

Colorado
Commission to Study
American Indian
Representations in Public
Schools
Meeting Agenda

Indian Education – Title VI

Friday, September 30, 2016

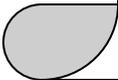
12:45pm – 1:15

***American
Indians as
Mascots:
Unintended
Consequences
and the Power of
Negative Imagery***

Co-Chair

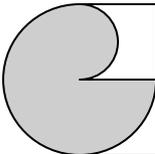
Darius Lee Smith, Navajo/Black





In 2015, Gov. Hickenlooper created the "Commission to Study American Indian Representations In Public Schools" to support constructive community dialogue in order to find cooperative and create solutions to the debate over the continued use of cultural mascots. The addition to hosting public meetings, the Commission will also explore the manner that images and names are perceived, gather information from affected school districts, and engage with American Indian representatives to guide discussion on the potential offensive nature of these images. The Commission's final objective will be to create a list of recommendations on how to move forward on this issue to present to the State.

Ideas for Recommendations Heard So Far:

- Resource guide for schools
 - Set of protocols that schools with cultural mascots are encouraged to adhere to and/or tribally approved criteria
 - Advocacy for strengthened American Indian history in Colorado
- 



CSAIRS Presentations

Loveland High School - January 14, 2016

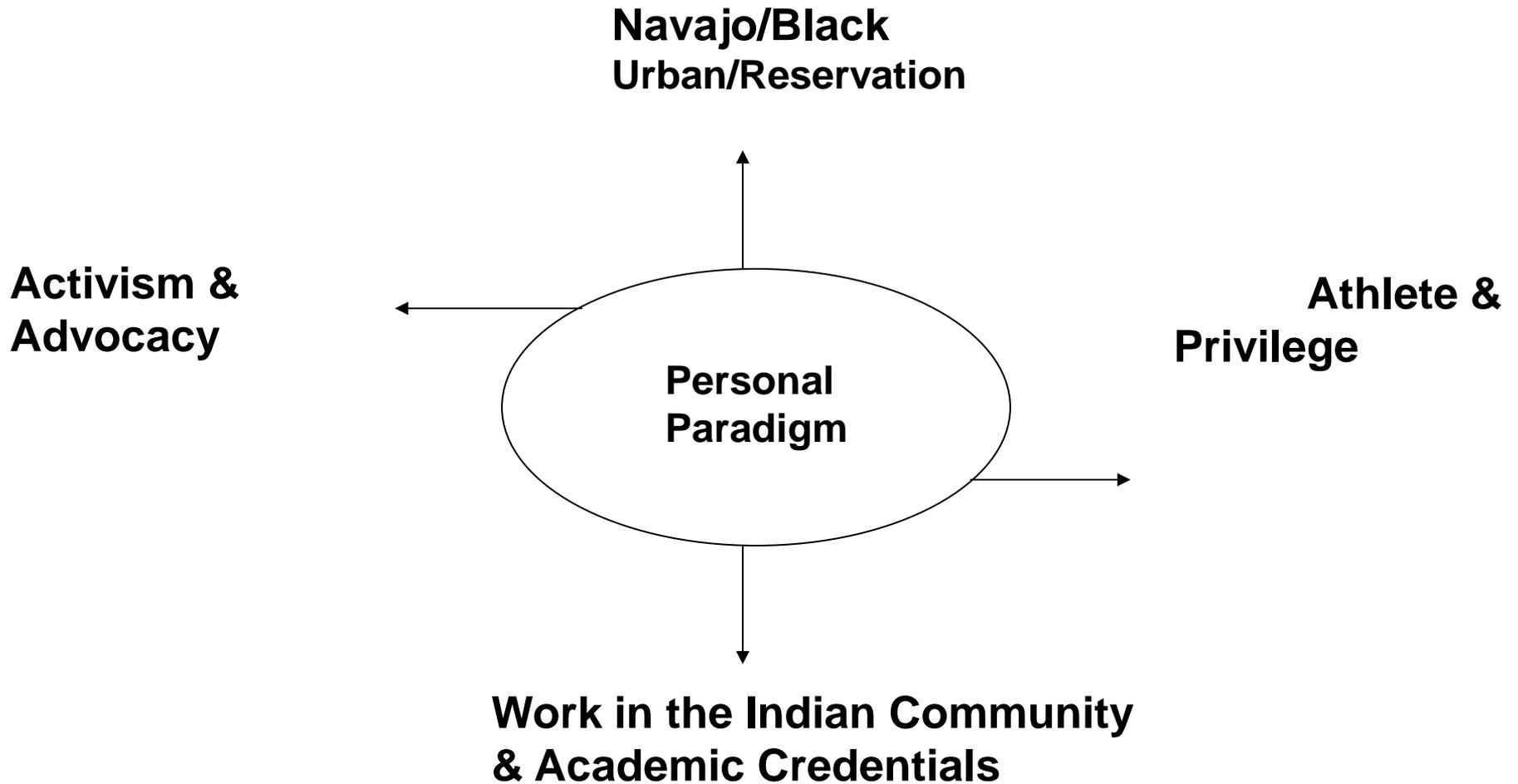
Strasburg High School - February 17, 2016

