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Native American Mascots in Oregon
by Joe Escobar - Friday, March 3, 2017, 10:05 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.

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BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it RE: Native American Mascots in Oregon

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Keep The Mascots In Oregon



by William Barker - Sunday, March 5, 2017, 6:11 PM

I will be 100 percent honest that I barely have any knowledge about the Native American people. If it hadn't been for the school logo controversy, Native American's wouldn't be a topic of discussion for me. The most I've learned about their struggles and culture have been limited to cartoons and chapter 18 of *Liberty, Equality, Power: A History of the American People*. Now why should this be reality for me? I attended public school most of my life and I'm a conscience human that has cognitive thought, yet I have literally no knowledge of the people who dominated this land for centuries. I think this could be related to politically correct thought that runs rampant in today's educational realm. People are too afraid to accidentally offend someone if we speak about Indian culture or get pinned as a racist for accidentally saying something that may be perceived as offensive. Well, this line of thinking hasn't served me well because like I said earlier, I know nothing.

It took until I was a sophomore in college to learn about events like Wounded Knee, the Dawes Severalty Act, the Sand Creek Massacre, etc. which are all representations of how the federal government broke promises and wiped out women and children so that greed ridden businessmen could cultivate farm land for monetary gain. These are very sensitive and painful historical events that are unfortunate to the highest degree, but how are we supposed to learn from them if we are to "white wash" history and pretend nothing happened in order to make everyone feel better?

Schools use these logos to reinforce the mighty culture of the Indians and to pay tribute to them in a way that is very public. No one carries around history books to sports games to show their solidarity with Native American people, but can and do fly a great school flag or banner to show they respect and recognize Native Americans. While caricatures of Native Americans are highly offensive and perpetuates racism, using regal and respectful renderings would promote strength and dignity of Native Americans. Banning these logos only helps to erase mainstream awareness and remembrance of the rich history of Native peoples. We must not let fear of demeaning Indians prevent us from celebrating them.

One last point I'd like to highlight is that a lot of Indian tribes do grant permission for schools to use Native American logos. Here locally, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde are speaking out against the ban of Indian logos. They point out that literally nothing is being done to really help with stereotype issues, it's only making those who aren't Native Americans feel better about themselves.

Removing Native American logos from schools is removing dialogue about Native Americans from the public eye. Where else are we to be engaged in discussion about the Native Americans if there is no trace of them in a place of EDUCATION?

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Re: Keep The Mascots In Oregon

by Alec Beebe - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 5:01 PM

I agree with you and believe that people are trying to forget the past. In reality, we should remember the past and the people who were a part of it, good and bad for these events can help shape the future. For example, when the schools chose their mascots, I doubt that people had and negative intent. Schools wanted to pick a positive, strong, courageous figure to represent their school. The reason that they chose Native American culture to be a mascot was due to what the Indians had been through in history. That's why they are viewed as positive, strong, courageous figures to look up to because they never gave up. It irritates me that schools aren't being given the option to go to local tribes and get their opinion on the matter. Instead, an organization is making that decision for them and it is affecting the whole nation.

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Change the Mascots

by Katherine Fjordbeck - Monday, March 6, 2017, 12:21 PM

“Ever since the earliest battles between colonist and Indians in the 17th century, whites had followed the strategy of burning down Indian crops and villages as a means of destroying or driving off the Indians.”(pg 609) This quote shows me why it’s understandable that people of Indian descent would rather not have mascots named after their culture. There was so many times in history that Indians were kicked out of their lands and homes and forced to be placed somewhere else without any regards to their own needs and wants. As it says in the the article written by Anne Williams of the Register Guard a quote from Brenda Brainard, “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.” Schools with Indian mascots are not shedding good light on many people. There was so much turmoil in their past they don’t want to be made fun of now. It’s much like minority groups we wouldn’t want to be having people dress up in costumes and acting like someone of a different culture people look down upon that very harshly. So, I think that taking away Indian school and university names is better for the whole because then we won’t be having debates on what’s right and wrong. There are many more mascots types out there besides Indians.

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Re: Change the Mascots

by William Barker - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 2:13 PM

Katherine,

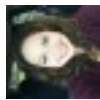
Unfortunately if we erase all public showings of Native Americans we won't have a prompt for discussing the history of Indians. All throughout my public schooling I've learned little to nothing about the Native Americans. Also there was never a strong presence of Indian culture anywhere in the mainstream culture for my mind to be triggered into asking about the Native Americans.

