

# Effect of Exposure to an American Indian Mascot on the Tendency to Stereotype a Different Minority Group<sup>1</sup>

CHU KIM-PRIETO<sup>2</sup>

*The College of New Jersey*

LIZABETH A. GOLDSTEIN

*Ohio State University*

SUMIE OKAZAKI

*University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign*

BLAKE KIRSCHNER

*Pacific University*

Numerous findings have documented the adverse effects of stereotypes on those negatively portrayed by the stereotypes. Less is known about the ramifications of stereotype exposure on those who are not the objects of the stereotypic depictions. Two studies examined the effect of exposure to an American Indian sports mascot on the stereotype endorsement of a different minority group. Study 1 used an unobtrusive prime, while Study 2 used a more engaged prime. Study 2 also investigated the effect among those unfamiliar with the controversy regarding American Indian sports mascots. Results from both studies show that participants primed with an American Indian sports mascot increased their stereotyping of a different ethnic minority group.

Stereotypic descriptions of women, ethnic minorities, and other devalued groups abound in the popular media. Blockbuster movies (e.g., *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*) have been criticized for their stereotypic portrayal of American Indians<sup>3</sup> and Asians (Ma, 2003; Parekh, 2003). On television, as well as in films, ethnic minorities tend to be overrepresented as perpetrators of violence and as criminals (Dixon, Azocar, & Casas, 2003; Dixon & Linz, 2000; Entman, 1992; Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000; Gilliam, Iyengar, Simon, & Wright, 1996; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Shaheen, 2003). Other popular media (e.g., radio talk shows, popular music) have also been criticized for their stereotypic descriptions of ethnic minorities and women. Recently, popular U.S. radio talk show host Don Imus caused controversy when he made derogatory

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<sup>2</sup>Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Chu Kim-Prieto, Department of Psychology, The College of New Jersey, P. O. Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628–0718. E-mail: kim@tcnj.edu

<sup>3</sup>The authors use the terms *American Indian* and *Native American* interchangeably to describe the Native peoples of the United States, since both terms are used interchangeably in the literature (e.g., Gone 2004, 2007).

on-air comments about a largely African American women's college basketball team (e.g., Carter & Steinberg, 2007). In the aftermath, some have argued that despite the Imus controversy, stereotypic and derogatory comments about ethnic minorities and women in the popular media have not subsided (e.g., Steinberg, 2007).

*Stereotypes* are belief systems or categories used to organize other people cognitively (Operario & Fiske, 2001). Stereotypic portrayals in the popular media exist in spite of considerable evidence that stereotypes are harmful to those who are being stereotyped (Allport, 1954; Hess, Hinson, & Statham, 2004; Levy, 1996; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). Being stereotyped can negatively influence academic performance (Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2003; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995), memory (Hess et al., 2004; Levy, 1996), leadership aspirations (Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005), and self-esteem (Crocker, Voekl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Fryberg, 2003). The stereotyped person may also be negatively appraised in interpersonal settings (Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005; Mastro & Tropp, 2004; Monahan, Shtrulis, & Brown Givens, 2005). The negative appraisal includes being falsely remembered and misidentified as a perpetrator of violent crimes (Oliver, 1999; Oliver & Fonash, 2002), or being evaluated as deserving of punishment and more likely to commit future crimes (Peffley, Shields, & Williams, 1996).

Many of these negative repercussions occur as a result of exposure to stereotypic images in the popular media. A gender-stereotyping television commercial, for example, caused women to show less leadership aspirations (Davies et al., 2005), greater avoidance of math problems, and less interest in quantitative vocational options (Davies, Spencer, Quinn, & Gerhardstein, 2002), as compared to those who did not view the gender-stereotyping commercial. Exposure to an anti-gay video resulted in greater negative attitudes toward homosexuals than did exposure to a pro-gay video (Levina, Waldo, & Fitzgerald, 2000). In addition, exposure to stereotypic images of American Indians available through popular media outlets (e.g., Pocahontas, Chief Wahoo<sup>4</sup>) caused American Indian youth to self-report lower self-esteem and collective self-efficacy, as compared to those who were not exposed to the images (Fryberg, 2003).

