

HST 202: US History W20 (Escobar)

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Native American Mascots in Oregon
by [Joe Escobar](#) - Friday, March 6, 2020, 6:35 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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My Opening Thoughts With Some Evidence Behind It
by [Tanner Hermanson](#) - Saturday, March 7, 2020, 2:41 PM

I would like to start off Forum 4 by discussing official tribe's views on the changing of mascots and then throw in some of my personal beliefs on the topic as well. In my personal opinion, I do not see schools or sports teams naming themselves after Native American Tribes as hostile or racist or even worth the time to drop everything and change the name. Just for context, I am a Caucasian male, with a fair amount of Cherokee Indian blood in me (take my opinion in relation to my heritage as you may). I feel as though naming our schools and sports teams after Native American groups is a great honor to them and I believe that changing names does not solve any problem or necessarily mend any tensions that arise. To give some numbers to back up my thoughts: "A 2002 poll conducted by Sports Illustrated found that 75 percent of Native Americans polled had no problem with the team's nickname" (Quick Facts Page, Forum 4 Materials). I honestly would have thought this number to be a lot less than it actually is, however, it proves my point in that most, not all, but most Native Americans believe that this should be an allowed practice. While I do think that having a team or school named after your people is somewhat of an honor, I also believe that support and approval from the actual tribes themselves is the most important thing in this whole discussion/debate. Schools, such as Florida State University have already sought out support and gained it. The Seminoles "have official permission from the two remaining Seminole Indian groups to use the name for their sports teams" (Quick Facts Page, Forum 4 Materials). Other schools have also received permission and support by local Indian Tribes to keep their mascot names, such as Utah University (The Utes), and Central Michigan University (The Chippewas). Ultimately, the decision should be up to the tribes themselves to decide whether or not they support a team named after them. The renaming of a school's mascot should **only** be considered if that particular native tribe voices their discomfort or concern, **not** if one random person with no prior knowledge of Native Americans or Native American blood in them complains.

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american natives and mascots
by [Brett Lee](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 9:15 AM

Native Americans are an important part of our history, not only for the country but for this state as well, and its important to understand the difference between the two. Natives here before the cascade of white men are the Indians of America, they are natives here before we arrived. Only because of "Manifest Destiny" did it plague the people of the old world to fight for total domination of this continent. This is not to say that manifest destiny is a bad thing though. To place Native Indians as mascots was a last attempt to keep them in the limelight. For natives I can see how this may anger those who full heartedly agree with the old life, as its can be seen as belittling, that this was the only thing left of the proud tribes prominent before the white man took over. I don't think the state should have authority over what the schools mascot is, and it should be left to the people living in the area to decide. I personally think the ban on Indian mascots was out of the blue and most likely redundant, though I do not know there reasonings for it. My father was personally offended as his high school had to change their mascot because of this. I think its important to speak with a general community before putting anything in stone, as slow as it may be its to keep the masses as happy as they can be.

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Who's opinion should hold the most weight in this discussion?
by [Tanner Hermanson](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 8:53 PM

In regards to who's opinion should hold the most weight when making the decision to change a school's mascot, I strongly believe that people of Native American descent, who are in a registered tribe, should definitely be able to speak their mind on this issue, as it is solely about them and their ancestor's history, not about the people in power making the decisions, who are typically not of Native American blood. Even registered tribes believe this as well. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians issued a statement which mentioned that: "people who have no knowledge of Indian communities" made the decision to change the Molalla High School mascot and that this did "nothing to address the real issues of racism" (Article by Ryan Kost). A more effective way to actually deal with the racism that occurs would be for the state to have adopted the alternate solution that the two tribes, who opposed the ban of Native American mascots, proposed. They "asked the board to endorse an alternate rule that would have allowed local tribes to work with schools on their portrayal of Native culture" (Article by Ryan Kost). This solution would have allowed high schools to truly understand Native American culture, lifestyle, and values. This solution also could have eased the racial tension that surrounds this particular situation. Just changing a school's mascot seems to be just a cop-out or an easy way out of a situation that neither the state nor the schools want to even dip their toes into.

