**Teaching Notes**

**WASHINGTON FOOTBALL TEAM DROPS REDSKINS MASCOT: MOMENTS AND MOVEMENTS**

**Learning Outcomes**:

1.) To explore the impact of sports symbols on society and culture

2.) To consider the ways Native mascots and imagery portray Indians and the impact this has

3.) To explore issues of cultural understanding and cultural exploitation

4.) To recognize issues of cultural historical realities

5.) To gain a perspective into the implications and motivations for societal changes and movements

6.) To foster an appreciation for rights to cultural interpretation

7.) To explore communication strategies that support diversity and equity and their effectiveness

**AUDIENCE:** This case is suitable for students in high school or college classes and appropriate for classes in Native American studies, history, geography, civics, education, communications, sociology, law, and media.

**RELATED CASES**: There are a number of other cases on the website that relate to the themes in this case: “*Waiting Patiently For 500 Years* (the process of writing and passing legislation to include tribal history in the schools); “*Whose History Should Be Taught?”* (a teacher meets with conflict from colleagues while attempting to include tribal history). “*Whose Story Should be Told? Representations of Native Americans in Public Art” (*Native Employees at the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington DC want controversial murals removed), and several others focusing specifically on mascots: “*Should Indian Mascots be Repealed?,” “Is Diversity a Mask or a Bridge: The Indian Mascot Debate,” and “The Aftermath of Redskins Indian Mascot Decisions: What’s Next?”*

**IMPLEMENTATION SUGGESTIONS**: This case is versatile as far as its audience and can be taught in a variety of ways including small groups, debates, and research. One approach would be to plan for three one hour class periods for the case to be taught. Period one would be lecture/discussion introducing the case and the issues it touches on. It would be preferable for students to read the case the night before. Period two would be discussion group session, and period three would be for reporting out of groups and general discussion on the pros and cons and proposed solutions and/or identification of further or unresolved issues. Homework for the third session could include an assignment where students bring images to class that would aid in the pro/con/solutions general discussion phase as the groups report out on their discussions.

This case could also be taught as research-discussion case study. Assigning students singly or in groups to research on different sections and either report orally or hand in written reports would be a good approach. Current research would be good discussion material on how this case has evolved and how it is changing as well as what the future may hold as far as resolution or debate.

An alternative approach is to teach the class in one 3-hour class with students divided into groups to discuss and report out on the following discussion questions:

Finally, since there are a number of cases that raise similar issues the teacher might have students use several of these cases to deepen understanding of the issues.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

**Group One**: Controversy exists over the use of Native mascots, symbols, imagery, movements, and chants. Some voices say that obliteration of Indian mascots may further compromise a valued culture. When is it inappropriate to use this imagery, and when is it appropriate to use these things? Use specific examples and explain why.

**Group Two:** What is taught and not taught in classrooms across the country as being historically factual, is open many times to interpretation and changes over time. This is also true of how history is portrayed in the larger society, in the media, art, sports and other venues. What is real in many ways is culturally connected, especially where conflict exists. Identify examples from the case where conflicts exist in connection with what is perceived to be historical reality. Explain

**Group Three**: Regarding the Washington NFL franchise and its dropping the Redskins mascot, identify at least three factors that promoted this change. Explain how each factor identified was instrumental in this change. What were the motivations? What things were at stake? Who were the stakeholders? What activist activities were employed during this process of change?

**Group Four**: Identify at least three societal conflicts and changes that have taken place recently that might have a bearing on the mascot issue in this case. What are the issues surrounding these conflicts? Identify positive and negative aspects of these changes. What strategies might be employed to reach mutual support and general understanding?

**Assessment of student learning and case discussion**

To assess student learning from this case, the teacher might suggest that the students write responses to several reflection questions after the case discussion such as 1) what are the four major lessons you learned from this case, 2) what does the case tell you about balancing different values and perspectives, 3) in what ways does this case illustrate effective and ineffective avenues of resolving conflicts and provide examples of how conflicts are best settled?