



Submitted for: October 11th, 2018

Motion Regarding Renaming of McGill's Men's Varsity Teams 2018-10-11

WHEREAS, in 2016 the Provost and Vice Principal (Academic) struck a Task Force on Indigenous Studies and Indigenous Education which found there were “past usages of the name 'Indians' to refer to men’s teams, and 'Squaws' or 'Super Squaws' to refer to women’s athletics teams, as well as phrases such as ‘Indians on the warpath’ and ‘Redman scalped’ that appeared in McGill media”¹;

WHEREAS, “Such demeaning and offensive language was used into the 1970s, long after the official naming of the men’s varsity team as the ‘Redmen’. Further, stereotyped images of Indigenous persons found their way onto McGill jerseys and helmets before a 1992 decision of the McGill Athletics Board to cease usage of the offensive logo, while retaining the Redmen name largely because of the apparently benign origins of the term Redmen”²;

WHEREAS, “A final decision about whether to keep the Redmen name was made at a March 4, 1992 meeting of the McGill Athletics Board [...] advised removing the native connotation associated with the logo, drop the logo and retain the name Redmen, since its historical roots had no association to native peoples”³;

WHEREAS, a McGill Athletics press released on March 6th 1992 stated that the "logo, which was adopted in 1982, might possibly be construed as a stereotype. While this was never McGill's intention, we want to be sensitive to the concern that has been expressed. We are quite prepared to make a change so as to remove any suggestion that the traditional name of the Redmen was connected with a stereotype relating to native peoples. Unless we find historical evidence which establishes that the Redmen name came from other than the colour of McGill's uniforms. We intend to preserve the traditional name for our men's teams"⁴;

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https://www.mcgill.ca/equity_diversity/files/equity_diversity/final_report_of_the_provosts_task_force_on_indigenous_studies_and_indigenous_education_0.pdf

² Ibid.

³ <http://mcgillathletics.ca/sports/2015/2/27/0227154844.aspx?path=general>

⁴ Ibid.



Office of the Speaker | Bureau de Président du Conseil
Tel: (514) 398-6800 | Fax: (514) 398-7490 | speaker@ssmu.ca
3600 McTavish Street, Suite 1200, Montréal, Québec, H3A 0G3
Located on unceded, Kanien'kehá:ka traditional territory

WHEREAS, The continued usage of the Redman name refuses to acknowledge the historic and contemporary pain felt by Indigenous students;

WHEREAS, The historical usage of “Indian” and “Squaw” at McGill has helped promote hyper-masculinized and stereotypical views of Indigenous peoples;

WHEREAS, The misrepresented history of the name devalues the pain felt Indigenous peoples and students at McGill, and continues as a limitation towards both reconciliation, as well as the full participation and representation of Indigenous students on McGill Varsity Teams;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the SSMU engage in effective solidarity with Indigenous students and work towards immediate renaming of the Varsity Men’s Team;

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the SSMU Legislative Council approve the following question for the Fall 2018 referendum period:

QUESTION 1: Do you endorse the immediate renaming of the “Redmen” name and mandate the SSMU to work towards immediate renaming of the Varsity Men’s Team?

BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the ‘WHEREAS’ clauses be included on the ballot.

Moved By:

Tre Mansdoerfer, President
Ana Paula Sanchez, Arts Representative
Haoyi Qiu, Science Representative
Rebecca Scarra, Arts Representative