

HST 202: History of United States W17 (Escobar Meta 30937 30938)

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Native American Mascots in Oregon
by Joe Escobar - Friday, March 3, 2017, 10:06 PM

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

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IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

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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Both sides have good reasoning.



by Michael Gray - Sunday, March 5, 2017, 11:40 AM

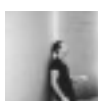
This is such a controversial topic that I feel like does not need to be at the top of the list for important exposure but, it definitely needs to be talked about more. The amount of Americans with native heritage that are trying to deal with this issue matters in terms of reasons to even discuss the changing of mascots. I do hear about a push from tribes and Native Americans for mascots to be changed from names like the "Indians" and the "warriors" for example but that does not mean that there is not people out there who are not greatly offended or support the mascots.

I am not a Native American so I do not have a valuable say whether the mascots are derogatory or not. Native Americans obviously can take offense to mascots being named at their heritage's expense. I do not think that the number of Native Americans who take issue with it is an overwhelming factor but should always be taken into consideration. If there were Natives in the streets protesting and taking legal action at every point they could I feel like this would be handled differently. But because there is not a huge number of people speaking out and trying to plead that the mascots are derogatory, I think that it will take a lot more to have everyone on board to have them changed.

If there is a small minority trying to take action the effect is going to be minimal. But the point is is that there is definitely people who are taking offense to these mascots and it needs to be handled. But on the other hand, like the Register Guard article, there would be a lot more mascot changes if a small minority were taking offense to names. The fighting Irish for example. I am Irish so I feel like I can kind of pick at this topic. The mascot is a little Lepracaun character that can definitely offend some Irish people but it's not a big enough issue to be changed.

The issue should be handled simply. There is enough Natives who take offense to the mascots so I support Oregon's decision to ban them. It's such a controversial topic and I really don't know how exceptions could take effect. I'm not sure if there could a viable threshold to have some exceptions to some getting to keep the mascot. That'll be too difficult to create in my opinion.

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Native American response. WHY.

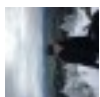
by Joshua Grigsby - Sunday, March 5, 2017, 6:25 PM

After reading the provided material and chapter 18, Im frustrated and confused.

When you learn of the gruesome history our country has, as it pertains to the treatment of this lands original tenants, you find yourself exacerbad. Frankly, and this is no surprise, for running from the tyrannical rule, our country's ancestry is

riddled with a breath taking amount of short sighted racism. Its gross and sad. But at the same time, how long will we allow the past to effect our lives today? Out of all the racist things racist individuals do, I would hardly think a high school mascot is the battle we should be picking. Theres no racism there. Also, to note, being "offended" by what someone says doesn't grant you the ability to change what their saying. You have every right to tell them they're wrong. But until there is racist action to prove the malintent of said group, all you are is offended. Especially after finding out statistics show that 75 percent of Native Americans don't find Indian mascots offensive? I agree with the tribes that take the stance that the real injustice is that It took until my second year of college to find out how awful Native Americans were treated. Educate the students, make them aware of our history. Honestly, as a Native American you would think they would be more offended by a mascot depicting the Colonel John Chivington. After all, he was the one who orchestrated the slaughter of 200 hundred Native Americans, most being children.

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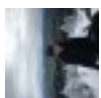


Native American Mascot Issue: Good Intentions

by Micaela Willey - Monday, March 6, 2017, 5:27 PM

The Indians who were offended by the mascots are the ones that really started the discussion, however really aren't the ones making the final call. I feel this argument began over the one, a single individual that made it a discussion, but to me it depends on how many people agree with that one human being to make a change. Of course I think it matters if someone is offended by the indian mascots, what I am saying is that if only a minority of the Indian population is offended and the majority sees it as an honor, than I believe we just need to alter how we present the Indians, rather than just get rid of it all together. I think, I am a little disappointed in Oregon's most recent decision on how to handle the issue. I really believe that the original intentions were good, we just messed up a little and need to fix the things we did wrong. Indians should be honored and known in a positive way, I think them being portrayed as mascots could be a really good thing, if done right.

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Re: Native American Mascot Issue: Good Intentions

by Micaela Willey - Tuesday, March 7, 2017, 11:17 PM

To add to this, today I was in the presence of a choir singing for my class, they were from Sheldon High School. The music teacher believed that since their mascot at Sheldon is an Irishman that the students should learn about Irish history. She did this through music by teaching the students some Irish songs,

that are about various historical events; and as they sang the songs to us she would explain what the history behind the song meant. In one of the songs the students were even required to sing in Irish.

