

**An Analysis of Community Attributes Likely to Result in School Districts
Repealing Native American Mascots**

**by
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ABSTRACT

Alethia T. Miller for the degree of Master of Public Policy
Presented on May 23, 2014

Title: An Analysis of Community Attributes Likely to Result in School Districts Repealing Native American Mascots

Michigan's State Department of Education issued a resolution in 2003 calling for all public K-12 schools to repeal their American Indian mascots and in 2013 the Michigan Department of Civil Rights filed a complaint with the United States Department of Education in response to school districts failing to do so. There is much research to suggest that race based mascots not only stigmatize a minority population, but negatively contribute to Indian education and falsely portray Native American culture. Using Michigan school districts and data provided by the American Community Survey, this research sheds light on a larger policy question: what factors influence communities to repeal the mascot and what characteristics do these communities have in common? Out of the 48 school districts in Michigan with an Indian mascot, seven repealed their Indian mascots after the resolution passed. This research uses ten samples, drawing 21 cases from the 48 school districts and uses difference-in-means tests to measure the significance between the mean variables of interest (referenced below) and the group classification of whether the mascot was repealed. Using online media sources, this research also uses qualitative analysis to further identify factors influencing the repeal in three school districts. This research finds that average Native American population, educational attainment and poverty level play no significant relationship in repealing the mascots in school districts. My research suggests that drawing conclusions of communities is near impossible due to the challenge in evaluating factors that cannot be easily quantified on a systematic level. This data was largely limited by a small sample size of Michigan school districts and a small sample of districts who actually repealed their Native American mascots.

Keywords: school district policy, Native American mascot, self-perception theory, education policy, American Indian stereotypes, race-based mascot, mascot repeal, Michigan State Department of Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are no restrictions on race-based mascots by the federal government for primary and secondary schools, and as such the issue to either maintain or repeal American Indian mascots in public schools has become a topic of debate. In the United States, American Indian mascots are the second highest caricature mascots used in sports, second only to animals. American Indian tribes and tribal councils have both opposed and favored the mascots, while many have remained neutral. The issue became prominent in higher education when the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) sponsors and donors opted to end their endorsements of sports if American Indian mascots were not removed from sports teams. In a pushback against losing these endorsements, the NCAA restricted Native American mascots across the country and offered support for teams that chose to immediately remove American Indian caricatures (Muir, 2010; Munson, 2010; Pewewardy, 1999).

Statewide legislation affecting secondary schools and their right to use race-based mascots has progressed slowly, since states can pursue individual legislation and statewide restrictions. These restrictions have arisen from a variety of sources, including state legislation, resolutions and restrictions imposed by the state department of education, statewide bans, and state recommendations. States have varied in their attempts to remove race-based mascots (Spindel, 2000; Riede, 2001; Moushegian, 2006). The State Board of Education in Michigan issued a resolution in 2003, recommending the “elimination of American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos, fight songs, insignias, antics, and team descriptors by all Michigan schools” (Michigan State Board of Education, 2003). This resolution was adopted to promote the idea that people of all cultures, races, and religions be treated with respect. On February 8, 2013, the Michigan State Department of Civil Rights issued a complaint against the United States

Department of Education, asking the federal agency to prohibit the use of these race-based mascots and to consider their negative imagery and subsequent impact on students. Michigan is one of the few states where the State Department of Education issued a resolution calling for the repeal of American Indian mascots, and is the only state where the State Department of Civil Rights filed a claim with the United States Board of Education recalling the use of American Indian mascots and filing a formal complaint against their State Board of Education for not repealing the mascots.

This paper uses Michigan as a case-study, drawing data from the American Community Survey in order to compare the means of each variable of interest and two mutually independent groups (the group classification of whether the mascot was repealed). Using ten samples drawn from 48 cases, this paper uses difference-in-means tests to measure the significance level. The literature draws three conclusions that led to the primary variables. First, as the Native American population increases in school districts, the mascots are more likely to be repealed. Second, as education levels increase communities are more likely to recognize the negative connotation association with race-based mascots. Third, the literature suggests that repealing these mascots costs the school districts a great deal of money. One can conclude that poorer communities will oppose the additional costs. Despite these claims in the literature they fail to reveal themselves in the Michigan data, which provides an ideal case study given that it is a national trend setter on imposing Native American mascot bans.

This paper is a work of social science and further emphasizes our understanding of race-based mascots and the factors contributing to why communities both positively and negatively perceive them. Using self-perception theory, this paper examines how individual feelings are formed after behavior is performed. In the case of sports mascots, race-based mascots are largely

accepted as the norm and individuals fail to recognize the potential racism and stereotyping they create. This research contributes to the larger policy question of what it will take to repeal them and what factors communities take into account when the repeal occurs. This research can be used to further evaluate the need to repeal the racial mascots, while emphasizing the challenge in drawing large scale conclusions. For the purposes of this paper, the term “American Indian” and “Native American” will be used interchangeably when referencing an individual of Indian descent and culture;” the resources referenced in this paper including the American Community Survey (ACS) use both terms interchangeably. The definition does not change depending on the term used.

II. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Controversy

There are two types of American Indian mascots that appear in public schools. While some employ generic names such as Warriors, Indians, Braves, and Chiefs, others adopt tribal names such as Comanches, Apaches, and Seminoles. The mascot images have varied from characterized pictures of stereotypical American Indian dress, to native dress using tomahawks, feathers, drums, and face paints to characterize American Indian culture. These images have been controversial in recent years because educators have argued they perpetuate negative feelings among American Indian children attending schools, and distort the real image of American Indians for non-American Indian children (Pewewardy, 1999; Miller, 2009).

In 2002, a poll by Sports Illustrated found that 88 percent of fans did not object to Native American mascots or find them offensive. The primary question asked was whether the Native American team names and mascots contribute to discrimination against Native Americans.

Eighty-one percent of Native Americans living off reservations found the mascots did not contribute to discrimination. Seventy-five percent of Native Americans living on reservations found it did not contribute to discrimination either (Clegg, 2002). The surveyed respondents supported the use of 'Redskins' as a team name, and specifically stated that the NFL's Washington Redskins should maintain their team name. Furthermore, the University of Pennsylvania National Annenberg Election Survey of the continental 48 states conducted a poll in 2003-2004 and found that only 9 percent of Native Americans believed the Washington Redskins name was offensive. Confirming the previous findings, the Peter Harris Research Group poll found in 2002 that 81 percent of Native Americans approve the use of high school and college American Indian mascots (Clegg, 2002; Reamey, 2009). It would appear that the American Indian population is rather united on their feelings for Indian mascots and their use in schools.

The prolonged use of these mascots in schools is due to the popular belief that they bring honor, tradition, and memory to American Indian culture (Clegg, 2002). The stern and strong image of American Indian chiefs, with mascot names such as the Braves and Warriors, represent the strength and honor of tribal people. Supporters argue the NCAA sport teams utilize these names because they reflect the strength, intelligence, and honor associated with American Indians. This positive association leaves some questioning whether repealing these mascots is necessary (LaRocque et al. 2011).

Often, what provokes school administrators or university affiliates to question the continued use of these mascots is the nonverbal behavior associated with supporting or opposing the team. The Major League Baseball's Atlanta Braves supported their mascot by referencing its nickname, the Tomahawk, and performing the tomahawk chop motion with their arms during

games (LaRocque et al. 2011). In Oregon the issue was brought to the State Board of Education by a student named Che Butler, who witnessed other students mocking his traditional tribal dances during football games (Castillo, 2012). American Indian mascots are often mimicked by fans through the use of plastic tomahawks, turkey feather headdresses, and body paint, and whether such behavior honors or degrades American Indians is debatable. Since they often represent caricatures of a minority population and fail to portray American Indian tribes, these mascots are critiqued for their inaccurate portrayal of American Indian culture. Those in favor of the mascots believe they represent brave figureheads that bring honor to the original tribal members and their people (Rosenstein, 2010; Pewewardy, 1999).

Much of the controversy in utilizing Native American mascots in sports has stemmed from whether these mascots hinder the positive self-perception American Indians have of their culture and people. Some scholars counter that these mascots bring glory and honor to American Indian tribes, (Clegg, 2002; Miller, 2001). The American Psychology Association (APA) strongly recommends the removal of race-based mascots in any institution supporting education or learning initiatives (APA, 2005). Their findings were confirmed in a study that was conducted in 2008 showing the impact of positive American Indian stereotypes and their effect on American Indians, using caricatures from popular culture. Despite their positive resemblance of American Indian tribes, these stereotypes fostered negative self-images in Native American students (Fryberg et al., 2008).

