



Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots Controversy

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A growing controversy in recent years has arisen around the use and abuse of Native American team mascots. The Cleveland Indians, Atlanta Braves, Washington Redskins, Kansas City Chiefs, Florida State Seminoles, and so forth—these are just a few of the images and names popularly associated with Native Americans that are still used as mascots by professional sports teams, dozens of universities, and countless high schools. This practice, a troubling legacy of Native–Euro-American relations in the United States, has sparked heated debates and intense protests that continue to escalate.

Team Spirits is the first comprehensive look at the Native American mascots controversy. In this work activists and academics explore the origins of Native American mascots, the messages they convey, and the reasons for their persistence into the twenty-first century. The essays examine hotly contested uses of mascots, including the Washington Redskins, the Cleveland Indians, and the University of Illinois's Chief Illiniwek, as well as equally problematic but more complicated examples such as the Florida State Seminoles and the multitude of Native mascots at Marquette University. Also showcased are examples of successful opposition, including an end to Native American mascots at Springfield College and in Los Angeles public schools.

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