

## Press Release

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### **Survey on Redskins team name found most American Indians believe it to be offensive and racist.**

The Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at California State University, San Bernardino has conducted a study on racial and ethnic perspectives on the team name Redskins and associated issues, and found that the large majority of American Indians, when properly identified and polled, find the team name offensive, disrespectful and racist.

The first question on the survey tells the basic story:

#### **The Redskins team name is a racial or racist word and symbol.**

American Indians were **67 % in agreement**, 12 % were neutral and **20 % disagreed** with the statement. Other ethnic groups are spread across the three major categories of seeing the term Redskins as racist, as neutral, or disagreeing in seeing Redskins as racially offensive. Whites were 33% in agreement, 26% neutral, and 41% disagreed the term was racial, generally the reverse of American Indian responses. The neutral category played a significant role for whites in allowing them to not be seen as “racist” – upon further analysis more than **60% of whites reject** the term Redskins as racist, while more than **60% of Indians see the term Redskins as racist.**

The survey was conducted based on similar work done on the Cleveland Indians Chief Wahoo mascot, when analysts found mainstream research agendas systematically mis-identified Native Americans to benefit dominant ideologies that American Indians supported the mascot and team name.

The Center's Principal Investigator, Professor James Fenelon, oversaw the collection of over 400 surveys directly from individuals who could be verified as being the race or ethnic group they claimed (important for self-identified Native Americans).

The first question of the survey is: The Redskins team name is a racial or racist word or symbol. When the strongly agree and agree categories were combined, American Indians were 67.3 % in agreement, with 12.2 % neutral and 20.4 % in disagreement (although even this one fifth was complicated by which ethnic group was using the term.)

When the second question was answered by American Indians, (The name-symbol Redskins is disrespectful of Native Americans) the agreement rose to 68.4 % and those in disagreement fell slightly to 19.4 %. (Most of the American Indian surveys were collected at local pow-wows) see figure 1 below (Fig 3B in report)

For Whites, the numbers were mostly in reverse.

On question one, RedRacist1, Whites were 32.8% in agreement that Redskins was racial or racist, 25.9% were neutral, and 41.4% disagreed that it was racial/racist.

(Most of this part of the survey was collected at pow-wows, so we believe it's skewed in the direction of “pro-Indian” viewpoints. The study will have more White survey respondents soon).

Similarly, for Latinos, the numbers were mostly in reverse. On question one, RedRacist1, Latinos were 35.4% in agreement that Redskins were racial/racist, 35.4% were neutral, and 29.2% disagreed that it was racial/racist. (This portion was mostly collected on a college campus).

see figure 2 below (Fig 2B in report)

Slight rises in seeing the term as disrespectful (question two) were found in both Whites and Latino respondents, as were slight falls in disagreement.

The survey has three more questions, with a reverse direction in question 3 on whether professional teams should be allowed to use racial names, and a more complicated question 4 on whether it is still racist if Indians use the term. Question 5 was on non-Indian usage, with remarkable congruence with questions 1 and 2 responses.

see figure 3 below (Fig 2F in report)

The survey shows high reliability in comparative answers on same direction questions, and high validity in responses across ethnic groups for the three same direction questions on whether Redskins is racial or racist in orientation. About one quarter of respondents were/are American Indians, with about two fifths Latino, and fifteen percent White, and another ten percent Asian, Black and mixed. The neutral category allows for respondents to not take positions, further validating the findings.

The study and survey was titled "Quick Survey of Attitudes toward the "Redskins" NFL Team Name" and the first or initial report is called "Redskins Survey Research Outputs 1 on 4-23-14" and is available from the Center at Cal State San Bernardino or the Principal Investigator James Fenelon.

The data release below is from the first analysis of the survey results.

