

Racism against native americans analytical essay

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In the article "Let's Spread the 'Fun' Around" Ward Churchill tries to explain why it is derogatory to name sports teams after American Indian names. He uses a number of racial and cultural abuses that are used in a derogatory way to refer to people of other cultures, races, sexual orientation and religious affiliations to make the point that the use of Indian words to name sports teams is derogatory to the Indians.

However, the point that Churchill is trying to make does not come across well because while the racial epithets that he compares the Indian words with are used in a derogatory sense in common use but when sports teams use these words as their nicknames, their intention is to bestow honor upon the Native Americans.

Churchill's claim that the use of Indian words to name sports teams is racist does not make sense because no word in itself is racist but the meaning and sense of discrimination attached to the word makes it racist.

Words like "Indians" and "Chiefs" do not hold the same connotation in popular culture as words like "niggers" and "slants" and so a comparison between these words does not explain why native Americans should feel bad at the use of these words. Words like "niggers" and "slants" are used in a derogatory way to refer to African Americans and Asians and suggest that these people may not be equal to the Caucasians.

But use of the word "Indian" to refer to American Indians is widely accepted and so far it has not been associated with anything derogatory. While it can be argued that the word "Indian" does not accurately identify the Native Americans, it is still a widely accepted and a politically correct terminology.

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In fact Native Americans themselves and even Churchill himself refers to Native Americans as Indians.

Since the word in itself does not have any negative meaning attached to it, the use of the word cannot be put in the same bracket as “ nigger” which is widely accepted to be racist. But most Americans do not use or think of the word “ Indian” in any derogatory sense.

After giving a list of well known derogatory words used to refer to racial minorities, homosexuals, and physically and mentally challenged, Churchill points out that “ not a single non-Indian example... can be considered socially acceptable in even the most marginal sense” (442).

Therein lies the most important argument in favor of the use of Indian words. No sports team, or for that matter any individual person, should ever use any word that is not socially acceptable in anyway. But as long as it is socially acceptable to use words like “ Indians” and “ Chiefs”, there is nothing wrong with using these words to name sports franchises.

If the Indian words had a derogatory connotation attached to them, no team would have used them as their nicknames because the use of a “ bad” word would reflect negatively on the team. When trying to find an apt name for themselves, any team would look for words that convey power, victory and strength. No team would ever want to use a word that stands for defeat, oppression or lack of ability.

So Churchill’s argument that it would be same as “ Germans naming their soccer teams “ Jews”, “ Hebrews” and “ Yids”” does not make any sense. To

Germans, the Jews were the defeated enemies who were so undesirable that they needed to be exterminated.

While it is true that during the western expansion of the US, the American soldiers fought and defeated the Native Americans, the American armies also respected Indian courage and were impressed by the fight they put up. The battles between the Americans and the Indians were legitimate battles in which the stronger army were victorious.

But the Germans did not fight the Jews in a battle and did not respect them for their intelligence or bravery and in general hated them. The status of Jews in Nazi Germany cannot be compared to the status of Indians during the westward expansion. Hence, Churchill's comparison does not make sense.

The managers were influenced by the stories they had heard about the Native Americans bravery to protect the right over their land by fighting a war which they were bound to lose and were impressed by these stories. So by naming their sports team after Indian words, they are expressing their awe of such brave people and not demeaning them.

When judging the sports teams for using American Indian words as their nicknames, it is important to look at the intention and there can be absolutely no two opinions about the fact the teams had very good and positive intentions. As mentioned above, words like "nigger" and "slants" have negative connotation in American culture.

However, while it is absolutely unacceptable for a white man to refer to an African American as a "nigger", African Americans refer to each other by the

word all the time and it is considered acceptable. Without going into an in-depth analysis of the use of the word “ nigger” among African Americans, the fact is that the acceptability of a word is directly related to the intention with which it is spoken.

So when a white person uses the racial epithet, the intention is to insult the African Americans but when a black person uses the same word it becomes an expression of brotherhood. When we look at the intention of the sports team managers, it is clear that their intention is to praise and honor the native Americans and not insult them and so it should be perfectly acceptable for them to call themselves by Indian names.

In the end, what really matters is the respect that we carry for each other in our hearts. Words and epithets just express our feelings and the words themselves can have a variety of meaning depending on the context and the emotions of the person using them.

If the sports teams have a positive intention and clean hearts and in fact, use the words to show their admiration for the Native Americans bravery then the Native Americans should not have any problems with the use of the Indian words and should actually welcome it and even feel proud of the honor.

Churchill, Ward. “ Let’s Spread the ‘ Fun’ Around”. In *From a native Son*. Cambridge MA: South End Press. 1996. Print.

During the course of this class, I put in a lot of hard work, followed all the guidelines and was very prompt with my drafts and final essays. I always

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carefully listened to the professor's criticism and continuously tried to improve myself.

Under the circumstance, I rightfully believe that I deserve an A grade in this class. This is especially even more important since English is not my first language and I have worked hard over the years to perfect both the vocabulary and the grammar so that I may be able to write English almost as a native speaker.

While researching the various essays for this course, I went out of my way to check not only the college library but even local public libraries so that I could get good source material to support my essays.

For the main essay, I could have easily used the internet for all my sources and only looked at two print and two academic sources to complete the paper. However, I felt that the essay required a thorough research and so read over half a dozen books related to my subject so that I could do justice to the essay.

Finally, my work speaks for itself and I am sure you will agree with me that I have written good essays, in good English and used an extensive vocabulary. Under the circumstance, I believe, I rightfully deserve an A grade in this course.