<sup>4</sup>“Pocahontas” is the nickname of a Powhatan tribal girl who has been mythologized as a heroic princess who saved a British colonist and negotiated peace between the British settlers and the Powhatan tribal people in the early 1600s. She has been the subject of numerous books, as well as an animated movie. “Chief Wahoo” is the mascot of the Cleveland Indians baseball team. Chief Wahoo, who is depicted as a grinning red face donned by a feather, has also been criticized for its derogatory portrayal of Native Americans (Strong, 2004).

### Impact of Stereotypes for the Stereotype Consumer

Less is known, however, about the effect of the stereotypic portrayals on those who are *not* members of the minority group depicted in the portrayal. What effect, if any, does exposure to a stereotypic portrayal have for those who are not the subjects of the portrayal? This question is important because much of the time, the consumers of the stereotypic portrayals are not necessarily those who have been portrayed stereotypically. For example, the majority of the listeners of Don Imus' radio talk show are not likely to be African American females, nor are the majority of the fans of the Cleveland Indians and its mascot Chief Wahoo likely to be American Indian. Thus, what is the impact of stereotypic portrayals for the rest of the population?

Even though less is known about the impact of stereotypic portrayals on those who are *not* the objects of the stereotypic portrayal, a growing body of evidence has indicated that repeated exposure to stereotypes results in an array of repercussions for the stereotype consumer, including an increased tendency to use the stereotypes. For example, Dixon and Azocar (2007) found evidence that repeated exposure to stereotype-confirming information resulted in increased utilization of that information by the stereotype consumer. Furthermore, research seems to indicate that increased exposure to stereotypes results in greater reliance on those stereotypes when making interpersonal evaluations. For example, heavy consumers of news media were more likely to judge an ambiguously guilty suspect as guilty when that suspect was African American than White American; no such difference was found for light consumers of news media (Dixon, 2006).

In addition, for participants who were high on stereotyping, exposure to African American perpetrators, compared to White American perpetrators, resulted in increased concern about crime (Gilliam et al., 1996). In these examples, however, the stereotypes to which the participants were exposed and the ones that were activated or utilized subsequent to the exposure to the stereotype are the same in their content. That is, exposure to stereotype-confirming information about a specific minority group results in increased utilization of a stereotype pertinent to that particular stereotyped group. It is still unclear whether exposure to stereotypes about one specific group would spread, and result in increased utilization of stereotypes about a different ethnic or minority group.

We propose that the activation of stereotypes about one group might spread or leak to other domains and, in turn, influence behaviors and evaluations of a different stereotyped group. While past research has indicated that stereotypes, once activated, can spread to affect evaluations and physiological responses, research has not provided direct evidence regarding the effect of stereotype activation about one particular minority group on our tendency

to stereotype a different minority group. Instead, past research has focused on the ways in which stereotype activation spreads to impact other domains while staying within the same stereotype. For example, Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) showed that college-age participants who were primed with elderly stereotypes behaved in a stereotype-consistent manner by walking more slowly, even though they themselves were not elderly (also see Cesario, Plaks, & Higgins, 2006). This effect was replicated by Wheeler, Jarvis, and Petty (2001), who provided evidence that the activation of a racial stereotype elicited stereotype-consistent behavior in participants who were stereotype consumers, even though they were not the objects of the stereotyped portrayal. Participants who held negative stereotypes about African Americans performed more poorly on a standardized math test when stereotypes about African Americans were subtly primed, compared to those who were not primed.

In these examples, stereotype activation spread to have repercussions in physiological and cognitive performance domains. However, the research was limited in that the stereotyped group remained the same. That is, activation of the elderly stereotype elicited elderly stereotype-consistent behavior (walking slowly) in college-age students; and activation of the African American stereotype elicited stereotype-consistent evaluation or behavior in the stereotype consumer. The current research takes the next step in understanding the impact of consuming stereotypes by investigating the effects of exposure to stereotypes on participants' tendency to endorse a stereotype that is different from the primed stereotype. That is, what implication does being exposed to stereotypes about one group (e.g., American Indians as savage warriors) have on stereotype consumers' tendency to stereotype a different group with different stereotype content (e.g., Asian Americans as socially inept)?