Lamar High School - February 25, 2016

Eaton High School – March 10, 2016



My Perspective ~



Debate is heating up!

May 2013, Washington NFL team owner, Dan Snyder insisted he would not change the Redskins name and that his stance could be put in all capital letters.

September 2013, Oneida Indian Nation kicks off their ChangTheMascot.org campaign that includes a website and a series of radio ads and held a symposium held in Washington D.C. Others who have joined the chorus for the change include members of allies groups, etc.

October 2013, President Obama has said that if he was the owner of a team and knew the name was offending a sizeable group of people, “I’d think about changing it.”

November 2013, Six City Council City Council of the City of Minneapolis, sent a letter to NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and Washington NFL team owner Dan Snyder expressing their disapproval of the team's name and mascot.

November 2013, The Council of the District of Columbia take up a *resolution* that calls on the Washington professional football team to change its racist *mascot*.

Ray Halbritter, Oneida Nation Representative and
Nation Enterprises CEO



Past 25-Years & Considerations

- ▶ 1989 - **Charlene Teters**, a Native American graduate student attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, initiates efforts to eliminate that school's "Chief Illiniwek" mascot.
- ▶ 1997 - **Jay Rosenstein's** documentary **"In Whose Honor"** is aired nationally on PBS Nationally. " Mr. Rosenstein's film highlights Charlene Teters' efforts to eliminate the "Chief Illiniwek"
- ▶ April 13, 2001 - **The United States Commission on Civil Rights Statement.**
- ▶ August 2005 – **NCAA** (National Collegiate Athletic Association) – contacts 18 member schools with unacceptable "hostile or abusive" American Indian mascots and encourages them to change them or risk participating in future championship competition.
- ▶ In 2005, the **American Psychological Association** (APA) **Retirement of American Indian Mascots** called for the immediate retirement of all American Indian mascots, symbols, images and personalities by schools, colleges, universities, athletic teams and organizations.
- ▶ 2013, **Oneida Indian Nation** Commissions a Research Report by Michael A. Friedman (Ph.D) about the **Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Team.**

✓ The focus of this message has been to educators. **As long as such negative mascots and logos remain within the arena of school activities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children are learning to tolerate racism in schools.** Finally, I challenge educators to provide the intellectual leadership that will teach a critical perspective and illuminate the cultural violence associated with Indian mascots used in schools. Inaction in the face of racism is racism. As culturally responsive educators, we must understand that *"enslaved minds cannot teach liberation."* That's why educators can't ignore Indian mascots. Dr. Cornel Pewewardy (Comanche-Kiowa)

✓ According to Dr. Stephanie Fryberg (Tulalip) University of Arizona, this appears to have a negative impact on the self-esteem of American Indian children. **"American Indian mascots are harmful not only because they are often negative, but because they remind American Indians of the limited ways in which others see them. This in turn restricts the number of ways American Indians can see themselves. "**

✓ **"Experimental study after experimental study shows that if you bring a Native American person into an experimental situation and you show them an image of a Native American mascot, their self-esteem goes down, their faith in their community goes down, their feeling that they can achieve goes down,"** Dr. Michael Friedman said. *Friedman, a clinical*

psychologist and researcher of Commissioned Report by Oneida Indian Nation.



BUT I'M
HONORING YOU,
DUDE!



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ALCARAZ
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SYNDICATE





Cleveland Indians Opening Day 2014 - Cartoon predicted encounter between Indians fan and Chief Wahoo protester (Robert Roche)



Why are mascots offensive?

"This is a human rights issue, we are being denied the most basic respect. As long as our people are perceived as cartoon characters or static beings locked in the past, our socio-economic problems will never be seriously addressed. Also, this issue of imagery has a direct correlation with violence against Indian people and the high suicide rate of our youth."