Empirical studies are few in number when examining the psychological effect of Indian mascots on American Indians. Fryberg (2008) completed an empirical study on the psychological effect of Native American mascots on American Indians and Europeans, finding that limiting the ways other racial groups view Native Americans is more harmful than the

negative portrayal these mascots and logos present. Fryberg (2008) found that Native Americans have a reduced sense of power to resolve problems in their community. Stereotypes perpetuate powerful discourse among minority groups and generate racism. The majority of non-American Indians have no direct communication with American Indians, and this invisibility makes it easier for false stereotypes to become reality, since few will encounter real Native Americans to counter these images (Fryberg et al. 2008). Critics have countered that negative stereotypes perpetuate negative feelings, yet positive stereotypes can reinforce ingroup cohesion. The studies found that students of South Korean descent fostered positive ingroup associations and perpetuated negative attitudes towards outgroup members when positive imagery of South Koreans were depicted for the students. The study showed that positive imagery of a minority population ignites team-building and cohesion for minority groups, (Greenwald et al. 1998; Jost et al. 2002; Dasgupta, 2004). If the dynamics hold for Native American populations in schools, then these mascots can create feelings of unity and cohesion for the minority population.

Fryberg studied the effect of introducing positive stereotypes of Native Americans, to test whether their self-esteem increases or decreases once these images appear. She found that there is a positive relationship between depressed self-esteem among American Indian youth when introduced with Chief Wahoo and Pocahontas imagery. Though both images represent positive ideas of American Indians, the self-esteem of individual students dropped dramatically after being introduced to these caricatures. American Indian students were asked to associate five words to each image, and these were coded as positive or negative words. Fryberg found that positive images of a population (e.g. Pocahontas) can denote negative images and feelings of self-esteem for the individuals being portrayed. Thus positive images do not equate to positive feelings of self-esteem (Fryberg et al. 2008). This became a rather prominent study, not only

showcasing the negative impact stereotypes portray, but further questioning how our culture and teachings affect children and their self-image.

Self-perception theory assumes that one's self awareness is defined by the patterns and behaviors of the individual. The theory supposes that individuals' feelings are formed after behavior is performed; thus, the cheering for race-based sports mascots in sporting events result in lack of concern for racism or stereotyping (Laird, 2007). This can also be seen in the type of society and culture we create that is often dictated by our language. Tovares (2002) acknowledges how the words and phrases we use in our everyday language affect our perceptions and social understanding. Allowing Native American mascots to exist sets a cultural standard that race-based mascots are allowed for American Indians because we have predefined the idea of "Indian." A 'Native American' is defined as an inhabitant of the United States who can trace their lineage to pre-European times. 'American Indian' is a definition used to describe a person who defines themselves as Native American. These definitions define our culture and society so that we interpret American Indian behavior differently (Tovares, 2002). Many educators in opposition to race-based mascots argue that we are setting a cultural standard for American Indians that is inappropriate for education.

The controversy also stems from the opposition to repealing the American Indian mascots in general. Clegg (2002) analyzes the use of such mascots and determines why getting rid of them in schools is unsupported by law and reflects unsound policy advice. The author argues that the only way American Indian mascots violate federal law is if they are designed to exclude or harass Indians in the United States. Drawing on the names of American Indian mascots such as Indians, Braves, and Chiefs, one finds that none of these words appears offensive in any way. For this reason schools should not legally be required to change their mascot names in order to

coincide with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act. Clegg argues that if individual school districts or universities receive complaints, then the schools should follow-up and decide whether to repeal these mascots. Current law does not support their removal on an objective basis, and Clegg argues that current law only supports their removal if the mascots perpetuate negative images of Native Americans (Clegg, 2002).

Clegg examines the policy in removing American Indian mascots in schools, finding that beloved American animals like Badgers and Beagles are also mascots. Cherished American occupations are fortified in mascot images and logos, with examples including Oilers, Steelers, Packers, and the Mariners. Historical US figures are represented, such as Cowboys, Fighting Irish, Patriots, and 49ers. These images define American culture as being the salt of the earth and blue collar workers. Clegg finds that claiming the use of “Indian” to be labeled as a calculated insult among policy makers is a heavy misstep, when team names are built to honor groups and individuals. Those team names are based on qualities and attitudes to which fans aspire; thus, naming sports teams after American Indians is, according to Clegg, not meant to be offensive (Clegg, 2002).

One of the primary concerns for the controversy is to whether Indian culture should be identified as a sports mascot. While examining the current literature on American Indian mascots, Strong (2004) draws on cultural citizenship, political correctness, and pseudo-American Indian sports symbols to examine the power the ‘Mascot Slot’ has to potentially demean American Indians in the United States. Strong (2004) argues that race-based mascots being assigned to Native Americans are an allegorical form of cultural citizenship that infringe on their ability to obtain full citizenship. The United States should seek to eliminate the mascot slot assigned to American Indians, in order to give full cultural recognition and participatory

citizenship. “Cultural Citizenship,” as used in Strong’s work, was originally coined by Aihwa Ong in 1996 when examining the experiences of Asian Americans and Latinos in the United States. Their cultural citizenship is defined as being mascots during sports games and athletic performances, which ultimately reduces their power and image in the United States.

The use of Indian sports mascots, logos, and rituals are just such normalized everyday activities; they exclude contemporary Native Americans from full citizenship by treating them as signs rather than as speakers, as caricatures rather than as players and consumers, as commodities rather than as citizens. (Strong, 2004, p. 83)

Strong (2004) argues that cultural citizenship should be the primary concern of academics and policy-makers. Arguing about political correctness allows individuals to dismiss claims made by Native American activists and organizations while trivializing their concerns. The goal of policy-makers should be to eliminate the mascot slot made for American Indians in order to provide them with full recognition and citizenship in the United States. The Mascot Slot is also reflected in Black’s (2002) study in what he defines as ‘mascoting a culture.’ Black (2002) examines the American Indian symbol and its perpetuation of white hegemony.

Black (2002) argues that redefining this perception of Native Americans is really a method of conquering Native America. In coining the phrase ‘mascoting a culture,’ Black argues that the creation of university mascots is designed to confuse and eclipse Native Americans into believing that they are defined by white social constructions of their people. The process of collegiate labeling and selling a culture to mass market a population is used to control and subjugate Native American populations: “[a]s long as the hegemonic song remains the same – label, sell, and conquer by claiming Native identity as wholly “American” – Natives’ stories are not lost but oppressively muddled” (Black, 2002, p. 11).

2.2 Federal Policy

In 1964, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act under Title VI, prohibiting discrimination based on race, gender, color, or national origin in all schools that receive federal financial assistance. The Civil Rights Act, Title VI states:

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (United States Department of Labor, 1986).

The Civil Rights Act was first implemented to eradicate discrimination in public schools and segregation. Such an act can also be used to support the dismissal of Native American mascots in K-12 schools. The discussion and debate among policy makers, legislators, and educators is whether these mascots heroically display Native Americans or whether there is psychological harm associated with their use in schools. For this reason, the Civil Rights Act does not offer guidance on whether these mascots are harmful and inappropriate in schools because the debate about whether the mascots are “subject to discrimination” is still largely taking place.

2.3 University Policy

Following the Civil Rights Act, student protests at colleges and universities around the United States took place in the 1970s to protest the use of race-based mascots in NCAA sports. In 1972, Stanford University retired their 40 year mascot, the dancing Prince Lightfoot, and changed their school nickname from the “Indians” to the “Cardinals.” Petitions circulated supporting and opposing the alteration of Stanford’s mascot. The Cardinal mascot was adopted in its place but only used as a color and not as a bird, in order for the school to distance itself from American Indian imagery entirely (Reamey, 2009; Moushegian, 2006).

Syracuse University was forced to reconsider the use of their American Indian mascot, the Saltine Warrior, when multiple lawsuits were filed against the university in 1972. In 1978, the Saltine Warrior changed its imagery to a Roman gladiator, and the lawsuits were settled. Miami University of Ohio and Marquette University followed suit in the early 1990s after protests from faculty, students, and Native American groups took place (Reamey, 2009). The NCAA banned the use of American Indian mascots in 2005, with the ruling affecting nineteen colleges and universities, making them ineligible to participate in NCAA postseason events unless the American Indian mascots and names were changed (Staurowsky, 2007). Eighty-eight universities and colleges used Indian mascots and images, but only nineteen were required to change their Indian mascots. The mascots that were forced to retire had acquired a nickname or imagery considered psychologically “hostile” and “abusive” to Native Americans, such as the name Redskins or imagery that depicted Indian headdress. The others were only cited as having Indian imagery that could potentially be damaging to self-esteem, but the teams were not forced to retire them (Hemmer, 2008). Some teams were allowed to keep their nicknames, such as the Braves or Warriors, but were required to change their mascot images.

