

# From Enemy to Mascot: The Deculturation of Indian Mascots in Sports Culture

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*This article focuses on two important concepts in the way many Indian mascots are treated in North American sports culture. The first is the deculturation process of stripping away the culture of an ethnic group by replacing them with images of the dominant group. The second concept is that of dysconscious racism—a form of racism that unconsciously accepts dominant white norms and privileges as played out as Indian mascots in North American sports culture. Educators need to be better informed about First Nations Peoples and their communities. Doing so will help them see that as long as such negative mascots and logos remain in the arena of school activities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children are learning to tolerate racism in schools. What children see displayed at school and on television only reinforces the ethnic images projected by popular culture. This is precisely what sports teams with mascots and logos of First Nations Peoples teach them—that it is acceptable racism to demean a race or group of people through North American sports culture. This article challenges educators to provide the educational leadership that will teach a critical perspective of the deculturation process that takes place when Indian mascots are used in school-related activities.*

## *Introduction*

Invented media images prevent millions of people from understanding the past and current authentic human experience of First Nations People. My response to the usage of Indian<sup>1</sup> mascots for sports teams has always been a reaction to these trappings. Seasonal insults offend the intelligence of thousands of Indigenous Peoples in North America. This article speaks to the average educator and discusses how, as educators, we are responsible for maintaining the ethics of teaching and for helping to eliminate racism in all aspects of school life. According to Spring (1997), *deculturation* is the educational process of eliminating cultures. Many mascots represent stereotypical racist images that relegate Indigenous Peoples to a colonial representation of the historical past. The exploitation involved in the use of Indian mascots becomes an issue of decolonization and educational equity.

## *Dysconscious Racism*

Why should educators know about the issues of Indian mascots, logos, nicknames, and the tomahawk chop? As someone who has spent his entire adult life teaching and administering elementary schools for Indigenous children, I see that the way Indian mascots are used today is about “dys-

conscious racism" and a form of cultural violence that operates at the psychological level. According to King (1991) and King and Ladson-Billings (1990), dysconsciousness is uncritical habit of mind (i.e., perceptions, attitudes, assumptions, and beliefs) that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given. It involves identification with an ideological viewpoint that admits no fundamentally alternative vision of society. With regard to racial inequity, this way of thinking uncritically accepts certain culturally sanctioned assumptions, myths, and beliefs that justify the social and economic advantages whites have as a result of the historical and contemporary subordination of people of color (Wellman, 1977). Therefore, dysconscious racism is a form of racism<sup>2</sup> that unconsciously accepts dominant white norms and privileges.

For example, if you have seen the racial antics and negative behaviors portrayed by Indian mascots hundreds of times for most of your life, you may become numb to their presence. This is dysconscious racism. The thousands of ways Indian mascots are used today in North American sports culture are racist and should be eliminated using education as the tool for liberation.

### *The Issues*

Various arguments against Indian mascots and logos have used assumptions based on similar critiques as those connected to the discourse of colonialism, racism, and white hegemony (Hewitt, 1991; Schultz, 1991; Monaghan, 1992). Slowikowski (1993) contends that although these criticisms are justified, the cultural roots, symbolism, and performance of sport mascots will be considered as they have been articulated to the symbolic production of cultural narratives such as *good luck*, *authenticity*, and *nostalgia*.

Many schools around the country exhibit Indian mascots and logos, using nicknames and doing the tomahawk chop<sup>3</sup> in sports stadiums with inauthentic representations of Indigenous cultures, yet many school officials state or say they are honoring Indigenous Peoples and insist their schools' sponsored activities are not offensive, but rather a compliment. I would argue otherwise. It would be the same as a crowd of fans using authentic saints as mascots or having fans dressed up as the Pope (Lady Popes or Nuns) at a New Orleans Saints football game and doing the "crucifix chop" to the musical accompaniment of Gregorian chants while wearing colorful religious attire in the stands. What would be the reaction of Catholics in North America if that happened? Indigenous Peoples would never have associated the sacred practices of becoming a warrior with the hoopla of a pep rally, half-time entertainment, or being a sidekick to cheerleaders.