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Mascot Issue
by [Kaleah Holmes](#) - Sunday, March 8, 2020, 9:57 PM

Any person who has Native American DNA should be able to identify as an Indian. I think that any person who has a history involving the Native Americans should get a voice in the mascot debate. This issue shouldn't be about random people who are easily offended. This should be about the people who call themselves Indian, how do they feel about this topic?

"A 2002 poll conducted by Sports Illustrated found that 75 percent of Native Americans polled had no problem with the team's nickname." (Quick Facts article). The majority of Native Americans don't have an issue with it, but if this is offensive to some tribes (not solitary people) then they should stop using an Indian for a mascot.

"There was also the issue of equity. "Are we then accepting a certain level of discrimination? Are we accepting certain levels of dehumanizing somebody – a full race?" she said. "We need to be consistent." (Two tribes call state's Native American mascot ban disappointing By Ryan Kost). I agree that we need to be consistent but certain tribes have given their permission to schools to use the mascot. It is not fair to take their mascot when

a school was decent enough to ask the tribe their thoughts on it. The rule to use an Indian as a mascot should be that you must get permission from a local tribe to use it. The issue shouldn't be this topical, it should be between tribes, and the schools.

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Who Should Decide?
by [Alexander Marx](#) - Tuesday, March 10, 2020, 2:33 PM

The articles in this forum topic do a nice job of considering multiple viewpoints on the volatile topic of Native American mascots in schools. As a white person I find it somewhat difficult to bring myself to argue for keeping mascots that some may deem offensive, but I think it would be wrong not to consider exceptions to the gradual ban that was passed in 2012. The points that grabbed my attention most in the articles were Native American groups who had been in communication with schools in their communities regarding the mascots and felt that they were being represented and even honored in their community. I support the idea of keeping the mascots while also providing educational resources to learn about whatever tribe they are representing as long as there is a mutual agreement within the local Native American community. To some extent I agree with Steve Bowers' letter to the editor that just because one person is offended doesn't mean action needs to be taken. That being said, his comparison of Native American mascots to loggers and cavemen is stupid. The level of systematic oppression committed by our country towards Native Americans doesn't compare or even apply to some of his examples which I think is the main issue with this whole topic. The Native American groups who voiced their opinions against the ban make good points in that the whole process was done with somewhat of a disregard to the overall feelings of Native American communities, and ignored their constant push to provide more education regarding Native Americans. To me it really comes down to respect, and if a mascot isn't caricatured in a racist manner and is honored by the school as a positive symbol then that should provide the grounds for a solid argument to keep the mascot.

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Native American Mascots
by [Leon Bohmer](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 7:28 PM

The issue of native american mascots is a socially charges subject, a fractured spectrum of opinions exist, and and the meaning of mascots portraying natives is completely subjective; these three factors intersect to make clear, black or white, decisions difficult to make.

I know, and as we learned in class and in chapter 18-2, the American government has not been kind to the Natives of this land. Forced relocation, reeducation, corruption on a massive scale, and out right massacres, have left the Native American peoples striped of much of there culture and impoverished as a people; to many the adoption of depictions of natives as mascots seems like a further extension of the evils of inflicted by the 'white man' onto the natives. If a school was calling there native american mascot the "drunken savages," as was done in the fictional TV show "Parks and Rec," then I would be totally on board with forcing the school to change there mascot. However, I don't know of any school with a mascot that insulting, instead, as mentioned in the reading for this forum, in regards to Oakridge's mascot, the Warriors, "...Warriors mascot evokes the best in sportsmanship - courage, respect, dignity, perseverance, discipline, integrity." That is the crux of the issue, I think, mascots are romanticized caricature of a person or group. Nobody remembers the Spartans for what they were, warmongering, slave holding, pedophilic, eugenics practicing, despots; people remember the Spartans as disciplined, stoic, and cunning, the principles meant to be evoked by a Spartan mascot.