2.4 Statewide Policy

Michigan and New Hampshire had their State Boards of Education formally recommend the repealing of American Indian mascots in public schools. In 2003, the Michigan State Board of Education formally recommended the elimination of American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos, and fight songs by issuing a statewide recommendation to public schools (Michigan State Board of Education, 2003). The New Hampshire State Board of Education issued a resolution

endorsing the elimination of American Indian mascots in public schools, while strongly encouraging their removal (Black, 2002; King, 2004).

The Wisconsin Act 250 (Senate Bill 25) took effect on May 20, 2010 allowing school district residents to object to the use of their school's mascot or team name by filing a complaint with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Superintendent can then review the complaint and determine whether the mascot or logo is race-based. If the Superintendent finds the mascot to be race-based then the school board will be given time to terminate the mascot and its logo. Despite the success in passing this legislation for organizations against the use of American Indian mascots, no residents have filed any formal complaints in their respective district. Thus, schools in Wisconsin continue to operate with American Indian logos and caricatures (LaRocque et al., 2011; Castillo, 2012).

The Oregon State Board of Education issued a resolution on May 17, 2012 endorsing the elimination of Native American mascots in Oregon public schools. The resolution was endorsed by the Superintendent of public instruction and affected 15 schools in Oregon. The Superintendent can withhold all or part of a school's state funding from the school district if it fails to comply by July 2017 (Castillo, 2012).

2.5 District Policy

There have been varying levels of state and district policy responses to repeal the use of Native American mascots in public K-12 schools. Larger school districts have difficulty regulating the use of Indian mascots due to the larger number of individual administrators to appease, although Dallas and Los Angeles were successful in their repeals. Several smaller school districts in the United States were also successful in banning the Indian mascots. In New

York, the Catskills school district successfully voted to retire the Native American mascots in 2000. In 2002, the New York State Education Commissioner, Richard Mills, issued a statement to reevaluate the use of American Indian mascots in public schools, and the school districts in Afton, NY, removed their American Indian mascots in response (Gomez 2012; Editorial board, 2000).

The State of Wisconsin has seen mixed reactions at the district level, with some communities heavily favoring the ban and others widely rejecting it. La Crosse Central High School voluntarily changed their mascot image and nickname, while other districts like Mukwonago and Mosinee have resisted. The Department of Public Instruction sided in favor of the school districts, stating that American Indian team names and mascots could remain, but mascot caricatures must be altered to no longer reflect inappropriate images. In 2002, North Carolina's State Board of Education sent a memo to all public school districts requiring them to consider the psychological effects of American Indian mascots. This targeted Guilford County, which ultimately sided with the State Board of Education and repealed their use (Spindel, 2000; Hofmann, 2005).

Measures have occurred on a district level when statewide policies fail. Despite the statewide policy discussed earlier with Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Indian Education Association implemented a task force to pressure secondary schools to drop American Indian mascot logos and images. In California, the statewide bill to repeal the use of American Indian mascots was vetoed by the Governor on two occasions. The statement from the Governor's office was that administrative decisions regarding athletic team names should be retained at the local level and so the city of Los Angeles implemented a ban on its school districts with the highest concentration of American Indian mascots. Though controversial, the ban was successful in

removing such mascots from public schools (Hemmer, 2008). Districts have taken action when state policies have proved ineffective.

2.6 Michigan: State Board of Education and State Dept. of Civil Rights

On June 26, 2003, the State Board of Education in Michigan adopted a Resolution supporting and strongly recommending the “elimination of American Indian mascots, nicknames, logos, fight songs, insignias, antics, and team descriptors by all Michigan schools” (Michigan State Board of Education, 2003). The State Board of Education recognized that individual school districts should adopt their individual policies and recommendations, but the state board was issuing a statewide recommendation to further the process along. The resolution cited the United States Commission on Civil Rights and their Resolution dated April 13, 2001, asking for schools to consider the perpetual misrepresentations these mascots portray in public schools and their effect on student learning.

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights (DCR) filed a complaint with the United States Department of Education on February 8, 2013, asking the Department to prohibit the use of these mascots in Michigan schools and filed a formal complaint against 35 Michigan school districts. The Michigan DCR states that such imagery negatively affects student learning and hinders their capacity to learn. On May 29, 2013, the U.S Department of Education and their Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued a response to the Michigan DCR, stating:

Based on the foregoing, OCR concludes that the information you provided is not sufficient... As OCR informed you in its March 4 letter, in complaints involving mascots, names and other associated imagery, OCR examines whether the complaint allegations are sufficient to constitute a racially hostile environment. A racially hostile environment is one in which racially harassing conduct takes places that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent to limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient’s programs or services. [...]OCR is therefore dismissing your complaints as of the date of this letter.¹

¹ http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcr/USDofEd5-31_423125_7.pdf

The Department of Civil Rights in Michigan responded with the following statement:

... We are disappointed that US Ed considered our complaint based only on the previously established "hostile environment" standard, but chose not to consider whether the standard itself needs to be reexamined based on the empirical evidence we provided showing that it fails to prevent harm to students. MDCR believes the evidence is clear that students are being hurt by the continued use of American Indian mascots and imagery. We will continue to look for ways to ensure all students are equally protected. MDCR is reviewing the decision and considering next steps.²

This discourse draws into question the potential motivations school districts and school boards have to retain American Indian mascots in public schools. There is evidence pointing to the psychological harm in continuing the use of these mascots in schools, and their damaging effect on American Indian students. Other states have failed to remove their American Indian mascots in public schools and communities have disagreed on whether to support or disapprove their removal. Ultimately, Michigan is left with the 2003 statewide policy recommendation to guide their school districts toward repealing American Indian mascot usage. From the year 2003 onward there was no further policy action at the state level, requiring school districts to implement district policy changes on their own.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will be organized based on the following studies related to the variables of interest and their relationship to Native American mascots: (1) self-perception theory and its relationship to sports mascots; (2) the difficulty in surveying and identifying Native Americans and the sheer lack of Native American students attending public schools; (3) the positive correlation between higher education and racial awareness; and, (4) the financial costs to

² http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdcr/MascotStatement632013_423141_7.pdf

universities and school districts when repealing the mascots. To my knowledge, a study has not been performed like this and I believe this is due to cultural acceptance of Indian mascots.

3.1 Self-Perception Theory

Daryl Bem proposed self-perception theory, suggesting that individual attitudes and beliefs are formed after drawing conclusions based on one's own behavior. Internal thoughts and emotions play very little role in our self-perception, and instead it is based on our behavior. This theory further suggests that self-perception is manifested in the "patterns of our behaviors and the situations in which we are behaving," and account for attitude formation in individuals (Laird 2007, 11). The theory assumes that our actions are derived prior to our feelings being created. Americans cheer for Indian sports mascots and because of this, we enjoy the Indian mascots. The act of cheering comes before the initial thinking and attempt to understand and process the race-based symbol and imagery (Plummer, 2009; Laird, 2007). This psychology theory assumes an individual level of analysis and though my paper uses a school district level of analysis, the theory was used because it more accurately reflects the articles in the literature review and the challenge Americans face in rejecting the Native American mascot. It establishes the difficulty communities face in persuading citizens to see the stereotyping of Native Americans when using Indian mascots.

This theory applies to the creation and use of Native American mascots in the United States and their use as a sports image. The NCAA and United States Department of Education allow for Native Americans to be depicted as sports imagery. These images reflect their political power and wealth. Due to their constrained image as a sports mascot, their political power is diminished and this is reflected in their current behavior. The population develops their attitudes

for Native American mascots by observing their own behavior and deciding what attitude must have caused that behavior.

3.2 Lack of American Indians in Public K-12 Schools

A. Counting American Indians: Concerns with the Census

One of the reasons why a study like this has not been performed is due to the general acceptance of Indian mascots in American culture and historic racism. The following study is important in understanding the complexity in measuring the Native American and American Indian population in the United States. Ultimately this sheds further insight on the data produced by the United States Census Bureau and its effectiveness overall.

Jobe (2001) traces the history of the enumeration of American Indians by the U.S. Census Bureau and the political ramifications of not having them counted until the year 1890. Furthermore, the Census Bureau has repeatedly altered the definition of being American Indian and there are policy ramifications for doing so. In the United States, the concept of being American Indian has changed multiple times based on residence, appearance, notions of purity of blood, lifestyle location, and self-perception.

In the year 1860, the Census Bureau reported 44,020 total taxed American Indians in the United States, ranging from two American Indians in Mississippi to 17,798 in California. In the year 1870, the U.S. Census Bureau changed the definition of American Indian to subdivide the race into two identities and presented these in the Census dataset. They were identified as American Indians “sustaining tribal relations” or American Indians possessing “out of tribal relations.” The former consisted of American Indians on reservations who maintained a nomadic

lifestyle, while the latter referred to American Indians not living on tribal reservations or those who counted as maintaining a nomadic lifestyle (Jobe, 2001).