### The Present Research

In two studies, we investigated the effect of being exposed to a stereotype of one minority group on participants' willingness to endorse stereotypes about a different minority group. Specifically, we hypothesize that participants who are exposed to a stereotypic American Indian portrayal will heighten their stereotyping of Asian Americans. We are specifically interested in these two groups for two reasons. First, we want to investigate specifically the effects of American Indian portrayals on psychological functioning. Most of the research on the adverse impact of stereotypic media portrayals has concentrated on African Americans (e.g., Brown Givens & Monahan, 2005; Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) and females (e.g., Davies et al., 2002, 2005; Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2003).

To date, there appears to be only one experimental study that has directly tested the impact of stereotypic images of American Indians on psychological functioning (Fryberg, 2003), in spite of the widespread use of stereotypic images of Native Americans on television, in movies, and in team sports. Chief Wahoo of the Cleveland Indians and the signature “tomahawk chop” of the Atlanta Braves are just two of the many stereotypic portrayals of American Indians in team sports. American Indian names are among the top 10 most popular mascot names for U.S. high schools (Clarkson, 2002). This popularity and persistence in the use of such mascots comes despite criticism that the images are derogatory and result in negative repercussions for American Indians (e.g., Gone, 2002; Strong, 2004). Proponents have rationalized their continued support by noting that the depictions are positive and complimentary, rather than derogatory (e.g., University of Illinois, 2007).

Second, we specifically chose Asian Americans as the second minority group because the content of stereotypes about American Indians and Asian Americans are different. For example, stereotypes about Asian Americans include being socially inept and academically overachieving, whereas stereotypes about American Indians include physical prowess (e.g., warrior) and alcoholism (e.g., Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005; May & Moran, 1995). Thus, we want to ensure that any increased tendency to stereotype Asian Americans results from a greater tendency to rely on stereotypes, as opposed to greater accessibility to the specific content of stereotypes.<sup>5</sup> We hypothesize that participants who are exposed to American Indian stereotypes will also heighten stereotyping of a different ethnic minority group, as compared to those in the control condition.

## Study 1

### *Method*

#### *Participants*

Participants were 79 students (44 female, 35 male) at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, a large public university in the Midwest with

<sup>5</sup>Ensuring that the content of the stereotypes would be different for the two groups was the primary reason for choosing Asian Americans as the target group; however, choosing Asian Americans also afforded the best possibility of avoiding a floor effect in participants' willingness to endorse stereotypes. In their research on prejudice acceptability for potential prejudice targets, Crandall, Eshleman, and O'Brien (2002) found that while the overall acceptability of being prejudiced toward ethnic minorities was quite low, the acceptability rating for being prejudiced against Asian Americans was higher than those for other ethnic minority groups in that study. Thus, while the ratings between the groups were not statistically different and were indeed low overall, we expect that choosing a scale of anti-Asian American sentiment will increase the chance of avoiding a possible floor effect in participants' willingness to voice their stereotypes.

an Indian chief (i.e., Chief Illiniwek) as an icon for its athletic program at the time of the data collection.<sup>6</sup> Of the participants, 52 were White American, 22 were Asian American, 3 were African American, and 2 were Hispanic American.<sup>7</sup> The data were collected during Spring 2005, when the university was debating whether to continue the use of Chief Illiniwek to represent its athletic program.

### Measures

The stereotyping measure we used is the 25-item Scale of Anti-Asian American Stereotypes (SAAAS; Lin et al., 2005). Items on the SAAAS are rated on a 6-point scale ranging from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The scale assessed our study participants' endorsement of stereotypes of Asian Americans as lacking in social ability and being overly competitive ( $\alpha = .94$ ). Sample items include "Asian Americans tend to have less fun compared to other social groups," and "Asian Americans are motivated to obtain too much power in our society." The scale has been validated in past research, and is considered to possess adequate internal validity, construct validity, as well as predictive validity (Lin et al., 2005).