My point in this story is that a man with Irish descent could be offended by the fact Sheldon High School uses an Irishman as their mascot. I mean the Irish were faced with discrimination before, during, and after the Civil War period, as we've learned. Also, even today they are faced with heavy judgements of being heavy drinkers and Leprechauns and the "ye ol' lucky charms" and the "pot of gold.".

But really representing those groups and being able to engage our students in their history, I think is really valuable. Think about it in a student sense, those students at Sheldon we're proud of their school and proud to represent the Irish, which jump-starts a curiosity in students to want to learn about what the history behind the Irishmen and who they are. I just think that if people try and see we are not trying to be offensive but praise the history of Native Americans, or Irishmen, we could move forward and really help to make sure all groups are represented in a respectful manner, but get represented, because they should be.

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Throwing the baby out with the bath water.

by Eric Brackett - Monday, March 6, 2017, 6:13 PM

I can completely understand someone not wanting their culture and heritage mocked. Being of Scandinavian decent I deal with this all the time in Junction City. Has anyone ever witnessed the mockery of my culture during Scandinavian Fest in JC? Anyone a fan of the Minnesota Vikings? For centuries my viking ancestors were mocked and villainized in literature, art and even corrupted by the Nazis for their own propaganda needs. However I also attended a Jr high and High School in Texas, where our mascots where the Lincoln Jr high Braves and the Lake View High Chiefs. The images of both were absolute caricatures of the people they were wishing to represent. Growing up this was no big deal, granted my perspective on the matter has changed since I have aged. Also I think the reason it was never brought up in my area is simply there have been no Native tribes in that region since the 1890's. Out of sight out of mind as it were.

I feel there has to be middle ground that we can come to. Perhaps the best way would be for people to represent a tribe in a fashion that is culturally and historically accurate, instead of forcing someone to change a mascot. This way we honor a portion of our society who suffered from acts of genocide and other deplorable conditions, rather than whitewashing our history and acting as if they never existed. Maybe we can realize that names like Warriors are not limited to just Native Americans, nor is chiefs, or maidens. Maybe we should not nit pic at all and just ban mascots across the board, I mean is the term Warrior any more offensive than the

Fighting Irish? I feel that the correct answer is that there is no correct answer. You will never be able to sate the feelings of all the people all the time. So if that is the case then we have to find middle ground and compromise the best we can.

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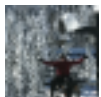


Re: Does Native American mascots/symbols mix with sports?

by Noah Cramer - Monday, March 6, 2017, 6:35 PM

Sports, such as football, tend to use Native American mascots to represent their team, their passion, and their spirit for the game. However, over the years, people question if this is considered racism, or if its just a respectable use of a mascot to represent a sense of power. So who gets to decide if these mascots are offensive? To define, an Indian is someone who is related to an indigenous person/people of the continent of America. I think these people, who are related to ancestors of these people, have the right to be called a Native American. Now that we know who an Indian is, how do they get to decide on the use of these mascots? American Indians, in my eyes, have a right to these mascots, its part of their blood, their history, and their ancestors lives. To not listen to Native Americans, is disrespecting them, and their ancestors. It is extremely important how Indians view the use of these mascots, no matter how small or big the minority. This issue should be handled by the Native Americans. It should be handled with caution and sensitivity towards native Americans. Most importantly, I think Native Americans should partner with other representatives in order to come to the clearest and most thought through conclusion of this debate. The State of Oregon's recent decision to ban the words "Indians," "Chiefs" and "Braves," has awoken more controversy. I think that this is a respectable decision, however it is a bit harsh to threaten to take away school funding if they do not change their names of teams. I believe that education and learning has little to do with the mascots of schools. Unfortunately, not everyone will be content with decisions, two tribes showed disappointment in this ruling. This goes to say, that no matter the concluding decision, not everybody will always be completely happy. It is extremely difficult to please everybody, and I think thats what the State of Oregon is trying to do! With new rulings, come new rules, how do schools allow expectations? Well, perhaps if a school is mostly Native Americans, they could be allowed to use the banned words in school names and mascots.