The Census altered its practice in 2000, thereby allowing individuals to report more than one racial category and self-identify as mixed race, the number of American Indians rose dramatically. In the year 2000, over 4 million people identified as being American Indian of mixed race, compared with 2 million in 1990 (Jobe, 2001). The Census Bureau study in 2010 found that the American Indian and Alaskan Native population were extremely concentrated with 71 percent of the total counties in the United States having less than 1.5 percent Indian or Alaskan Native and of the counties, 29 percent were in Oklahoma (Norries and Haeffel, 2012). Contrary to popular belief, the number of Native Americans is not decreasing, nor rapidly declining. Native Americans make a strong economic impact. The misconception of a shrinking population could largely be due to the way their population clusters, as noted above. Their increasing population is also seen by their economic influence, when measuring purchasing patterns. Indian tribes often play an understated role in the county's economy. Casinos owned and operated by Indian reservations largely contribute to economic growth and tribal governments spend money purchasing goods and services (Giago, 2012).

B. Counting American Indians: Secondary and Post-Secondary Attendance

Several studies have reported that the lack of American Indian students attending public schools in the United States is the reason why school districts have failed to repeal American Indian mascots (Castagno et al. 2008; Tovares 2002; Reamey 2009). Proponents of American Indian mascots frequently cite the lack of opposition from American Indian students on campus, yet the total population of such students on campus would greatly influence their voice. For this reason, one of the primary variables of interest is the percentage of Native American households

in Michigan school districts. The data relies on each household registering as primarily American Indian.

Castagno et al. (2008) reviewed culturally responsive schooling techniques for indigenous youth living in the United States and attending public schools. They purport that in 2006 there were approximately 624,000 American Indian and Native American students in the United States attending primary and secondary schools. This number accounts for only 1 percent of the total public school enrollment. Out of the total number, only 92 percent attend public schools while the others attend schools operated and funded by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Castagno et al. 2008).

Tovares analyzed the University of Dakota's Fighting Sioux and the history of their mascot, finding that the sheer lack of American Indian students attending the university is a strong reason why the Fighting Sioux was allowed to remain as their mascot. In the fall of 1999, the University of North Dakota had 349 American Indian students enrolled, totaling 3.8 percent of their 10,590 student body (Tovares, 2002).

Reamey (2009) examines the University of Illinois and their mascot, the Fighting Illini. Reamey (2009) cites the lack of Native American students as one of the reasons the University of Illinois was able to maintain their Fighting Illini mascot. If the Native American population on campus would have been stronger, there might have been more opposition to the mascot or proponents would have reconsidered its use. Of their 13,000 student body campus, 69 percent wanted to keep Chief Illiniwek at games and ceremonies as the unofficial school mascot (Reamey, 2009).

3.3 Education Increases Racial Awareness

A. Higher Education: Increasing Racial Awareness

Multiple studies have been conducted on the necessity of education and its ability to influence racial barriers and lessen cultural misunderstandings (Kernahan, 2007; Hogan and Mallott 2005). To my knowledge, there is no study on the value of higher education and increasing cultural understanding of Native Americans; however, the literature below can be used as a benchmark to understand the value of higher education courses and their influence on understanding minority populations and cultures. There is a strong link between increasing educational awareness and improving cultural understanding of minority populations (Kernahan and Davis, 2007).

Hogan and Mallott (2005) use the modern racism scale to assess the impact of education on college students' prejudicial attitudes toward African Americans. Since the 1980s, the population of African Americans in universities has increased steadily and introduced students to multicultural curricula. These courses have become requirements in order to increase civic participation, while making students more aware of diversity on and off campus. Fifty-eight percent of universities around the country require a single diversity course in order to graduate with an undergraduate degree. Forty-two percent of these universities require two or more courses. Such classes are especially required in graduate degree granting programs. Teacher certification requires multiple multicultural courses in order to gain stimulating multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skillset. In the year 2000, 60 percent of universities in the United States instituted multicultural course offerings, although many of these were not required in order to earn a diploma (Hogan and Mallott, 2005).

Hogan and Mallott (2005) found that multicultural courses heighten student awareness of social problems that confront minorities. They examined previous studies utilizing the Modern Racism Scale, comparing students who were near completion of the multicultural course requirement with students who were just beginning this class. The survey examined student awareness of racial differences and multicultural issues. The authors argue that the timing of the diversity courses can largely contribute to multicultural awareness. Students who are just beginning a diversity course are less tolerant because they have not experienced the university, compared with students who have experienced living and going to school in a university setting. Their study (2005) examined whether completing a general education course requirement in race and gender issues reduces racial prejudice.

Kernahan and Davis (2007) found that as students participate in diversity courses, they experience an increase in awareness and in feelings of racial guilt and responsibility. The authors had a class answer questions regarding racial stereotyping before and after taking a prejudice and racism course. The questionnaire took place at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. Students were presented with the following scenario:

You walk into a jewelry store in downtown Washington, DC. There are already two Black customers waiting. The only salesperson, who is White, looks at you and seems relieved. He comes over to help you first, ignoring the Black customers who are waiting for help. What do you think of this salesperson's special treatment of you? (Kernahan and Davis, 2007, p. 50)

The questions utilized both qualitative and quantitative (measured on a Likert scale) response formats to measure the participants' feelings toward prejudice and racism before and after the class. The data showed students' changing awareness. Over the semester, the students used the word "racism" more when describing situations that reflect prejudice. In the pretest, only 20.8 percent mentioned the word "racist" in the first exam; however, by the end of the class 41.7

percent used the word “racism.” In comparing the results, respondents experienced a greater understanding and analysis of racism and its appearance in society (Kernahan and Davis, 2007).

Both of the studies in this literature review provides support for the hypothesis that education increases awareness of racism. Thus, households with higher education are more likely to have taken multiple diversity courses, and therefore more likely to understand the necessity in repealing the Native American mascot and its potential psychological harm to American Indian students. There is no study directly correlating a link between understanding the racial implication of American Indian mascots and participating in higher education courses, although the literature shows that cultural understanding increases with years in school. Thus, one of my primary variables of interest is that as postsecondary educational attainment in school districts increases, so too does the likelihood of repealing mascots.

3.4 Cost to Repeal Mascots Dissuades School Districts

One of the primary variables of interest in this research study is poverty level in school districts. It is expected to be a strong predictor of whether school districts consider repealing race-based mascots. The literature below examines the cost imposed on universities and school districts choosing to repeal the mascots, as this appears to be the strongest deterrent when a school district is choosing whether to repeal the mascot. School districts with higher poverty levels will be more averse to repealing the mascot due to the upfront costs imposed on their communities and households.

Universities and post-secondary institutions often face financial concern when dealing with the cost to repeal race-based mascots. For them it is not about the upfront costs imposed on the schools, but the potential loss in money after the repeal. The tuition-paying students and

donating-alumni often matter more to universities because they rely on outside funding. Reamey (2009) examines multiple universities and colleges who considered repealing their mascots. Reamey cites that one of the biggest concerns facing the University of North Dakota was the wealthy alumnus and Las Vegas casino owner who threatened to discontinue his promised donation of \$100 million to the university if his “beloved Fighting Sioux” mascot was removed. The Board of Directors at the University of North Dakota decided to keep the mascot and the \$100 million donation, despite protests and heated discussions on campus. Reamey (2009) found that the money donated to the school from alumni mattered more than their current student body.

Two concerns have repeatedly appeared in articles discussing school districts repealing race-based mascots and replacing them with non-Indian mascots. These concerns relate to: (1) litigation fees for school districts; and, (2) the cost to redesign schools when reinventing the mascot symbol and logo. School districts budget on a biennial and annual basis, so the cost to redesign athletic gear and gymnasium floors may be small but significant if districts are already on tight budgets. Districts may incur litigation fees if they file a complaint against the school board or State Department of Education for originating a mascot ban. School districts can incur additional fees in order to pay for attorneys, while others will incur fees related to penalties, damages, or withholding of the State School Fund. These costs are often mentioned by school districts when identifying reasons not to repeal the mascots. (Reamey, 2009; Castillo, 2011).