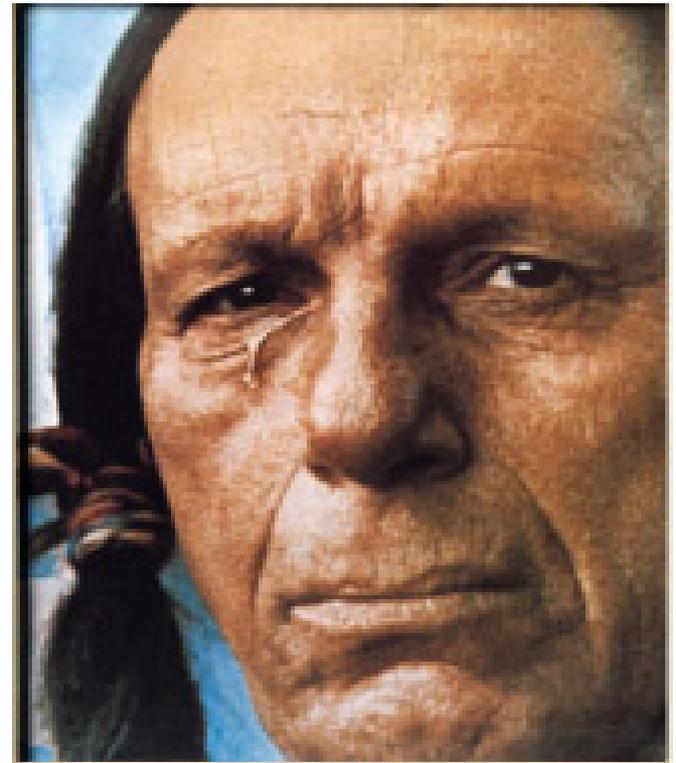
Michael S. Haney (Seminole)

1948 - 2005



Who is an Indian?

- Stereotypical Images
 - Stoic
 - Noble Savage
 - Museum/Wooden Indian
 - Mascot
 - Feathers, Tipis, Buffalo
 - Indian Princess
 - Warrior
 - Pan-Indianism



Iron Eyes Cody (AKA The Crying FAKE Indian)
1904 – 1999





FRANKA

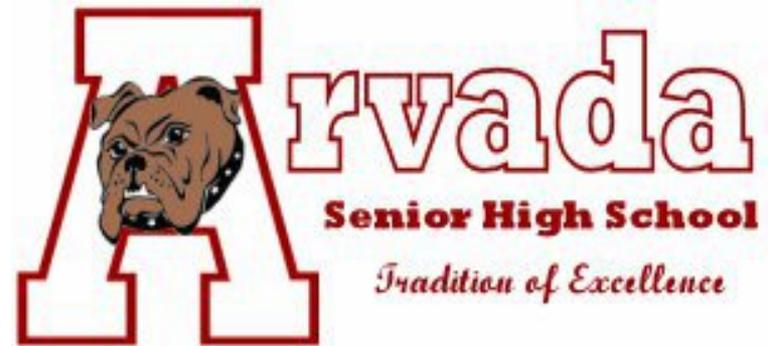


1993 Arvada Redskins changes mascot to Bulldogs

Retired in 1993...



Changed to...



1993 Arapahoe High School transform the schools negative, stereotypical Indian mascot into a positive respectful depiction.