I've basically lived in ignorance to Indian culture all my life, and the only reason I've ever had dialogue about the Native Americans is because of the mascots! I'd rather have a minority be upset than get rid of the mascots and let the majority become ignorant to the past of Indians. Like some of the local tribes have said, getting rid of the mascots will do nothing, because there is no plan to help educate students and the general public about the Native American's culture.

One other point I'd like to make. Mascots of Indians, when portrayed appropriately, are respectful. Caricatures of Indians are not respectful and are very stereotypical and border line racist. I think tribes need to discuss with schools about how to portray Indians in a respectful and culturally correct way in order to represent Native Americans in schools.

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Re: Change the Mascots

by Megan Spencer - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 4:00 PM

I agree with you, that mainstream media does not focus on Native American culture as much as it should. However, I disagree with you that on allowing to keep using Native Americans as mascots. I don't think that it is right that people should learn about a culture through mascots. There needs to be a different representation of Native Americans in mainstream media, that can open up a dialogue that does not perpetuate stereotypes. Its a form of institutionalized racism, and internalized oppression, and it needs to be changed I think it is also good to point out, that it seems like its more of the older generation of Native Americans that are okay with the use of Native Americans as mascots, but that it is the students, and younger generations that feel that it is a problem, which I agree with.

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Re: Change the Mascots

by Alec Beebe - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 4:25 PM

I agree with what you are saying, but I believe that schools should be able to keep their Native American mascots. Due to historical negativity towards the Native American, it almost feels as if they were finally being accepted at the time of schools choosing them as their mascot. There is also data stating that only 25% of Native Americans had an issue with schools using their mascots and several other tribes stating that it is ok to use Native American mascots. Because of only 25% of people being against it, I don't think schools should be forced to get rid of their mascots. People already believe that schools spend money unwisely and to force schools to come up with a new mascot just to satisfy the minority of the people seems unreasonable. I think that schools should not be forced to give up their mascots.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by Alec Beebe - Monday, March 6, 2017, 1:49 PM

I find these articles to be very interesting due to people becoming offended by schools using Native American mascots. In the article it states that, in 2002, 75% of Native Americans had no problem with a schools nickname. Then the question is asked, why is it a problem that schools use Native American mascots? James Florendo stated that even if one student is affected in a negative manner that the mascot should be removed. If that were the case for everything then nothing would exist. It seems like the minority of the Native American Population want to change these mascots. When I think of a Native American mascot, or even name, I view them as being tough and traditional. I don't find that to be negative view towards Native Americans. Schools seem as if they are trying to to make a positive image for the Native Americans, and if the tribes don't like the way they are being represented, they should educate and correct the schools. Changing names of over 600 schools in the entire nation seems a bit extreme. It seems like the 25% of Native Americans who has a problem with these mascots are giving themselves a bad name. No school had a negative intention when it came to choosing their mascot. They wanted something that people could look up to and admire. Overall, I think people are overreacting and schools should be able to keep their mascot and if someone has a problem with it then state why and it can be put into consideration.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

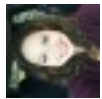
by Katherine Fjordbeck - Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 8:07 PM

I completely understand where you are coming from, yet Brenda Brainard said "She questioned why it's acceptable to use Indian nicknames when it would be considered inappropriate or even abhorrent to do so with other minority groups, such as blacks, Jews or people with disabilities. Even when mascots are depicted

in a respectful fashion." This just concerns me because it is hypocritical if this is considered appropriate wouldn't other minorities be accepted as well? People would be concerned if there was mascots just presenting a minority people would be offended, and people are offended by this that's why this is unacceptable in my opinion. Yes, they do represent strength because they had to become strong after all the struggles they went through to earn this respect, and now it's just thrown under the bus and they become mascots and people from Indian descent are not happy with this. That's what I have gotten out of the articles so far though.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by Megan Spencer - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 3:59 PM

I agree with you, I think it is hypocritical to keep using racial slurs about Native Americans for mascots, when it would be wrong for any other minority group. I think the reason why some people are okay with it, is because Native American culture and history is not usually taught in schools, so people don't understand the atrocities that were committed against Native Americans. I also think that people are okay with it, because it has been a huge part of mainstream media, and people don't like change, especially when they don't understand why the change needs to happen.