In Oregon, several school districts analyzed the costs to repeal their Native American mascots and found the overall costs were steep. Roseburg Public Schools created a Native American Mascot Advisory Committee in 2007 to determine the additional charges it would incur for repealing their American Indian mascots. It estimated that the school district would require an additional \$345,650 in state funding. Another district in Oregon, the Enterprise

School District, changed its mascot name and symbol from the “Savages” to the “Outlaws” in 2010. The school district estimated the additional costs imposed were between \$15,000 and \$20,000 that year. School districts averaged out the cost to repeal their American Indian mascots by each school and found that two cost drivers were the most excessive (Castillo, 2012). Gymnasium floors averaged from \$30,000 to \$40,000. School uniforms averaged from \$60 to \$150 a piece. The cost to redesign school logos would be up to \$20,000 (Castillo, 2012). These costs may appear relatively small but districts often cite the additional fees as the primary reason for not wanting to retire the American Indian mascots.

Clegg (2002) analyzes the controversy of using race-based mascots while citing Maryland’s Commission of Indian Affairs and their announcement to target thirteen schools still using American Indian mascots. In this article, Clegg states that it will cost approximately \$80,000 for one school to replace their uniforms, letterhead, and gymnasium floor. This cost becomes one of the driving factors against repealing the race-based mascots in Maryland. Clegg asserts that the subject was repeatedly cited in local newspapers, with arguments regarding potential state tax increases and tightening of school district budget (Clegg, 2002).

Redesigning the mascot is only one of many school district fees. Many school districts battle their state boards of education and state departments, the cost to begin litigation and reoccurring legal fees often drives the cost upward for school boards. Riede (2001) analyzes how the American Indian mascots have created division between faculty, administrators, alumni, and students. In one example, a school district in Wisconsin had a special election in 2009 to recall three of the board members who favored repealing the American Indian mascot. Though the election resulted in allowing the board members to stay, it ended up costing the school district \$7,000 to hold the special election (Riede, 2001). This was cited as one reason not to consider

repealing race-based mascots, especially in districts that are underfunded. Since the community and students opposed the mascot change, additional charges occurred to hold a separate school board election and hire attorneys. This is only one of many additional charges that dissuade school districts and board members from considering the repeal of race-based mascots, aside from the emotional turmoil and energy.

In another case, Riede (2001) examines school districts in Huntley, Illinois, that are part of a Chicago suburb with strong ties to and appreciation of their American Indian mascots. The school board voted 4-3 in favor of keeping the Redskins mascot alive in their local high schools. In retribution toward the Superintendent who recommended their removal, the school board recommended the middle schools now use Redskins as the school mascot. The Superintendent estimated that the legal battle against the school board would cost between \$5,000 and \$25,000 in attorney fees, and thus no legal action occurred. Based on the literature, one can argue that additional fines and fees imposed on districts play a pivotal role in whether American Indian mascots are repealed. Costs vary from district to district and it is difficult for states to estimate these fees upfront, since they vary depending on the schools. However, many authors have cited the costs infringed on public schools as the primary reason to allow the continuation of American Indian mascots. The cost to repeal the mascots is clearly the strongest deterrent for any school district or university questioning whether they need to be repealed.

IV. HYPOTHESES

The current study aims to answer the question of what factors influence school districts in the United States to repeal the use of Native American mascots, using Michigan as a case study. This work uses difference-in-means to test the significance level between the classification of

school districts (repealing the mascot versus not repealing the mascot) and the variables of interest. Based on my literature review, I have created three hypotheses on the relationships between the variables and group classification of school districts.

Below are the three Hypotheses:

H_1 : School districts that banned their mascots report higher values of Native American households compared with those that did not ban their mascots.

H_2 : School districts that banned their mascots report more households with higher levels of education compared with those that did not ban their mascots.

H_3 : School districts that banned their mascots report more households with lower poverty levels compared with those that did not ban their mascots.

This research study uses difference-in-means tests to measure whether the means of each variable above are significantly different between districts repealing the mascot versus those that did not. Since the statewide resolution occurred in 2003, this case study examines school districts that repealed the mascot ban after 2003. Forty-nine Michigan school districts that used or currently use Native American mascots were selected for this study. Seven of these school districts repealed their Native American mascots, while the other 42 did not. This leaves 499 elementary and unified school districts in Michigan, since they were unaffected by the 2003 resolution. Either these schools did not utilize Native American mascots or they had already removed them prior to the statewide resolution passing in 2003. Regression analysis was not used to measure the significance of the variables on repealing the Native American mascots because the sample size was significantly small and the presence of school districts who repealed their mascot was too few in number.

Moreover, it uses 10 randomly drawn samples from the 49 school districts, while identifying seven that repealed the mascot and 14 that did not. The 14 that did not repeal their mascots were randomly sampled due to disproportionate number of school districts who did not

repeal their mascots compared to those that did. In order to create a difference-in-means test that had a comparable ratio of 2:1, the 14 districts were randomly selected from the 42 samples. This research project does not test the associations in the analyses because the significance was so low; by contrast, the means tests yielded better results. Selecting multiple random samples of the over represented group, allows to better discern the mean in the ban vs non-ban groups.

Gary King (2001) studied rare events analysis and the problems when researchers rely on logistic regression for statistical analysis of datasets where the dependent variable is binary. King found that in international relations, specifically quantitative analysis, using logistic regression to measure international events is near impossible because the dataset are so skewed with samples where a non-event happened. King uses the example of entering into a World War, where a country, like the United States, has few years where it actually *went to war* compared with years where it was currently in war or at peace, (King and Zeng, 2001). This research project faces the same shortcoming where there are fewer ones (repealing the Native American mascot) than zeroes (not repealing the mascot).

For example, with the data for repealing the Native American mascots, King would argue that logistic regression is not a good measure of estimation because the repealing of the mascots far outweigh the chances of them not being repealed and this is visible in the dataset. The binary dependent model is limited to whether the mascot is repealed or not. King finds that using other measures of analyzes are more effective if the dependent variable is binary, (King and Zeng, 2001). The difference-in-means is a better fit than logistic regression. Difference-in-means tests are a better predictor method of analyses than the typical logistic regression due to the skewed binary variable.

This study uses difference-in-means to measure whether the Indian population, education level, or poverty level significantly differ between the two groups of school districts (those that repeal the bans vs those that do not). Although the proportion of districts that did not repeal the mascot was far greater than those that did, selecting samples allowed for better ratios to perform the tests. Ten random samples were drawn to remove the possibility of selection bias. This study examines the school districts that repealed the American Indian mascot after the 2003 resolution, the data used from the American Community Survey was published in 2011 and the data was averaged from years 2007 to 2011. This study examines what characteristics affect school districts to repeal their use of American Indian mascots after the resolution had been passed.

Michigan was selected for this study because its State Board of Education strongly recommended repealing Native American mascots in 2003 and urged school districts through a statewide resolution. However, in February 2013 the Michigan Department of Civil Rights filed a complaint with the United States Department of Education and its Office of Civil Rights because school districts were failing to comply with the necessary repealing of race-based mascots. The Department of Civil Rights asked the federal agency to issue an order prohibiting the continued use of American Indian mascots or imagery in public schools. In many ways, Michigan is a special case of the State Department making a formal request for Native American mascots to be repealed in public schools as well as one of the few states to have a separate Department of Civil Rights. Other states tended to rely on their Departments of Civil Rights or Departments of Justice to file formal complaints.

V. DATA

All school district data were published by the ACS in 2011 and they comprised five-year average estimates from 2007 to 2011. The ACS is an official Census Bureau survey that is part of the decennial census program. Specifically, it is an annual survey of communities where one in 38 households is invited to participate. The data collected were then processed by the Census Bureau and formatted into datasets to be utilized by communities, state governments, agencies, and federal programs to help allocate over 400 billion dollars a year in government funding (Census Bureau, 2013). For this reason, my variables are measured by percentage of households, not individuals, and the unit of analysis is school districts. The surveys are distributed per household for one member of the household to complete (Census Bureau, 2013).

The data surveyed relates to age, sex, race, family and relationships, income and benefits, health insurance, education, veteran status, disabilities, employment, and housing. The ACS collects data over 60 months from all population levels. The one- and three-year estimates are restricted by population size, ranging from 65,000+ and 20,000+ populations, and for this reason, the five-year estimates were used in this study. Five-year estimates are data averages for Michigan school districts from 2007 to 2011 and are the most comprehensive data in Michigan. In summary, the data used in this survey was school district data that had already been averaged and calculated by the ACS (Census Bureau, 2013).

The group classification of whether a school district repealed its schools' use of American Indian mascots were provided by the State Department of Civil Rights in Michigan. The State Department of Michigan identified and confirmed the school districts in Michigan that had repealed the use of American Indian mascots. Despite using only one state, this case study provides useful information on what drives school districts to repeal the use of American Indian

mascots. To my knowledge, no published study has used quantitative analysis to measure what affects school districts and their decisions to repeal the use of American Indian mascots in schools. In the literature, there is a serious gap in what accounts for public school districts continuing their use of Native American mascots. For instance, previous studies have not explained why Native American mascots have failed to be repealed in K-12 schools. This study takes three reoccurring variables that have been discussed in the literature and examines their likelihood when school districts repeal such mascots. This study also provides comparable data that can be further analyzed to determine the impact of individual household characteristics on school districts' decisions to repeal race-based mascots.