1964 - 1993



1993 - current



1996 Montbello High School changes mascot

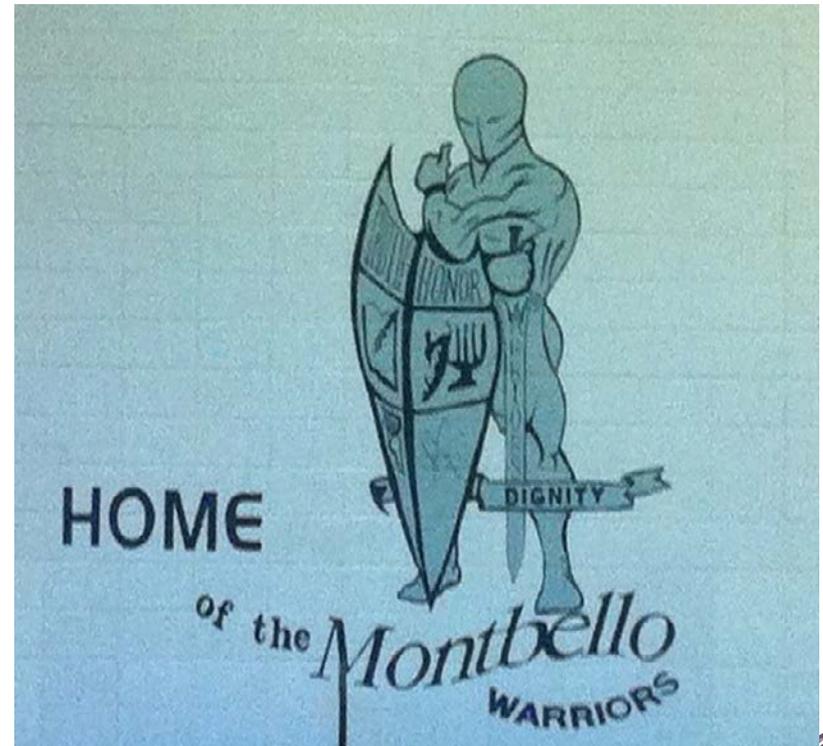
1980 - 1986



1986 - 1996



Futuristic Warrior in 1996...



In Colorado...High schools with American Indian mascots

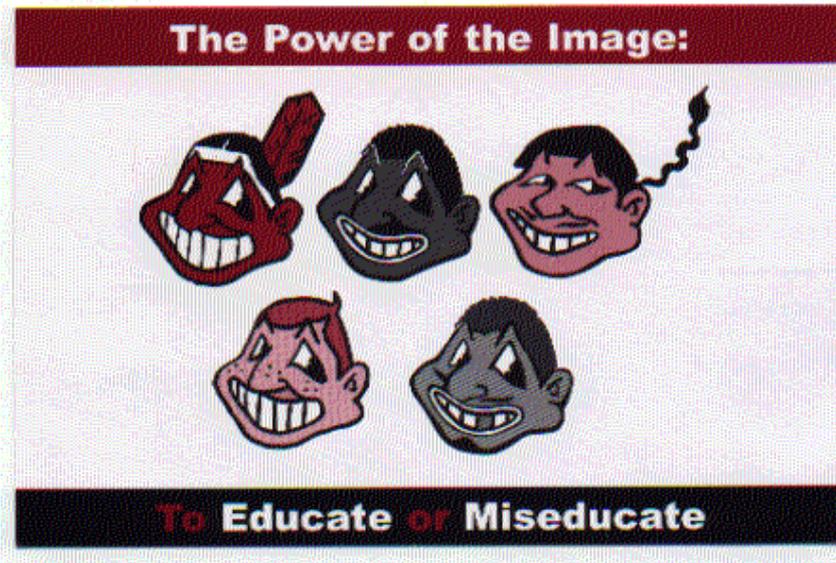


- ▶ Arapahoe (Littleton): Warriors
- ▶ Arickaree (Anton): Indians
- ▶ Central (Grand Junction): Warriors
- ▶ Cheyenne Mountain (CO Springs): Indians
- ▶ Eaton (Eaton): Reds
- ▶ Frederick (Frederick): Warriors
- ▶ Kiowa (Kiowa): Indians
- ▶ La Veta (Le Veta): Redskins
- ▶ Lamar (Lamar): Savages
- ▶ Loveland (Loveland): Indians
- ▶ Montrose (Montrose): Indians
- ▶ Mountain Valley (Saguache): Indians
- ▶ Sanford (Sanford): Indians
- ▶ Strasburg (Strasburg): Indians
- ▶ Weldon (Weldona): Warriors
- ▶ Yuma (Yuma): Indians

Source: Bartels, Lynn, "Bill would require high school mascots to get Colorado OK: Measure addresses school teams' Indian-themed nicknames, images" **Denver Post**, January 22, 2010.



Don't you want all our students in our Colorado schools to:



- ▶ Be educated?
- ▶ Feel safe?
- ▶ Feel empowered?
- ▶ Be respected?

Source: Che Butler & Luhui Whitebear 2006 – www.aistm.org





Governor's Commission to Study
American Indian Representations
in Public Schools

Report 2016



Four Guiding Principles

- The elimination of derogatory and offensive American Indian mascots, imagery, and names and strong recommendations for communities to review their depictions in facilitated public forums.
- The recognition and respect of Tribal sovereignty and a strong recommendation for schools to enter into formal relationships with federally recognized tribe to retain their American Indian imagery.
- The recognition and respect of local control by elected boards of education and an active involvement of local communities, students, and citizens around the topic of American Indian mascots.
- A strong educational focus and outreach



Next Steps...

Thank you

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