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Mascot Ban

by Megan Martin - Monday, March 6, 2017, 3:57 PM

I think how the majority of American Indians view the mascot is the most important opinion. The Register Guard states that "if Indian mascots affect even a single student in a negative way, they should go"(article pg 3). I disagree with that statement. The school districts attempt to help students as a whole and majority. They cannot make rules or bans based on every single student's opinion. I think the situation should be handled just as it is at the University level at Florida State and Utah. If the tribe's council gives permission or approval of the nickname/mascot, then it should be allowed to stay. I disagree with Oregon's ban because I think we are making a decision that isn't ours to make.

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I don't understand why this is a problem

by Hope Kelley - Monday, March 6, 2017, 6:12 PM

To me it sounds like only a few people were offended by the names of mascots. A majority of Native tribes don't care about the names and they don't understand why this is a problem either. Not only that but there were two Native tribes that said they were "disappointed with the State Board of Education's decision last week to ban Native American-themed mascots in schools" (forum information). I think people need to get over themselves and just deal. There are schools named after Abraham Lincoln to honor him, so why can't there be a mascot with a Native name to honor them? These mascots aren't there to mock but to honor.

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Where Do You Draw The Line?

by William Mc Mahon - Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 3:00 PM

The issue is more complicated than that. Think about what Mr. Escobar brought up in class about the person Lane County, and thus LCC, is named after; Joseph Lane. (Lecture) Lane was a pro-slavery democrat. Should black people be expected to just accept that? Is that right?

That being said, I don't agree with James Florendo's comment that "If Indian mascots affect even a single student in a negative way, they should go." (Symbolic Debate p.3) although his point is difficult for me to reconcile.

Growing up in a society that essentially worships democracy, my inclination is that this is something Native American communities should come to a consensus about and that consensus should be respected.

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Re: Where Do You Draw The Line?

by Hope Kelley - Friday, March 10, 2017, 9:49 PM

I agree with what you're saying. I believe Mr. Escobar also said that people shouldn't try to erase history and that is absolutely what they did with the name of Lane County. Yes it happened and yes it was bad but it's not happening now and we can't change history.

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Consensus Amongst Native Communities

by William Mc Mahon - Monday, March 6, 2017, 10:06 PM

It's very important to understand that not all Native Americans and their governing bodies find the names and mascots racist or degrading. Some felt honored and even consented to have the names of the tribes used by high schools and colleges.

These are people who have been horribly mistreated ever since Europeans "discovered" their land. They have endured tragedy after tragedy. Their culture has been under attack since missionaries first sought to convert them. It culminates into this quote by Chief Joseph, after hundreds of years of oppression and abuse he said, "I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. The old men are all dead. It is cold and we have no blankets... no food... The little children are freezing to death... Hear me, my chiefs; I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever." (Textbook p.610)

After such decimation who wouldn't want to be remembered as proud, brave warriors? As a symbol of courage and fighting spirit?

I don't think there's an easy solution to this controversy. Especially since it appears there isn't a strong consensus within some Native American communities.

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Re: Consensus Amongst Native Communities

by Alec Beebe - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 4:39 PM

I fully agree with your argument. I would like to add that only the minority, only 25% of Native Americans, would like to change school mascots. Schools shouldn't be forced to give up their mascot because of the minority of people dislike the school mascots. Instead, schools should be able to go to neighboring tribes and get their opinion on the matter. If the majority of people want a mascot change, then so be it. However, people already have a problem with schools wasting money and wasting money to find a new mascot instead of books or updating school equipment could result in another problem. I believe that schools and their neighboring tribes should be able to decide on if they get to keep their mascot and not an organization that is unhappy.

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Re: Consensus Amongst Native Communities

by Hope Kelley - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 10:39 PM

Like someone else said in their post, that I agree with highly, instead of eliminating all mascots that are seen as "offensive", we need to educate and fix these images. If they are educated, and correct their images to an accurate representation of Native Americans, I think this could solve this problem and everyone will be happy.

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Blanket Bans vs Proper Representation

by Bailey Davis - Monday, March 6, 2017, 10:23 PM

I agree with the tribes mentioned in Ryan Kost's article, where they gave an alternate idea that schools could use a Native American mascot, so long as they worked with the tribes in order to accurately teach and portray native culture. "Blanket Bans" tend to forget details or overlook opinions. While broad generalizations and inaccurate portrayals of Native Americans purely for the sake of a mascot isn't okay, representation and proper education of Native American culture is important. It's beneficial for students to know and understand Native American history and culture, so that they can understand what is considered insensitive or not themselves. Just banning the mascots without any education on why, neglects students the opportunity to learn about a large culture that neighbors their own, and takes away representation of the Native American tribes.