5.1 Variables of Interest

The three variables of most interest in this analysis are percentage of Native American households in school districts, educational attainment of households, and percentage of households below the poverty line. Since seven school districts repealed their mascots, I used all seven and then randomly sampled 14 of the school districts that did not repeal their mascots. I then used difference-in-means tests between the group classification and each variables of interest was tested separately. A difference-in-means test was performed for each group and each independent variable, allowing for 10 samples per variable of interest.

The percentage of American Indian households in school districts is measured as the total percentage of American Indian households in each school district. These households need to register with the Census Bureau as being American Indian or Native American since the self-reported racial category was the same. One can assume that the percentage of households registering as American Indian is an adequate representation of the number of students

registering in each school district as Indian. The sheer lack of Native American students in school districts is often reflected in the literature as the primary reason why Indian mascots are allowed in schools (Jobe, 2001; Castagno et al., 2008; Reamey, 2009). Due to historical racism and the general acceptance of Indian stereotypes, many Americans feel these mascots bring honor to Indian culture and their tribes.

Educational attainment in the community is measured by using two variables: percentage of the population with a Bachelor's degree and percentage of the population with an Advanced degree. These two variables allow me to measure the association between having a bachelor's degree or advanced college degree and repealing the mascot. The assumption is that the higher the level of education in a school district's population, the greater the chance the school district will repeal the Native American mascots because the households in these districts would have an increased understanding of the racism and cultural misgivings associated with their use (Hogan and Mallot, 2005; Kernahan and Davis, 2007). The percentage of households does not correlate with the highest degree obtained for each household. Instead, these numbers reflect whether the households in these school districts have the corresponding degrees. These variables still reflect the educational attainment of each school district but not the highest degree obtained per se; however, these variables are a general indicator of community educational attainment and its potential effect on the willingness of each district to repeal the mascot.

Poverty is captured by the variable measuring the percentage of households in each school district in poverty over the previous 12 months. One question is how overall community poverty levels affect whether school districts invest in repealing Native American mascots. If community poverty levels are high, the chances that a school district chooses to repeal the use of Native American mascots decreases. This variable is used as an income proxy for two reasons.

Firstly, school districts with high poverty levels are less likely to be able to afford to remodel mascot images and logos. Secondly, the households in poverty within these school districts are less favorable toward a potential increase in taxes or school fees due to the repealing of American Indian mascots. The percentage of poverty-stricken households in school districts could thus affect whether the community is interested in repealing these mascots (Reamey, 2009; Castillo, 2012; Clegg, 2002; Riede, 2001).

This research project has potential for bias, defined as the tendency that prevents the unprejudiced consideration of a research question. Bias was diminished because 10 random samples were drawn in this study. Each sample consisted of 14 school districts that did not implement a ban and seven school districts that did. Another potential for bias is relying on ACS data which is self-reported household data that is limited to what households report. Only one in 38 households per year receive an ACS request to participate in the survey; however, the five year estimate provided by ACS is more accurate because the number of households expand due to the five year time frame. ACS is historically more accurate than Census data because it occurs annually (Census Bureau, 2013).

VI. RESULTS

The analysis focuses on a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data relating to Michigan school districts and the repealing of their race-based mascots. The quantitative data include the results of the difference-in-means tests for the 10 random samples. As stated in the data section, the significance level, as the measure of association between the variables, was so low that it was not reported in the results. The qualitative data comprise the information gathered

from online sources relating to the seven mascot bans in Michigan school districts. The results in this section are arranged into three subsections showing the difference-in-means test results for each of the three variables.

Table A: Difference-in-means tests of ten sample groups						
School districts that banned their mascots report higher percentages of Native American households compared with those that did not ban their mascots.						
Group	Ban	N	Mean	SD	T	P
1	No	14	0.96	1.25	1.38	<0.10
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
2	No	14	0.36	0.50	-0.64	0.73
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
3	No	14	0.89	0.90	1.61	<0.10
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
4	No	14	0.64	0.77	0.59	0.28
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
5	No	14	0.61	0.15	0.78	0.22
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
6	No	14	0.71	1.08	0.79	0.22
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
7	No	14	0.87	1.13	1.25	0.11
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
8	No	14	0.88	1.14	1.28	0.11
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
9	No	14	0.58	0.85	0.43	0.34
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		
10	No	14	0.67	0.87	0.79	0.22
	Yes	7	0.47	0.26		

*Mean and Standard Deviation are percentages listed from 0 to 100, not 0 to 1.

Table B: Difference-in-means tests of ten sample groups						
School districts that banned their mascots would report higher percentages of Bachelor's Degrees earned compared to those that did not ban their mascots.						
Group	Ban	N	Mean	SD	T	p
1	No	14	19.07	15.84	-0.99	0.83
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
2	No	14	31.70	20.26	1.10	0.14
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
3	No	14	23.91	16395	-0.11	0.55
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
4	No	14	26.99	21.08	0.36	0.14
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
5	No	14	24.00	16.65	-0.10	0.54
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
6	No	14	23.33	17.25	-0.22	0.58
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
7	No	14	24.21	16.57	-0.06	0.53
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
8	No	14	18.41	9.86	-1.38	0.90
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
9	No	14	88.33	7.14	0.40	0.19
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		
10	No	14	30.40	20.37	0.89	0.83
	Yes	7	24.60	9.59		

*Mean and Standard Deviation are percentages listed from 0 to 100, not 0 to 1.

Table C: Difference-in-means tests of ten sample groups						
School districts that banned their mascots would report higher percentages of Advanced Degrees earned compared to those that did not ban their mascots.						
Group	Ban	N	Mean	SD	T	p
1	No	14	7.32	8.20	-0.68	0.75
	Yes	7	9.20	6.31		
2	No	14	13.09	10.89	1.09	0.13
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
3	No	14	9.75	8.94	0.19	0.43
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
4	No	14	11.47	11.44	0.65	0.26
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
5	No	14	9.30	8.91	0.03	0.49
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
6	No	14	9.14	9.29	-0.02	0.51
	Yes	7	9.20	4.33		
7	No	14	9.29	8.27	0.03	0.47
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
8	No	14	6.39	3.56	-1.49	0.92
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
9	No	14	12.96	11.18	1.10	0.14
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		
10	No	14	7.20	5.09	-0.94	0.81
	Yes	7	9.20	4.31		

*Mean and Standard Deviation are percentages listed from 0 to 100, not 0 to 1.

Table D: Difference-in-means tests of ten sample groups						
School districts that banned their mascots report more households with lower poverty levels compared with those that did not ban their mascots.						
Group	Ban	N	Mean	SD	T	P
1	No	14	15.18	7.55	-0.93	0.19
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
2	No	14	14.41	8.61	-1.04	0.16
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
3	No	14	12.42	4.91	-1.52	<0.10
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
4	No	14	14.39	9.37	-1.03	0.16
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
5	No	14	14.06	6.09	-1.17	0.14
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
6	No	14	16.38	8.36	-0.68	0.26
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
7	No	14	15.64	8.25	-0.82	0.22
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
8	No	14	15.29	6.96	7.18	0.19
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
9	No	14	16.56	9.20	-0.64	0.27
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		
10	No	14	14.48	9.01	-1.02	0.17
	Yes	7	20.00	12.69		

*Mean and Standard Deviation are percentages listed from 0 to 100, not 0 to 1.

6.1 Results from Difference-In-Means tests

My literature review suggests that all the above hypotheses should have significant results, since each variable of interest should be significantly different between districts that removed the Native American mascot and those that did not. None of the samples showed significant difference between the mean group classifications and each variable of interest. This finding is contrary to my literature review; the results are expressed in further detail below.

Table A reflects the difference-in-means tests of the 10 sample groups of the relationship between school districts repealing the mascot versus not repealing them and the population of Native Americans. Table A shows the likelihood of a positive relationship between school

districts implementing a mascot ban and the Native American population. Only one of the 10 samples showed a significant relationship between repealing the mascot and having a strong Native American population. Sample 3 of Table A shows a positive relationship between repealing the mascot and having a high Native American population, suggesting that school districts in Michigan ($N=21$, per sample) with high Native American populations are more likely to repeal their mascots ($M=0.47$; $SD=0.26$), $t(1.38) = 15.22$, $p \leq 0.10$, $CI 0.31 - 0.09$) compared with not repealing them. However, this single occurrence does not allow me to draw any broad conclusions about repealing Native American mascots and having a large Native American population.

