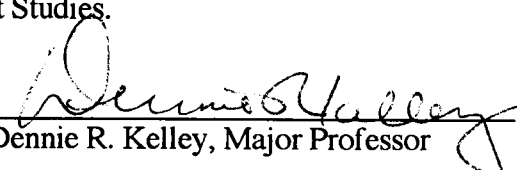
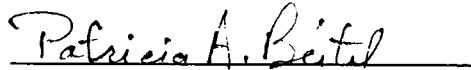


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by John-Edward F. Comer entitled "Female Athletes Perceptions of Racism and Sexism of Sport Mascots and Nicknames." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Human Performance and Sport Studies.


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Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

**FEMALE ATHLETES' PERCEPTIONS OF RACISM AND
SEXISM OF SPORT MASCOTS AND NICKNAMES**

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

John-Edward F. Comer
August 1997

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

John Fitzgerald Comer

and

Ruth Smart Comer

who have given me invaluable opportunities in education and in life.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are a number of people to whom I am grateful for making my time at The University of Tennessee so rewarding. I wish to thank the faculty, staff, and graduate students in the Sport and Physical Activity Unit for their support and encouragement, especially Delores Neal for her helpfulness and friendship. I am thankful for the generous financial support I have received from the Sport and Physical Activity Unit, the Physical Education Activity Program, and the Department of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics.

I am particularly grateful to my Thesis Committee members whose assistance should be recognized. A great debt is owed to Patricia Beitel for her tireless effort in guiding me along the straight and narrow path. I wish to thank Joy DeSensi for teaching me that education is about understanding and embracing diversity, and that compassion and politeness are powerful qualities. Lastly, I am grateful to Dennie Kelley for her total belief in me and my abilities. She was behind me 100% from day one. She is someone I was glad to call a mentor and friend but now I am proud to call a colleague.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore how female athletes at the intercollegiate level perceive racism and sexism inherent in sport, specifically, the language usage and naming practices involved with sport mascots and nicknames. A review of literature revealed that there were high levels of racism and sexism involved with the selection and usage of these symbols. A selected group of 104 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I female basketball players were sent the survey. Seventy-three questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 70.1%. The results indicate that a majority of female athletes believe racially and sexually offensive mascots and nicknames should be changed. However, a majority of those same female athletes do not believe their own institution's mascot or nickname should be changed even when it was found to be sexist. The information provided in this study may be useful to athletic administrators who are confronted with similar issues. In conclusion, this study suggested that female athletes need education and awareness to issues of racism and sexism in sport.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Sport mascots and symbols have been a highly visible and sometimes controversial reflection of American society (Fuller & Manning, 1987). A review of literature revealed that there were high levels of racism and sexism inherent with the selection and use of these symbols. The naming practices and the language that surrounds their use were often found to be demeaning and demoralizing. The two groups that were most often effected were Native Americans and women.

Much of the information regarding the Indian mascot was consistently presented across the papers and articles in the review of literature. One consistent finding was that the use of the Indian, whether as a nickname or represented on a university's seal, was not acceptable to the Native American people. Native Americans have found this practice offensive (Monaghan, 1992). The fact that such practices were allowed to continue in the realm of sport was another consistency identified. Because racism, through the use of the Indian mascot, has occurred in sport, it has been deemed acceptable (Giago, 1992). Racism should not have as strong a foothold in sport as it has had (Banks, 1993).

Concerns presented in the papers and articles that dealt with women's team names were much the same. One consistent finding was that sexist naming practices continued the promotion of male dominance and female subordination in sport as in society (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). The sexism in team names placed female athletes in the role of second class citizens (Duncan, 1993). The language used within sport consistently demeaned women. The use of "Lady" as a modifier has been an accepted practice in naming when it should not have been (Fuller & Manning, 1987). Language has remained full of bias against women (Duncan, 1993).

There were inconsistencies presented in the findings across the papers and articles that dealt with naming practices. The results of the Eitzen & Zinn (1993) study at Colorado State University (CSU) were surprising. The fact that female athletes at CSU felt the “ram” name for their mascot was not an issue was inconsistent with what the papers and articles said should be felt. It was determined that there is a need for more extensive research concerning how female athletes perceive sexism when it exists in their team’s names. Lastly, it was found that future research needs to focus on the female athletes themselves and their perceptions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how female athletes at the intercollegiate level perceive the racism and sexism inherent in sport, specifically, the language usage and naming practices involved with sport mascots and nicknames. Does the female athlete have the same perceptions as the authors of the articles and papers from the review of literature? The Eitzen and Zinn (1993) study findings were the driving force that led to the development of this problem statement. Further questions were developed and these research questions included:

1. What does she consider racist?
2. What does she consider sexist?
3. Does she believe anything justifies the continued use of a sexist naming practice?
4. How does she interpret society’s perceptions of women’s athletics?
5. What perception does the female athlete have about her own institution?

The use of the Indian as a mascot was not covered in depth by the Eitzen and Zinn (1993) study. The articles and papers from the review of literature consistently provided substantial findings that warrant an end to the use of the Indian as a mascot

and nickname. Authors and researchers across the review of literature determined that the Indian's use as a mascot and nickname does indeed constitute racism.

Definition of Terms

The following were terms used in this study, they have been defined using a theoretical definition and an operational definition. The operational definition was used for the purpose of this study. This list is provided to give the reader a better understanding of the topic.

American Indian

Theoretical: a member of any of the aboriginal peoples of the western hemisphere.

Operational: a member or a descendent of any of the aboriginal peoples of the western hemisphere, particularly the North American continent.

Equity

Theoretical: something that is equitable, dealing fairly and equally with all concerned.

Operational: dealing fairly and equally with all concerned in sport.

Female Intercollegiate Athlete

Theoretical: a woman who is trained and skilled in sport at the college level.

Operational: a woman who actively participates in sport at the college level.

Gender Equity

Theoretical: something that is equitable, dealing fairly and equally where men and women are concerned.

Operational: dealing fairly and equally where men and woman are concerned in sport.

Language

Theoretical: a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings.

Operational: the communication of ideas or feelings about sport.

Mascot

Theoretical: a person, animal, or object adopted by a group as a symbolic figure.

Operational: any person, animal, or object adopted by a sport team as its symbolic figure.

Naming Practice

Theoretical: a repeated or customary action that mentions or identifies.

Operational: the custom of mentioning or identifying a mascot or nickname in sport.

Nickname

Theoretical: a descriptive name given instead of or in addition to the one belonging to a person, place, or thing.

Operational: a descriptive name given to a sport team mascot.

Racism

Theoretical: prejudice or discrimination based on race or ethnicity.

Operational: prejudice or discrimination in sport based on race or ethnicity.

Sexism

Theoretical: prejudice or discrimination based on gender.

Operational: prejudice or discrimination in sport based on gender.

Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made in this study:

1. Racism and sexism are inherent in sport.

2. Certain sport mascots and nicknames are racist and/or sexist.
3. The survey used in this study was a valid and reliable means of obtaining information about the perceptions of female intercollegiate athletes regarding racism and sexism inherent in the language and naming practices of sport mascots and nicknames.
4. The participants in this study understood and responded to the survey in an open and honest manner.

Scope of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine, through a survey of NCAA Division I female basketball players, female athletes' perceptions of racism and sexism of sport mascots and nicknames. The study focused on the participants' perceptions based on their experiences as intercollegiate athletes. Although the scope was centered around NCAA Division I athletes, the information obtained is of vital importance to administrators and athletes at all levels of competition. However, there were limitations and delimitations within the study:

1. The study was limited to NCAA Division I female basketball players.
2. The study was limited to institutions with experience in the 1996 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament.
3. The survey did not cover all areas of racism and sexism in the language and naming practices of sport mascots and nickname.

Significance of the Study

In order to fully comprehend the effects of racism and sexism in sport the perceptions of those involved must be understood. What more appropriate vehicle than the athlete herself. Those female athletes that experience sport were the best to make the judgments. They were the ones out there in the "trenches". Their perceptions formed the basis for this research.

The results of this study serve the purpose of providing sport administrators and managers with an understanding of the far-reaching effects of racism and sexism. It is important for administrators to be attuned to their institution's perceived image, most important is the perception by its own athletes. A university's mascot and/or nickname is often the public's only image of that institution. It is essential for these administrators to have a point of reference by which they can measure their own institution's position. The information from this study can be used as a device for initiating a plan of change if necessary.

Today's sport administrator is faced with many complex tasks. They deal with various concerns ranging from fiscal management to the win/loss records of their sport programs. One of the most important concerns may be those that deal with ethics. Having a racist and/or sexist mascot or nickname may constitute an ethical concern. The success of such a resolution may effect an administrator's entire department. It is important that administrators be able to work with athletes, coaches, faculty, students, alumni, and associated community personnel in dealing with such concerns.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose for this review of literature was to study how sport mascots evoke a powerful range of emotions on society and how to curb their often negative effects. A mockery has been made of the Indian and the Native American culture through the use of sport mascots (Banks, 1993). The trivializations of women has occurred because of the sexism present in mascot names (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). This review focused on the use of Indian mascots and the sexist practices surrounding the naming of women's athletic teams.

Research papers and opinion articles were gathered from journals and periodicals in the university library. The papers and articles have been abstracted and arranged in the following categories: The Indian mascot; sexism in names; and mascots and other issues. The information and materials span a time frame from 1987 through 1993.

The Indian Mascot

The Lidz (1990) essay discussed the appropriateness of using the Indian as a team mascot, offering that its use is "not a very sporting symbol" (p.10). The 64 year old tradition of Chief Illiniwek, the painted and "befeathered" mascot of the University of Illinois, had been challenged by activists (Lidz, 1990). Native American groups joined with students and administrators to fight the trivialization of Indian culture at the University of Illinois and other colleges across the nation.

The groups at Illinois garnered the support of the university's director of academic affirmative action and called the mascot "an affront to the dignity of all Indians" (Lidz, 1990, p.10). Illinois Senator Paul Simon joined the fight and signed a petition started by the group to remove Chief Illiniwek. Not everyone was in support.

Alan Dixon, the State's Junior Senator, and Governor James Thompson were in favor of keeping Illiniwek. The Illinois State Legislature passed a resolution in the fall of 1989, praising the University for its commitment to preserve Chief Illiniwek (Lidz, 1990).

Promise was shone in the 1970's when several schools changed or dropped Indian nicknames. Stanford changed its name from the Indians to the Cardinal and Syracuse dropped the Saltine Warrior mascot (Lidz, 1990). Dartmouth removed its Indian nickname in 1969 but a force developed in 1980 that challenged the decision and called for the return of the old nickname. *The Dartmouth Review* started the campaign to reinstate the Indian, the *Review* is an independent, right-wing, student-run journal (Lidz, 1990). The administration took note but no change back was made.

In conclusion, Lidz (1990) suggested that the editors of the *Review* should listen to what Native Americans were saying. College football and the Indian mascot have nothing in common (Lidz, 1990). The aggressive-type Indian mascot is a symbol that is demeaning to the Native American. A subsequent article focused on the conflicts in journalism and how it has dealt with the Indian mascot issue.

The Giago (1992) essay discussed the issue of the use of Indians as mascots, "an issue and a people that will not go away" (p.7). There are a few journalists who have confronted this issue, they have received harsh criticism from fellow members of the press. Lost in what has been labeled an argument over political correctness are the feelings of Indian people themselves (Giago, 1992).

William Hilliard, editor of *The Oregonian*, was cited for his "courage and sensitivity" for choosing not to use names with racial overtones (Giago, 1992). He changed the editorial policy of the paper, no longer would names for sports teams be used that could be construed as racist. His action received "a lot of journalistic flack" (Giago, 1992, p.7).

Hilliard, himself a black man, asked the question: "If the name 'Redskin' were changed to 'Blackskin' and the fans in the stands painted their faces and donned Afro wigs believing they were 'honoring' blacks, would he be offended" (Giago, 1992, p.7). His answer was yes.

District of Columbia radio station WTOP/WASH manager Michael Douglass ceased using the name Redskin because it was determined to be offensive to Native Americans (Giago, 1992). Because it was station policy not to use offensive names, it followed that the station extended that policy to Native Americans.

The decision made by Don Shelton, assistant sports editor, of *The Seattle Times* was equally impressive. Team nicknames that were deemed racially offensive would no longer appear in headlines, photo captions, or quotes made larger than the story (Giago, 1992). The paper would also avoid using such names in the story when possible.

Mike Jacobs of *The Grand Forks* (N.D.) *Herald* suggested that the press should not have been a target for seeking an end to racist attitudes and criticized the decision of William Hilliard. Giago (1992) noted that the words such as kike, nigger, Jap, chink, wop, or other racially offensive names have not been used to describe ethnic groups in news or sport stories. These names are demeaning and racist. Why then, is it still considered all right to use names that offend Native Americans?

Giago (1992) concluded that the Indian people are no longer a "vanishing" people but, instead, are a growing and active segment of American society. Native Americans do not want to be treated as mascots, to be made fun of and ridiculed. "Bigotry is bigotry, and it cannot be sugarcoated because it happens to occur at a sporting event" (Giago, 1992, p.46). The college and university campus has been the scene of similar conflicts as detailed in the next article.

Monaghan (1992) presented an essay focused on the debate that has been raging on college campuses across the nation concerning the use of Indian symbols, nicknames, and mascots that American Indians find offensive. Colleges and universities have had to tread with caution among the waters of controversy (Monaghan, 1992). In dealing with the complaints, administrators have had to be careful to appease not only their critics but also alumni groups who have voiced their concerns.

In October, 1992, Hartwick College agreed to requests from students and faculty that it find a new seal. Critics charged that there were inaccuracies in the seal, the seal was both historically inaccurate and demeaning to American Indians. The seal features a clothed Westerner paternalistically resting his hand on the shoulder of an unclothed Indian and handing him a book, most likely the Bible (Monaghan, 1992). The main objection focused on the demeaning stereotype not the historical inaccuracy. Hartwick was founded as a Lutheran Seminary in 1797, the college may adopt the original seal of the seminary which closed in 1948 (Monaghan, 1992).

Central Michigan University conducted a 3 year study to determine if the nickname "Chippewas" could be used in inoffensive ways (Monaghan, 1992). In 1989 the university did eliminate the use of all visual symbols associated with the nickname but not the nickname itself. Other schools dropped names altogether, the University of Oklahoma stopped using its "Little Red" mascot in 1972 and Siena College dropped its "Indians" nickname for "the Saints" (Monaghan, 1992).

Alumni groups at several schools have threatened to withhold donations unless symbols and nicknames remain intact. Many institutions are concerned because alumni giving represents a substantial part of their funding. The University of Mississippi did not drop an Indian nickname but asked that Confederate Rebel flags not be waved at sporting events or used as a likeness of the school (Monaghan, 1992). That prompted

alumni to threaten to withhold donations. University officials checked names of signed letters of protest against their fund raising records and found that few of the protesters had given more than \$10.00 and many had not given at all. Other institutions have reported similar findings.

A decision was made at Eastern Michigan University to replace its nickname of "Hurons" with "Eagles", the name had been used for 62 years (Monaghan, 1992). More than 75 members withdrew from the school's alumni association. A group of alumni organized to protest the change and force the reinstatement of the nickname, they claimed the school was losing valuable funding through donations. School officials noted a drop in gifts but offered the recession as an explanation. Reasons for Native American protest were also cited in the following opinion essay.

Banks (1993) noted that in the 20 years since the American Indian Movement (AMI) the real reason why the Indian's likeness should not be used has not been recognized. A mockery has been made of the Indian through its use in sport. AMI has identified the real sport at hand, the sport of racism. "Racism is racism no matter how we choose to spell it or color it" (Banks, 1993, p.6).

Present in every sport has been some form of degradation of the Indian culture by non-Indians (Banks, 1993). If fans of the Atlanta Braves or Cleveland Indians were suddenly cheering on the "niggers" would African Americans be hurt? No group should have to be represented in this manner.

The AMI offered as an example the Stanford University football team, Indian culture had been represented well until the 1950's (Banks, 1993). Early coach Glenn "Pop" Warner adopted the name "Indians" as the mascot because of his strong alliance to the Carlisle Indian School where he once coached. Native Americans were honored by Stanford's use of the name because Indians were portrayed in a dignified manner. There were no fans wildly mocking the ways of the Indian people at that time.

A change occurred in the late 1950's that altered the Native Americans' views of the Indian mascot. The once dignified display was replaced with racist remarks and mockery. With the advent of television the practices spread, many teams participated in the demeaning displays (Banks, 1993). Native American students joined together to protest in 1968; the name was changed in 1972.