### Procedure

In Study 1, two experimenters individually approached potential participants on university grounds (e.g., undergraduate library, dormitories, cafeterias) and asked each potential participant if she or he would be willing to complete a brief survey for a psychology class. If the individual agreed to participate, he or she was given an informed consent form. Once informed consent was obtained, the experimenter randomly removed one of three folders from a bag. Each folder represents a manipulation for the three conditions: stereotype-activation-prime condition, athletic-prime control condition, and no-prime control condition. The primary experimenter was African American, and she was responsible for the bulk of the data collection ( $n = 60$ ); a second experimenter who also engaged in data collection was

<sup>6</sup>Authors use the term *icon* to describe Chief Illiniwek, rather than using the words *mascot* or *symbol*, since the naming of Chief Illiniwek as either a mascot or a symbol has been a point of contention between supporters and opponents of the Chief Illiniwek tradition (for details, see Eppley, 2005).

<sup>7</sup>As a result of a questionnaire oversight, participant demographic information for age is not available. However, full demographic information is available for Study 2.

Asian American ( $n = 19$ ). Preliminary analysis shows that the experimenters' race did not have a significant effect on stereotyping,  $F(1, 78) = 1.22, p > .05$ .

In the stereotype-activation-prime condition, the folder was decorated with five orange-and-blue stickers (1.5 in. or 3.81 cm in diameter) depicting Chief Illiniwek. The stickers represent the official University of Illinois trademarked image of Chief Illiniwek, which shows a relief of a face wearing a feathered headdress (see Appendix A). In the athletic-prime control condition, the folder was decorated with five orange-and-blue block-I stickers. The block-I stickers depict an orange-and-blue capital letter "I," which is the official University of Illinois trademarked logo for its athletic program. At the time of data collection, both images were used widely to symbolize the athletic program at the University of Illinois at its Urbana–Champaign campus.<sup>8</sup> The two types of stickers were of equal size, and were placed in the same location on the folders. The purpose of the athletic-prime control condition was to ensure that the effect of the American Indian prime was a result of exposure to the Indian icon per se, and not a result of exposure to university athletics, since Chief Illiniwek was associated with the University of Illinois athletic program. In the no-prime control condition, the folder was not decorated.

After randomly removing one of three folders from the bag, the experimenter then took out a stereotyping measure from the folder for the participant to complete. Completion of the survey took less than 5 min, and the study participants were not compensated. After the survey was completed, the experimenter recorded the sex and race of the participant, as well as the experimental condition.

### *Results and Discussion*

Since preliminary analysis reveals that the experimenter did not have a significant effect on stereotyping, the data were collapsed across experimenters for hypothesis testing. We predicted that participants who were exposed to the American Indian prime would endorse anti-Asian stereotypes to a greater extent than would those who were exposed to the athletic-prime control condition or to the no-prime control condition.

A one-way ANOVA shows group-level differences in propensity to stereotype,  $F(2, 78) = 7.92, p < .05, \eta^2 = .17$ . Follow-up  $t$  tests of the planned comparisons show that the American Indian prime was different from the

<sup>8</sup>For samples of the logos, see [www.publicaffairs.uiuc.edu/resources/illinois.pdf](http://www.publicaffairs.uiuc.edu/resources/illinois.pdf). While both logos were widely used and available at the time of data collection, the University of Illinois board of trustees subsequently decided to discontinue the use of Chief Illiniwek to represent the University of Illinois (University of Illinois, 2007).

athletic-prime control condition,  $t(51) = 3.82$ ,  $p < .05$  ( $d = .91$ ); and the no-prime control condition,  $t(52) = 2.90$ ,  $p < .05$  ( $d = .60$ ). However, the two control conditions did not differ from each other,  $t(51) = 0.96$ ,  $p > .05$ . Participants in the American Indian prime condition ( $M = 2.74$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ;  $n = 26$ ) endorsed anti-Asian American stereotypes to a greater extent than did participants in the athletic-prime control condition ( $M = 2.17$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ;  $n = 26$ ) or the no-prime control condition ( $M = 2.31$ ,  $SD = 0.53$ ;  $n = 27$ ).<sup>9</sup>

The results provide evidence that when exposed to the American Indian icon, participants were more willing to endorse stereotypes about a different racial minority group. The results also rule out the possibility that heightened stereotyping was a result of being primed about the university's athletics, because the athletic-prime condition did not result in heightened stereotyping of Asian Americans any more than the neutral no-prime condition.