Tables B and C reflect the relationship between postsecondary education and school districts repealing the mascot. Table B shows the positive relationship between school districts repealing the mascot and educational attainment of Bachelor's degree in the community. Table C reflects the relationship between repealing the mascot and earning an Advanced degree. These samples show no significant relationship between repealing the mascot and an increase in education levels. The literature suggested a positive correlation between these variables; however, the data in Tables B and C show no positive relationship.

Table D expresses whether there was a significantly negative relationship between repealing the mascot and poverty level. I hypothesize that more samples express a negative relationship between repealing the mascot ban and having a low poverty level; thus, a school district's likelihood of repealing the mascot increases as poverty level decreases in the district. In Table D, sample 3 shows a negative relationship between these two variables. The results from sample 3 show that school districts in Michigan ($N=21$, per sample) with high poverty levels are less likely to repeal the mascot ($M=20.00$; $SD=12.69$), $t(-1.52) = 6.91$, $p \leq 0.10$, $CI 10.94 -$

18.95) compared with them not repealing ($M=12.42$; $SD=4.91$) the mascot. However, as before, this single sample does not affect my determination that I fail to reject the null hypothesis.

6.2 Results from Qualitative Analysis

Based on the results of the difference-in-means tests, I reject my hypotheses of a relationship between the mascot bans in Michigan school districts and the community attributes of educational attainment, Native American population size, and community poverty levels. However, I can further examine the school districts and their bans at a qualitative level of analysis by reviewing news articles that provide further insight into the reasons school districts in Michigan repealed their race-based mascots. This qualitative analysis analyzes three school districts out of the seven that repealed their mascots: the Muskegon City School District, Milan School District and Marshall Public School District.

A. Muskegon City School District

The families in the Muskegon City School District of Michigan had little input when it came to the decision to repeal the race-based Indian mascot in their local high schools. However, the two factors contributing most to the school board requiring the repeal of American Indian mascots were criticism from the Native American Council and the need to consolidate middle schools in order to save district dollars. A controversial mascot debate occurred in the Ottawa Hills High School community, which ultimately led to the Muskegon School Board repealing all Indian mascots and banning them entirely. The controversy began in 2004, only a year after the Michigan State Board of Education requested that school districts repeal their Indian mascots.

The high school was nicknamed *the Indians*, but it changed its name to *the Bengals* when the Executive Director of Athletics, Kurt Johnson, changed the school's name in 2004. This change occurred after a request by the school district. Johnson suggested that the concerns of the Native American Council fueled the decision to repeal the mascot and ensure that the new mascot would not be offensive to any racial group (Marnville, 2012, February 2013).

Future students entering Ottawa Hills High School did not express resistance to the new mascot since they had no prior relationship with it. Johnson reported that alumni and community members expressed the greatest resistance to the new mascot (WZZM Press, 2013; The Grand Rapids Press, 2009). Alumni and families in support of the Indian mascot signed a petition online and presented this to the Muskegon Public School Board, requesting that it reinstate the Muskegon Big Red Indian as the official school district logo (Petition Online, 2009).

The request from the Native American Council was not the only major factor persuading the Muskegon School Board to produce a district-wide repeal of Indian mascots. The decision to repeal Indian mascots also came when the school board decided that the district would consolidate several middle schools into what became Muskegon Middle School because of funding cuts and low enrollment rates. Both Steele and Bunker Middle Schools closed and transformed into Muskegon Middle School, which adopted a new mascot, the Big Red. The district informed the press that their intention was to reinvent their middle school students' identity and deconstruct the association with the American Indian mascot image (The Grand Rapids Press, 2009; Trzaska, 2013).

The information from the qualitative research can help us deconstruct the information from the quantitative research. This new information sheds light on the decision to repeal the mascots in the Muskegon School District and suggests that the repeal was caused by the request

made by the Native American Council combined with the funding problems being faced at the district level and the decision to combine schools. My quantitative variables did not measure the effect of these outside factors on the decision to repeal the Indian mascot in the Muskegon School District.

B. Milan School District

The decision making of the Milan School Board was greatly influenced by the families in the local community. The families in the school district had a significant impact on the decision to repeal American Indian imagery, while allowing the Indian logo and nickname to remain intact. Ultimately, the community at large and designated committee decided to repeal the Indian imagery, but the alumni and families that testified before the committee affected the decision making. The Milan School Board decided to repeal Native American imagery from all schools in its district. It began phasing out Indian imagery in April 2012 by formulating a committee to redesign the mascot. Pushback came when the decision originally requested that all school districts repeal any kind of Indian imagery, as school districts wanted to keep the nickname Big Reds (Arndt, 2013; Marnville, February 2013).

The debate in April 2012 began by discussing the extent to which Native American imagery needed to be removed. The school board originally wanted all Native American imagery removed, but resistance from faculty and students meant that the Milan School Board decided that Native American imagery could remain in schools to facilitate understanding of Native American history. The committee decided that it would benefit neither the students nor the faculty to remove all Indian imagery from schools. The resolution was altered to request that

Indian mascots be removed; however, the mascot names could remain Indian but Indian imagery needed to be eliminated (Arndt, 2013; Marnville, 2012).

The committee charged with creating a new logo for Milan High School had the challenging task of keeping “Milan Big Red” as the name, while altering the symbol. The board appointed a 22-member committee that comprised community members, school staff, and students. Members of the public also offered ideas for the new mascot and imagery. A survey distributed by the committee received over 120 responses from the public. The designs included images of a Hawk, the word ‘Big Red’, and the letter ‘M’ (WZZM Press, 2013).

In January 2013, the committee recommended Milan schools approve the image of a hawk as the new symbol and this passed unanimously. The public and committee members were allowed to present ideas for the new mascot. Milan community members voiced tremendous opposition on social media to the board and committee. They created a Facebook page named “Once a Big Red Always a Big Red.” When the Milan Board of Education was presented with an image of the new mascot logo, the reaction from the public was negative. The logo was a letter ‘M’ with hawk eyes. The public believed that the new mascot image did not fit with the words, Big Red, which the community, students, and alumni wanted to keep as the school logo. Another criticism came from the imagery of the letter, as ‘M’ did not properly resemble the words, Big Red. This stirred confusion from opposition and other leagues (Marnville, May 2013; Arndt, 2013). The committee meetings ended with an agreement between committee members, the Milan Board of Education, the public, and alumni. Native American communities weighed in and testified in support of the Hawk nickname. Thus, Milan schools became the Hawks (Marnville, May 2013).

Of the three quantitative variables examined by using difference-in-means, none was mentioned in the qualitative research above. The qualitative research above suggests that the Milan School District was influenced by the community. The alumni in the Milan School District heavily favored the Indian mascot, as noted earlier when they created a Facebook page for community members to reject its repeal. By far the most interesting comparison to the difference-in-means was my initial assumption that communities with larger Native American populations increase the likelihood of repealing the mascot. However, based on the qualitative research, it seems as though the number of Native Americans matters less than the political weight each member carries.

C. Marshall Public School District

In the Marshall Public School District, Native American activists were the strongest factor to contribute to the repealing of Indian mascots. Native American activists actively rebelled against the Indian mascot. The debate began when Marshall High School changed its nickname to the Redhawks and discontinued the use of its former name the Redskins. After the Michigan State Board of Education requested school districts in Michigan repeal their Indian mascots, American Indian activists in Michigan complained that the mascot was offensive to their people. In September 2002, Marshall High School received multiple complaints from Native American activists. When the high school was debating which new mascot name to support, it allowed students to vote on the two potential mascots the school district was considering. The student body voted 324-240 in favor of the Redhawks over the Warriors. Several months after the decision had been made, alumni and community members voted to remove the school board members that were behind the Indian mascot repeal. This decision

ultimately led to the removal of the Marshall School Board members that advocated in favor of the Indian mascot (Associated Press, 2005; Marnville, February, 2013).

In light of my quantitative analysis, the results of this qualitative analysis were surprising. The difference-in-means showed no statistical relationship between repealing the mascot and having a strong Native American population in the community. However, Native American activists in Marshall School District brought forward the complaint and ultimately played an important role in repealing the mascot. The data from the ACS measured American Indian households within each school district, whereas the examined news articles refer to Native American activists in Michigan. We can assume that these were not all activists in the Marshall School District, which explains the insignificance when examining the results of the difference-in-means comparing the Native American count in each school district.

One of my variables of interest was the education level of households in Michigan, since research shows a positive relationship between postsecondary education and racial understanding. The qualitative research does little to explain how education level influences the likelihood of repealing the race-based mascot. Both the quantitative and the qualitative evidence suggest that having the highest level of education hardly influences whether a school district repeals its race-based Indian mascot. None of the qualitative research presented by media outlets mentions the effect of education level on the decision to repeal the Native American mascot (Associated Press, 2005).