In conclusion, Banks (1993) argued that racism should not have as strong a foothold in sport as it has had. The ignorance of fans, sports media, and sport team owners has caused the desensitization of too many Native Americans. Pride in a mascot or symbol cannot be found when such demeaning practices still occur, it is time to end the era of disrespect in American sport (Banks, 1993). Subsequent arguments citing historical perspectives were offered in the next essay.

The Davis (1993) essay focused on the close scrutiny sport mascots have been under in recent years and the reactions to this movement. Reactions to the hundreds of protests held in Minneapolis during the few months between the 1991 World Series and the 1992 Super Bowl were presented. The Atlanta Braves and the Washington Redskins were at the center of protests due to their use of Indian nicknames. The activists' arguments focused on reshaping American history and correction of distortions in the accounts of Native Americans (Davis, 1993). Many people were angry with the activists, they felt the protest challenged the ideal of the American West (Davis, 1993).

The Minneapolis/St.Paul metropolitan area, known as the Twin Cities, had the third largest urban Native American population in the United States (Davis, 1993). The Twin Cities have become a focal point of increased activism. Local activists had launched a successful protest to eliminate the use of Native American mascots in area high schools. The result was a change in 20 of the 50 targeted schools.

The activists' most common argument was that the mascots represented racist stereotypes of Native Americans (Davis, 1993). The attributes of the wild, aggressive, and violent Indian have been the focus of many sport mascots. The notion of the Indian as an aggressor has been of particular concern because it distorts the reality of the American settlers invasion of Native American lands. "The American West was a time of glory and adventure, rendering the holocaust and oppression of Native Americans invisible" (Davis, 1993, p.13).

Another stereotype of mascots that disturbed the activists was the view that Indians were only part of the past, not accounting for their contemporary existence. There has been the need to understand the present day Native American and the challenges she/he faces. If Americans cannot understand the problem with mascots, then they will not be able to understand the issues that presently confront the Native American (Davis, 1993).

Those in opposition to the protest argued that the use of Indians as mascots has been a tribute to Native Americans. "It is a tribute because Native Americans are viewed as people associated with bravery and a fighting spirit" (Davis, 1993, p.15). They see nothing wrong with the mascots and their use was not meant to offend anyone.

Often the opposition has cited cases where there has been support from Native Americans. People associated with the Kansas City Chiefs point out that money raised through the sale of a poster featuring the team outfitted in Native American dress has been donated to a Native American Center (Davis, 1993).

Davis (1993) has seen opposition to the protest as a case where American traditional identity has been challenged, the tradition of the American West and in particular the challenge to American masculinity (Davis, 1993). Americans have identified with the cowboy, the image of a spirited adventure. This image has come to

define what Americans think of as their past. Another popular form of mascots are those from the American West such as cowboys, rangers, mustangs, and pioneers (Davis, 1993). The theory connecting the frontier to masculinity has been controversial but there also has been historical evidence to support it.

In conclusion, Davis (1993) presented the argument that negative reaction to the activists' protest may have been backlash to the political correctness movement. They may have felt that the wave of political correctness has been taken too far. If there is to be a truly multicultural society then Americans need to examine those issues which challenge the very core of who they are (Davis, 1993).

Sexism in Names

Eitzen and Zinn (1989) conducted a descriptive study on the sexist naming of college athletic teams and how the trivialization of women occurs through this practice. American colleges use mascots, nicknames, and emblems as symbols of unification and have adopted these symbols to represent their athletic teams (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). Many of the symbols that have been chosen are demeaning or derogatory to some groups. Data collected from 1,185 four-year schools reveal that more than half of the schools use names, mascots, or logos that demean and derogate women's teams.

The practice of using symbols to achieve solidarity and community is a common group practice according to the Durkheim Study of 1949. A school's nickname symbolically conveys the characteristics, attributes, and self-concept of an institution. Schools often choose names that represent or reflect the school's ethnic heritage, mission, religion, or founder. In sport symbols are chosen because of their aggressiveness and ferocity (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989).

Native American groups have protested the use of Indian names for more than 20 years (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). They have objected to the stereotyping of Indians and their depiction as savages and warriors. A 1982 book by Franks reported that 67

schools used “Indians” or some other related name (Warrior, Chiefs, etc.) of the 1,251 four-year schools in his study. The other group that has been oppressed by the naming of sports teams is women.

Many of the symbols, mascots, and nicknames given to college women’s sport teams are not fair to women athletes and women in general (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). These names often belittle them, diminish them, and place them in a secondary status. The gender differentiation that exists in language reveals that language reflects and helps maintain the secondary status of women. This differentiation puts women in that status by defining them in their place according to the 1987 Study by Henley. Many Colleges have adopted linguistic marking systems that promote male dominance and female subordination (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989).

Data were collected from 1,185 four-year colleges and universities listed in the 1987 edition of *American Universities and Colleges* published by the American Council of Education. Names were categorized into 8 gender-linked practices that diminish and trivialize women (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). The study used the 3 practices from the 1987 Fuller & Manning Study and created 5 more from further review of literature. The 8 categories were:

1. Physical markers -- a practice that describes women in terms of physical characteristics and men according to their achievements.
2. Girl or gal -- a practice that stresses presumed immaturity.
3. Feminine suffixes -- a popular practice of gender differentiation.
4. Lady -- a practice that often “evokes a standard of propriety, correct, behavior, and elegance” according to s 1977 Miller & Swift Study (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989, p.365).
5. Male as a false generic -- a practice that assumes the masculine form of a word or phrase is the norm.

6. Male name with a female modifier -- a practice that applies the feminine to a name that usually denotes a male.
7. Double gender marking -- a practice that occurs when the name for the women's team is a diminutive of the men's.
8. Male/female paired polarity -- a practice that assigns women's and men's teams names that represent a female/male opposition (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989).

Information regarding geographical region and school type (public, private, or religious) was obtained as it related to the sexist naming of schools (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989).

The study found that 38.1% of all schools in the sample had sexist names for their athletic teams (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). A total of 903 schools from the 1,185 sampled provided a team logo, 45.1% were sexist. Sexism appeared in 54.6% of schools that provided complete information on both names and logos.

The frequency analysis using the 8 categories revealed that 55.1% of the names fell into the category of using the male name as a false generic. This type of usage contributes to the "invisibility" of women's teams (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). The next most popular type of sexism in naming came in the use of "lady", 25.2% of the names.

An assumption was made that Southern schools would be less progressive in gender matters than other regions, findings supported this assumption (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). The differences ($p < 0.001$) between Southern schools were significant. One interesting aspect of this finding was that Southern schools were more likely to use feminine suffixes like "lady" in their naming of women's teams. Conversely, the non-Southern schools were more likely to use the male as a false generic. The study assumed that religious schools would be more likely to possess traditional attitudes

toward women than public or private schools (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). Findings were not significant.

In conclusion, Eitzen and Zinn (1989) concluded that the names and symbols of college athletic teams will continue to contribute to the “maintenance of male dominance within college athletics” (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989, p.369). Negative linguistic and symbolic imagery must be replaced with imagery that reflects new thinking and practices. According to Van Den Bergh, 1987, renaming will give women a sense of control of their own identity, raise consciousness, and give a sense of empowerment. Sexism in language was also the focus of the opinion article that follows.

The Duncan (1993) essay looked beyond the names and mascots in sport to the larger issues of naming and the use of language in sport. Language has been saturated with negative bias against women as well as African Americans, Native Americans, gays and the disabled (Duncan, 1993). Language puts these groups at a disadvantage. Female athletes are continually dismissed, differentiated, and derogated through language. Where women are concerned it is “the gun that points backwards” (Duncan, 1993, p. 42). The subordination of female athletes is present in the overtones of the language of sports.

Men and men’s sports represent the standard, while women and women’s sports are seen as inferior (Duncan, 1993). This is one way that language in sport misfired in its representation of women. A 1990 research study by Messner, Duncan, and Jensen provided examples of this type of gender bias from televised basketball. On-screen graphics for men’s competition were labeled “The Final Four” while women’s were labeled “The Women’s Final Four”. Commentators referred to Pat Summit as “a legend in women’s basketball” rather than a legend in all of basketball. These were examples of the men’s competition being established as the main event with the women’s being marked as secondary in importance (Duncan, 1993).

Visual representation of sport, in the form of photography, has documented female athletes differently from their male counterparts (Duncan, 1993). In Duncan's 1990 study, differences in Olympic sport photography were observed. Women tended to be photographed in ways that played up their femininity. The cover of Sports Illustrated's "Pictures '88" issue was a close-up of Florence Griffith Joyner's face and painted fingernails. In contrast, Matt Biondi was featured on the cover of the "Olympic Preview" issue moving through the water in a swimming pool. Men tended to be photographed showcasing their athletic abilities while women were posed.

Often in sport, women have been rendered invisible due to language (Duncan, 1993). In the sporting world this has been accomplished through the lack of media coverage of women's sports. Men's sport events occupied 92% of their air time according to the 1990 study by Messner, Duncan, and Jensen. Women, on the other hand, occupied only 5%. The lack of reporting women's sport "deprecates the efforts of female athletes, suggesting that they do not or should not participate in sports" (Duncan, 1993, p.44).

Another concern for women has been the impossible standards that have been set in the language of women's health and fitness magazines. A false message has been conveyed that fitness hinges on beauty and appearance (Duncan, 1993). Readers are led to believe that loss of inches and loss of pounds leads to enhanced health. If health were the real issue then the statistics of importance would be heart rate, VO2 max, and measures of strength and flexibility (Duncan, 1993).

In conclusion, Duncan (1993) suggested that "power relations have been encoded in language", they influence the way we think about gender, race, religion, and so on (p.45). The inequities of society have been put into sport through the use of language that discriminates against such groups. It is not too late to change the way we talk about sport. If a standardized language can be adopted that does not offend any

group then the “gun that points backward” can be turned (Duncan, 1993). The following article focused on a case study that presented surprising findings.

Eitzen and Zinn (1993) argued that linguistic marking systems practiced by colleges in the naming of their athletic teams promoted male domination and female subordination. Colleges use nicknames, logos, and mascots as identifying and unifying symbols. This practice has, just as sexist language has, trivialized and diminished women. A case study of a university’s confrontation with this issue was presented. Colorado State University’s (CSU) mascot is a ram, a male sheep, it has represented both men’s and women’s athletic teams since 1987 (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993).

“Research has demonstrated that certain language patterns demean women” (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993, p.34). There has been an uprising across the nation, campuses are demanding equity and diversity among their student bodies, faculties, and curricula. One focus has been on eliminating the bias in language, unfortunately the language of sport has been resistant to change. The sexist naming of women’s athletic has remained, this has stood in contrast to the other advancements made since the inception of Title IX (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993).

Eitzen and Zinn’s 1989 study revealed that some form of sexism was present in 54.6% of college teams when both logos and mascots were considered among the 1,185 American colleges surveyed. This form of discrimination has promoted and perpetuated male dominance in sport and the subordination of women. “These names diminish women, trivialize them, and even make them invisible” (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993, p.36).

A professor of history at CSU, David McComb, complained in 1981 that the ram mascot was sexist, the use of a male sheep as the mascot for the women’s teams was an insult to them (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). He charged the university was being insensitive to the women athletes. The response to the charges has been

overwhelmingly in support of keeping the ram mascot. The arguments presented by certain groups were surprising (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993).

The female athletes at CSU were polled to determine if the naming debate was an issue for them. The women responded by claiming that the ram was a non-issue (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). They made it a point to note that the fan support they received was based on the effort and accomplishments rather than the team's name. None of the coaches of the women's teams at CSU raised any objection to the use of "Rams" for their team.

Campus wide student opinion was not measured, but the editor of the student newspaper reported that a majority of the editorials received supported the ram name (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). A questionnaire was distributed to 94 students in a "Sport and Society" class in the Spring semester of 1990 asking their opinion on the mascot issue (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). All of the students responded and 86% strongly rejected the dropping of the ram name or felt it was not an issue.

The faculty of CSU decided the issue should be discussed in its Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). The Committee gathered data from the Athletic Department and the Student Government, both expressed opposition to the name change. Based on its findings, the Committee passed a formal motion that stated the nickname did not promote sexism and the name should not be changed.

In conclusion, Eitzen and Zinn (1993) argued that tradition is a strong barrier but should not justify the continued use of a name that is sexist. Because a sexist name promotes and socializes sexism, it must be changed (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993). The opposition has claimed that the sexism issue is trivial, if it is so trivial, then why is opposition so strong? The case study of CSU represented how a name can be accepted without question even when it is sexist. Eitzen and Zinn (1993) concluded that

students, faculty, administrators, and alumni need to join together to combat the sexism that exists in all areas of campus, even sport.

Mascots and Other Issues

Fuller and Manning (1987) conducted a descriptive study to demonstrate that the use of college symbols reflects the violent attributes of mascots and their patriarchal attitudes toward women. College symbols and mascots are highly visible, they represent part of American culture and in sports are taken quite seriously (Fuller & Manning, 1987). Specifically, the use of American Indian and other violent mascots as symbols needed reevaluation in terms of the image they project.

The most frequently identified symbols were animals, the Eagle was the most popular according to a 1982 study by Franks. That same study contended that if all names associated with the American Indian groups together (Warriors, Braves, Redmen, etc.) it would become the largest category of mascots. Mascots were chosen because of their coercive image to emphasize their attributes of violence, domination, and power (Fuller & Manning, 1987). Mascots are almost never chosen for their compassion, cooperation, and individuality, these attributes are often avoided.

American Indian students at Dartmouth and Stanford were successful in the late 1960s and early 1970s in having these schools' nicknames changed. Not all outcry has been against the use of Indian mascots. Miami University (Ohio) decided to keep its nickname of "Redskins" after the Miami Indians' Tribal Council passed a resolution supporting the name (Fuller & Manning, 1987). American Indians find the use of the Indian symbol offensive because the mascots only display the qualities of a warrior role.

A typology depicting the degree of violence represented by college mascots and symbols as compared to the legitimacy of the teams' names was presented (Fuller & Manning, 1987). Violence was determined by perceived attributes of domination and

brutality. Legitimacy was determined by whether the symbol or mascot bears a geographic or historic relationship to the school. Four topology categories were offered: (a) high legitimacy-low violence, (b) high legitimacy-high violence, (c) low legitimacy-low violence, and (d) low legitimacy-high violence (Fuller & Manning, 1987).

The Hawaii Rainbows, Nebraska Cornhuskers, and Oklahoma Sooners represented a high legitimacy-low violence type of mascot. The Gettysburg College Bullets, Arizona State Sun Devils, and Iowa State Cyclones were given as examples of high legitimacy-high violence symbols. The schools listed as low legitimacy-low violence were the Arkansas Tech Wonderboys and Assumption College Greyhounds. Among the schools found in the low legitimacy-high violence category were the Auburn Tigers and Arizona Wildcats (Fuller & Manning, 1987).

The trivialization of women's sport has been reflected by the way schools have assigned names to their women's teams as the high level varsity competition has increased. Many schools simply adopted the same name of their men's teams, other schools feminized their symbols. This feminization has contributed to the trivialization of women's sport and supports the perception of women as second class citizens (Fuller & Manning, 1987). In many instances the feminization of team names emphasized gender so that one is aware first that they were women and only second that they were athletes.

One of the most frequently used methods of feminization has been to add "Lady" to the name used by the men's team. Sometimes this leads to the feminization of an essentially masculine term, as is the case with the West Georgia College Lady Braves (Fuller & Manning, 1987). A brave is an American Indian male who has achieved a warrior status through a rite of initiation. American Indian females did not have a comparable experience that allowed them to become warriors.

Using the diminutive to the male form has been another popular method to use, Eaglettes and Tigerettes are common examples. Unfortunately, the use of this type of feminization creates an image that reflects mascots as small or helpless. Trivialization of the mascot's name carries it a step further, the reduction of the women's teams to a second class status (Fuller & Manning, 1987). Examples included: (a) Mercer University Bears becoming Teddy Bears; (b) Dickenson State College (ND) Blue Hawks becoming Blue Chicks; and (c) Fort Valley State College (GA) Wildcats becoming Wild Kittens. Appropriate feminization has been accomplished especially when women's teams are given a name that is related to that of the men's teams (Fuller & Manning, 1987). The Central Missouri State Mules and Jennies, the U Mass Minutemen and Minutewomen, and the James Madison Dukes and Duchesses were examples.

Fuller and Manning (1987) concluded their study by pointing out that the values embodied in particular mascots and symbols have been inconsistent with the values that should be reflected by an institution of higher education. Values of violence and sexism are the current reflection of today's mascots and symbols.

Also, the decision made by many schools, including Stanford and Dartmouth, to drop their American Indian mascots and symbols makes the point that change is always a possibility. Though the number of schools reconsidering has not reached epidemic proportions at least the images being projected by such mascots and symbols have been taken seriously (Fuller & Manning, 1987).