It is possible, however, that heightened stereotyping by participants who were exposed to the American Indian chief icon resulted not from the icon per se, but because it primed the participants about the racially charged controversy over the continued use of the icon. At the time of data collection for Study 1, the university was engaged in a 6-month self-evaluation of the icon at the request of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the national governing body for college athletics. At the time, the NCAA was reviewing the use of American Indian mascots and symbols by U.S. colleges and universities across the nation, and was expected to rule on its appropriateness in the near future (Linehan, 2005).

The Chief Illiniwek icon used in the present study had been under fire by scholars, political organizations, and American Indian groups. Several ethnographies, as well as a documentary film had described this icon—as well as other American Indian sports icons—as a derogatory portrayal, charging it with creating a racially hostile environment on the campus (e.g., Connolly, 2000; Gone, 2002; King, 2004; Stapleton, 2001). On the other hand, many of the students and the campus community at the university supported the retention of the icon, with 69% of the votes cast in favor of keeping the icon the last time the issue was put to a vote in a student-wide referendum (Johnson, 2004). The extent of the controversy was such that the chancellor of the university had resigned her post the previous year, after she was extensively criticized by students, alumni, and staff for her unfavorable view of Chief Illiniwek (Foreman, 2005; Shaw, 2005).

<sup>9</sup>Because the SAAAS assessed stereotyping of Asian Americans, a second ANOVA was computed for just the 22 Asian American participants. Though marginal, the results show a similar pattern to the overall analysis,  $F(2, 21) = 3.36$ ,  $p = .06$ ,  $\eta^2 = .26$  (stereotype-prime condition,  $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ; athletic-prime control condition,  $M = 2.15$ ,  $SD = 0.42$ ; no-prime control condition,  $M = 2.32$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ).



Thus, it is possible that Study 1's findings were influenced by this extensive controversy. It is possible that the heightened tendency of participants in the American Indian prime condition to stereotype a different racial minority group was not a result of exposure to the Chief Illiniwek icon per se, but perhaps exposure to the icon heightened awareness of the controversy surrounding the use of Chief Illiniwek and the charges that the icon represents a racist stereotype. Study 2 was conducted to examine this possibility.

In addition, while the preliminary analysis shows that the experimenter's race did not have a significant effect on stereotyping, we cannot rule out the possibility that the experimenters themselves had an effect. While the experimenters randomly chose among the three conditions, and the participants were blind to the existence of the three conditions, the experimenters were not blind to the condition to which the participants were randomly assigned. Hence, it is possible that the experimenters had an unwitting effect on the results. Therefore, an additional goal of Study 2 is to replicate the results with experimenters who were blind to the participants' conditions, using a double-blind procedure.

## Study 2

Study 1 provided initial evidence that the effect of exposure to an American Indian sports icon leads to heightened stereotyping of a different minority group. It is possible, however, that the effect of heightened stereotyping is limited to those who are affiliated with an organization with an Indian icon and mired in accusations that the icon is a racist and derogatory image. Study 2 was conducted to examine whether the effects of heightened stereotyping would extend beyond the University of Illinois campus. In addition, the experimenters in Study 2 were blind to the condition to which the participants were randomly assigned. We hypothesize that participants primed with the American Indian sports icon will self-report greater endorsement of stereotypes about a different racial minority group, as compared to participants in the control condition.

