

HST 202: History of United States W19 (Escobar)

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Native American Mascots in Oregon
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, March 1, 2019, 9:09 PM

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

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Do NOT simply leave it RE: Native American Mascots in Oregon

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Tribe's Decision
by [Quinton Liebl](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 8:59 PM

I can see where both sides of this argument are coming from. Stereotyping is my main concern about the offensiveness of these mascots. There are many negative and even positive stereotypes that I was exposed to as a child and they influenced my idea of the people of Native American descent. If I had the knowledge of certain cultures or monumental historical events, I would be more aware of what is right or wrong.

I believe that whichever tribe is offended or represented as a mascot should be the ones to decide what happens. I liked how a committee stated, "it's not the privilege of any group to determine what makes another group feel devalued or stereotyped." This is very real. Being a white male, with no blood or cultural relation to any tribe, I have no clue what could be considered disrespectful to their culture or offensive to specific people.

One of the articles states that rural areas are proud of their mascots, and are not willing to give it up even though they are aware that it may offend or be disrespectful to someone else. I feel as if that is adding insult to injury. To offend someone and then persistently say that their feelings aren't valid towards something so near and dear to their way of life or culture. With all the statistics in these articles, it seems that a majority of Native Americans don't find this offensive. I think if it were up to certain tribes, it seems as if compromise would work out in the favor of Pro-Native American mascots.

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Covering an issue in a blanket does not solve the issue
by [Benjamin Planck](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 9:42 PM

The issues surrounding the use of Native American mascots, school names and nicknames is obviously a complex one at the very least. But does it have to be? I found myself dumbfounded at many points during my reading of these articles. Not because I know all the answers, not by any means. It doesn't take a whole lot of digging into the history of the U.S. to know that racism, discrimination, slavery and flat out borderline genocide are horribly embarrassing issues embedded into the foundation of the country we know today. If there is one aspect of the way Oregon handled this issue in particular that I agree with it is that we as a state recognized the voices of a minority group in desperate need of open ears. I also recognize that the issue is much more difficult given that both sides of the argument were supported by different "Federally recognized Tribes." I however, must make a stand for the side of the argument that is against the removal of Native American mascots(to an extent, some mascots have negative connotations, like the Redskins). I did not attend a high school with a Native American mascot (I went to Sheldon). I am not a member of a Federally recognized Tribe, or Tribe of any kind, and to my limited knowledge I do not have any Native American ancestry. This lack of affiliation can make it difficult for my words to hold any sort of weight in this matter, but I believe I can form some sort of argument. It seems to me the entire basis around this issue is to lessen the traumatizing effects our historical treatment of Native Americans has had and can have on Native American students(or students who have deep affiliations with Native American Tribes), but it sounds ridiculous to me to hear that the "solution" to that would be to flat out remove said mascots and nicknames? Didn't we spend a considerable amount of time in our history doing just that to Native American Tribes? Removing them from wherever they found homes? Wouldn't it be more constructive to allow those Tribes speak for themselves and come to a decision instead of trying to make that decision for them? One part that I think really strengthened my stance on this issue came under the part titled "Two tribes call state's Native American mascot ban disappointing", where Brenda Frank, the Chairwoman of the Oregon Board of Education disagreed with the opinions of the Tribes of the Siletz Indians and the Tribes of Grande Ronde and said "Mascots are a divisive issue to all members," Frank said. "We're not immune to being on different sides of the line. "With all due respect... their responsibility is only to their membership and not to the community as a whole. The Oregon State Board of Education speaks for all students in the state of Oregon." ... that sounds to me like another way of saying "We see what you're saying, and we really want to make it seem like we are standing for the voices of all Tribes...but we aren't going to stand for the voices of all Tribes" In my opinion, and in my argument, this issue is too complex to enact a flat out blanket ban on anything related to Native Americans when it comes to mascots, school names and nicknames. This is an issue that should be approached with open ears from all Tribes and should be settled by communicating and working with those Tribes. In other words, we should be looking for a solution that only grows stronger as time passes and a solution that gives back to these Native American Tribes. Banning mascots, names and nicknames only puts the real issue away for another day.

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legality of the mascots
by [Levi Savage](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 9:47 PM

The use of native American mascots is a long going debate that has many opposing sides and views but if we look at legal president we can find that the supreme court has ruled that schools have a unique job of educating students even at the cost of the first amendment as seen in Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser "it is a highly appropriate function of public school education to prohibit the use of vulgar and offensive terms in public discourse." If the school deems the mascot to be offensive or the school board then the appropriate action would be to remove the mascot even if local tribes view the mascot as a source of pride and not discrimination.

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Re: legality of the mascots
by [Benjamin Planck](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 9:02 PM

I see what you're saying, but don't you think that because the basis of their argument against the mascots is because of it's effect on the Tribes themselves? And don't you see how ignoring many of those Tribes opinions and proposed solutions paints the Board in a negative light? Wouldn't it make more sense to sit down with those said Tribes and work out a solution that benefits everyone? It just seems silly to me to put a ban on the entire issue, it almost feels like a cop out, the "easy way out". What do you think?

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Re: legality of the mascots
by [Quinton Liebl](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 9:42 PM

I agree that the only way for a solution is to compromise. It seems that no how it might be resolved, there will still be hurt feelings. Though I believe the feelings of the tribe should be more of a priority than those who support the mascot for merely the fact of "school pride." No matter the mascot, there will always be school pride.