Lastly, sport has remained a male dominated preserve. Both the selection of original names and their feminization reflected the sexist attitudes that were present in American culture. There is the hope that schools will realize the demeaning nature involved in the sexist naming of women's teams and change will occur (Fuller &

Manning, 1987). How two universities have dealt with sexism is presented in the following essay.

The embarrassments that stem from the racist use of Native American team mascots and the sexism reflected in team names that trivialize women's athletics were presented in an essay by Wenner (1993). American sport's need to maintain traditions were discussed as a cause why the racism and sexism issues have continued to rage. "Sports is big on history, team names and mascots proclaim the tradition of sports" (Wenner, 1993, p.1). The time has come for sports to revise its sense of its own history.

There has been a yearning for "the good old days", the call for a time when everything in life was simpler. In retrospect, things seemed simpler because the social order was not being challenged as it has been in recent times (Wenner, 1993). In essence, in the "good old days" sport was played for the love of the game, the major leagues were actually white leagues, and intercollegiate sport meant men's sport (Wenner, 1993).

History as it has been taught in the American higher education system has been telling stories about traditions, whose traditions were these? The development of cultures as taught in history courses has been taught from a decidedly "western" perspective. Great art and literature were mostly western and mostly white. Sports institutions, like educational institutions, have been entrenched in western perspective and have been resistant to change (Wenner, 1993).

The issues of racism and sexism in sport have not been ones of political correctness, they have been about failure to make progress (Wenner, 1993). A decision to face these issues represents good business. Embracing diversity rather than resisting it is in the best interests of sport (Wenner, 1993). Many will claim the system works well as it is, some will cut through the rhetoric and make the necessary changes.

Some institutions have already begun, they have “concretized” rather than theorized their commitment to gender equity (Wenner, 1993).

Stanford took care of the Indian issue 2 decades ago. It is now engaged in a fund raising campaign that will support the creation of 3 women’s sports. Compliance of Title IX will be reached and exceeded, it will be done without cuts in any men’s sports. The Stanford plan is unique because it is reaching its goal through the enlarging of the athletic “pie” not the downsizing of it (Wenner, 1993). The University of Iowa had devised a five year plan to move toward compliance, it did not waste time complaining about Title IX but put a plan into action. The key is to set specific goals and chart your own course of action (Wenner, 1993).

Wenner (1993) concluded that sport was embedded in traditionalism. There needs to be revision, understanding different culture’s perspectives on history are important. Groups that oppose change have put pressure on organizations not to succumb to the pleas for revision. The bottom line is that sport can no longer advance itself on tradition, the “good old days” are gone (Wenner, 1993). A subsequent essay looked at a variety of concerns regarding mascots.

Complaints involving the symbolism of college mascots was discussed by Shea (1993). The essay’s focus centered on the use of Indian symbols but now the focus has been centered on mascots that were unrepresentative of the students at their universities. The use of Indians as symbols remained a source of contention; however, some old arguments have heated up. “Political correctness” entered the debate and soon took over (Shea, 1993).

The University of Alabama at Birmingham spent \$18,000.00 on study to find a more fitting mascot for its nickname “the Blazers”, the school had used a chicken (Shea, 1993). It unveiled “Blaze”, a cartoonish warrior with Nordic features. Blaze failed miserably. The first complaints were from women and minorities, Blaze was too

masculine and too white. But the main reason the costume was packed away was that students claimed Blaze did not represent them as a whole (Shea, 1993).

An uproar occurred at the University of Massachusetts when a petition circulated calling for an end to the use of the "Minutemen" as the school's mascot (Shea, 1993). Controversy ensued when the chancellor canceled a proposed meeting with students following remarks made by the Governor of Massachusetts supporting the mascot. Students contended that the image itself, not the history surrounding it, was the problem. The Minutemen was a white male representing a student body that was not exclusively white or male, this promoted racism and sexism (Shea, 1993). Students also raised questions regarding the appropriateness of having a military figure represent them.

Sport teams at Auburn University at Montgomery have been known as the "Senators" since the school's founding in 1967. The Senator has been depicted as a gentlemanly Robert E. Lee type character. Students organized a referendum to abolish the symbol and the nickname, a majority voted against the mascot. Students hope to find a replacement that will not offend any group of people (Shea, 1993).

Some protests have involved language used in conjunction with a school's mascot (Shea, 1993). For years the informal name of the Kennesaw State "Fighting Owls" had been "the Hooters" but the growing notoriety of a restaurant chain, also named "Hooters", caused supporters to question its use. The restaurant's drawing card was a skimpily clad waitresses. The students and alumni decided that the name Hooters had come to mean something else and needed to be replaced (Shea, 1993).

Traditions other than mascots, nicknames, and symbols had also been effected by the push for "correctness" (Shea, 1993). Signs in the Texas A & M University's Memorial Student Center had asked students to remove their hats in honor of Aggies who died in World Wars I and II. Black students began complaining that veterans of

integrated armed forces were excluded. The signs were changed to read “alumni who died or will die in any war past or future” (Shea, 1993, p.A33).

In conclusion, Shea (1993) contended that the ruling out of people and adoption of an animal as a mascot was not safe from criticism. Federal investigators concluded in July, 1993, that “Nugget”, the live eagle kept as mascot of the University of Southern Mississippi that died in 1992, had died as a result of the incompetence of a student caretaker. An animal cruelty spokesperson from People for Ethical Treatment of Animals said “if someone wants to dress up as a bird that’s fine, but I don’t see any justifiable reason to keep a real animal” (Shea, 1993).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to determine what perceptions female intercollegiate athletes have with regard to the racism and sexism inherent in sport mascots and nicknames. This chapter describes the methods that were used in obtaining information for this study. The subjects that participated in the research will be identified. The reasons for their involvement will be given. A survey was conducted to obtain the research data. Explanations of what was included in the survey and why it was included will be offered. The organization of the analysis and the techniques that were used to obtain the information will be listed. The headings that appear in this chapter are rationale, subjects, development of the instrument, procedures, and evaluation of information.

Rationale

Female basketball players with National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I experience were chosen to participate due to the high level of competition and exposure they receive. No other intercollegiate sport that women participate in receives as high a level of competition or as much exposure as does basketball. Only institutions whose teams participated in the 1996 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament were selected. The levels of competition and exposure the tournament provides are very similar to the levels male NCAA Division I basketball players receive. For this reason, it was determined female basketball players were better able to answer specific comparison questions.

A descriptive research technique was performed to gather the necessary data. This technique was chosen because of the number of participants and the time frame involved. A survey was deemed an appropriate instrument to provide to a large number

of athletes. There was the potential for 104 athletes to participate in the study. The information was obtained following the conclusion of the 1995-96 basketball season. For these reasons a survey was selected as the best approach.

Subjects

The participants in this study were 73 female athletes from eight selected NCAA Division I basketball teams. All eight teams participated in the 1996 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament. The athletes in this study had completed at least one full season of experience playing for their team.

The coach of each selected institution received a letter (Appendix A) explaining the purpose of the study and the capacity to which the student athletes would be involved. The letter sought permission from the coach for the survey to be conducted. The survey consisted of the administration of a questionnaire (Appendix B). Completion of the questionnaire by an athlete served as informed consent.

Development of the Instrument

The investigator developed a survey to address the problem statement and the various research questions presented in this study. The questionnaire (Appendix B) was designed to be concise and relative to the information being sought for the study. The statements and questions were designed to be consistent with the goals of the study. Every question on the survey covered one or all of the sub-questions.

Based on a comprehensive review of literature (Fuller & Manning, 1987; Eitzen and Zinn, 1989; Eitzen & Zinn, 1993), twenty items were generated to assess the athletes' perceptions of the racism and sexism inherent in the language and naming practices associated with sport mascots and nicknames. In the first part of the questionnaire, the athletes were asked to provide demographic information including: age, race, class year, eligibility year, and athletic scholarship status. The second part consisted of general questions rated (1) No, (2) Yes, and (3) Don't know. In the third

part, a standard Likert Scale was used and the athletes rated on a 5-point scale of their disagreement (1) or agreement (5) with each of eight naming practices that are sometimes used by colleges or universities (Eitzen & Zinn, 1989). In the fourth part, athletes were asked specific questions regarding their institutions, answers were rated (1) No, (2) Yes, and (3) Don't know.

The investigator designed the instrument to match the statement of the problem and the various research questions cited in Chapter 1. Survey questions 8, 9, and 10-A answered research question one. Survey questions 1, 2, and 7 answered research question two. Survey question 3 and 10-B answered research question three. Survey questions 4, 5, and 6 answered research question four. Lastly, survey questions 11-20 answered research question five. Demographic information about the institutions' coaches was obtained from the information sheet (Appendix E) included in the survey.

An attempt to determine the degree of logical validity and reliability of the survey instrument was conducted. The survey was reviewed by a group of eight Sport Administration graduate students at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The survey's statements were reviewed for content and relation to the statement of the problem and various research questions of the study. All reviewers, 100%, were able to match the statements to their respective research questions.

Procedures

Each coach of a participating institution was mailed an introduction and permission letter following the end of the 1995-96 basketball season (Appendix A). Upon receipt of permission, surveys were mailed on April 20, 1996. The time frame for completion of the survey was approximately one month. The institution should have received, administered, and returned the survey in that amount of time.

The survey consisted of a cover letter (Appendix C), the questionnaire (Appendix B), directions for administering the questionnaire (Appendix D), and an

information sheet (Appendix E) to be filled out by the coach. The cover letter advised the coach of the time frame for administration of the survey, explanation of the survey, and materials associated with the survey. The directions for administering the questionnaire explained how the survey should be administered and provided answers to any questions the participants might have had regarding terms, concepts, and procedures. It also explained that completion of the questionnaire served as informed consent. The information sheet was included in the survey to obtain demographic information about the coaches.

The collection of data for this study was completed in the Spring of 1996. All participants were guaranteed confidentiality and were made aware of the non-identifying nature of the data analysis and presentation of results. Completion of the survey served as informed consent. The participants were also told they could receive a copy of the information by request. The study followed the guidelines set forth by The University of Tennessee for research with human subjects.

Evaluation of Information

Survey respondents were divided into two groups and a comparative analysis was made. The sport information departments of each of the eight participating institutions sent photographic and written descriptions of their mascots and nicknames and this information was evaluated by the investigator. Group determination was based on the eight identified naming practices of mascot and nicknames developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989) that colleges and universities often use. Group A consisted of respondents from the institutions whose teams had non-sexist and/or non-racist mascots or nicknames according to the study groupings and was referred to as the non-biased named group in this study. Group B consisted of respondents from the institutions whose teams had sexist mascots or nicknames according to the study groupings and was referred to as the biased named group in this study. The statistics

that were used included frequency distributions and independent sample t-tests which were stated as percentages.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore how female athletes at the intercollegiate level perceive the racism and sexism inherent in sport, specifically, the language usage and naming practices involved with sport mascots and nicknames. A questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed and sent to female basketball players at eight selected National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I institutions. The institutions were chosen based on their participation in the 1996 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament. A total of 104 questionnaires were mailed and 73 were returned for a response rate of 70.1%.

The demographic information provided on the survey included age, race, athletic scholarship standing, academic class, and year of eligibility. The average age of the participants was 19.9 years. Those participants whose race was of the White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic origin, category were 58.9%. Those participants of the Black/African American, not of Hispanic origin, category were 38.4%. One participant each, 1.4%, was of the American Indian/Alaskan Native category and the Hispanic category respectively. Athletes on athletic scholarship accounted for 93.2% of the participants while 4.1% were not on scholarship, and 2 participants did not respond. Of the 73 respondents, 30.1% were freshman, 23.3% were sophomores, 32.9% were juniors, 11% were seniors, and 2.7% were fifth-year seniors.

The survey included an information sheet (Appendix E) which it provided demographic information about the coaches of the participating institutions. Five of the eight head coaches were female, 62.5%, and three were male, 37.5%. All eight of the head coaches, 100%, were White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic origin. A total of 24 assistant coaches were represented. Eighteen of the assistants were female, 75%, and

six were male, 25%. Among the assistant coaches, a look at race revealed that 19 were White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic origin, 79%, and five were Black/African American, not of Hispanic origin, 21%.

Survey respondents were divided into two groups and a comparative group analysis was made. The statistics that were used included frequency distributions and independent sample t-tests which were stated as percentages. Group determination was based on the eight identified naming practices of mascot and nicknames developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989) that colleges and universities often use. The sport information departments of each of the eight participating institutions sent photographic and written descriptions of their mascots and nicknames. Group A consisted of respondents from teams that had non-sexist and/or non-racist mascots or nicknames according to the study groupings. Group A will be referred to as the non-biased named group or as the non-biased named teams in the results and discussion sections that follow. Group B consisted of respondents from teams that had sexist mascots or nicknames according to the groupings. Group B will be referred to as the biased named group or as the biased named teams in the following results and discussion sections.

This chapter is divided into four sub-topics: (a) perceptions of racism, (b) perceptions of sexism, (c) interpretation of society's perceptions, and (d) perceptions of the subjects' own institution. The development of these sub-topics was derived from the statement of the problem and research questions cited in Chapter 1. Discussion of the results follows each sub-topic.

Perceptions of Racism

The first sub-topic examined the female athletes' perceptions of racism in the usage of sport mascots and nicknames. Survey questions 8, 9, and 10-A dealt with this issue. Two of the survey questions focused specifically on the use of the Indian as a sport mascot and nickname.

Results

Does the female athlete believe the use of an Indian as a mascot or nickname is racist? One-hundred percent of the non-biased named group answered no. A majority, 88.8%, of the biased named group answered no, 2.2% answered yes, and 8.8% answered don't know (Figure 1). When asked if an Indian mascot or nickname should be changed if it was found to offend Native Americans, the respondents were mixed in their beliefs. Just over half, 53.5%, of the non-biased named group answered yes, not quite a third, 32.1% answered no, and 14.2% did not know. The biased named group responded in similar fashion with 44.4% answering yes, over a third, 37.7%, answering no, and 17.7% answering don't know (Figure 2).

Finally, the focus shifted to a more broad view of racism when the respondents were asked if any mascot or nickname that was deemed racially offensive should be changed. Yes was the answer chosen by 62.2% of the non-biased named group. Answers of no and don't know were chosen by an equal number, 17.8%, of the respondents in that same group. Members of the biased named group cited yes as an answer 51.1% of the time. No was the choice of one third, 31.1%, of the biased named group respondents and don't know was the choice of 17.7% (Figure 3).

Discussion

The Indian remains a highly visible and often-used choice as a sport mascot (Banks, 1993). Both the non-biased named and biased named groups believed the use of the Indian as a mascot or nickname was not a form of racism. The popularity of professional sport teams such as baseball's Atlanta Braves and football's Washington Redskins have legitimized the use of the Indian as a mascot in the eyes of many (Monaghan, 1992). Davis (1993) cited backlash to the political correctness movement as one reason why many felt it was a non-issue. It is possible that at one time members of both groups may have played for or against teams whose mascots or nicknames

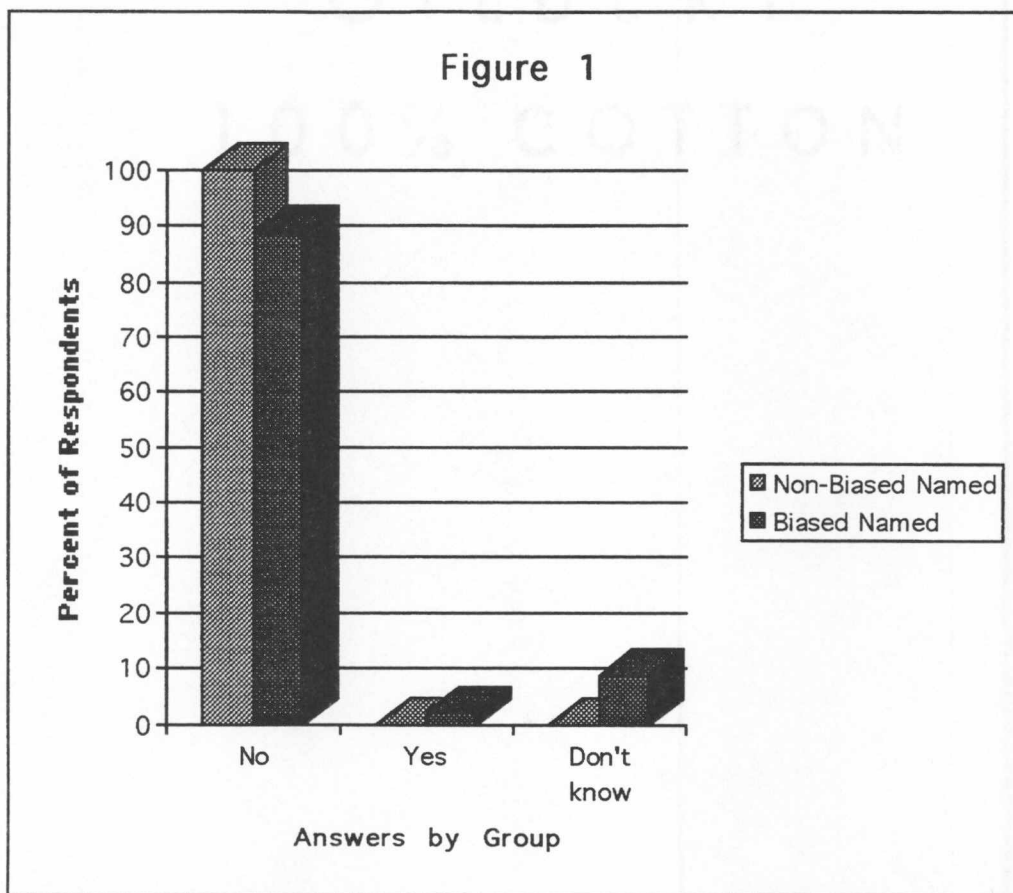


Figure 1. Determination of the use of an Indian mascot or nickname as racist.