## *Method*

### *Participants*

Study participants were undergraduate psychology students ( $N = 161$ ; 129 female, 32 male;  $M$  age = 19.7 years,  $SD = 3.30$ ) at The College of New

Jersey, a small public college in the eastern United States. The study was part of a larger study on personality, and students received partial course credit for their participation. Participants included 127 White Americans, 15 Hispanic Americans, 9 Asian Americans, and 8 African Americans. There were 13 participants who were excluded from the analysis because of incomplete responses ( $n = 3$ ), or familiarity with the Indian mascot and controversy surrounding its continued use ( $n = 10$ ), as indicated by their responses on the exit questionnaire.

### *Measures*

Study measures included the SAAAS (Lin et al., 2005; used in Study 1), a demographics form, a filler questionnaire on personality and values for a larger study on well-being and personality, a manipulation check that asked participants to recall the content of the reading passage that was used for priming the participants, and an exit questionnaire. The exit questionnaire asked participants about their familiarity with American Indian sports mascots and their awareness of the controversy regarding the continued use of the mascot, including the purpose of the research.

### *Procedure*

Participants were randomly assigned to the priming condition or the control condition. The prime manipulation consisted of reading a passage about an American Indian icon (prime condition) or an arts center (control condition). The two types of packets contained the same cover page, and experimenters were not aware of the condition to which the participants were randomly assigned.

The American Indian icon paragraph described the tradition of Chief Illiniwek at the University of Illinois. The paragraph was adapted from a descriptive history of Chief Illiniwek that was available from the university's webpage at the time of data collection that sought to honor and maintain him as an athletic symbol ("Chief Illiniwek," 1998). In the control condition, participants read about an arts center at the University of Illinois, which was adapted from a narrative that sought to highlight and promote the arts center ("Krannert Center," n.d.). Both paragraphs were 233 words long, and both were complimentary and respectful in tone. The paragraph about the arts center did not mention Chief Illiniwek. The paragraph about Chief Illiniwek did not use the words *mascot*, *symbol*, or *icon* to describe him. Furthermore, the controversy surrounding his status at the university, including objections

to his portrayal as derogatory or stereotypic, were not mentioned (see Appendix B).

In both conditions, participants were instructed to read the paragraph and to circle each word that started with a capital letter as part of a reading comprehension task. The Chief Illiniwek passage contained 56 words that began with a capital letter, while the control condition passage contained 54 words that began with a capital letter. After reading the passage, participants completed the packet of questionnaires. Participants always completed the SAAAS immediately after being exposed to the manipulation, and they always completed the exit questionnaire last. All participants were able to remember the content of the reading passage correctly. All study participants provided informed consent prior to their participation. Finally, all participants were debriefed at the conclusion of their participation.

### *Results and Discussion*

Both experimenters in Study 2 were White Americans. Therefore, a preliminary test of the effect of experimenter race on the stereotyping measure was not conducted. We hypothesized that participants who read the Chief Illiniwek passage would more strongly endorse anti-Asian stereotypes than would those who read the neutral passage. A one-way ANOVA shows that priming did have an effect on level of bias,  $F(1, 147) = 6.38, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ . Participants who were assigned to the American Indian reading passage endorsed anti-Asian American stereotypes to a greater extent ( $M = 3.03, SD = 0.54, n = 73$ ) than did those in the control condition ( $M = 2.82, SD = 0.49, n = 76$ ).<sup>10</sup> The results replicated Study 1's findings, thus providing additional evidence that exposure to American Indian mascots increased stereotyping of a different minority group.

### *General Discussion*

The results from Studies 1 and 2 indicate that exposure to an American Indian sports icon increased the tendency to endorse stereotypes about a different racial minority group. The increased tendency to endorse stereotypes was evident, regardless of whether the exposure was through an unobtrusive prime (Study 1), or a more engaged exposure (Study 2). The results rule out experimenter effects, as well as the possibility that heightened

<sup>10</sup>Including the dropped participants from the data analysis did not change the significance of the results,  $F(1, 159) = 3.94, p < .05, \eta^2 = .02$  (stereotype prime,  $M = 2.99, SD = 0.57$ ; control condition,  $M = 2.82, SD = 0.48$ ).

stereotyping of the second minority group was a result of being primed about the controversy surrounding the continued use of Chief Illiniwek to represent the University of Illinois. The results extend the current body of knowledge and provide evidence that exposure to stereotypes about one racial minority group results in heightened stereotyping of a different racial minority group, a group with a different set of stereotype content. That is, one's reliance on stereotypes appears to be heightened with increased exposure to stereotypes, regardless of whom the stereotype is portraying.

