those who have attended schools with Indian mascots. 'The students despised it, across the board,' she said. 'They despised it, they were embarrassed by it, they wanted it changed.'" Another example is the committee that included American Indian student that wrote "It is not the privilege of any group to determine what makes another group feel devalued or stereotyped." Even older members of Native American tribes, who have not attended a school that had a Native American mascot, can't truly know what it's like from the students' point of view. There are practices that are blatantly racist and further stereotypes such as Molalla High School "using a mascot dressed like a Native American to lead cheers" or as described by Che Butler "During the game he saw a student dressed in buckskin and fake feathers performing stereotypical Native American dance moves." These types of representations in schools can be particularly destructive and hurtful to students and their families, to those of Native American descent, but also to those who are not because they are being exposed to and taught that it's ok. Furthering racism and stereotypes is wrong, but I'm unconvinced that the way in which the school mascot ban was handled really helped the situation.

The Confederated Tribes of the Siletz and the Grande Ronde both opposed the blanket ban, in hopes that the school board would initiate a curriculum that could more accurately educate students about Native Heritage. Children in school celebrate Thanksgiving, making turkeys and dressing up as pilgrims, but even as many adults in our country have not learned, it was not the start of a friendly relationship between the pilgrims and Native Americans. "After the initial Thanksgiving feast, tensions rose between the settlers and indigenous peoples and reached a breaking point in 1675, resulting in King Phillip's War. Spanning three years, the conflict raged throughout New England, destroying 12 towns and almost completely destroying the Wampanoag tribe and their allies, the Narragansett tribe from Rhode Island" (1). The school system, for grades K-12, spends a lot of time educating students about the Colonization of America, the Civil War and the World Wars, while glossing over the rest of our history. As discussed in the last forum, the reconstruction period is one that many know nothing about, Native American history is typically not taught in depth and is misunderstood as well. While many have learned about the Trail of Tears, events such as the Sand Creek massacre in which 200 Indians were killed, half of them women and children (Murrin pg. 609) or Wounded Knee that killed 146, nearly half women and children, are focused on less. It's easier to teach about Hitler and the atrocities that were done to Jewish people in World War 2, than to teach about the genocide committed by our own ancestors.

Mascots can be banned, but will people really understand why if they have not been educated about the history that makes them unacceptable? Maybe fewer people would oppose such a ban if there was better education about the history of our nation’s interactions with Native Americans. The ban could have been less severe and allowed tribes to have input on how the topic is approached in schools, as some of the tribes asked for, but were denied.

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Understanding their Viewpoint
by [Kimberly Wong](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 3:20 AM

Yes of course it matters how the Native Americans view these Indian mascots. Does it matter to you how your family is portrayed to the public? How about your religion, culture, or heritage? Anyone of us would be offended to know that such important details of our lives and history would be used in this way. They may not mean any harm, but they are being offensive to your way of life none the less. Who can say what is offensive? Well the people whose culture is being used. Their view of that usage is what counts because its their way of life that is being used without it being understood. While most would not think an Indian mascot would be offensive, it’s far from the truth. Just the clothing they use in the image can be offensive. In Native American culture your clothes say a lot about you. Not the everyday street clothes they wear but their traditional clothes. For one these clothes are usually worn during ceremony and many items signify achievements or life milestones. Such as the feather headdress that is often depicted on Indian mascots. Indians.org tells the history of these sacred head accessories. They were only worn by chiefs and great warriors. They had to be earned feather by feather with brave acts. Each feather having a symbolic meaning depending on the bird it came from. While the making of it required ceremony, fasting, and meditation. For a Native American to see an image of someone who did not earn it, in one of these sacred headdresses is insulting.

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Indian Mascotts
by [Vince Shumway](#) - Sunday, March 10, 2019, 9:26 PM

Anyone who is educated and sensitive to this issue may have a voice in this issue. No body “gets to be an Indian” for speaking purposes, but if there are individuals who share communities with Indians and sympathize with the people they could say if Indians resent these mascots or not. This is only answerable if you actually know where they stand though. Of course, this does not speak for all peoples across the spectrum though. People are diverse and have different viewpoints.

Yes, it does matter how most Indians view a mascot. It is their heritage and their ancestry, it belongs to them and is who they are. Everyone’s voice matters. The majority as well as the minority, but there also has to be balance you can’t always change legislature to accommodate the few. Likewise, you can’t always uphold the majorities views against the minority. For example, slavery, the majority of Americans in the mid to late 19th century supported slavery and it was the black populace who was the minority. there has to be a balance to benefit society. If Just one person is offended it doesn’t make any sense to change all of these mascots. One single individual shouldn’t necessarily dictate and change the way of life for an entire population.

I do not agree with Oregon’s decision. This decision is not in favor of deterring racism and seems to only bring up issues where there shouldn’t be issues. I am part native American. My great grandmother was full blooded Indian and apart of the Klamath and Modoc tribes. Mascots are a school’s pride; whether it be a Indian, a cowboy, a logger, fighting Irish, or an animal. It doesn’t seem that an Irish man as a mascot is that big of a deal, and we all know that Irish Catholics were very much discriminated against. Schools aren’t making a particular mascot there representative to make issues and segregate different cultures or races. It isn’t okay for schools to represent Indian pride any more, but it is okay to represent Loggers and fighting Irish? It seems weird to pull out the Indian representation but to leave in all the white male representation.

I think the best out come would have come from local tribes working with schools to make the best possible representation of Native Americans. If a school’s mascot was offensive and people wanted to take it down it should be between the tribe and the school. If people are still offended, they should look into what that mascot is representing. If your interpretation of the mascot offends you look into the meaning, understand why they are doing what they are doing. If people understood why, it would fix a lot of issues. All the mascots I’ve seen represent a fighter, they represent honor, and character. I played sports in through high school, and all of the Indian schools were very proud of who they were and they showed it in character on and off the field/ court. While playing football

3/14/2019

HST 202 W19 (Escobar Meta 30769 30800): Native American Mascots in Oregon

an opposing team did a tribal ritual dance before the game. My team only had respect for them, and we were the cowboys. The team was a majority of natives, but there were some white boys on the team as well and they all did the dance together. That was really incredible and heartwarming to witness.

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