There is enormous public ambivalence and confusion about the racial implications of the Indigenous imagery so intertwined with North American sports culture. According to Lowenthal (1995), the Cleveland

Indians' claim mirrors their much publicized "Indian" identity from their past images through people and things remembered, tradition passed on from one generation to the next, and stories told and retold.

Staurowsky (1998) contends that the Cleveland claim also illustrates the perils associated with venturing into the past. Carnes (1995) notes that renditions of the past are likely to be imperfect because lived experience can never be identically duplicated or replicated by other people in other ages. In addition, the process of retrieving the past is subject to the limitations of the retrievers themselves, whose reading of the past is influenced by their own experiences and views of the world. As a consequence, the past is a place that can be illuminated and discovered through history and memory, but it is also "in large measure a past of our own creation, molded by selective erosion, oblivion, and invention" (Lowenthal, 1995).

Children's self images are impressionable, pliable, and susceptible to external forces, especially if they are steeped in violent and negative images (Fleming, 1996; Rouse & Hanson, 1991; Madsen & Robbins, 1981; Pushkin & Veness, 1973). They also respond accordingly to the respect they are shown in regard to their individuality, including their ethnicity and/or race (Paley, 1989). Unfortunately, for Indigenous Peoples many false images of ethnicity still dominate the consciousness of the North American psyche. Howard (1983) asserts that in the North American psyche Indigenous People have fulfilled their historical mission. They existed to provide a human challenge to whites as they marched across the continent. Their resistance provided the stuff of myths of conquest and glory.

Invented behavior like the tomahawk chop and dancing around in stereotypical Hollywood Indian style makes a mockery of Indigenous cultural identity and causes many young Indigenous people to feel shame about who they are as human beings, because racial stereotypes play an important role in shaping a young person's consciousness. Subjective feelings such as inferiority are an integral part of consciousness and work together with the objective reality of poverty and deprivation to shape a young person's world view.

Tragically, I have found that many ethnic images like Indian mascots have been manufactured and created in the image of other racial groups. The manufactured *savage, pagan, retarded, culturally deprived* non-European is the flip side of the European Civilization myth. The affect of ethnic images is to distort reality while creating a new and seductive reality of their own. Students in schools cannot be expected to understand the realities of modern First Nations People's life and the prospect for future generations when bombarded with the popular mascot images of the past and the present.

So why do some teachers allow their students to adopt uncritically a cartoon version of Indigenous cultures through the use of a mascot

portrayed by sports teams? Dennis (1981) contends that people engage in racist behavior because they are reasonably sure that there is support for it in their society. Their cultural lens, for example, may be highly ethnocentric; yet no distortions are perceived in the field of vision. To understand why this is racist consider how euphemisms and code words for ethnic persons and groups are used: scalp, massacre, redskin, squaw, noble savage, papoose, Pocahontas, Cherokee princess. Bosmajian (1983) explains that while the state and church as institutions have defined the Indians into subjugation, there has been in operation the use of a suppressive language by society at large that has perpetuated the dehumanization of Indigenous Peoples. The English language includes various phrases and words that relegate the Indigenous Peoples to an inferior status: *The only good Indian is a dead Indian; Indian giver; drunken Indians, dumb Indians, and Redskins*.<sup>4</sup> These words represent a new generation of ethnic slurs that are replacing the older, more blatant and abusive nicknames (Allen, 1990; Moore, 1976).

According to Sigelman (1998), many white Americans who understand that terms like *nigger* and *spic* are derogatory, and who even know something about the history of such terms, may not recognize *redskin* as a derogatory term. On the other hand, repeated attempts to raise public consciousness on this issue have fallen flat.

#### *Methods of Deculturation<sup>6</sup>*

According to Spring (1997), deculturation is the educational process of eliminating cultures. In the case of First Nations People, North America attempted deculturation as part of a process of winning the loyalty of these Indigenous people to the North American government. At part of the deculturation process, federal and state governments instituted programs of assimilation designed to replace tribal cultures with the dominant white culture of North America.