This finding has possible implications for our understanding of stereotypes. Past research on social cognition and stereotyping has considered the effect of category activation on subsequent evaluations and behaviors as it pertains to that particular category (for reviews, see Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000; Major & O'Brien, 2005). Our findings provide evidence that reliance on thinking categorically about others, once activated, extends to other categories. Future research should investigate the boundaries of this phenomenon. For example, additional research might investigate whether this phenomenon of stereotype contagion is limited to racial or ethnic or racial minority groups, or whether it extends to all stereotyped categories (e.g., females, the elderly, lawyers).

Additional research might also consider the role of implicit versus explicit measures, as well as behavioral ramifications in investigating the boundary conditions of stereotype contagion. In both of our studies, we used an explicit measure of stereotyping as our dependent variable. Since is it possible that social desirability concerns may have resulted in greater reluctance by participants to endorse stereotypes, we expect that our results provide a more conservative test of the effect of stereotype contagion. In addition, future research using implicit measures, as well as behavioral measures, is needed to examine whether participants' willingness to endorse stereotypes will extend to behaviors and evaluations using those endorsements.

Future research should also investigate the process by which the stereotype contagion occurs. For example, is it possible that being primed with one stereotype provides a cue for using heuristics? It may be that exposure to stereotypes provides an advantage to top-down processing such that this top-down processing becomes activated when further evaluations about a different group need to be made.

Research has indicated that categorization occurs implicitly, and that automatic activation occurs without active monitoring (for reviews, see Devine, 1989; Higgins & Bargh, 1987). Therefore, one might expect that stereotype contagion might occur in situations that provide an advantage to any any top-down heuristic process or a group categorization process, regardless of whether the top-down heuristic that is being called into activation is about stereotypes.

On the other hand, the process may be specific to stereotypes that are accessible. Dixon and Azocar (2007), for example, found that the extent of stereotype consumption moderated the effect of stereotype activation on subsequent evaluation. It is possible that the relative accessibility of the stereotype would moderate the effect of stereotype contagion. Future research should consider whether chronic consumers of stereotypes differ from infrequent consumers of stereotypes in their susceptibility to stereotype contagion.

Another avenue for future research is the role of membership status and social identity in the tendency to engage in stereotyping. As research on social identity and groups indicates, membership status—as well as the status of the group itself—impacts the tendency to derogate out-group members (e.g., Cheryan & Monin, 2005; Guimond, Dif, & Aupy, 2002; Noel, Wann, & Branscombe, 1995). Future research should examine the role of perceived membership status in the extent to which stereotype consumers engage in the spreading of stereotypes. It is possible that the spreading of stereotypes is influenced by the perceived group status of the stereotype target, as well as the in-group membership status of the stereotype consumer. A robust body of research in stereotype threat, which has shown that people of color as well as other disadvantaged minorities can be primed effectively about their own negative stereotypes (for a review, see Steele, 1997; also see Croizet & Claire, 1998; Sekaquaptewa & Thompson, 2003; Steele & Aronson, 1995). However, research has shown that such effects are not always the rule (i.e., Davies et al., 2005). Therefore, understanding the boundary conditions under which people of color may or may not succumb to stereotype contagion is an important next step.

