http://www.aics.org/mascot/cornel.html

Why Educators Can't Ignore Indian Mascots

By Dr. Cornel Pewewardy

So-called Indian mascots reduce hundreds of Indigenous tribes to generic cartoons. These "Wild West" figments of the white imagination distort both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children's attitudes toward an oppressed -- and diverse -- minority. Schools should be places where students come to unlearn the stereotypes such mascots represent. The Indigenous portrait of the moment may be bellicose or ludicrous or romantic, but almost never is the portrait we see of Indian mascots a real person.

Racism is the social-psychological threat that rises when one is in a situation or doing something for which a negative stereotype about one's group applies. This predicament threatens one with being negatively stereotyped, with being judged or treated stereotypically, or with the prospect of conforming to the stereotype. While these images help shape people's perceptions, stereotypes aid in the dehumanization of Indigenous Peoples.

Furthermore, I contend that American racism as we inherit it today is a social construction of reality. Prior to Columbus, the world functioned for millennia without the race construct as we understand it today. Therefore, we must understand that racism is the primary form of cultural domination in the United States over the past four hundred years. It is cultural construction by social scientists and other students of group life as well as the mass media.

Understanding the contemporary images, perceptions and myths of Indigenous Peoples is extremely important not only for Indigenous Peoples, but also for mainstream America. Most images of Indigenous Peoples are burned into the global consciousness by the mass media. It was the Hollywood screen writers who helped to create the "frontier myth" image of Indigenous People today. In most every respect, it was challenging the worn-out theology of Indians as losers and victims, and was transforming tribes into powers to be reckoned with for a long time to come. It was, moreover, a revolution that had gone largely unrecorded by the national media and unnoticed by a public that still sees Indigenous Peoples mainly through deep 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.

In this respect, the consciousness of the oppressor transforms Indigenous identity into a commodity of its domination and disposal. Ceasing to call Indigenous Peoples or 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 ind

John Eliot's Rules of Conduct for the Praying Indians (eight additions to the Decalogue) were as follows:

I. If any man shall be idle a week, or at most a fortnight, he shall be fined five shillings.

II. If any unmarried man shall lie with a young woman unmarried, he shall be fined five shillings.

III. If any man shall beat his wife, his hands shall be tied behind him, and he shall be carried to the place of justice to be punished severely.

IV. Every young man, if not another's servant, and if unmarried, shall be compelled to set up a wigwam, and plant for himself, and not shift up and down in other wigwams.

V. If any woman shall not have her hair tied up, but hang lose, or be cut as a man's hair, she shall pay five shillings.

VI. If any woman shall go with naked breasts, she shall pay two shillings.

VII. All men that shall wear long locks, shall pay five shillings.

VIII. If any shall crack lice between their teeth, they shall pay five shillings. irect power block to the identity of Indigenous Peoples.