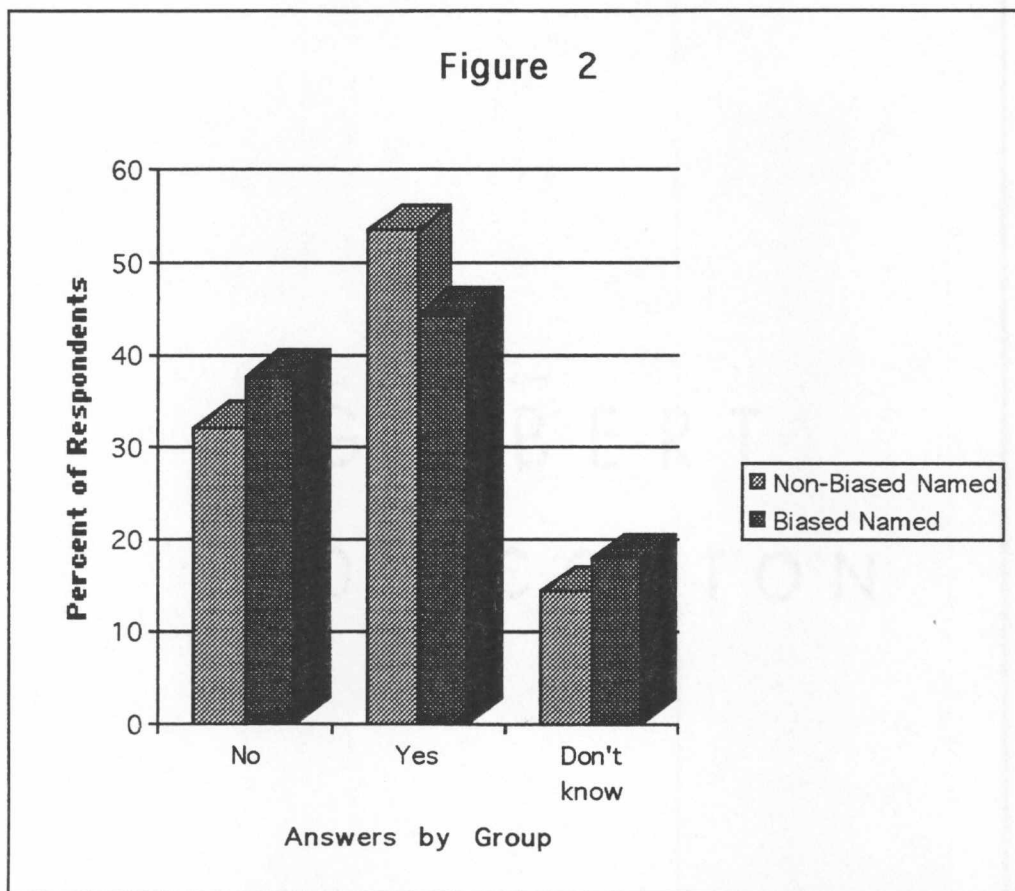


Figure 2. Determination of change for an Indian mascot or nickname found to offend Native Americans.

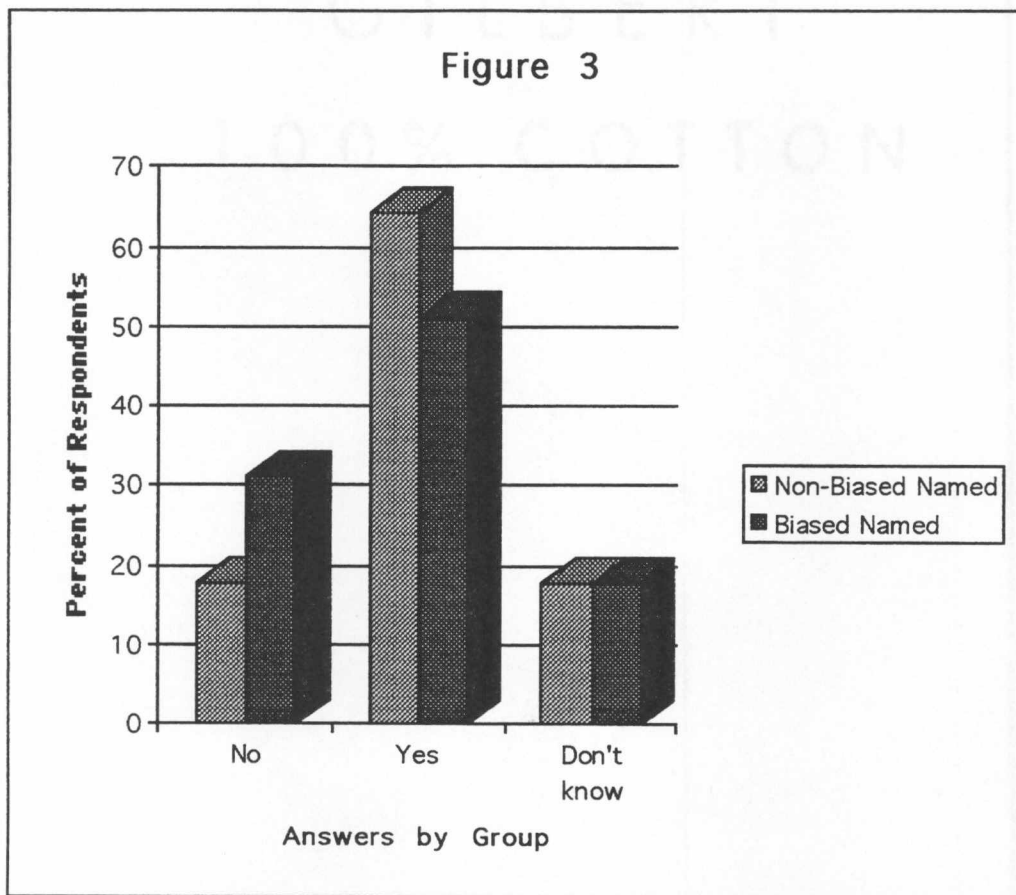


Figure 3. Determination of change for any racially offensive mascot or nickname.

were Indian but differences between groups seemed not to be a factor in this issue. The groups' responses were consistent with the views expressed throughout the review of literature.

The differences between groups did not change when confronted with the issue of mascots offending the Native American people. Both groups responded similarly, however, a majority of each group answered yes instead of no. Also, there was an increased number of don't knows. That change in belief and the increase in don't knows may have occurred due to the fact that real people, Native Americans, became the target of the racism. Increasing the sensitivity of an issue often changes the viewpoints of those involved (Shea, 1993). Again, the groups responded consistently with previously expressed beliefs.

When asked if any mascot seen as racially offensive should be changed, there were slight differences in the groups' responses. A majority of both groups answered yes, but the biased named group responded at ten percentage points less. Also, the biased named group answered no at almost twice the rate of the non-biased named group. That difference may be due to the fact that the biased named group plays on teams whose mascots and nicknames are considered sexist. They may believe their own teams' names are a non-issue and relate that to racism as well.

Lastly, each group believed an Indian mascot or nickname was not racist yet they responded that it should be changed if found offensive by Native Americans. Also, both groups believed "any" racially offensive mascot or nickname should be changed, therefore, the Indian must not be just "any" mascot or nickname.

Perceptions of Sexism

The second sub-topic addressed the participants' perceptions of sexism in the language usage and naming practices of sport mascots and nicknames. Also, it focused

on the perceived justification of such practices. Survey questions 1, 2, 3, 7, and 10-B dealt with these issues.

Results

Survey question one asked whether having a different mascot or nickname for the women's teams and men's teams within a college/university represented a form of sexism. An answer of yes was given by 71.4% of the non-biased named group respondents, 17.8% of them answered no, and 7.1% answered don't know. Among the biased named group, 53.3% of the respondents answered yes, 40% answered no, and 4.4% answered don't know (Figure 4).

The second question on the survey asked did the participants believe equality was being served by having the women's and men's teams use the same mascot or nickname even when it had been found to be sexist. A majority, 57.1%, of the non-biased named group members registered an answer of yes, about one third, 32.1% chose no, and 10.7% said don't know. Biased named group members chose yes as an answer 46.6% of the time, no as an answer 28.8% of the time, and don't know 22.2% of the time (Figure 5).

The justification for maintaining mascots or nicknames that had been deemed sexist was the subject of the next question. Participants were asked did they believe alumni support, fan support, or tradition were valid reasons for maintaining a mascot or nickname that had been found to be sexist. With regard to alumni support, 67.8% of the non-biased named group stated no, 21.4% stated yes, and 7.1% stated don't know. The biased named group chose no on 64.4% of the occasion, 13.3% chose yes, and 22.2% said don't know (Figure 6). Fifty percent of the non-biased named group did not find fan support to be a valid reason. Just over a third, 35.7%, of the non-biased named group said yes and 7.1% said don't know. Fan support was not considered a valid reason by 55.5% of the biased named group while 24.4% did not know and 20%

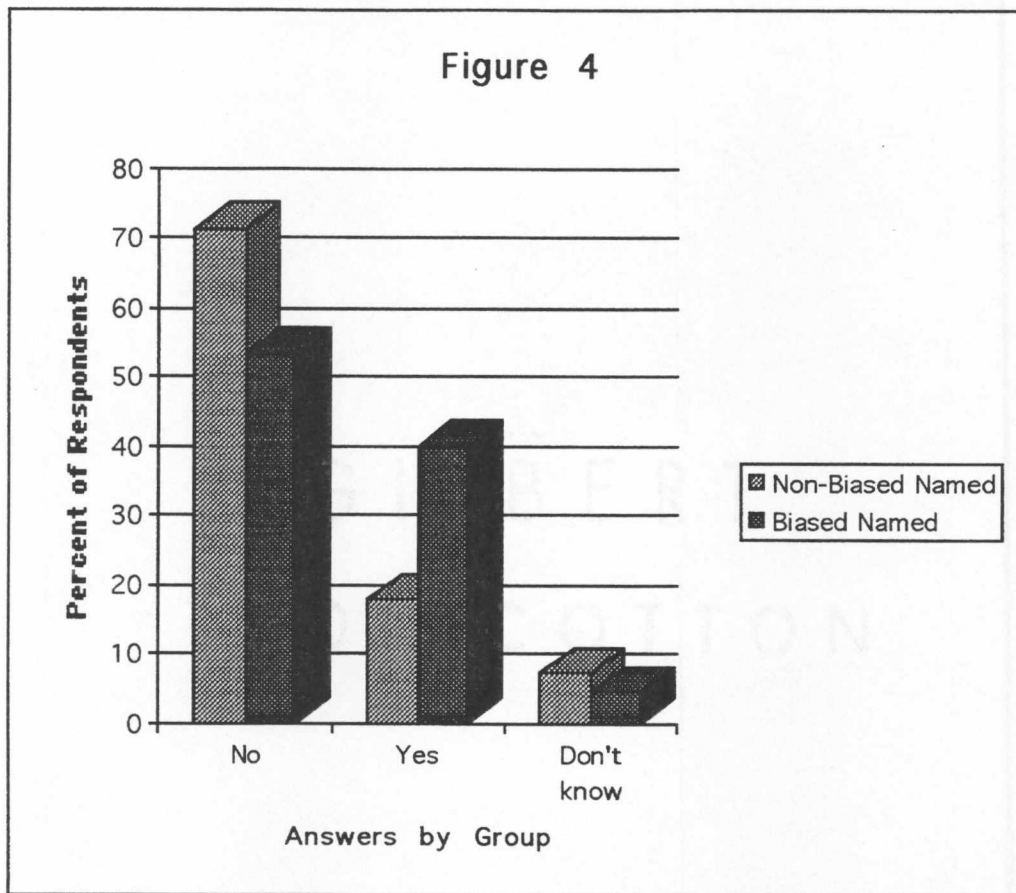


Figure 4. Determination of sexism as any difference in mascots or nicknames.

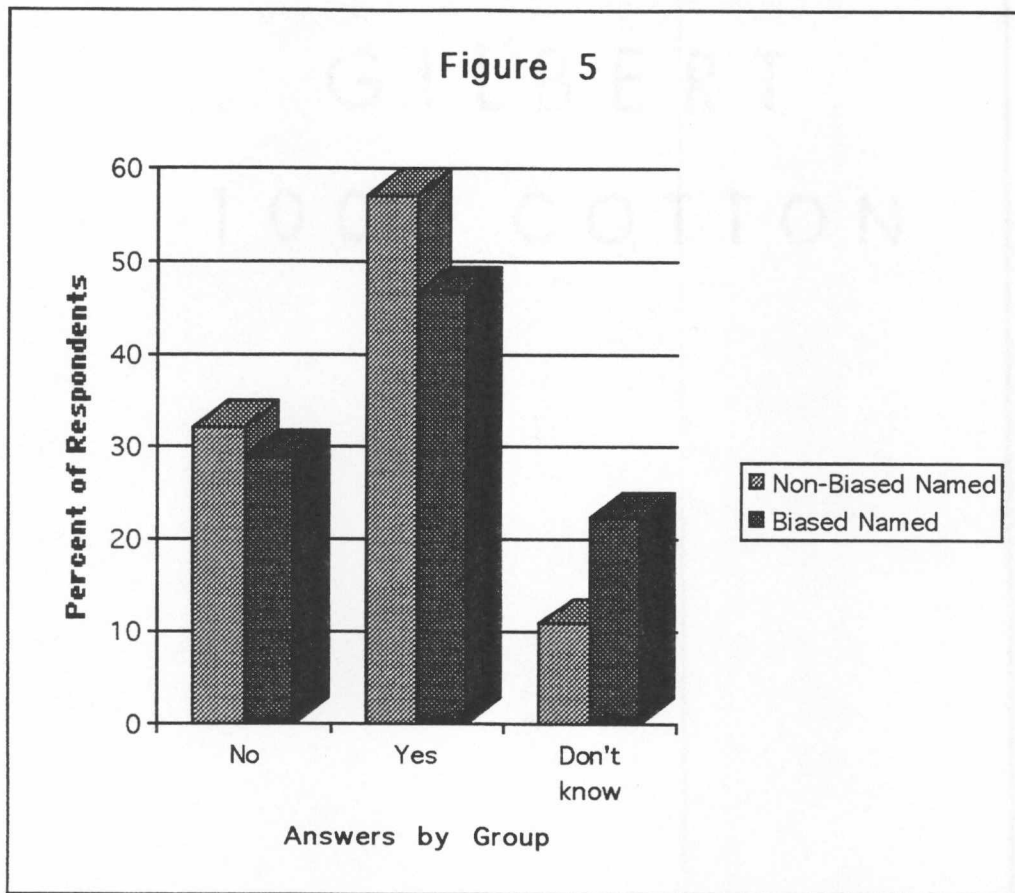


Figure 5. Determination of equality for use of a sexist mascot or nickname.