First Nations People struggled to pass on their traditions and languages to their children and resisted attempts at deculturation. The methods for which Indian mascots are used in sports culture vary. Spring (1997) asserts that in general, deculturation patterns have used the following educational methods.

1. Segregation and isolation;
2. Forced change of language;
3. Imposition of dominant culture through the curriculum;
4. Imposition of dominant culture through textbooks;
5. Denial of expression of dominated group's culture;
6. Use of teachers from the dominant group.

Programs of cultural conformity accompanied all these methods of deculturation. These programs were designed to create emotional attachments to symbols of North America. By gaining emulation of the dominant white culture of North America, it was believed, First Nations

People would rush to embrace their conquerors rather than resist their subjugation.

*Manufactured Images and Social Construction of Reality*

Individuals behave not in accordance with reality, but in accordance with their perceptions of reality. Therefore, the challenge that we have today is to deconstruct a reality that has been manufactured by the North American media and scholars. For many North Americans there is something faintly anachronistic about contemporary Indigenous Peoples. Many people today look at Indigenous Peoples as figures out of the past, as relics of a more heroic age. Ironically, the modern presence of Indigenous Peoples has been hard to grasp for most North Americans. It is only recently that Indigenous Peoples have begun to reclaim their own images and make their special presence known.

The portrayal of Indigenous Peoples in sports takes many forms. Some teams use generic Indigenous names such as Indians, Braves, or Chiefs, whereas others adopt specific tribal names like Seminoles, Cherokees, or Apaches. Indian mascots exhibit either idealized or comical facial features and "native" dress ranging from body-length feathered (usually turkey) headdresses to more subtle fake buckskin attire or skimpy loincloths. Some teams and supporters display counterfeit Indigenous paraphernalia, including tomahawks, feathers, face paint, symbolic drums, and pipes. They will also use mock-Indigenous behaviors, such as the tomahawk chop, dances, chants, drum-beating, war-whooping, and symbolic scalp-ing.

So-called Indian mascots reduce hundreds of Indigenous tribal members to generic cartoon characters. These "Wild West" figments of the white imagination distort both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children's attitudes toward an oppressed—and diverse—minority. The Indigenous portrait of the moment may be bellicose, ludicrous, or romantic, but almost never is the portrait we see of Indian mascots a real person (Stedman, 1982). Most children in North America do not have the faintest idea that "Indigenous Peoples" are real human beings because of such portrayals.

The contradictory views of Indigenous Peoples, sometimes represented as gentle and good and sometimes as terrifying and evil, stem from the Euro-American's ambivalence toward a race of people they attempted to destroy.

For example, today the perceptions and negative images of Indigenous Peoples by the North American macroculture are a part of the history of the motion picture portrayals, which evolved from stereotypes created by the earliest settlers and chroniclers of this country. The treatment of Indigenous Peoples in the movies is a manufactured expression of white North America's attempt to cope with its uneasiness in the face of unconscious cultural guilt (Bataille & Silet, 1980). Francis (1992) states that the

*Indian* began as a white man's mistake and became a white man's fantasy, because of white guilt, white fear, and white insecurity.

Racism is the primary form of cultural domination in North America over the past 400 years. Prior to Columbus, the new world, or North America, functioned for millennia without the race construct as we understand it today (Stiffarm & Lane, 1992; Mohawk, 1992). Race is a social construct built primarily of prejudice, superstition, and myth, and the boundaries between races depend on the classifier's own cultural norms (Russell, 1998). Race can be a powerful tool, either for oppression or for group self-actualization (Spickard, 1992). According to Banton (1998), the pre-Columbian European explorers in the Pacific had only fleeting contacts with the islanders, who often received them in friendship. Their accounts were favorable. However, European writing inspired by these accounts went further and built the myth of the Noble Savage. This was of importance politically, for to believe that the savage is noble is to believe that man is naturally good. If evil does not have its origin in human nature, it must spring from the faulty organization of society.