To conclude, mascots, in my opinion, are not meant to be statements about a person or a group, they are a positive depiction of the best attributes of a romanticized image of a person, people, place, or thing. Leave them be, they are not hurting anyone.

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This is an ambiguous issue
by [Yibo Zhang](#) - Thursday, March 12, 2020, 9:46 PM

As an international student, I have just a little understanding about Native Americans. I can probably learn the history of them ,but I' m actually have no experience about the relationship between Native Americans and Americans in today's society. However, I believe it is also a difficult issue to deal with for every American citizen

today.

By reading provided articles, I think local Native American association or some related orgnizations play an important role to handle the relationship with native Americans. It looks like their main working purpose is to lower conflict but not claim possible rights for native Americans.

Politically, it is reasonable because every state do not hope to cause serious problem with native Americans, even they have distinctive policies and laws to follow. Prohibiting or limiting of using of Indian mascots and similar logos will weaken cultural peculiarity of native Americans. For authorities, they probably hope native Americans to believe they are "totally same" with other Americans. Nonetheless, it is morally and legally wrong to forbid Indians to use their cultural information. So some of related associations will claim that the name/logo/mascot they used are "hostile and abusive" (Oregon bans Native American mascots in schools). The information they used might be unrespectable and rude, but I am personally suspicious of their real purpose.

Historically, I believe that native American issue is a topic which people do not want to talk. Most people today would like to treat native Americans as same as others. Although they behaved in different ways, I still believe that people are looking for an appropriate solution which will make everyone comfortable.

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Native American Mascots and the Letter to the Editor
by [Brontae Sodeman](#) - Friday, March 13, 2020, 1:17 PM

I strongly agree with the removal of Native American depictions in high school mascots and nicknames. Considering the extensive history the United States has with removing Native Americans, public schools shouldn't disrespect those lives, languages, traditions lost in the process. The nickname "warriors" gives us a sense of hostility, that Native Americans were in some sense aggressive and destructive people. This is a direct stereotype which is inherently racist. In the letter to the editor, this man's argument was that Sheldon's use of the word "Irish" was also considered racist. The Irish were an oppressed people but comparatively less considering their white origin. Many students at Sheldon probably identify as Irish decedents so in a way, calling them the "Irish" is accurate. The contrast, one would not call a Native American a warrior, because of it's exceedingly negative connotations and more extensive history of blatant racism.

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A Relatable Story and my Final Thoughts
by [Tanner Hermanson](#) - Saturday, March 14, 2020, 11:44 PM

I went to South Eugene High School, home of the formerly known Axemen (recently changed to just Axe). While not exactly the same situation, this is quite relatable I think to high schools having to change their mascot due to their Native American ties. From what I gathered, only a very small group of people (roughly 2-5) complained about the Axemen mascot as they felt it was not inclusive of women. The majority wanted Axemen, while the minority wanted Axe, and the minority won as the state caved and made the name change so. The same thing is happening for high schools with names associated with Native Americans or Native American culture. I personally do not see a problem with mascots such as, Warriors, Indians, or Braves. The names and the mascots were not meant to be offensive and belittling in the first place, which I believe should hold weight in this discussion. Mascots in general are a symbol of pride for an alumni of a particular high school and they also are a symbol of the positive attributes of the particular character portrayed. For example, Oakridge High School's mascot is the Warriors and for many residents of the small town, "the high school's Warriors mascot evokes the best in sportsmanship — courage, respect, dignity, perseverance, discipline, integrity. They call it "Warrior spirit" (The Register-Guard Article). Now tell me, what's wrong with that? Why must a high school, who's mascot represents a sense of courage and respect to them, change just because a couple of people complained?

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