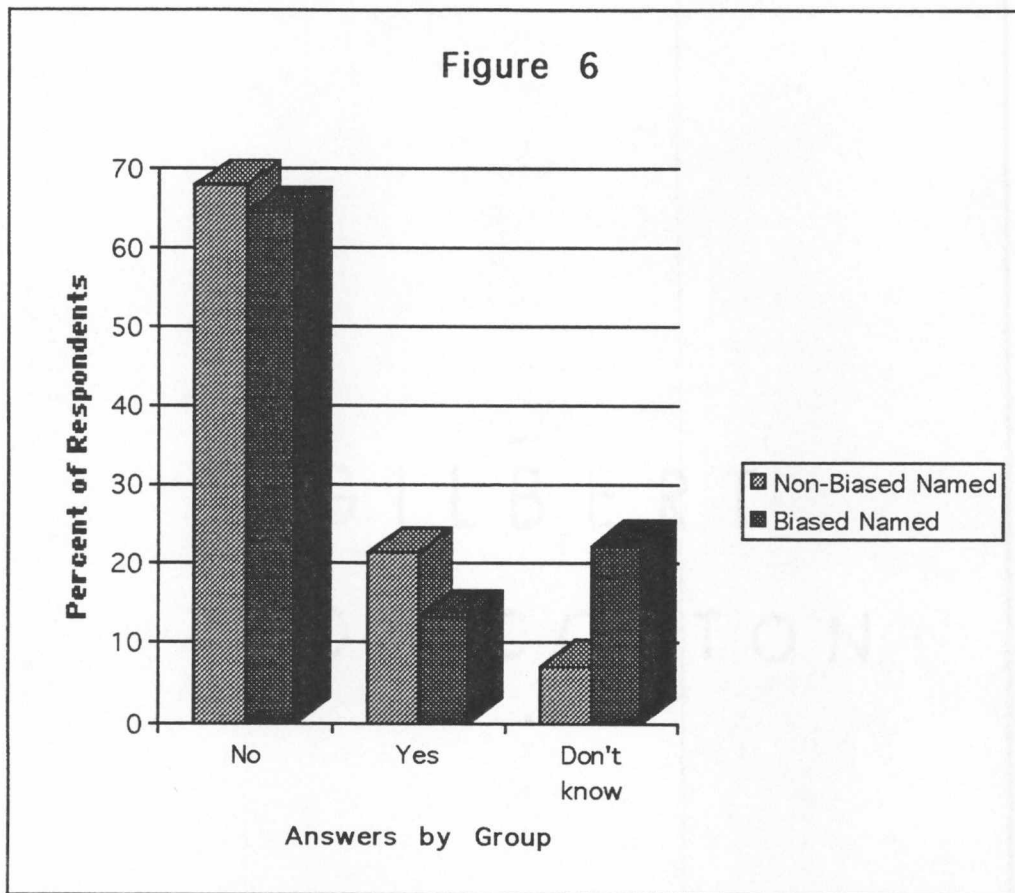


Figure 6. Determination of alumni support for justification of a sexist mascot or nickname.

said yes (Figure 7). The non-biased named group was split in its view of tradition as a valid reason. Answers of no and yes were each cited 42.8% of the time, while don't know was cited 14.2% of the time. Over half, 53.3%, of the biased named group did not find tradition to be a valid reason. Did not know was the response of 26.6% of the biased named group members and 20% said yes (Figure 8).

The seventh question on the survey asked respondents had they seen incidents of sexism in any of the following areas of the sport media: print, radio, or television. In the print, 57.1% of the non-biased named group said yes they had seen incidents and 39.2% said no. The biased named group responded no at a rate of 62.2% and yes at a rate of 35.5% (Figure 9). Almost two thirds, 60.7%, of the non-biased named group found no incidents of sexism on the radio while almost a third, 32.1% said they had. Similarly, 68.8% of the biased named group found no incidents while just less than a third, 31.1% did (Figure 10). In the medium of television, 64.2% of non-biased named group members cited incidents and 28.5% did not. Over half, 55.5%, of biased named group members found no incidents of sexism on television while 44.4% said they had (Figure 11).

Lastly, respondents were asked did they believe any mascot or nickname found to be sexually offensive should be changed. The non-biased named group believed, yes, change should occur according to 60.7% of respondents. Only 17.8% of the non-biased named group said no while 14.2% said don't know. Two members, 7.1%, did not answer. Not quite half, 48.8%, of biased named group members answered yes, 28.8% answered no, and 20% answered don't know (Figure 12).

Discussion

Each group responded in kind when asked if women's teams having a different mascot or nickname than men's teams represented a form of sexism. Both groups answered yes but the non-biased named group answered yes at a higher rate. Again,

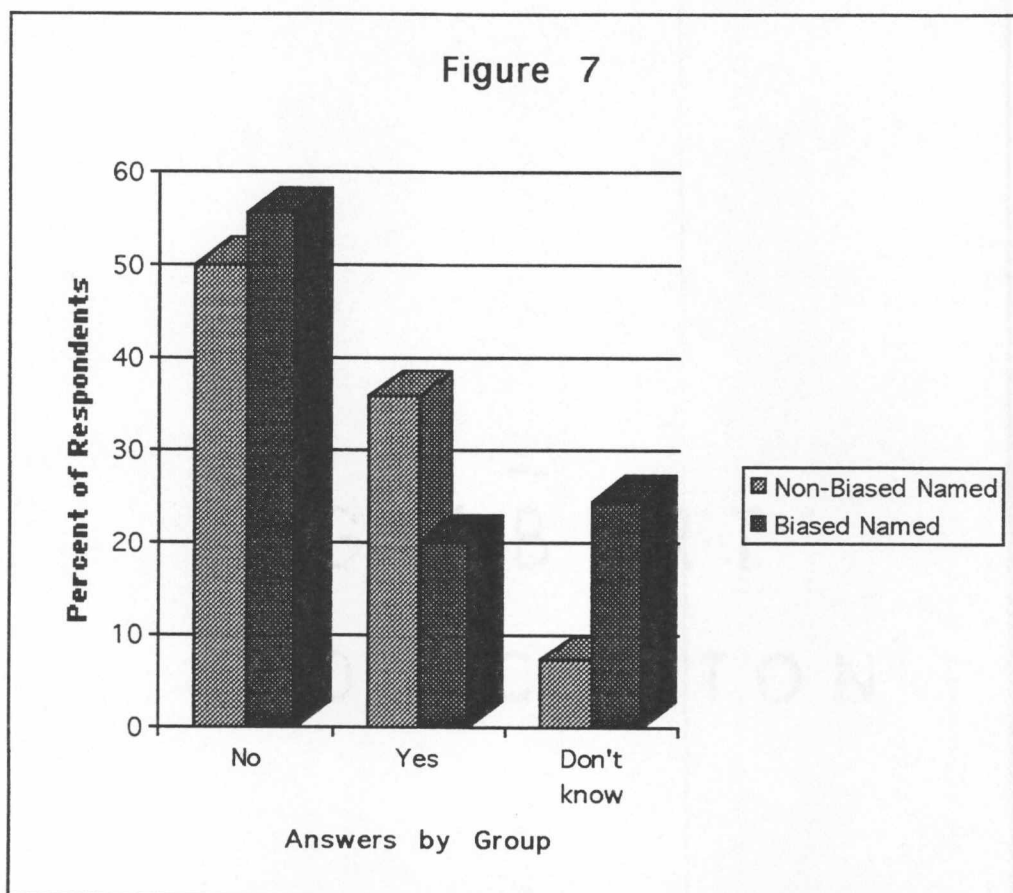


Figure 7. Determination of fan support for justification of a sexist mascot or nickname.

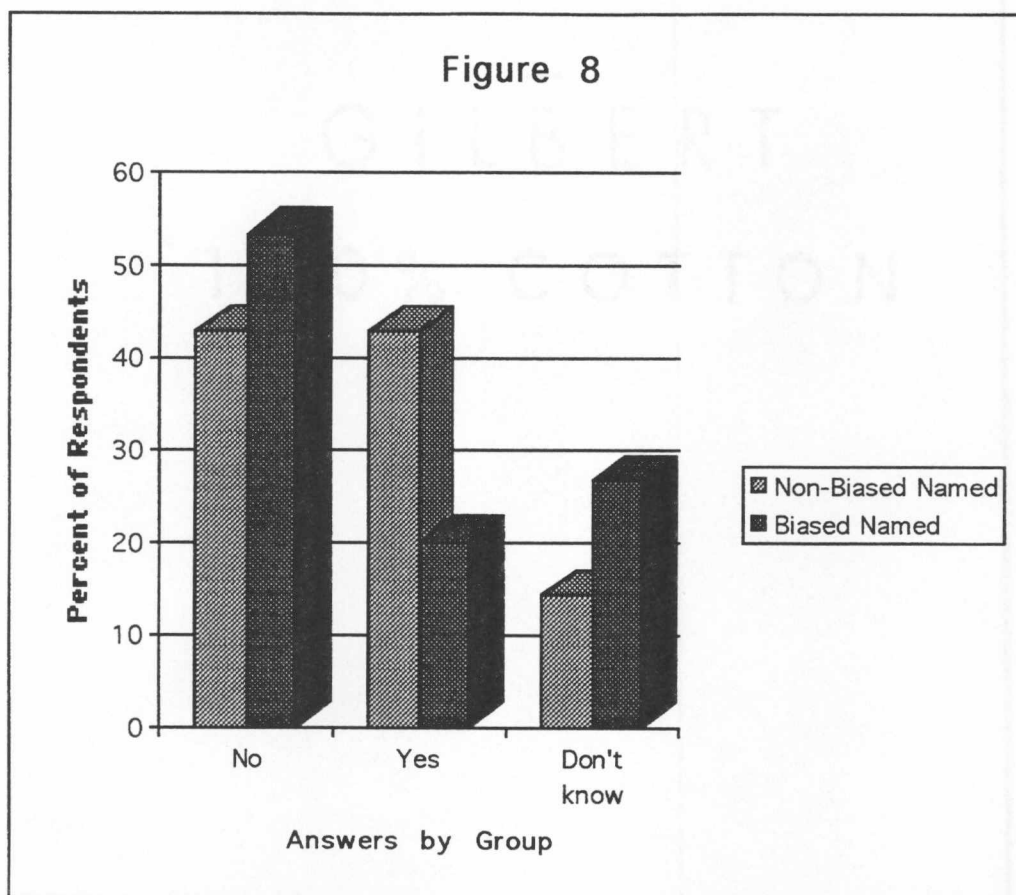


Figure 8. Determination of tradition for justification of a sexist mascot or nickname.

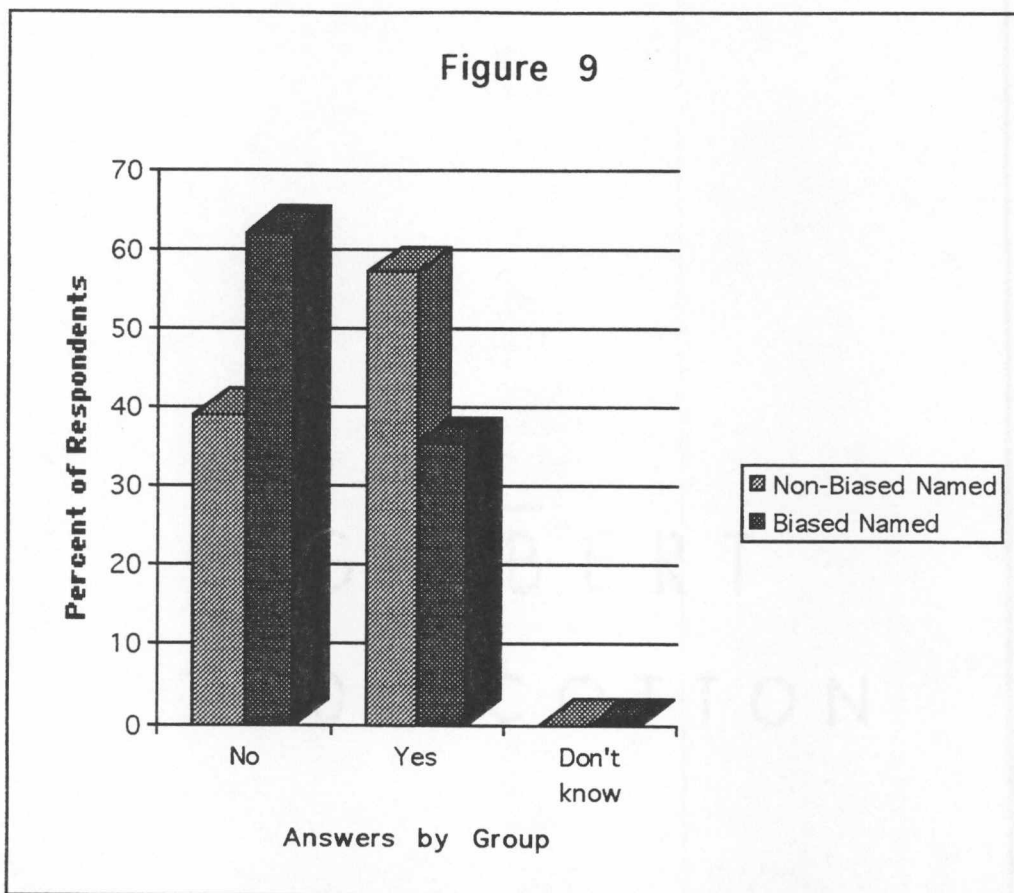


Figure 9. Perceived instances of sexism by the sport media in print.

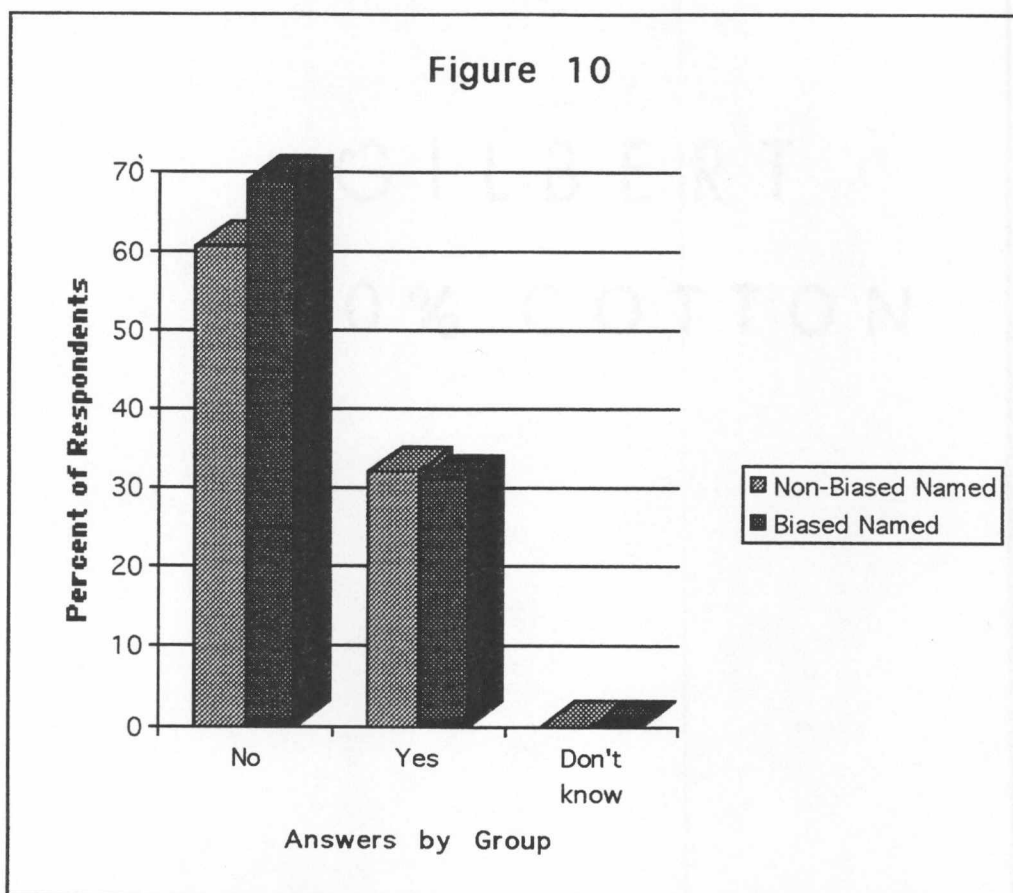


Figure 10. Perceived instances of sexism by the sport media in radio.