In this context Indigenous Peoples stood as the cipher for everything that was pristine and sublime. This fascination and its attendant desire for otherness was used by European intellectuals as an emblem that escaped the emotional and intellectual shackles of modernity. These notions of exotic innocence are no less stereotypical than the idea that Indigenous People are less civilized and more barbaric. Solomos and Back (1996) contend that this kind of identification is locked in the discourse of absolute difference which renders *Indian* exotic and reaffirms Indigenous Peoples as a "race apart."

According to Solomos and Back (1996), Darwinism arguments in favor of heredity and variation challenged the idea of the fixity of species, but by the late 19th and early 20th centuries themes derived from Darwin were used in debates about race in a variety of national contexts. This was evident, for example, in the popularity of Social Darwinism and of Eugenics during this period (Mosse, 1985; Dengler, 1991; Pewewardy, 1999). Genoves (1989) says that with the appearance of Darwinism, racism—or at least white racism—took a new course: "many white people were quite enthusiastic about Darwinism because, proclaiming the survival of the fittest, it confirmed their policy of expansion and aggression at the expense of the inferior peoples" (p. 158). Gould (1996) contends that Darwinism is not a statement about fixed differences, but the central theory for a discipline—evolutionary biology—that has discovered the sources of human unity in minimal genetic distances among our races and in the geological yesterday of our common origin. Social scientists and other students of group life have misused these ideas throughout the 20th century, and much of their work has been used by the mass media. Together with schools, legal systems, and higher education institutions,



these forces participate in a major way in legitimizing and reifying this invalid construct—the romanticized image of Indigenous Peoples. Consequently, race as a construct is now internalized by the world's masses.

Racism is really about American hegemony.<sup>5</sup> I agree with Hilliard (1997) and Kane (1996) that racism is a mental illness. It is a mental illness because it is a socially constructed system of beliefs created by advocates and inventors of hegemonic systems. It is a precursor to mental illness among ethnic minorities, because it requires that the individual function with the academic falsification of his or her human record, distortion of cultural identity, and delusions of grandeur about white supremacy (Novick, 1995). Tinker (1993) asserts that even many Indigenous Peoples have internalized this illusion just as deeply as white North Americans have, and as a result many Indigenous People fully participate today in their own oppression. Alfred (1999) contends that those who find sincerity and comfort in the oppressor, who bind themselves to recent promises, must yield to the assimilationist demands of the mainstream and abandon any meaningful attachment to an Indigenous cultural and political reality.

At the ideological level, racism's link to mental illness requires continued systemic study, and at the applied level, massive financial resources toward the deconstruction of the European colonial mind-set need to be devoted to the restructuring of domination. Conflicting ideological components such as a defense of racial exploitation on one hand or an assertion of racial equality on the other, must depend in part for their effectiveness on a degree of correspondence with that ongoing construction (Saxton, 1990).

### *Racism is Detrimental to Children*

Unresolved identity issues have the potential for creating negative educational effects such as poor school performance, poor social skills, off-task behavior, negative attitudes, sadness, and depression (Nishimura, 1995). Accordingly, as a teacher educator I show future teachers why Indian mascots are one cause for low self-esteem and poor self-concept in Indigenous children. Therefore, self-esteem and self-concept is the point where this issue becomes detrimental to the academic achievement of students in school. To make my point clear, I point to the American Indian Mental Health Association of Minnesota's (1992) position statement supporting the total elimination of Indian mascots and logos from schools:

As a group of mental health providers, we are in agreement that using images of American Indians as mascots, symbols, caricatures, and namesakes for non-Indian sports teams, businesses, and other organizations is damaging to the self-identity, self-concept, and self-esteem of our people. We should like to join with others who are taking a strong stand against this practice. (p. 1)

A similar position statement by the Society of Indian Psychologists of the Americas was drafted in January 1999 (Clearing-Sky, 1999).