While Sports Illustrated reported that 75 percent of Native American's have no opinion on the mascots, its important to know who the polling population was. Sports Illustrated is read by sports fans, who could be less likely to take offense to a mascot than others.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Blanket Bans vs Proper Representation

by Katherine Fjordbeck - Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 10:20 PM

I agree with what you have said on Blanket Bands, it is overlooked at times because people are willing to sit down and look through the details. Even though in the article it did say that only a minority of Indian tribes were offended by these mascots the group majority saw it as an honorable mention. Where I see the blanket bands come in, they decided not to band the mascots because only a small group of the majority were against it, so they didn't see a huge need if everyone was not offended or it became a big issue.

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Re: Blanket Bans vs Proper Representation

by Bailey Davis - Thursday, March 9, 2017, 8:36 PM

Katherine,

I definitely agree with you. Being reduced to an inaccurate caricature is totally not okay, and mascots that perpetuate stereotypes should never be allowed. However, from most of the articles presented, it sounds like a majority of Native Americans would be okay having a respectful representation of them as a school mascot. The blanket ban overlooks this, and in the article "Oregon bans Native American mascots in schools," the idea of working with a local tribe to create a respectful representation was rejected by the Oregon Board of Education.

I feel as though the decision is best left to the local tribes. If they're comfortable with the mascot, then it can stay. The school can work with the tribe to properly teach Native American history and culture. As Jim Smith, who was raised on a reservation, said, "It's a chance for us to talk about family and tradition and loyalty."

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Re: Blanket Bans vs Proper Representation

by William Barker - Thursday, March 9, 2017, 8:59 AM

Bailey,

I second your argument. I feel as if this whole debate is really about the education of the public regarding Native Americans. Simply banishing all depictions of Indians from school mascots doesn't do anything but further underrepresented Native Americans in mainstream culture.

To add to your other point, we must not let stereotypical caricatures be representing school mascots. Rather we need to have proper depictions of Native Americans, which could be designed and approved by local tribes to better represent themselves.

Doing this the right way, I believe, will help with educating folks about Native Americans while also showing respect for Indian culture.

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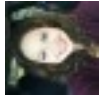
Re: Blanket Bans vs Proper Representation

by Hope Kelley - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 12:23 PM

This is a great point that I never even considered. I am for keeping the mascots because a majority of tribes aren't offended by them. If take your point and put it into action I believe it could solve this problem. Educating the schools and having them fix their icons to accurate portrayal of Native Americans is a great idea.

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Mascots

by Megan Spencer - Friday, March 10, 2017, 12:41 PM

I think that Native American mascots should be changed, even if only a small minority are offended. i agree with the statement "It is not the privilege of any group to determine what makes another group feel devalued or stereotyped", which was made from a committee that includes the American Indian students and the Oregon School Activities Association. It is important for kids to feel safe, and respected, especially when it comes to their culture. Since the majority of schools have already begun to change their mascots, I think the rest should follow suit. Most Native American mascots are made to look like the stereotypical Indian, with a headdress, and war paint, and I don't think that is an accurate representation of all of the different tribes. I think that there is a better way to honor Native American history, than to use a stereotype and a racial slur to represent a school.

However, I also understand how certain Indian groups could feel that it is an honor to be used as a mascot. I think that it is acceptable if a Native American mascot is being used to represent a Native American team, or school, like the Seminoles in Florida and Oklahoma.

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Re: Mascots

by Katherine Fjordbeck - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 9:41 AM

I agree with you that they are the stereotypical Indian look with the headdress and war paint, but this a very slow process they are facing to fix this issue. As the Oregon Department of Education spokesman Jake Weigler said, "To some who advocated for change, the inaction feels like insult on top of decades-old injury. They assert that the mascots perpetuate stereotypes — negative and positive — and symbolize institutionalized racism. Such mascots have the potential to embarrass and create a hostile learning environment for American Indian students, they say."This shows that these stereotypical depictions of Indians can bring up racism and make the students that are from Indian descent uncomfortable to be in their classes because of how the school represents their culture. Yet, these tribes are so much more than their war paint and headdress, they're a history, a culture that so many people look past, as it said in the video in class, more Indian remains are in museums rather than in the ground. This shows the impact Indians have had on our history and they should be seen for their true culture rather than what schools depict them as.

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