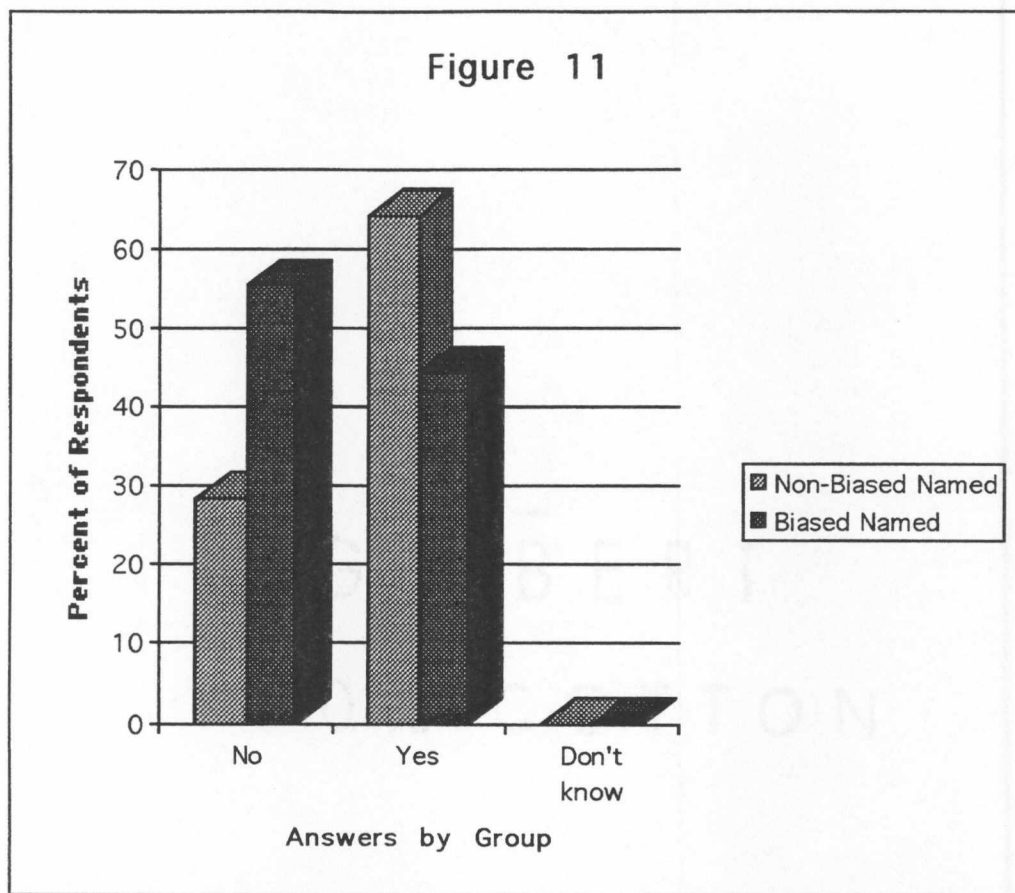


Figure 11. Perceived instances of sexism by the sport media in television.

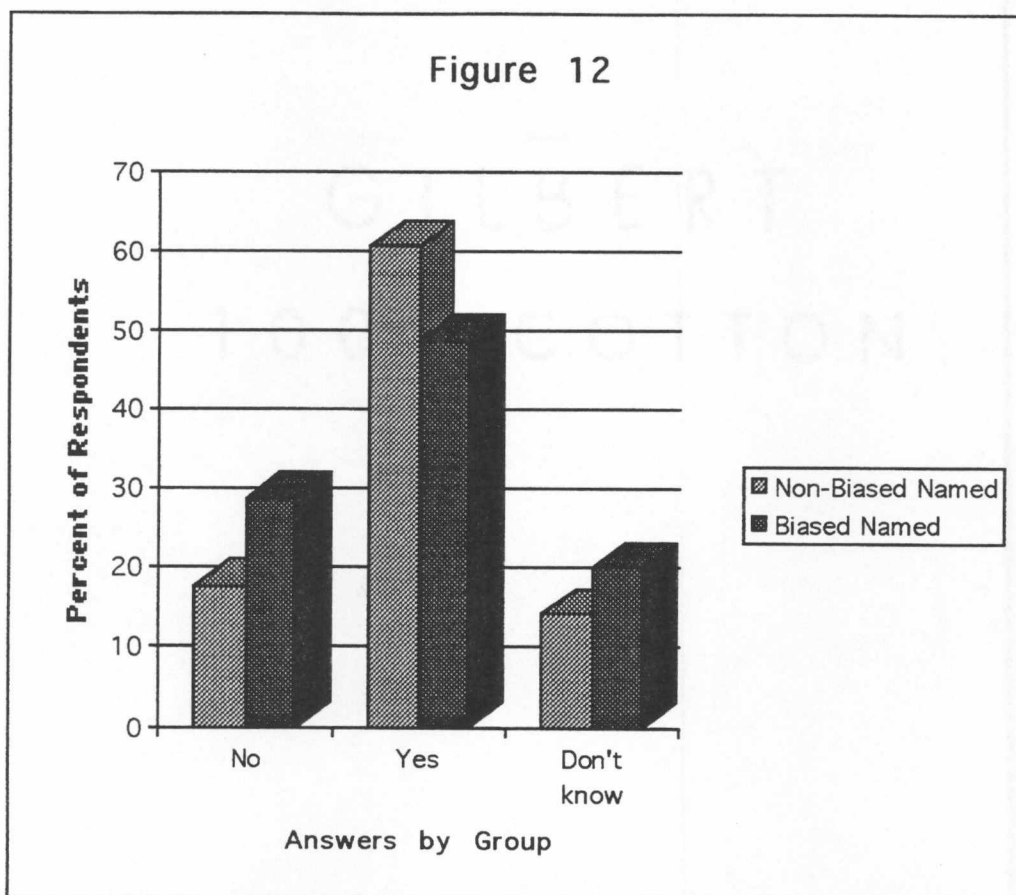


Figure 12. Determination of change for any sexually offensive mascot or nickname.

the groups answered yes when asked if equality was being served by having women's and men's teams use the same nickname even when it was found to be sexist. The first question was not specific about what kind of difference. The second question clearly stated the mascot was sexist. The statistics indicated that both groups equate equality with having the same name. Similarly, difference, even when it has not been clearly defined, was seen as inequality. The non-biased named group's higher rate of yes on question one may stem from the fact that the group's institutions use the same mascot or nickname for both its men's and women's teams.

Very few differences between groups surfaced when asked about what justifies maintaining a nickname found to be sexist. Both groups did not believe alumni support was justification enough. A majority of each group found fan support was no justification. Tradition as a means of justification drew some interesting results. The non-biased named group was split in its beliefs, an even number of no and yes responses was the majority. The biased named group was clear in answering no. That difference may be attributed to the fact that the non-biased named group shares a similar tradition with its men's teams. The biased named group may have experienced differences in tradition because of differences in mascots and nicknames. The tradition issue saw a rise in the number of don't knows. Both alumni and fan support were non-issues in the eyes of the female athletes but tradition was. This was consistent with previous research. Tradition has always been an emotional issue with regard to mascots and nicknames (Lidz, 1990; and Monaghan, 1992).

Responses to incidents of sexism in the sport media revealed some differences between groups. Each group was asked to respond to incidents of sexism seen in the mediums of print, radio, and television by the sport media. Differences between groups occurred with regard to the print media. A majority of the non-biased named group revealed, yes, they had seen incidents of sexism by the sport media in print

during their tenure as athletes. Conversely, a majority of biased named group members did not. Neither group reported experiencing incidents of sexism by the radio sport media. There was a difference between groups with regard to television. The majority of the non-biased named group reported seeing incidents of sexism while a majority of the biased named group members did not. The differences among the media most likely reflects the growing influence and popularity of television. Because the biased named group may see its teams' names as a non-issue, they may not recognize incidents sexism for the same reason.

No differences between groups were recorded when asked if a mascot or nickname found to be sexually offensive should be changed. Each group responded that the name should be changed. Interestingly, only when the issues dealt directly with the athletes themselves did their perspective change. This was consistent with the findings of the Eitzen & Zinn (1993) study.

Interpretation of Society's Perceptions

The third sub-topic attempted to determine how female athletes interpret society's perceptions of women's athletics. Concepts such as gender equity and language usage in the media were presented. Survey questions 4, 5, and 6 dealt with these issues.

Results

The fourth question on the survey asked participants had they seen any significant advancements in gender equity occur during their tenure as an intercollegiate athletes. Non-biased named group members responded yes at a rate of 64.2% while 35.7% responded no. Biased named group members had a more mixed response. Almost half, 48.8% said yes, 40% said no, and 8.8% did not know. One member of the biased named group did not respond (Figure 13).

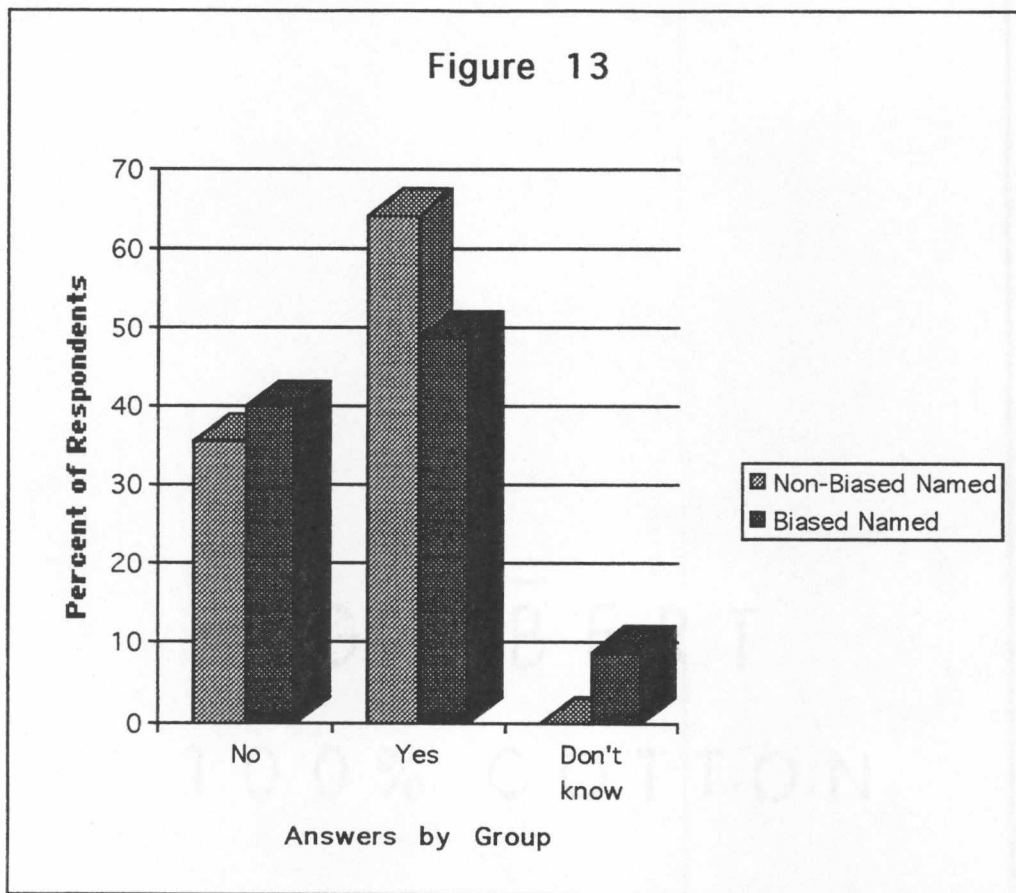


Figure 13. Perceived advancements in gender equity.

Survey question number five asked the participants whether they thought society perceives female athletes and women's athletics in the same manner it perceives male athletes and men's athletics. One-hundred percent of the non-biased named group members responded no. A majority, 88.8%, of the biased named group members also responded no. An answer of yes was recorded by only 6.6% of the biased named group members while don't know was recorded by 4.4% of them (Figure 14).

Language usage was introduced when participants were asked if the language used by the sport media was fair in its portrayal of women's athletics. Non-biased named group members were split as 46.4% responded yes, 42.8% said no, and 10.7% said don't know. Similarly, biased named group members were split when 42.2% said no, 40% said yes, and 17.7% responded don't know (Figure 15).

Discussion

When interpreting society's perceptions of women's athletics the two groups did not differ. A majority of each group claimed to have seen significant advancements occur in gender equity. This was a promising finding. When the groups were asked whether society perceive female athletes and women's athletics the same as male athletes and men's athletics, the response was an overwhelming no by both groups. Again, these views were consistent with previous findings throughout the review of literature. Society continues to perceive women's athletics as second class when compared to men's athletics (Duncan, 1993). The athletes in this study confirmed that they themselves are the target of such perceptions.

The groups did not differ but were mixed in their assessment of language usage by the sport media. A majority from each group responded yes to the question regarding whether the sport media was fair in its portrayal of women's athletics but the figures were close. This uncertainly was, for the most part, consistent with the views expressed throughout the review of literature. The language used by the sport media is

Figure 14

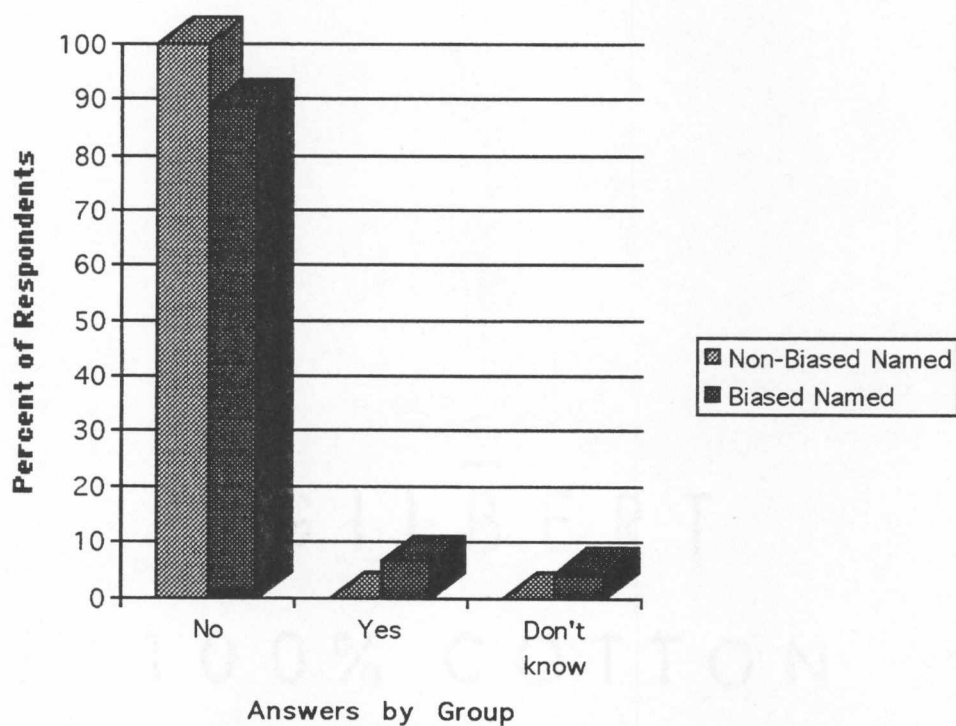


Figure 14. Interpretation of society's perceptions of equality between women's and men's athletics.

Figure 15

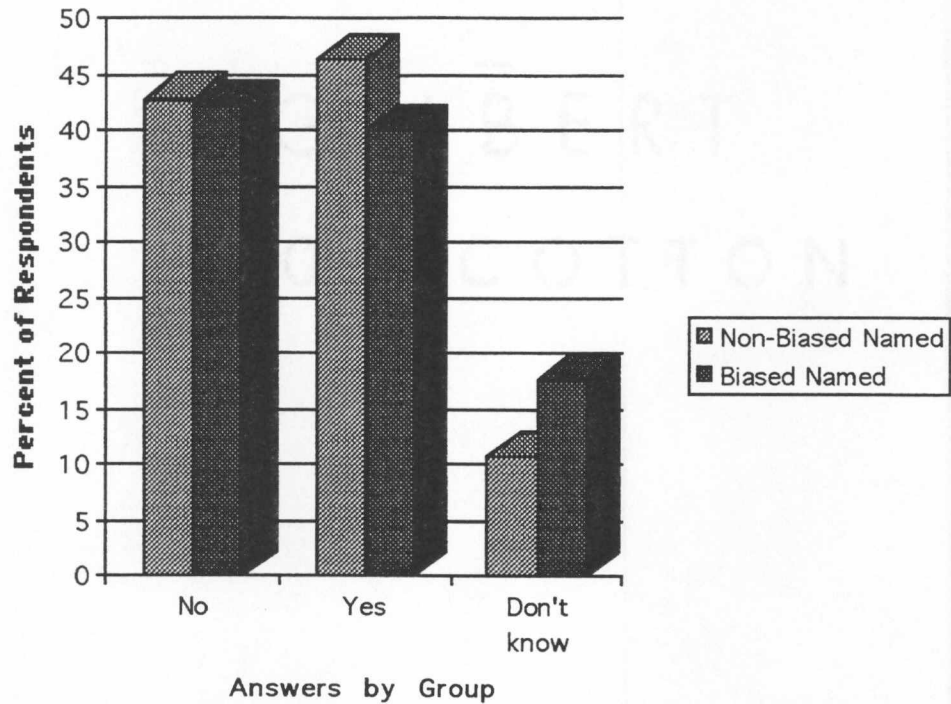


Figure 15. Perceived fairness of language usage by the sport media.

full of negative bias against women (Duncan, 1993). The respondents in this study said it was fair and that might reflect that the media has made some improvement.

