



# Change the Mascot!

## Top 10 Facts Omitted From D.C. Team's New PR Website

*According to news reports, the Washington NFL team is backing a new website called "Redskins Facts" that purports to provide all the facts about the continued use of a racial slur as the team's name. This website is currently financing advertisements, and its steering committee includes Chris Cooley, an employee of a radio station owned by team owner Dan Snyder. Considering these obvious connections to the team, it is not surprising that "Redskins Facts" deliberately omits any mention of these 10 important facts:*

- 1. The Washington team name is a dictionary defined racial slur:** As reported by National Public Radio's ombudsman, every major dictionary defines the R-word as a derogatory slur. [Source: NPR Ombudsman, [3/19/14](#)]
- 2. The Washington team name is defined by the U.S. government as a slur:** The U.S. Patent Office in 2014 ruled that the R-word is "disparaging to Native Americans" and therefore not entitled to taxpayer-financed copyright protections. [Source: ESPN, [6/18/14](#)]
- 3. The owner who gave the team its name was an infamous segregationist who the team still promotes and honors today:** George Preston Marshall, an infamous segregationist who helped engineer the NFL's ban on African American players, was the last team owner to allow his franchise to be integrated. Marshall only acquiesced to integrating his team under threat of federal sanctions. Dan Snyder continues to promote and honor Marshall by naming a part of the Washington stadium after Marshall. [Source: USA Today, [6/24/14](#)]
- 4. Marshall did not use a racial slur as his team's name in order to honor Native Americans:** Though Washington team officials claim that their preferred racial slur has always been designed to honor Native Americans, that is not true. As Marshall himself told the Associated Press in 1933, "The fact that we have in our head coach, Lone Star Dietz, an Indian, together with several Indian players, has not, as may be suspected, inspired me to select the name Redskins." Instead, Marshall told the news organization, he chose the name simply to be able to keep using caricatured Native American iconography and not be confused with the Boston Braves. [Source: [Washington Post](#), 5/28/14]
- 5. The team name has been used to disparage Native Americans throughout history:** The R-word has been used throughout history as an epithet aimed at Native Americans. Esquire magazine, for instance, cited evidence of the term being used to describe the bloody scalps of Native Americans in government bounty announcements. More generally, it was a slur screamed at Native Americans as they were dragged at gunpoint off their lands. [Source: Esquire, [6/17/14](#)]

6. **Social science research has documented the continued damage the Washington team is inflicting on Native Americans by marketing the racial slur:** As documented in a comprehensive review of decades of social science research, the Washington team's continued promotion of the R-word has serious psychological, social and cultural consequences for Native Americans. [Source: Report by Dr. Michael Friedman]
7. **Most major Native American and civil rights groups have asked the Washington team to stop promoting a racial slur as its name:** Because the R-word is so denigrating, the nation's major Native American and civil rights groups, who represent millions of people of color, have asked the team to change its name. [Source: Change the Mascot campaign list of supporters]
8. **Members of Congress from both parties, the President of the United States and the United Nations have demanded the team stop promoting a racial slur:** In the past year, Members of Congress from both parties - including half the U.S. Senate - have demanded that the Washington team stop promoting the R-word. Joining that call has also been the President of the United States and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples James Anaya. [Source: Washington Post, [10/5/13](#); USA Today, [5/22/14](#); United Nations, [4/11/14](#)]
9. **Major icons from the sports world have urged the team to stop promoting a racial slur:** Along with political leaders, major figures in the sports world have said it is time for the Washington team to change its name. These include Olympian Billy Mills, PGA golfer Notah Begay, broadcaster Bob Costas and many prominent sports writers. It also includes current and former NFL players such as Richard Sherman, Champ Bailey and Calvin Hill. [Source: Change the Mascot campaign list of supporters]
10. **Billionaire Dan Snyder has a vested financial interest in continuing to slur Native Americans:** Though it goes unmentioned in much of the coverage of the controversy over the team's name, the fact remains that only one side of the debate has a vested financial interest in continuing to slur Native Americans--billionaire Dan Snyder and his franchise.