Most of the resolutions to eliminate negative ethnic images came from grassroots efforts, mostly on the part of Indigenous parents. Resolutions to ban Indian mascots and logos from schools have also been drafted by American Indian organizations like the National Indian Education Association, Kansas Association for Native American Education, Wisconsin Indian Education Association, and Minnesota Indian Education Association. Other groups that have passed resolutions to ban Indian mascots and logos include the National Education Association, Governor's Interstate Indian Council,<sup>7</sup> United Indian Nations of Oklahoma, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council in Wisconsin, Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin, National Congress of American Indians, American Indian Movement, National Rainbow Coalition, NAACP, and the Center for the Study of Sports in Society. More recently, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) has issued a statement supporting the elimination of Indian names and mascots as symbols for their member institutions' sports teams (Whitcomb, 1998).

#### *Power and Control*

Because the powerful messages from state and national organizations have been ignored, the question must be asked: Why do racial slurs in the form of Indian mascots and logos remain? I believe that the hidden agenda behind their use is about annihilation; cultural, spiritual, and intellectual exploitation. Therefore, the real issues are about power and control. Those that want to define other ethnic groups and control their images in order to have people believe that their truth is the absolute truth drive these negative ethnic images. Furthermore, it is the ability to define a reality and to get other people to affirm that reality as if it were their own. Remember that media commercials are carefully designed and expensively produced to stereotype groups and help us, as consumers, realize we are far less intelligent than we should be. This is an additive systemic approach to power and control, and therefore transfers over from dysconscious racism to overt and conscious racism.

#### *Controversy Surrounding Mascot Name Changes*

Through the politics of colonization, Indigenous Peoples were socialized into stereotypes of being seen as inferior, stupid, and lazy, thereby fulfilling the need to being a popular mascot. This list of macrocultural stereotypes of Indigenous Peoples is well known (i.e., University of Illinois' Chief Illiniwic, Oklahoma's Eskimo Joes, Crazy Horse Malt Liquor, Land of Lakes Butter, Jeep Cherokee, Pocahontas, etc.).

Although the Cleveland Indians, Atlanta Braves, Washington Redskins, Kansas City Chiefs, Florida State University Seminoles, Southeastern Oklahoma State University Savages, Wichita North High School Redskins, and many more athletic teams have resisted the pressure to change, scores of colleges, universities, and high school teams have



adopted new names over the years. Stanford changed from Indians to the Cardinal. Dartmouth changed from Indians to The Big Green. Ohio's Miami University Redskins became the Red Hawks. If these colleges and universities can change, so can other educational institutions. In the Big Ten Conference, the University of Wisconsin and University of Minnesota athletic departments established policy that banned out-of-conference competition with universities that use Indian mascots names and logos, for example, Marquette Warriors, who recently changed their name to Golden Eagles.

Several newspapers, including the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Seattle Times*, *Portland Oregonian*, and *Duluth News-Tribune* have instituted new policy on the use of racist overtones and words such as *redskin* in its reporting, particularly of sports events. Moreover, some radio announcers and stations will not use racially insulting words on the air.

Some large school districts across the nation (i.e., Dallas Public Schools, Los Angeles Public Schools) have eliminated Indian mascots from their school districts as the result of active advocacy from parent and education groups wanting to work closely with school officials. Wisconsin and Minnesota have mandated that publicly funded schools not use mascots, names, or logos that have been deemed offensive to Indigenous Peoples. Although some colleges, universities, high schools, and middle schools have dropped their racially insulting Indian mascot and logos, no professional sports team has felt enough heat or perhaps has enough conscience or respect to take a similar step. One exception is the Washington Wizards, who succumbed to the political pressure to change their mascot from the Bullets to the Wizards, which suggests that changes are possible at this level. Change should be possible without the unsightly alumni and student backlashes that smear Indigenous complainants as activists or militants—even as politically correct minorities. This is not the current fad of being politically correct.

Negative imagery of Indigenous Peoples has been around for more than a century. However, the more serious controversy regarding Indian mascots did not emerge until the past two decades. During this period a growing Indigenous consciousness and grassroots transformation has emerged, while at the same time the general public and media have become more alert to the rapidly growing ethnic awareness and diversification of society.