Perceptions of the Subjects' Own Institution

The fourth sub-topic attempted to explore how the female athlete perceives her own institution. That section of the survey asked participants to base their perceptions on the 8 identified naming practices of mascots and nicknames developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989) that are often used by colleges and universities. Survey questions 11 through 20 dealt with these issues.

Results

Survey questions eleven through eighteen asked group members for their reactions to the eight naming practices developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989). The respondents were asked to relate their own institution's mascot or nickname to one of the eight groupings. A standard Likert Scale was used to gauge reactions. Responses varied greatly (Tables 1-8). Independent sample t-tests were run but findings were not significant ($p \leq .05$). Many of the respondents from both groups did not answer or chose the neutral response.

Survey question nineteen asked participants if their institution's mascot or nickname fell under one of the eight naming practice categories developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989). Among the non-biased named group, 60.7% answered yes, 32.1% answered no, 3.5% answered don't know, and 3.5% did not respond. Sixty percent of the biased named group members answered yes, 20% answered no, 15.5% answered don't know, and 4.4 did not respond (Figure 16).

The final question on the survey asked participants did they believe their institution's mascot or nickname should be changed if it had fallen under one of the eight Eitzen & Zinn (1989) naming practice categories. A majority, 85.7%, of non-

Table 1. Female athletes' perceptions of the "physical markers" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	7 25.0	4 14.2	14 50.0	2 7.1	1 3.5	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	9 20.0	10 22.2	22 48.8	1 2.2	1 2.2	2 4.4
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	16 21.9	14 19.1	36 49.3	3 4.1	2 2.7	2 2.7

Table 2. Female athletes' perceptions of the "girl or gal" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	8 28.5	5 17.8	10 35.7	4 14.2	1 3.5	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	12 26.6	12 26.6	16 35.5	4 8.8	1 2.2	0 0
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	20 27.4	17 23.2	26 35.6	8 10.9	2 2.7	0 0

Table 3. Female athletes' perceptions of the "feminine suffixes" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	17 60.7	3 10.7	6 21.4	0 0	2 7.1	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	18 40.0	4 8.8	17 37.7	1 2.2	3 6.6	2 4.4
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	35 47.8	7 9.5	23 31.5	1 1.3	5 6.8	2 2.7

Table 4. Female athletes' perceptions of the "lady" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	1 3.5	2 7.1	9 32.1	3 10.7	13 46.4	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	3 6.6	1 2.2	15 33.3	4 8.8	21 46.6	1 2.2
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	4 5.4	3 4.1	24 32.8	7 9.5	34 46.5	1 1.3

Table 5. Female athletes' perceptions of the "male as a false generic" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	6 21.4	8 28.5	10 35.7	1 3.5	3 10.7	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	11 24.4	6 13.3	21 46.6	2 4.4	3 6.6	2 4.4
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	17 23.2	14 19.1	31 42.4	3 4.1	6 8.2	2 2.7

Table 6. Female athletes' perceptions of the "male name with a female modifier" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	5 17.8	3 10.7	7 25.0	1 3.5	12 42.8	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	5 11.1	6 13.3	14 31.1	6 13.3	12 26.6	2 4.4
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	10 13.7	9 12.3	21 28.7	7 9.5	24 32.8	2 2.7

Table 7. Female athletes' perceptions of the "double gender marking" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	6 21.4	4 14.2	9 32.1	2 7.1	7 25.0	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	9 20.0	2 4.4	22 48.8	4 8.8	7 15.5	1 2.2
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	15 20.5	6 8.2	31 42.4	6 8.2	14 19.1	1 1.3

Table 8. Female athletes' perceptions of the "male/female paired polarity" naming practice.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Did not respond
<u>Non-biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	13 46.4	6 21.4	6 21.4	2 7.1	1 3.5	0 0
<u>Biased</u> <u>Named</u> Frequency: Percent:	14 31.1	8 17.7	20 44.4	2 4.4	0 0	1 2.2
<u>TOTAL</u> Frequency: Percent:	27 36.9	14 19.1	26 35.6	4 5.4	1 1.3	1 1.3

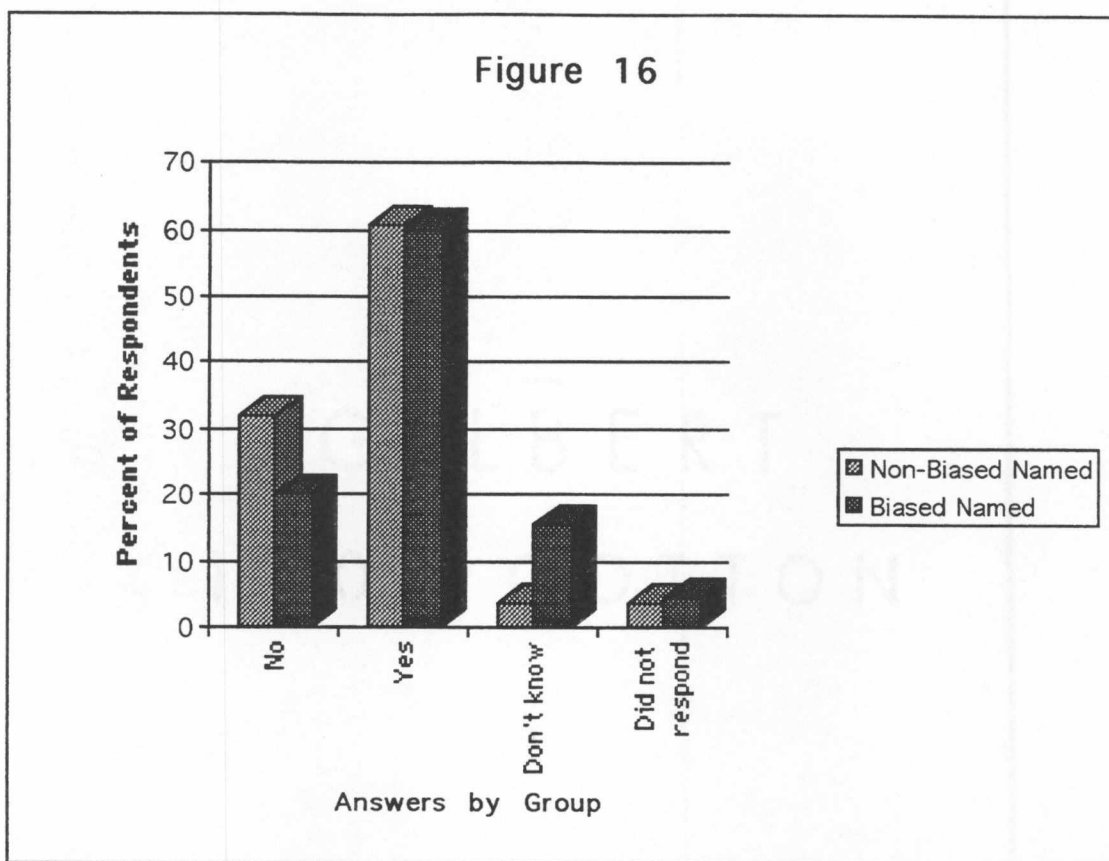


Figure 16. Institutions' perceived placement among the naming practices.

biased named group members responded no, 10.7% did not respond, 3.5% responded don't know, and no one responded yes. Similarly, three quarters, 75.5% of the biased named group members responded no, 13.3% did not respond, 11.1% responded no, and no one responded yes (Figure 17).

Discussion

Responses to the eight Eitzen & Zinn (1989) naming practices revealed no significant differences between groups (Tables 1-8). Members of both groups remained neutral toward many of the groupings. This may have been a result of not understanding what the groupings meant and how to relate their institution's mascot or nickname. The non-biased named group was expected to have no reaction to any of the groupings as its teams' mascots and nicknames did not fall under any of the grouping. Instead, the non-biased named group showed varied reaction but a majority were neutral. The biased named group responded as expected with varied reactions. The biased named group was expected to show a varied response because each its teams fell under one or more of the eight groupings.

The responses to survey question nineteen were surprising. The non-biased named group was expected to answer no because none of its institutions had mascots or nicknames that fell under any of the groupings. Yet, a majority answered yes. The biased named group answered as expected when a majority answered yes. The response of yes was expected to be close to 100% because each of the institutions that made up the biased named group had a sexist mascot or nickname according to the grouping.

Survey question twenty presented some surprising findings as well. Respondents were asked if their institution's mascot or nickname fell under one of the eight groupings should it be changed. A large majority of each group responded no. Not one member of either group answered yes. This contradicted other findings within

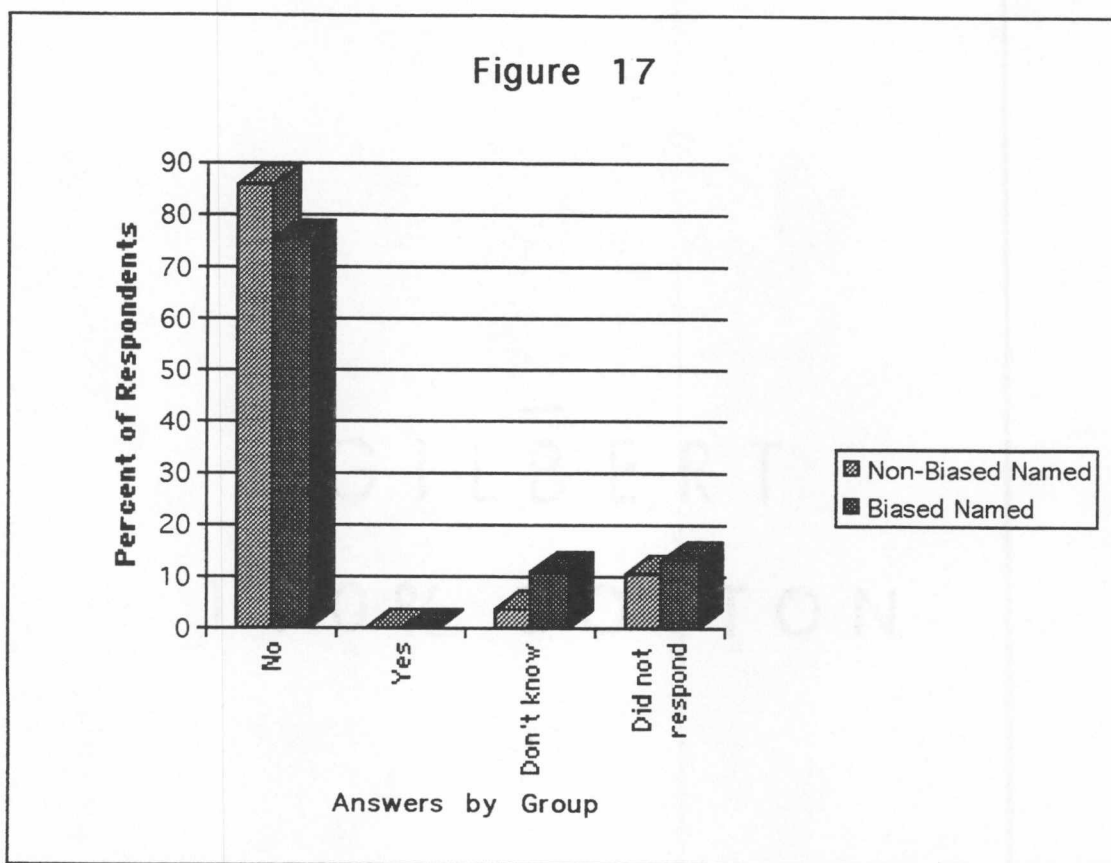


Figure 17. Determination of change for institutions' sexually offensive mascots or nicknames.

the study. The majority of participants in each group believed a sexually offensive name should be changed yet when it was found to be their own institution they did not choose change. This was consistent with previous research throughout the review of literature. The Colorado State University (CSU) study conducted by Eitzen & Zinn (1993) offered similar findings. The female athletes at CSU felt their team's sexist mascot was a non-issue.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine what perceptions female intercollegiate athletes have about the racism and sexism inherent in the language usage and naming practices of sport mascots and nicknames. The study was developed in an effort to examine the powerful range of emotions racist and/or sexist mascots and nicknames have on these athletes and how to curb their often negative effects.

The study and its results were divided into four topical areas based on the five sub-questions developed in Chapter 1. The four sub-topics were: (a) perceptions of racism, (b) perceptions of sexism, (c) interpretation of society's perceptions, and (d) perceptions of the subjects' institution.

A questionnaire was developed and a survey was conducted by the investigator. The participating subjects were 73 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I female basketball players from eight different institutions. The subjects were chosen based on their institutions' participation in the 1996 NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Tournament.

The subjects were divided into two groups and a comparative analysis was made. Group determination was made based on the eight identified naming practices of mascots and nicknames developed by Eitzen & Zinn (1989). Group A consisted of respondents from teams that had non-sexist and/or non-racist mascots or nicknames according to the naming practices and was referred to in the study as the non-biased named group. Group B consisted of respondents from teams that had sexist mascots according to the naming practices and was referred to in the study as the biased named group.

The results of the study were consistent with previous research and reflected the findings of many of the authors across the review of literature. Sub-topic one was based on the first research question. Both groups believed any mascot or nickname found to be racially offensive should be changed. Also, the groups believed that an Indian mascot or nickname should be changed when it offends the Native American people. However, both groups found the use of an Indian as a mascot or nickname not to be racist. Some form of the Indian name (Braves, Chiefs, Indians, Redskins, Warriors, etc.) remains a highly used and popular choice as a mascot or nickname in American sport and the female intercollegiate athlete agrees.

Sub-topic two was developed based on research questions 2 and 3. There were very few differences between groups with regard to perceptions of sexism. The results indicate that both groups equate sexism with difference or inequality. The two groups believed that having different mascots or nicknames for men's and women's teams constituted sexism even when the kind of difference was not clearly defined. Similarly, both groups believed equality was being served by have the men's and women's teams use the same mascot or nickname even when it was found to be sexist. Conversely, each group responded that any mascot or nickname found to be sexually offensive should be changed. This contradicted what they had stated with regard to different men's and women's team names.

The study revealed that female athletes do not believe alumni support, fan support, or tradition serve as justification for maintaining sexist nicknames and mascots. The non-biased named group was split on the issue of tradition but this was consistent with previous research and findings. Tradition has been found to be an emotional issue with regard to mascots and nicknames and emotional issues often elicit varied responses (Lidz, 1990; Monaghan, 1992).

Responses to incidents of sexism in print, radio, and television by the sport media revealed some differences between groups. No differences were found with regard radio and television, both groups responded they had seen incidents of sexism. The groups differed in their beliefs with regard to the print media. The biased named group had found no incidents while the non-biased named group had. Differences between mediums was not measured but the biased named group's response with regard to the print media may be a reflection of the decreased influence of print and the increased influence of television.

Sub-topic 4 was based on research question 4 and athletes responded with their interpretation of society's perceptions of women's athletics. Both groups claimed to have seen advancements occur in gender equity. An overwhelming response of no was given by members of both groups when asked if society perceives women's athletics the same as it does men's athletics. The two groups differed in their response to the fair portrayal of women's athletics by the sport media. The non-biased named group believed the language usage by the sport media was fair while the biased named group did not. The difference may reflect an improvement made by the sport media. Investigators and authors across the review of literature found the media unfair in its portrayal of women's athletics and saw room for improvement.

Results of the female athletes' perceptions of her own institution were the focus of sub-question 5. Reactions to the Likert Scale questions regarding the eight Eitzen & Zinn (1989) naming practices revealed little difference between groups (Tables 1-8). There were a high number of neutral reactions from both groups. Also, there were a high number of participants that did not respond. Previous research suggested that the biased named group should have had a more varied reaction while the non-biased named group should have had a more neutral reaction.

When asked if their own institution fell under one of the groupings and if so should it be changed, results were surprising. Respondents from both groups believed their institutions' mascot or nickname fell under one of the groupings. The non-biased named group should have responded no because its institutions did not while those in the biased named group did. When asked if the their own institutions' mascots or nicknames should be changed because they fell under one of the groupings, both groups believed no. This was consistent with previous research as well. When sexism occurred in a mascot or nickname of the female athlete's own institution, it was considered a non-issue (Eitzen & Zinn, 1993).