Finally, the results suggest possible implications for the continued use of American Indian mascots by athletic teams across the nation. To date, there appears to be only one experimental study that has directly tested the impact of Indian mascots on psychological functioning (Fryberg, 2003), despite the widespread use of American Indian mascots by school and professional athletic teams. The results are especially noteworthy because the icon used in the studies (i.e., Chief Illiniwek) is said to be a respectful, positive symbol that honors American Indians (Connolly, 2000; Gone, 2002; King, 2004; Spindel, 2000; Stapleton, 2001). For example, the University of Illinois' board of trustees (2004) had passed a resolution noting Chief Illiniwek's status as a "treasured symbol" of the university, symbolizing "dignity, strength, intelligence, and grace . . . created and intended as an honorable and respectful representation of the indigenous people." In addition, the reading passage that was chosen for Study 2 was specifically chosen because it depicted Chief Illiniwek in a manner consistent with its intended status as a respectful representation. However, our results indicate

that even if the intention of the depiction may have been to honor and respect, the ramification of exposure to the portrayal is heightened stereotyping of racial minorities.

The current study provides much-needed evidence to empirically evaluate the effects of Native American mascots on creation of a hostile environment. The evidence suggests that the effects of these mascots have negative implications not just for American Indians, but for all consumers of the stereotype. After the Study 1 data were collected, the University of Illinois announced that it would no longer use the Chief Illiniwek imagery in association with its athletics, or allow a performer to dance at halftime events at athletic games (University of Illinois, 2007). However, Chief Illiniwek continues to be a highly regarded symbol of the university by many students, alumni, and the community at large. In spite of its official retirement in 2007, the image of Chief Illiniwek was used to decorate several homecoming floats subsequent to the retirement, with about half of the spectators sporting Chief Illiniwek paraphernalia (Saulny, 2007).

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## Appendix A

### *University of Illinois Images*



## Appendix B

### *Stereotype Passage*

(Adapted from an online narrative posted to <http://umgawa.bands.uiuc.edu/MI.old/background/chief.html>)

The tradition of the Chief at the University of Illinois began on a bright and sunny Saturday afternoon in 1926 at a football game. Prior to the game, a student by the name of Lester Leutwiler was chosen to portray Chief Illiniwek. The reason Lester was chosen was due to the fact that he had studied Indian dance, lore, and leather and bead work. The second student to portray Chief Illiniwek, Webber Borchers, was the first student to wear an authentic American Indian hand-crafted outfit. He traveled to a reservation in South Dakota, where an American Indian woman and her young apprentice made the outfit. Webber wore the outfit on the train on his way to the Illinois–Army game, where he got mistaken for “the real thing.” Since Lester Leutwiler, there have been a total of 30 students to portray Chief Illiniwek. Today, the outfit worn by the student who portrays Chief Illiniwek is hand-crafted Sioux work. It was purchased from Sioux Chief Frank Fools Crow, of the Oglala-Lakota Sioux from the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. The outfit includes a shirt, leggings, moccasins, and gloves. Chief Fools Crow traveled to the University and presented the outfit during the halftime of a football game that year. It was said that he was extremely happy to present the outfit to the University so that his craftsmanship would be seen by so many people.

### *Control Passage*

(Adapted from a description of the center facilities posted to [www.krannertcetner.com](http://www.krannertcetner.com))

The Krannert Center nurtures excellence and innovation in the performing arts through education, presentation, community service, and research. Each season, the Krannert Center features performances and productions by students and faculty in the University's School of Music and Departments of Theatre and Dance. Encompassing two city blocks, the Center is a stunning architectural achievement. The Krannert Center has four main venues, and is most famous for its acoustically superior concert hall, the Foellinger Great Hall. Over intermission, audiences can mingle in the vast, elegant lobby or enjoy fine fare at the Center's Intermezzo Café. The Promenade Gift Shop, located just off the lobby, features quality fine arts. Proceeds from purchases at the Intermezzo Café and the Promenade Gift Shop are reinvested into the performances at the Krannert Center stages. Backstage you'll find rehearsal halls, studios, classrooms, and shops for scenery, costumes, and property construction—along with hundreds of students, faculty, and staff members hard at work. If you are interested in experiencing what's behind the scenes at the Krannert Center, you might follow one of the daily tours, given at noon every day, or become involved in KCSA—the Krannert Center Student Association. In addition to its performance facilities, the Center is available for conferences, meetings, and weddings, and provides services ranging from catering to prop and costume rental. More than 350,000 people each year enjoy the many opportunities this magnificent complex offers.