

Context

The North American Society for Sport History (NASSH) is a community of scholars engaged in research, writing, and the promotion of sport history. NASSH has a distinguished history that examines how sport affects individuals, teams, organizations, and communities. We celebrate and challenge our considerations of sport and society by recovering the stories of notable and hidden participants. We debate how sport has, and might, function for sporting institutions, the public, and ourselves.

During the 2016 NASSH Conference, the panel “Reflections on R*dskins,” discussed the historical roots and contemporary repercussions of the Washington football team, the University of Illinois, and other sports teams with Native mascots. Members from this session then brought to the NASSH Business meeting the motion that NASSH pass a resolution condemning the use of Indian mascots. In the ensuing discussion, a few members stated that they feared the creation of any resolution on behalf of NASSH might splinter our membership in a way that would damage us as an organization. The membership passed the motion that there be a NASSH resolution created which condemns the use of Indian mascots. An Ad Hoc committee was subsequently struck by the President to draft the resolution and a procedure for taking this resolution to the membership at the NASSH 2017 Business Meeting. After deliberations, the Ad Hoc Committee proposes for membership consideration the following resolution:

NASSH Resolution Opposing the Use of Racialized Indigenous Imagery in Sports

WHEREAS, the purpose of the North American Society for Sport History is to promote, stimulate, and encourage the study, research and writing of the history of sport; and

WHEREAS, “the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), the oldest, largest and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization, has passed several resolutions calling on the elimination of the use of racist stereotype images, logos and mascots in sports, including the Washington NFL team mascot;”¹ and

WHEREAS in 1992, the National Education Association discouraged the “initiation and continued use of prejudicial and derogatory names and symbols of ethnic groups for school, sporting teams, and mascots;”² and

WHEREAS in 2005, the American Psychological Association, citing a growing body of social science literature that shows the harmful effects of racial stereotyping and inaccurate racial portrayals, including the particularly harmful effects of American Indian sports mascots on the social identity development and self-esteem of American Indian young people, called for the immediate retirement of all Native American mascots, symbols, images, and personalities;³ and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the National Collegiate Athletic Association introduced a policy to prohibit NCAA colleges and universities from displaying hostile and abusive racial/ethnic/national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery at any of the 88 NCAA championships;⁴ and

WHEREAS, the National Indian Education Association, in 2009 and 2013, called for “educational institutions and national sports franchises to cease their use of such race-based Native logos, mascots, and names, in the effort to remove these stereotypes and raise the self-esteem of Native students so they have the same opportunity as their non-Native peers to achieve academically without discrimination”;⁵ and

WHEREAS, in 2013, the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET), an inter-tribal organizations with 26 federally-recognized Tribal Nations called upon the National Football Team and the Washington football team to ends its use of the term, “r*dskins”;⁶ and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, Canada’s National Inuit organization, called for “an end to the use of our peoples as sports teams mascots. For Inuit, our concerns are with Edmonton’s CFL team, which continues the use of the outdated term Eskimos as their moniker”;⁷ and

WHEREAS, in the last thirty years, dozens of federally-recognized and sovereign Indigenous nations have requested the cessation of use of racist images, logos, names, and merchandise;⁸ and

WHEREAS, major academic professional associations including the American Sociological Association (2007),⁹ the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport (2005),¹⁰ the Modern Language Association (2001),¹¹ the Organization of American Historians (2015);¹² and

WHEREAS, the US Commission on Civil Rights called in 2001 for an end to the use of Native American images and team names by non-Native schools;¹³ and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada called “upon the federal government to ensure that national sports policies, programs, and initiatives are inclusive of Aboriginal peoples, including, but not limited to, establishing: Anti-racism awareness and training programs.”¹⁴ Justice Murray Sinclair, head commissioner of the TRC, insisted that use of such sports imagery “has no place in Canada;”¹⁵ and

WHEREAS, in 2016, complaints were filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, and a case was brought before the Ontario Superior Court, asserting that racially discriminatory sporting team names and iconography against Indigenous peoples are in violation of Canada’s Human Rights Act and the Ontario Human Rights code;¹⁶ and

WHEREAS, since the 1990s, scholars have identified the historical and contemporary ramifications of racialized representations in sport;¹⁷ and

WHEREAS, numerous schools and sports teams continue to use Indigenous names, symbols, and images as mascots, nicknames, logos, and or team names; be it

RESOLVED, that the North American Society for Sport History condemns the continued use of racist stereotype images, logos and mascots in sports and institutions of education; and be it

RESOLVED, that the North American Society for Sport History hereby opposes the use of racialized Indigenous images, logos, names, and mascots in sport for both commercial and educational purposes.