Conclusions

1. Female intercollegiate athletes believed the use of the Indian as a mascot or nickname does not constitute racism. However, they believed if the use of the Indian as a mascot or nickname offends Native Americans, its usage should be discontinued.
2. The usage of any mascot or nickname deemed racially or sexually offensive should be discontinued. However, female intercollegiate athletes did not support that statement when it related to her own team. Previous research has indicated that close involvement to a sensitive issue may change one's viewpoint (Shea, 1993).
3. Any difference between women's and men's mascots or nicknames was perceived as sexism. Both groups believed any difference in names, even when one was found to be sexist, was a form of sexism and inequality.
4. The support of alumni and fans does not justify the continued use of a sexually offensive mascot. However, time honored traditions may be seen as justification for continued use of a sexually offensive mascot. A majority of each group (a no and yes tie occurred among non-biased named group members) believed tradition is a means of justification.

5. Instances of sexism still occur in radio and television broadcasting.

Members of teams whose mascot or nickname is sexist believed no instances of sexism by the sport media in print have occurred during their tenure as athletes. Members of teams whose mascot or nickname is not sexist believed instances of sexism by the sport media in print have occurred. The biased named group believed the language used by the sport media is unfair in its portrayal of women's athletics while the non-biased named group did not.

6. Female intercollegiate athletes believed society perceives women's and men's athletics unequally yet they have seen advancements in gender equity occur during their tenure.

7. Female intercollegiate athletes view her own team's mascots or nicknames differently than they do other teams' and other situations.

The findings in this study indicated that female intercollegiate athletes show concern for racism and sexism of sport mascots or nicknames. However, they did not believe the continued use of sexist mascots and nicknames by their own institutions was concern enough for change. Although this was consistent with the Colorado State University study conducted by Eitzen & Zinn (1993), it does not make it right. The investigator was disappointed that the athletes did not find change a necessary option and tried to determine why these athletes believed sexist mascots and nicknames were a non-issue.

There are many demands placed on today's intercollegiate athletes. Practice and game schedules along with academic work makes for a hectic schedule. Often, many athletes are too busy to care about these issues much less get involved. In some cases, years of participation in major intercollegiate athletics may have caused athletes to be cynical toward the system. This may have contributed to some of the athletes' responses in this study.

There may have been a lack of understanding of by the athletes in this study about the negative effects of sexist naming practices. These naming practices have occurred for so long that they have been deemed acceptable. Female athletes have been socialized to believe these names are appropriate (Fuller & Manning, 1987). There is a need for future education and exposure to issues of sexism in society and in sport in particular. This education needs to be proactive and forward-looking in its approach and application.

Although the investigator was disappointed with the results of study, it does not make the issues of the study any less important. The athletes need to address the topics. The issues of racism and sexism in sport have not been ones of political correctness, they have been about failure to make progress (Wenner, 1993). These issues are just a few that need to be addressed before the playing field between women's and men's athletics can become level.

Recommendations

Listed are concerns the investigator had about this study and suggestions were made in two areas: for future research and for practitioners.

Concerns for Future Research

1. The investigator may have placed too much of an emphasis on NCAA Division I tournament experience. It is the investigator's belief that any female intercollegiate athlete would have been able to respond with regard to the subject matter. Competition for women has advanced across all levels and divisions, therefore, participation in future research should not be limited to NCAA Division I athletes.
2. More of a controlled selection of participating groups needs to be performed. There was no clear definition of difference between groups other than the mascot or nickname in this study. Other experiences, specifically the relation to the school's men's team, were not taken into consideration.

3. Limit the questions in number and in scope. Ask why more often. Ask for specific experiences and views. Many of the questions in this study were vague and probably difficult for the athlete to understand. The scope of many of the questions in this study was not specific enough regarding sexism as it dealt with mascots and nicknames. At twenty questions, the questionnaire was too long.

5. Limit the study to only issues of sexism. Because this study dealt with both racism and sexism, there was the potential for confusion among the participants.

Concerns for Practitioners

1. There is a need for female intercollegiate athletes to receive further education and exposure to the negative effects of racism and sexism. The level of awareness of these issues needs to be raised. The education process needs to be proactive and forward-looking.

2. Sport administrators need to be sensitive to issues like racist and sexist mascots and nicknames. Perceptions the public has about a team, university, or organization are important but so are the perceptions of those individuals or groups that an administrator oversees.

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REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO COACH

Dear Coach:

I am a graduate student seeking a masters degree in Sport Administration from the University of Tennessee. As part of my thesis project, I am conducting research about the perceptions that female intercollegiate athletes have regarding the racism and sexism inherent in sport mascots and nicknames. I would very much appreciate permission to have your players participate in this study.

This study will consist of answering questions on an information sheet and a questionnaire. Data and examples regarding racism and sexism in sport mascots and nicknames will be provided. The data and examples are from previous research. I will ask you to complete the information sheet which deals specifically with your team. Next, I will ask you to have an assistant coach or a team manager to provide your players with the questionnaire which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The subjects for this study will consist of players that have participated on National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I women's basketball teams.

You and your athletes' participation in this study is greatly appreciated and completely voluntary. If at any time an athlete feels uncomfortable answering the questions or wishes to discontinue, she should feel free to do so. There will be no risk of penalty or prejudice by doing so.

You and your athletes' participation in this study involves no foreseeable risks or discomforts. Only group data will be reported. Individuals' and institutions' names and identities will not be revealed. To insure complete confidentiality, my advisor and I will be the only individuals with direct access to the information sheets and questionnaires. All materials received from you will be kept under lock and key. There will be no mention of specific institution, athletic program, or team in reporting the results of this study.

Upon receipt of this letter, I will mail the survey materials to you. Thank you for your time and effort. Your cooperation on this study is greatly appreciated.

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE STATEMENTS. I UNDERSTAND THE RESEARCH PROCEDURES, MY ROLE, THE ROLE OF THE ATHLETES IN THIS STUDY, AND THE POTENTIAL RISKS INVOLVED IN OUR PARTICIPATION. I GRANT PERMISSION FOR THE CO-DIRECTORS OF THIS STUDY TO CONDUCT THE SURVEY AND OBTAIN THE NECESSARY INFORMATION FROM THE ATHLETES AND MYSELF.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For further information or questions, please contact me or my adviser at the address and phone number provided below.

John-Edward F. Comer and Dr. Patricia A. Beitel
The Sport and Physical Activity Unit
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville
1914 Andy Holt Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
(423) 974-5111

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

TITLE

Female Athletes' Perceptions of Racism and Sexism of Sport Mascots and Nicknames.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study, which is part of the requirements for my M.S. thesis, is to explore how female athletes at the intercollegiate level perceive the racism and sexism inherent in sport, specifically, the language usage and naming practices involved with sport mascots and nicknames.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

This study will consist of responding to questions which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Examples regarding racism and sexism in sport mascots and nicknames will be provided. The subjects for this study shall consist of females that have participated on National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I basketball teams during the 1995-96 season. The information you provide should reflect your perception based on your experiences as an athlete at the intercollegiate level.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and completely voluntary. Also, your participation in this study involves no foreseeable risks and discomforts. Please answer the questions openly and honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. You are under no obligation to complete the questionnaire. If at any time you feel uncomfortable answering the questions or wish to discontinue, please feel free to do so. There will be no risk of penalty or prejudice by doing so and your team standing will not be affected whether you agree to participate or not.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

Your participation in this study might result in heightened awareness of the perceptions that female intercollegiate athletes have on the racism and sexism that may be inherent in sport, particularly, with regard to your perceptions of sport mascots and nicknames.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To insure complete confidentiality, the co-directors of the study and the MS student advisor will be the only individuals with direct access to the information sheets and questionnaires. All materials received from you will be kept in a locked file cabinet. No individual, team, or university names will ever be attached and only group data will be used in reporting the results. Once again, you are under no obligation to participate in the study. You may withdraw your consent and discontinue at any time without risk of penalty or prejudice.

QUESTIONS

Any questions you have concerning this study or your participation in it, before or after consent, will be answered by John Comer or Dr. Patricia A. Beitel at the address and phone number listed at the end of the questionnaire.

COMPLETION OF THE ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE SERVES AS YOUR INFORMED CONSENT.

INFORMATION SECTION

Age: 1) _____

Athletic Scholarship: 1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes

Race: 1) ☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
2) ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
3) ☐ Black/African American, not of Hispanic Origin
4) ☐ Hispanic
5) ☐ White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic Origin
6) Other _____
(please specify)

Class Year: 1) ☐ Freshman
2) ☐ Sophomore
3) ☐ Junior
4) ☐ Senior
5) Other _____
(please specify)

Year of Eligibility: 1) ☐ First
2) ☐ Second
3) ☐ Third
4) ☐ Fourth

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Do you believe that having a different mascot or nickname for the women's teams and the men's teams within a college/university represents a form of sexism?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
2. Do you believe equality is being served by having the women's and men's teams use the same mascot and nickname even when it has been found to be sexist?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
3. Do you believe any of the following reasons should justify maintaining a mascot or nickname that has been found to be sexist:

A. Alumni support?	B. Fan support?	C. Tradition?
1) ☐ No	1) ☐ No	1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes	2) ☐ Yes	2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know	3) ☐ Don't know	3) ☐ Don't know

4. Have you seen any significant advancements in gender equity occur during your tenure as an intercollegiate athlete?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
Comments: _____

5. Do you think society perceives female athletes and women's athletics in the same manner it perceives male athletes and men's athletics?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
Comments: _____

6. Do you believe the language used by the sport media is fair in its portrayal of women's athletics?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
7. Have you seen incidents of sexism in the sport media during your tenure?
A. In Print: 1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
Example: _____

B. In Radio: 1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
Example: _____

C. In Television: 1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
Example: _____

8. Do you believe the use of an Indian as a mascot or nickname (i.e., Braves, Chiefs, Indians, Redskins, Warriors, etc.) is racist?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know
9. Regardless of your answer to the previous question, do you believe an Indian mascot or nickname should be changed if it offends the Native American people?
1) ☐ No
2) ☐ Yes
3) ☐ Don't know

10. Do you believe any mascot or nickname that is seen as racially or sexually offensive should be changed?

A. Racially offensive:

1) ☐ No

2) ☐ Yes

3) ☐ Don't know

B. Sexually offensive:

1) ☐ No

2) ☐ Yes

3) ☐ Don't know

Eitzen and Zinn (1989) identified 8 naming practices that are sometimes used by colleges and universities. Please evaluate your school according to these statements:

My college/university uses:

(Circle your answer)
Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. <u>Physical markers</u> - a practice that describes women in terms of physical characteristics. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. <u>Girl or gal</u> - a practice that stresses presumed immaturity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. <u>Feminine suffixes</u> - a popular practice of gender differentiation, e.g. "Tigerette" or "Eaglette". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. <u>Lady</u> - a practice that often "evokes a standard of propriety, correct behavior, and elegance" (Miller & Swift, 1977, p.365). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. <u>Male as a false generic</u> - a practice that assumes the masculine form of a word or phrase is the norm, e.g. "Cowboys" or "Knights". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. <u>A male name with a female modifier</u> - a practice that applies the feminine to a name that usually denotes a male, e.g. "Lady Ram" or "Lady Gamecock". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. <u>Double gender marking</u> - a practice that occurs when the name for the women's team is a diminutive of the men's, e.g. "Lady Jags"/"Jaguars". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. <u>Male/female paired polarity</u> - a practice that assigns women's and men's team names that represent a male/female opposition, e.g. "Teddy Bears"/"Bears". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR INSTITUTION

19. Does your institution's mascot or nickname fall under one or more of the categories listed above?

1) ☐ No

2) ☐ Yes

3) ☐ Don't know

20. If yes, do you feel your institution's mascot or nickname should be changed?
- 1) ☐ No
 - 2) ☐ Yes
 - 3) ☐ Don't know

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING. PLEASE PLACE THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED AND SEAL IT.

John Comer and Dr. Patricia Beitel
The Sport and Physical Activity Unit
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville
1914 Andy Holt Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
Phone: (423) 974-5111

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE COVER LETTER

Dear Coach:

Thank you for allowing your athletes to participate in this study. Please find enclosed the following items: 1) an information sheet, 2) Directions for the Questionnaire, 3) the questionnaires, and 4) a self-addressed stamped envelope in which to return all the enclosed materials. Also, I have included a copy of the permission letter and informed consent I received from you earlier this month. Please keep this copy of your letter for your files.

- 1) If you would, please take a few moments to fill out the information sheet.
- 2) Please have an assistant coach or manager act as proctor and administer the questionnaire if you are unable to do so.
- 3) Upon an athlete's completion of the questionnaire, she should seal it in the individual envelope provided and give it to the proctor.
- 4) Once all questionnaires are handed in, please place the individual envelopes containing the questionnaires and the information sheet in the self-addressed stamped envelope for return in the mail.

The questionnaire should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please remember, your assistance and your athletes' participation in this study are completely voluntary. Your assistance and your athletes' participation in this study involve no foreseeable risks. If at any time an athlete feels uncomfortable answering the questions or wishes to discontinue, she should feel free to do so. There will be no risk of penalty or prejudice by doing so.

To insure complete confidentiality, the researchers will be the only individuals with direct access to the information sheets and questionnaires. All materials received from you will be kept under lock and key. There will be no mention of specific institution, athletic program, or individuals names in reporting the results of the study.

Should you have any concerns or questions regarding any aspect of participation in this study please feel free to contact me at the address or phone number provided below. Once again, thank you for your time and effort. Your cooperation on this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John-Edward F. Comer and Dr. Patricia A. Beitel
The Sport and Physical Activity Unit
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville
1914 Andy Holt Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
(423) 974-5111

APPENDIX D

DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Completion of the questionnaire serves as informed consent.
2. Complete the information section, DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.
3. The terms that appear on the questionnaire have been defined as follows:

American Indian - a member of or descendent of any of the aboriginal peoples of the western hemisphere, particularly the North American continent.

Equity - dealing fairly and equally with all concerned in sport.

Female Intercollegiate Athlete - a woman who actively participates in sport at the college or university level.

Gender Equity - dealing fairly and equally where men and women are concerned in sport.

Language - the communication of ideas or feelings about sport.

Mascot - any person, animal, or object adopted by a sport team as its symbolic figure.

Naming Practice - the custom of mentioning or identifying a mascot or nickname in sport.

Nickname - a descriptive name given to a sport team mascot.

Racism - prejudice or discrimination based on race or ethnicity.

Sexism - prejudice or discrimination based on gender.
4. The answers you provide should reflect your perception based on your experiences as an athlete at the intercollegiate level.
5. Upon completion of the questionnaire, seal it in the business envelope attached, and turn it in to the person administering the survey.
6. The completed questionnaires, any blank questionnaires, and the information sheet should be returned in the self-addressed return envelope that has been provided.
7. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated, thank you!

John-Edward Comer and Dr. Patricia A. Beitel
The Sport and Physical Activity Unit
University of Tennessee at Knoxville
1914 Andy Holt Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
(423) 974-5111

APPENDIX E
INFORMATION SHEET
(To be completed by Head Coach)

1995-96 Head Coach Information

(please circle the appropriate answer)

- | | | | | | |
|----|------|----------------------|----|-------|---|
| 1. | Sex: | 1) Female
2) Male | 2. | Race: | 1) American Indian or Alaskan Native
2) Asian or Pacific Islander
3) Black/African American, not of Hispanic Origin
4) Hispanic
5) White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic Origin
6) Other: _____
(please specify) |
|----|------|----------------------|----|-------|---|

1995-96 Assistant Coaches Information

(please provide number of asst. coaches)

- | | | | | | |
|----|------|--|----|--------|--|
| 3. | Sex: | Number of:
1) ____ females
2) ____ males | 4. | Races: | Number of:
1) ____ American Indian or Alaskan Native
2) ____ Asian or Pacific Islander
3) ____ Black/African American, not of Hispanic Origin
4) ____ Hispanic
5) ____ White/Caucasian, not of Hispanic Origin
6) Other: _____
(please specify) |
|----|------|--|----|--------|--|

COMPLETION OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET SERVES AS YOUR INFORMED CONSENT.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Once completed, please return with the questionnaires to:

John-Edward Comer and Dr. Patricia A. Beitel
The Sport and Physical Activity Unit
The University of Tennessee at Knoxville
1914 Andy Holt Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37996-2700
(423) 974-5111

VITA

John-Edward Fitzgerald Comer was born in Richmond, Virginia on October 1, 1964, and was raised in Greensboro, North Carolina. He attended schools in the Greensboro Public School System where in June, 1982, he graduated from Grimsley Senior High School. In August of 1982, he entered Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina. He entered The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in August of 1984, where in May 1987, he received the Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. After working for several years, he entered the Master's program in Human Performance and Sport Studies at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville in August, 1994. The Master of Science in Sport Administration was received in August 1997.