VII. DISCUSSION

The insignificant results for all three variables could be due to the size of the dataset. The sample size of the school districts is small and is not an accurate reflection of combined school

districts in the United States. If the sample size were larger and consisted of an entire region and their Native American mascot bans, it would be a better predictor of banning the mascots. All three variables expressed insignificant results in the difference-in-means tests for each variable of interest tested against the two group classifications. There was a significant lack of correlation between the three variables and repealing the mascot; however, I cannot confirm these results would remain the same if the sample size were significantly larger or obtained multiple states. The sheer lack of data prevents this research from drawing any wide-scale conclusions about repealing the Native American mascots and the three variables discussed. However, the below discussion further expands on what other contributing factors might influence the insignificant results.

The lack of a correlation between education and repealing the Native American mascots suggest that educational attainment has very little impact on households' decision making. Educational attainment of families does not influence whether school districts are likely to repeal the Indian mascots. However, years in schools (specifically higher education) is formal education whereas other factors could educate the population on Native American mascots that was not accounted for in this research. Indeed, news of repealing mascots and information produced outside school might play a stronger role in educating families on whether Indian mascots should be repealed. Brochures produced in favor or against the mascot ban, testimony given during hearings, and news articles and videos all strongly affect the level of knowledge related to Indian mascots. Although this educational level cannot be quantified by years in school, it affects whether the community supports or opposes the repealing of Indian mascots. Future research should thus consider outside sources as a factor contributing to knowledge on and educational awareness of mascots.

The lack of a significant relationship between having a higher concentration of Native American households in school districts and repealing the race-based mascot is surprising. Although much of the literature discusses the implications of having such mascots in public schools and the impact of self-imagery for Indian students, it is interesting that there is no correlation between higher or lower concentrations of Native American households. However, there are several possible reasons for the data reflecting these numbers.

As my literature review already noted, there are concerns with using the United States Census data to report Native American behavior because prior reporting methods have been inconsistent (Jobe, 2001). Census data have historically never used the same procedure to track Native American descent. The literature also reports the alarming decrease in Native American families in the United States and the difficulty for researchers to capture their opinions (Riede, 2001; Kernahan, 2007). One could argue that the ACS, produced by the United States Census Bureau, is only another survey ill-equipped to shed light on American Indian behavior and habits (Jobe, 2001; Castagno et al., 2008).

The relation between poverty level and repealing the Native American mascot was insignificant, meaning no correlation between these variables. Based on previous news articles and research, I was surprised that poverty has no significant correlation with repealing the Indian mascot. Again, this could be a result of the small sample size and the sheer lack of school districts that repealed their Indian mascots. As discussed in the literature review, the information portrayed to citizens in the media suggests that the financial component to repealing the mascot dissuades policymakers and households. The cost of repealing the mascot becomes the most important factor. As all my variables of interest express no correlation with repealing the mascot, my data also suggest one more piece of information. Household data measured by school district

bear little weight to whether school districts repeal their mascots; other outstanding factors are more influential.

My qualitative research also suggests that other factors outside school districts play a stronger role. Future research should aim to examine counties or larger populations as opposed to school district data alone. Outstanding factors that cannot be quantified or measured across multiple populations play a larger role in repealing these mascots at the local level. In examining the three school districts analyzed in my qualitative research, I discovered that non-measurable factors largely affect school districts in Michigan. The Muskegon School District is a primary example of outstanding factors, such as district-wide cutbacks requiring the merger of two middle schools, affecting the repeal of Indian mascots. Even if my dataset had had more variables relating to households in Michigan school districts, none of the variables would have been able to account for district-wide cutbacks at the state level or the Facebook page that community members used to reject the repealing of their Indian mascot in the Milan School District. This page stirred up emotions against its repeal. The committee assigned to redesigning the mascot took many months to make its decision (Marnville, February 2013). These variables were thus outstanding factors that were not provided by the Census data and that could not be measured by the school district data. In the Marshall School District, American Indian activists fuelled the debate on whether it could maintain its Indian mascot. If it were not for these activists, the mascot may have remained. Moreover, news articles did not state whether these activists were strictly from the Marshall School District; however, one can assume that most were from outside this school district (Associated Press, 2005).

The Native American population is a primary example of one that lost power at an early stage, while wealthier more powerful individuals shaped its persona as a race. Not only is the

Native American culture difficult to mobilize because the population is splintered across the United States, but the population is belittled to a sports mascot. This has deeper implications for how our culture constructs this population (Jobe, 2001; Black, 2002; La Rocque et al., 2011). Self-perception theory assumes that our self-awareness and feelings are defined by observing our own behavior. Seeing sports media and general acceptance of the mascots allows for the population to generally accept the mascots and like them. The behavior of liking the mascots has appeared so strongly in observation that we continue the pattern (Laird, 2007).

This finding suggests that not only is the Indian population constrained to the image of a sports mascot, but these negative constructions belittle Native Americans and disable their political and social power. The self-perception of Native Americans likely contributes to the continuation of the mascot, because the studies show that a contributing factor to the tolerance for the Indian caricatures is from Indians themselves (Clegg, 2002; Reamey, 2009). These perceptions were not measured in my research paper because I did not survey Native Americans and their perceptions of the sports mascot. Self-perception theory suggests that the average person would not dismiss these mascots as inappropriate in sports because the community around them is supportive of their use. The repealing of the mascot is more challenging because the mascot is well perceived by most.

VIII. CONCLUSION

As a work of social science emphasizing our understanding of race-based mascots, this study positively contributes to the research question of why communities both positively and negatively perceive racial mascots. This research contributes to the policy question of what it will take to repeal these mascots and what factors communities take into account when the repeal

occurs. Clearly, the literature review establishes a need to reevaluate our desire to keep Indian mascots in public schools. This research contributes to others in its field by concluding that there is a growing body of evidence establishing the need to repeal these mascots in order to enhance educational outcome and create an equal system for students of all nationalities.

This research also sheds light on a larger policy question: what factors influence communities and what characteristics do these communities have? There is a clear need to repeal these mascots and much literature supports this conclusion. However, each community is so specific and localized that my qualitative and quantitative results suggest that very few general conclusions can be drawn regarding the factors present in communities that will make them more willing to repeal these mascots. There is deeper concern for race-based mascots in the United States, and there is no systematic way to explain why households in school districts would favor their repeal. The qualitative evidence suggests that each case varies depending on the school district. The athletics directors of some school districts favored a repeal, whereas in others school board members rallied behind the decision, with students assisting in redesigning the mascot. Ultimately, these agencies played a significant role in whether the mascot was effectively repealed, and they greatly affected the time span of how long the repeal took. These Michigan cases suggest that even at a national level, the decision to repeal a mascot in individual school districts varies on a case-by-case basis. As noted in the discussion section, this study was largely limited by a small sample size and this is the main reason for the insignificant results; however, there are several other factors that could have affected my research.

Self-perception theory assumes that our perceived individual actions are facilitated prior to our initial thinking and processing. One of the challenges is the length of time Indian mascots have existed in our culture and become acceptable practice in schools. Our perception of reality

is skewed to believe these mascots are appropriate without giving thought to their practice. One of the factors influencing this research and further research is the notion that our beliefs and perceptions are changing. The topic of whether Indian mascots are appropriate in schools has become more relevant, while spanning many states and their school districts.

As the practice of Indian sports mascots becomes more controversial and the repealing increases within school districts, the question is whether our attitudes and behaviors will also change. Self-perception theory assumes that as more individuals oppose the allowance of race-based mascots and the practice of stereotypical tribal chants becomes more inappropriate at sports games, the acceptance of these mascots will also disappear. Our individual actions and attitudes are created based on what attitudes others present and what we perceive to be appropriate. The theory assumes that as the acceptance of these mascots diminish the likelihood of repealing them would increase.

This research could also find that quantitative research using school districts as the unit of analysis is an ineffective tool for examining what factors influence the decision to repeal Indian mascots in Michigan. As noted in the discussion section, using a different unit of analysis (e.g. by measuring larger locations) might yield different results and may even make quantitative analysis a more valuable methodology for such study. Some suggestions include utilizing counties or tribal areas for such an analysis, or even House Districts and their elected officials, noting their partisanship. Quantitative analysis could then be used to explain the same variables, but altering the unit of analysis.

This research could also find that the qualitative approach is more appropriate for measuring factors that lead to repealing racial mascots in school districts. Since each school district is responding to different pressures within their localized area, the best tool for measuring

factors that influence the repeal of race-based mascots is qualitative evidence. Future research could thus focus on several states and compare interview responses from legislators, students, teachers, school board members, and others involved in the repeal process.

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