### *Students' Right to an Equal Education*

Most states make a commitment to provide the best public education for every student. The issue of equity is an important component of that commitment to educational excellence, ensuring access, treatment, opportunity, and outcomes for all students based on objective assessment of each individual student's needs and abilities. Requirements and support for equity come from the state legislature, the federal government, the

private sector, community organizations, parents, school boards, and school district staff members.

Given this foundation, many of the issues pertaining to negative Indian mascots and logos displayed in all programs and activities in schools comes under the category of *discrimination*. The discrimination prohibition applies to curricular programs, extracurricular activities, pupil services, recreational programs, and use of facilities. Although most states prohibit discrimination against students, many initial Indian mascots and logos complainants are dismissed as irrelevant by school officials; thereupon, advocates follow up through a process of filing an official complaint as an "aggrieved person" (i.e., a student or parent of student who has been negatively affected) resident of the school district.

Every public school district is required to have a complaint procedure adopted by the school board for residents to use. Some complainants of Indian mascots and logos have also filed complaints with the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Chicago Office basing their discrimination on the student's sex, race, handicap, color, or national origin.

### *Conclusion*

Understanding the contemporary images, perceptions, and myths of Indigenous Peoples is extremely important not only for Indigenous Peoples, but also for mainstream North America. Most images of Indigenous Peoples have been burned into the global consciousness by 50 years of mass media. It was the Hollywood screenwriters who helped to create the "frontier myth" image of Indigenous People today. It was, moreover, a revelation that had gone largely unrecorded by the national media and unnoticed by a public that still sees Indigenous Peoples mainly through deeply xenophobic eyes and the mythic veil of mingled racism and romance. Each new generation of popular culture has, therefore, reinvented their Indian mascot in the image of its own era.

Those of us who advocate for the elimination of mascots of Indigenous Peoples appreciate the courage, support, and sometimes the sacrifice of all people who stand with us by speaking out and drafting resolutions against the continued use of Indian mascots in schools. When you advocate for the removal of these mascots and logos, you strengthen the spirit of tolerance and social justice in your community as well as model pluralism for all children. You provide a powerful teaching moment that can help to deconstruct the fabricated images and misconceptions of Indigenous Peoples that most school-aged children have burned into their psyche by the North American media.

If your team name were the Pittsburgh Negroes, Kansas City Jews, Houston Hispanics, Chicago Chicanos, Orlando Orientals, or Washington Whities, and someone from those communities found the invented name, stereotyped labels, and ethnic symbols associated with it offensive and

asked that it be changed, would you not change the name? If not, why not? Let us further “honor” these groups with demeaning caricatures of a rabbi in flowing robe, a Black Sambo image, a mascot who would run around in a Ku Klux Klan outfit. It is a mix of racism with sports enthusiasm in the guise of team spirit. Vickers (1998) asserts that Indigenous writers, artists, and activists on all fronts are sure to condemn all the noxious stereotypes discussed herein.

I have made several points in my message to educators about the deculturation process that involves the usage of Indian mascots in school-related activities. This process of stripping away the culture of another cultural group is having dramatic effect on First Nations People. Educators need to educate themselves about Indigenous Peoples and their communities. Doing so will help them see that as long as such negative mascots and logos remain in the arena of school activities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children are learning to tolerate racism in schools (Munson, personal communication, 1998). That is what children see at school and on television. As a result, schools only reinforce the images projected by popular culture (LaRocque, 1998). This is precisely what sports teams with mascots and logos of Indigenous Peoples teach them—that it is “acceptable” racism to demean a race or group of people through North American sports culture. 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*.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Previous research focusing on Aboriginal peoples in the US has used *American Indian*, *Indian*, and *Native American* as the nomenclature for this population. This article subverts this tradition by instead using the terms *Indigenous Peoples* and *First Nations People*. These terms are capitalized because they are proper nouns (particular persons) and not adjectives (words describing nouns). They are also capitalized to signify and recognize the cultural heterogeneity and political sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples in the western hemisphere (Yellow Bird, personal communication, 1997).