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Re: Does Native American mascots/symbols mix with sports?

by Michael Gray - Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 6:31 PM

Saying that to not listen to Native Americans is disrespecting them is a point that really has a tie in all your examples. We do not always listen to people's view on what's effecting them. We shouldn't necessarily get to decide what could be

viewed derogatory and offensive to a people because we don't know what it's like for them. Unless you are Native American, you don't get to write it off as completely harmless. The size of the Native Americans that are offended should not be used as a way to downplay this situation. I really like your ideas and reasoning and like you said, not everybody will be completely happy with however this turns out.

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Re: Does Native American mascots/symbols mix with sports?

by Noah Cramer - Friday, March 10, 2017, 11:52 AM

I do agree when you say that we shouldn't be able to decide how others happen to view certain things. Everything is different for others, especially when Native Americans have been treated so poorly in the past. Not just poorly, but so inhumane and absolutely unbelievably disrespectful. Like we learned in class Thursday, the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864 is called a massacre for a reason. Innocent Indians were brutally shot and killed, including 100+ plus women and children. So yes, I totally agree with you that we (as other races) cannot write off how these mascots effect Native Americans to this day, especially with how we've treated them in the past. All I'm saying is that no matter the decision, not all Native Americans will be content with the decision, and that is very close to impossible to achieve. Love having these great discussions!

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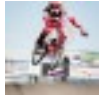


Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by Maclain O'Leary - Monday, March 6, 2017, 7:49 PM

To be completely frank, I believe this argument is a bit redundant. I, personally, have a hard time seeing how a high school or sports teams mascot being an indian is offensive. Many, like Oakridge, see it as a sign of respect, dignity and power. However, there are those who choose to believe that the mascot is a sign of some disrespect. A popular argument for this is being because the mascot is commonly depicted with red skin. However, if the indian was portrayed as white, or black, or purple or green, it would be called offensive due to the "inaccuracy" of the mascot. So teams and schools are stuck in a box on how to depict the indian.

I could see how the mascot could be seen as offensive if it was being used for some demeaning purpose, and even then, the people who should be able to call it out are Indians with deep rooted indian history. However, like previously stated, people use the indian as a mascot as a sign of respect and power, and what is wrong with that?



Re: Not everybody will show respect

by Noah Cramer - Wednesday, March 8, 2017, 11:30 AM

I partially agree with your opinion that this does seem a little bit redundant. While I do notice that this isn't the biggest problem occurring at the moment, it still deserves more attention than what it is getting. However, to have mascots, that are highly respected parts of Native American lives be used as just entertainment, seems a bit rough. Now, this would be fine if everyone showed respect to these mascots, however, that most likely won't happen. Oregon School Activities Association states, "It is the responsibility of each person to respond to others in a manner that assures mutual dignity and respect." If that can't be done, then I agree with the arguing side, that these mascots should be changed.

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Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 12:48 PM

I am going to have to respectfully disagree with you here a bit. The issue really isn't about them being used as representation, it is how they are represented. If a high school offers up a depiction based on reality, shows them culturally accurate and with respect then there really would not be much of an issue to address. However that is not the case for many of these representations. Here in the Pacific Northwest I have seen many representations of Natives used as mascots, yet none of them look like tribes of the Pacific Northwest, instead they look like a Hollywood representation of Plains tribes. They are shown wearing war bonnets (headdress) drawn in an exaggerated caricature.

To me it would be no different than if someone wanted to represent say the vikings as their mascot but instead used an cartoonish version of a Spanish conquistador. Yes they are both European, Yes the Spanish have roots in the Visigoths, a Scandinavia peoples, but that is where the similarities end. Each has their own unique culture and history. To use the conquistador as an example of a Norse viking would show ignorance on behalf o the school, a place that should be an example of intellectual proficiency. It ultimate shows they do not care about how they represent a culture. Now this may not bother you personally, but to the people of those cultures it can be extremely bothersome. And worse it can signal to those of that culture that they are still completely marginalized by the dominant (and in this case) conquering culture.