**Figure 1** (Fig 3B in report)

**Question 1 (recoded) – Indians versus Others (all) on Redskins being racist**

**1 The Redskins team name is a racial or racist word and symbol.**

Fig.3B

**Red1R \* Indian Crosstabulation**

		Indians v Others		Total
		Others	Indians	
Red1R	Racist name	105 36.0%	66 67.3%	171 43.8%
	Neutral	Count 99	12	111
	% within Indian	33.9%	12.2%	28.5%
	Is not racist name	88 30.1%	20 20.4%	108 27.7%
Total		292 100.0%	98 100.0%	390 100.0%

**Figure 2** (Fig 2B in report)

Question #1 is Redskins racist?

**1 The Redskins team name is a racial or racist word and symbol.**

Fig.2B

**Red1R \* Race Crosstabulation**

		Race				Total
		Other	Indian	Latino	White	
See as racist		29	66	57	19	171
		39.7%	67.3%	35.4%	32.8%	43.8%
Red1R Neutral	Count	27	12	57	15	111
	% within Indian	37.0%	12.2%	35.4%	25.9%	28.5%
Is not racist		17	20	47	24	108
		23.3%	20.4%	29.2%	41.4%	27.7%
Total	Count		98	161	58	390
	% within Race		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Figure 3** (Fig 2F in report)

Questions #5 is Redskins racist when used by non-Indians?

**5 If non-Indians (or whites) use Redskins it is racial/racist and unacceptable.**

Fig.2F

**NonI5R \* Race Crosstabulation**

		Race/ethnicity				Total
		Other	Indian	Latino	White	
See as racist		35	59	61	25	180
		47.9%	65.6%	38.4%	42.4%	47.2%
NonI5R Neutral	Count	22	15	60	18	115
	% within Race	30.1%	16.7%	37.7%	30.5%	30.2%
Is not racist		16	16	38	16	86
		21.9%	17.8%	23.9%	27.1%	22.6%
Total	Count	73	90	159	59	381
	% within Race	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Survey Questions:**

QUICK SURVEY OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE “REDSKINS” NFL TEAM NAME

**1 The Redskins team name is a racial or racist word and symbol.**

**2 The name-symbol Redskins is disrespectful of Native Americans.**

**3 Professional sports teams should be allowed to use racial terms and names like Redskins**

**4 If Indians (or Native people) use Redskins it is not racial/racist and acceptable to use.**

**5 If non-Indians (or whites) use Redskins it is racial/racist and unacceptable.**

## **Acknowledgements:**

This research was conducted under the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies at California State University, San Bernardino. Principal Investigator was/is James V. Fenelon, (Dakota/Lakota) Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center. Data Collection was mostly by Charli Eaton (Shawnee), graduating student at CSUSB, and by Jason Davis (Hualapai), graduate student at CSUSB. Data entry was done by Mario Moreno, graduate student at CSUSB. Professor Julian Montoro-Rodriguez provided expert advice at data construction and analysis.

James V. Fenelon is of Lakota/Dakota descent enrolled as Standing Rock Sioux, is a Professor of Sociology and founding Director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples Studies. Although he had been involved as a poet-scholar-activist against stereotypes of Native peoples, Fenelon first conducted surveys in Cleveland, Ohio, when as a new faculty member he was confronted with extreme racism from 1995 unto his departure in 1999, over the Chief Wahoo mascot issue, leading to the following scholarly publications and presentations:

Publications dealing with this issue:

“Indian Icons in the World Series of Racism: Institutionalization of the Racial Symbols of Wahoos and Indians” in *The Global Color Line: Racial and Ethnic Inequality and Struggle from a Global Perspective* edited by Pinar Batur-vanderlippe and Joe Feagin, Series (6) Research in Politics and Society. (Stamford, CT: JAI Press) 1999.

Fenelon, J. “Indians Teaching About Indigenous Issues: How and Why the Academy Discriminates” *American Indian Quarterly*, Volume 27, number 1 & 2 (2004: pgs. 177-188).

Presentations dealing with this issue:

“Wahoo: Window into the World of Racism” race & ethnicity research panels, 1997  
*American Sociological Association*, (Annual Conf.) Toronto, Canada

“Ending Racial Icons: American Indian Movement Coalitions” in thematic session, 2000  
*American Sociological Association*, (annual meeting) Washington, DC

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