In this respect the consciousness of the oppressor transforms Indigenous identity into a commodity of its domination and disposal (Freire, 1997). Ceasing to call Indigenous Peoples American Indians is more than an attempt at political correctness. It is an act of intellectual liberation, and it is a correction to a distorting narrative of imperialist “discovery and progress” that has been maintained far too long by Europeans and Euro-Americans.

Thus *American Indian* and *Indian* are sometimes used interchangeably as a common vernacular in this article only when trying to make a point in an attempt to liberate and combat linguistic hegemony, which is both a direct and indirect power block to the identity of Indigenous Peoples (Yellow Bird, 1999).

<sup>2</sup>Racism is defined as the unshared unilateral use of power that exploits, dominates, and tyrannizes people of color. The exploitation of cheap Black, Hispanic, or Chinese labor to maximize profits in a capitalist system is a classic example of racism as defined by this mode of thinking (Terry, 1996).

Racism in America is rooted deeply in the very structure of society. It is not solely, or even mainly, a matter of personal attitudes and beliefs. Indeed it can be argued that racist attitudes and beliefs are but accessory expressions of institutionalized patterns of white power and social control (Bowser, Hunt, & Pohl, 1981).

<sup>3</sup>The tomahawk chop is a social phenomenon that was created by those individuals who perceive the need for a supportive physical display of action (to cheer on one's favorite athletic team). It is the extension of a single arm out in front on an individual—swinging the hand and forearm in an up and down motion. The act of the tomahawk chop perpetuates an image of savagery and usually takes place in large crowds in sports stadiums accompanied by a so-called Indian war chant. The tomahawk chop is also a racist gesture because it perpetuates a stereotype that is not true for all Indigenous Peoples, and it certainly is not true in modern America.

This invented act of cheerleading plays on the transformation of Indigenous spirituality, knowledge, objects, rituals into commodities, and commercial exploitation, as well as constituting a concrete manifestation of the more general, and chronic, marketing of Native America (Whitt, 1995).

<sup>4</sup>*Redskins* is a word that should remind every American that there was a time in US history when America paid bounties for human beings. There was a going rate for the scalps or hides of Indigenous men, women, and children. These "redskin" trophies could be sold to most frontier trading posts.

*Redskins* as used by the Washington National League football team was a poor choice from the beginning. It was an unflattering name given to Indigenous Peoples by Euro-Americans. George Preston Marshall selected the name when he organized the Boston-based team in 1933. The fact that the name has become habitual or traditional for today's sports fans makes it no more pleasant to Indigenous Peoples who hear it.

<sup>5</sup>*Hegemony* in this reading becomes simply the establishment or preservation by a ruling class of identification between class and group (Saxton, 1990).

<sup>6</sup>The first method of deculturation—segregation and isolation—was used with Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples sent to Indian Territory were isolated in the hope that missionary-educators would "civilize" them in one generation. Indigenous children sent to boarding schools were isolated from the cultural traditions of their tribe as they were "civilized."

Forcing a dominated group to abandon its own language is an important part of deculturation. Culture and values are embedded in language. Using a curriculum and textbooks that reflect the culture of the dominating group was another typical practice of state school systems and federal government programs. All these methods of deculturation were accompanied by programs of Americanization (Spring, 1997).

<sup>7</sup>The Governors' Interstate Indian Council (GIIC) began in 1947 when Minnesota Governor Luther Youngdahl expressed concern about federal government involvement in Indian affairs. As an alternative, he recommended that Native Americans in the states work together to address common concerns. For the past 45 years, the GIIC has worked on the state level to promote cooperation between states and their Native people and to work toward solutions to their mutual problems. The Senate and House Committees on Indian Affairs rely on the GIIC input as do other Congressional committees and national associations. The Council consist of member states who send delegates to the annual meeting of the Council. GIIC regions represent the following: Northwest: Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Alaska; Southwest: California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Hawaii; Northeast: Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, Virginia, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine; Southwest: Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri.

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