Keep in mind as well how the standard America culture differs from Native culture. For natives there is a high amount of ancestor reverence, something that the common american does not have. Native culture places a great deal of significance on their history, it is a matter of cultural pride, again something that the average american does not do. Take into account the story that was told in class on Thursday in the documentary we watched. It showed how the peoples of Pine Ridge Reservation traveled by horseback to the site of the massacre of Wounded Knee. This was one hundred years after the event and yet because of the way their culture is structured, it was an extremely important and moving ceremony for them. take into consideration of how the ceremony held by the Cheyenne peoples moved them to tears when they received the skulls of their ancestors back from the Smithsonian. These people are three generations removed from anyone who would have had direct contact with those people, and yet it affected them as if these people had just died.

Now I am not opposed to a representation of Native peoples as mascots, however it should be done in a way that respects the historical figures, the culture and beliefs of those people, and should not be seen as a mockery.

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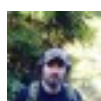
Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon: Who gets to voice their concerns?

by Alec Ebert - Monday, March 6, 2017, 11:27 PM

I think that the overall destruction and genocide of Native Americans in this country is often over looked, especially at the K-12 level. It wasn't until I studied American history at a higher education institution that I became fully aware of the scale of the atrocities committed. I do agree with Lane Community Colleges coordination of Native American programs James Florendo on the issue of students taking offense to the mascots. Even if one student is offended by the mascot, the faculty of the school should question the morality of having the mascot be such a thing at all. I am not a student who hails from an ethnicity that has had great tragedy fall upon my ancestors so I feel disconnected from the frustrations that Native American students face today in regards to this issue. However all one has to do to get a rather depression picture painted in their mind of the atrocities committed by white Europeans on native peoples of America is pick up a history book. So overall I think these decisions should be left up to members of the communities throughout the country who hail from Native American descent. The mascot represents their culture and their values so the representation of this through schools should be up to them.

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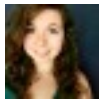
Re: Native American Mascots in Oregon: Who gets to voice their concerns?

by Eric Brackett - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 12:55 PM

I think it really depends on where you received your education from. Growing up in West Texas, from grade four on every social studies and history class I took we learned of the tribes in our area. We learned why the Spanish fort systems became militarized, we learned why the Texas rangers were formed (to protect Mexican nationals from Indian attacks). We learned about Quanah Parker and the Comanche, the Kiowa, the Kickapoo, the Apache. All of these tribes were prominent in my area. We would take field trips to Fort Concho and Fort McKavitt, where the Buffalo soldiers were stationed to combat hostile natives in the area. But most importantly, we learned why there were no Natives on reservations in Texas. We learned about a lot of the horrors that had happened, from white settlers, the federal government and the natives themselves.

Now I am not claiming that this is the way it is everywhere, but I just think it may be a bit unfair to paint it all with such a wide brush.

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Native American Mascots?

by Amelia Salzman - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 4:51 PM

I can understand both sides of these debates. Tradition is very important, I understand that some feel they are honoring Native American tribes and cultures, maybe in the eyes of some tribes they are. But I can also see why these mascots bother people. Using someone's heritage and nationality for a school's mascot seem demeaning in a lot of ways. But I think a big part of the problems is how we perceive mascots in general and how our culture sees the use of a mascot. Merriam-Webster defines mascot as "a person, animal, or object adopted by a group as a symbolic figure especially to bring them good luck". If I just read the definition I can see where you wouldn't be offended by a mascot, this doesn't seem disrespectful, it's almost seems like an attempt to celebrate Native American culture. However when we see mascots in today's light they don't culturally seem to hold the same prestige as the definition. As far as banning all Native American mascot from all schools, I would be inclined to see it as a case by case sort of thing. I'm not against a ban on Native American Mascots but it is extreme. For me, it depends on the mascot. I see a big difference between a team being called "Red Skins" and a team being called "Braves". A big part is also how we choose to depict the mascot in a logo.

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Native American Mascot Interpretations

by Howard Fuller - Saturday, March 11, 2017, 11:15 PM

I personally find myself of the opinion that if the mascots had enough support to provide for that much controversy, then they probably should have stayed. Although they perhaps could be offensively interpreted, they also could be associated with good qualities, and therefore the message of the mascots depends on how students choose or are taught to perceive it.

That said, I still feel a bit divided on the issue, as more Natives seem to be in favor of the ban than opposed. So democratically, Oregon would seem to have made the right choice. The conditions under which the Siletz and Grande Ronde tribes wished for exceptions seemed reasonable though, and I can relate to some degree to students who view the mascots with positive symbolism. Overall I find myself leaning away from the decision.

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