What should really be discussed in regards to the mascot debate

by [William Wilson](#) - Monday, March 4, 2019, 11:18 PM

In the aim of identifying who gets a say in the debate, I'd say that whether the mascots evoke a racial degradation or if they embody a form of pride is purely a decision for those who are being depicted. If most Native American truly view the mascots in a positive light then I think it would ultimately be up to them. If they are calling for the schools whose mascots are depicting certain tribes to work with those tribes in accurate depictions and education of their history, including the history that does not color the United States in a positive way then why would anyone argue otherwise. If the painting of one's face with "war paint" and donning highly inaccurate native headdresses and regalia or a cartoon depiction much like political cartoons of the past is "honoring" Native American heritage then I would say that's purely wrong. Having grown up with black and white movie depictions of cowboys and indians and being taught a watered down version of U.S. history I'd say there has been done little in the way of recognizing socially the impact of the settling of America. The eradication of millions of Natives and the breaking of treaties for pure profit motive. The near extinction of the Buffalo and the Plains Natives, the taking of lands possessed by the tribes of certain areas. Forcing them onto reservations. The list could go on about the atrocities that befell Native Americans when we first landed on Plymouth Rock to the mandate destiny and the settling of the West. In such a matter of fact way the articles that were made available to us having differing opinions and the stalemate that ensued is quite frankly still largely to do with the collective voices of many natives being silenced. If one person is offended by such depictions then why is the question not being truly asked of "why are you offended?" Much has not been done to really answer the questions being asked by any side in this debate. Sure the Oregon legislation did put a firm answer down but did it truly do anything at all? Were the two tribes who disagreed with the ruling to be silenced by such a matter of fact statement by Brenda Frank of "We're not immune to being on different sides of the line. "With all due respect... their responsibility is only to their membership and not to the community as a whole. The Oregon State Board of Education speaks for all students in the state of Oregon." The Oregon State Board of Education does speak for all students, but they do not enforce who listens or even whose voices are heard.

Id say the issue of Native American depiction in mascots should solely be between the tribes they depict and the school district who use their imagery. If by some miracle there could be required school curriculum nationwide. Educating every student about these tribes history in detail and not some washed out version, as well as the atrocities perpetrated on them by the settlers moving west, the money hungry land grabbers, and the U.S. government's underhanded dealings that would be a start. Education on what is racial stereotyping and how its happened in the past as well as how it is still happening today. As for the price of having mascots depicting Natives, Id say that there should be some reparations paid to the tribes if not by the school district themselves then through the public school funding allocated for all schools. Maybe if you start dealing with money then people will start listening. This reparations funds idea is by far an illogical solution in this time in our country when school funding and curriculum is being stripped down to bare bones. Its purely an idea to contemplate for those so engrossed in the argument of "P.C." culture and the idea that people are losing something when they are told "Hey that's racist," or even a more prevalent statement "That's not cool, that's kinda racist." Appropriation of imagery without proper education on the culture and history of that imagery and the perpetuation of glossing over the deep wounds inflicted on America's first people by stating they are "honoring" them is a grossly misguided argument behind keeping the mascots. I do not believe there could be any one thing done to correct or even recognize what really is being discussed. The removal of images from school gymnasiums and team logos is but a drop in a bucket.



Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by [Maclain O'Leary](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 9:31 PM

Over the last few years, opinions about how to handle certain "Idols" or "Images" that are affiliated with certain races has caused controversy through out the country. As the articles stated, these opinions and controversies are what helped in the decision for our state to require schools to change their mascots and names if it was deemed insensitive to the Native American people. Now I believe there is a few things wrong with this decision.

For starters, the people at the top who are making these decisions, a majority of them aren't even Native American. Therefore, while they may be talking and getting advice and testimonies from a small group of Native American, that does not mean that the whole Native American race and their culture deems these school mascots as offensive. Some might even see it as a sign of pride to be represented in a positive way such as sporting events and schools. And that is what makes these decisions tricky. By keeping the names and mascots, some people who identify as Native Americans may be offended, but by taking them away another portion may be offended. When it comes to

big decisions like this, especially in decisions concerning race, there is always going to be a faction that will be offended or upset about the outcome, it's just the way it is. Which is also why I think that in a case like this, it is important to have it one way or the other, with not a lot of room for exception. If exceptions in this situation are aloud, some people will see it as picking and choosing when to respect the Native American culture. Sometimes you cant please all sides, and sometimes it's best not to try to.

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We Should Listen, Not Assume
by [Enya Smith](#) - Saturday, March 9, 2019, 11:34 PM

At the beginning of the week, I was shocked to hear that many Native Americans were upset over Native American themed mascots being removed from Oregon Schools. For a long time, I was under the presumption that the Native American tribes had requested this, only to find out through this class that this was the opposite of the case. It was a huge challenge for me to rethink what I stood for knowing that the Native Americans weren't heard like I thought - rather, ignored.

I've always been in favor of petition and numbers when it comes to social change. That's why I'm fond of voting systems, even if there are flaws. In regards to mascots, I believe that the Native Americans should have been the primary determining party in the decision to remove Indian mascots from school. While not a perfect system, tribe affiliation would be an excellent way of reaching out to actively identifying Native Americans to establish a voting pool. I say this because in an ideal system, *everyone* voting seems rather fair for education, but I also think it's justified to want to be heard. Necessary, even.

While it's difficult not to win, I believe that a lot of good could come from voting and using the majority of votes, so long as it's a contained group. As old fashioned as it feels, I believe that if a person has a problem with something like Native American mascots, which many Native American tribe leaders have said have boosted moral and been a connection for teaching about their tribes, the history of Native Americans, and their culture, then their problem is not as big of a deal as losing those invaluable benefits. I'm very upset with Oregon's decision not to listen to the masses of Native American tribes, as it genuinely feels like another instance of white men choosing for Natives, instead of working with or even on behalf of them.

I suppose my final stance is that if the Native Americans do not see a problem with mascots in majority, perhaps it should be an issue we leave alone. Americans have been speaking over Native Americans for centuries. It's time to change.

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