Annotations

- 1 <http://www.ncai.org/proudtobe>
- 2 <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/nea-resolutions-2014-15.pdf>, p. 94.
- 3 <http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/indian-mascots.aspx>
- 4 <http://fs.ncaa.org/Docs/PressArchive/2005/Announcements/NCAA%2BExecutive%2BCommittee%2BIssues%2BGuidelines%2Bfor%2BUse%2Bof%2BNative%2BAmerican%2BMascots%2Bat%2BChampionship%2BEvents.html>
- 5 <http://www.niea.org.php56-15.dfw3-2.websitetestlink.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2013-07.pdf>
- 6 <https://www.usetinc.org/wp-content/uploads/Resolutions/resolutions/2013%20Resolutions/2013%20Annual%20Resolutions/2014.015%20Washington%20mascot.pdf>
- 7 <https://www.itk.ca/inuit-are-not-mascots-edmonton-eskimos/>
- 8 <http://www.changethemascot.org/supporters-of-change/>
- 9 <http://www.asanet.org/about-asa/how-asa-operates/council-statements/use-native-american-nicknames-logos-and-mascots>
- 10 <http://www.nasss.org/nasss-native-american-imagery-resolution/>
- 11 http://aistm.org/fr.more_educators_resources.htm
- 12 <http://www.oah.org/programs/news/oah-members-respond-to-the-redskins-name-debate/>
- 13 http://aistm.org/fr.more_educators_resources.htm
- 14 http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
- 15 <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2015/11/15/stop-using-offensive-indigenous-mascots-in-sports-justice-murray-sinclair-says.html>
- 16 http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/chra_guide_lcdp-eng.pdf
- 17 Baca, Lawrence. (2004). "Native Images in Schools and the Racially Hostile Environment." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 28(1):71-78. Bataille, Gretchen M. (2001). *Native American Representations: First Encounters, Distorted Images, and Literary Appropriations*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. Black, Jason Edward. (2002). "The Mascotting of Native America: Construction, Commodity, and Assimilation." *American Indian Quarterly* 26(4):605-622. Chaney, John, Amanda Burke, and Edward Burkley. "Do American Indian Mascots= American Indian People? Examining Implicit Bias towards American Indian People and American Indian Mascots." *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research: The Journal of the National Center* 18.1 (2011): 42-62. Clark, David Anthony Tyeme. (2005). "Wa a o, wa ba ski na me ska ta! 'Indian' Mascots and the Pathology of Anti-

Indigenous Racism." In *The Game: Race, Identity, and Sports in the Twentieth Century*, edited by A. Bass, 137-166. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Farnell, Brenda. (2004). "The Fancy Dance of Racializing Discourse." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 28(1):30-55. Freng, Scott, and Cynthia Willis-Esqueda. "A question of honor: Chief Wahoo and American Indian stereotype activation among a university based sample." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 151.5 (2011): 577-591. Guiliano, Jennifer. "Chasing objectivity? Critical reflections on history, identity, and the public performance of Indian mascots." *Cultural Studies? Critical Methodologies* 11.6 (2011): 535-543. Guiliano, Jennifer E. (2015) *Indian Spectacle: College Mascots and the Anxiety of Modern America*. Camden: Rutgers University Press. Jacobs, Michelle R. "Race, place, and biography at play: Contextualizing American Indian viewpoints on Indian mascots." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 38.4 (2014): 322-345. Kim-Prieto, Chu, et al. "Effect of exposure to an American Indian mascot on the tendency to stereotype a different minority group." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 40.3 (2010): 534-553. King, C. Richard. "On the offensive: Anti-Indian racism in the creation and contestation of the NCAA ban on Native American mascots." *The Native American Identity in Sports: Creating and Preserving a Culture* (2012): 193-205. King, C. Richard. (1998). "Spectacles, Sports, and Stereotypes: Dis/Playing Chief Illiniwek." In *Colonial Discourses, Collective Memories, and the Exhibition of Native American Cultures and Histories in the Contemporary United States*, 41-58. New York: Garland. King, C. Richard, ed. *The Native American mascot controversy: A handbook*. Scarecrow Press, 2010. King, C. Richard, and Charles Fruehling Springwood, eds. (2001). *Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots Controversy*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska. Mihesuah, Devon A. (1996). *American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities*. Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press, Inc. Pewewardy, Cornell D. (1991). "Native American Mascots and Imagery: The Struggle of Unlearning Indian Stereotypes." *Journal of Navaho Education* 9(1):19-23. Pewewardy, Cornell D. (1999). "From La Belle Sauvage to the Nobel Savage: The Deculturalization of Indian Mascots in American Culture." *Multicultural Education* 6:6-11. Spindel, Carol. (2000). *Dancing at Halftime: Sports and the Controversy over American Indian Mascots*. New York: New York University Press. Strong, Pauline Turner. (2004). "The Mascot Slot: Cultural Citizenship, Political Correctness, and Pseudo-Indian Sports Symbols." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 28(1):79-87. Strong, Pauline Turner. "Trademarking Racism: Pseudo-Indian Symbols and the Business of Professional Sports." *Anthropology Now* 6.2 (2014): 12-22. Taylor, Michael. "Indian-styled mascots, masculinity, and the manipulated Indian body: Chief Illiniwek and the embodiment of tradition." *Ethnohistory* 62.1 (2015): 119-143.