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Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport A Book co-authored by Illinois Wesleyan Professor, Examines Cultural Politics in Intercollegiate Athletics

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Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport

**A Book co-authored by Illinois Wesleyan Professor,
Examines Cultural Politics in Intercollegiate Athletics**

"In Race as Spectacle, we work against the trivialization of race and sports. We interpret moments in which individuals and institutions activate, enjoy, ignore, contest, and refuse racial difference."

*Charles Fruehling Springwood and C. Richard Drake
Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. -- Charles Fruehling Springwood, Illinois Wesleyan University's assistant professor of anthropology, has co-authored the book *Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport* with C. Richard King, assistant professor of anthropology at Drake University. The book, published by State University of New York Press, offers a history, ethnography and a social critique of racial spectacles in intercollegiate athletics.

Springwood and King also collaborated together to co-edit *Team Spirits*, a book released earlier this year, which examines the use and abuse of Native American mascots by high school, college and professional sports teams, and the emotional debate surrounding these images.

Suzan Shown Harjo, one of the contributing authors to *Team Spirits*, will be giving a presentation at Illinois Wesleyan on Monday, November 12 at 7:00 p.m. Harjo, president and executive director of the Morning Star Institute in Washington D.C., will discuss the mascot controversy in her presentation entitled "Team Spirits: The Native American Mascots Controversy." Springwood will also give a response following Harjo's presentation, which will take place in the Main Lounge of the Memorial Student Center, 104 E. University St.

Springwood's new book *Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport* is a broader work that not only covers the controversy over mascots, but also examines the entire cartography of racial spectacles in contemporary collegiate sports by mapping how the processes underlying them change over time. According to Springwood and King, sports have become an increasingly important space in which individuals and institutions struggle over the significance of race.

Focusing on half-time performances, commercialized stagings, media coverage, public panics and political protests, King and Springwood argue that collegiate revenue-producing sports are created as a spectacle, driven by a range of contradictory meanings and exploitative practices.

Furthermore, the authors examine how white Americans remain as constant spectators, coaches, administrators, journalists and athletes, producing and consuming college sport but unmarked as racial subjects, while American sports fans view Native Americans as empty distorted images

and African Americans are seen as both shining stars and 'troubled delinquents.' King and Springwood explore how American sports fans learn to embrace inflated, contradictory and distorted renderings of racial difference and the history of race relations in America when consuming these spectacles.

"The book is a multi-focal view on all different mascots," said Springwood. "It has as many Native American perspectives as well as Anglo perspectives."

Springwood, a native of Naperville, Ill., served as an assistant professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and Luther College before joining the Illinois Wesleyan faculty in 1994. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Purdue University and received a master's degree and Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Springwood is a member of the American Anthropological Association and the Society for Cultural Anthropology. He is the author of *Cooperstown to Dyersville: A Geography of Baseball Nostalgia* (1996) and co-editor of *Team Spirits* (2001).

King, originally from Manhattan, Kan., received his bachelor's and master's degree in anthropology from the University of Kansas and a doctorate in the field from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. King is the editor of *Postcolonial America*, and the author of *Colonial Discourse*, *Collective Memories*, and *The Exhibition of Native American Cultures and Histories in the Contemporary United States*.

He is a member of the American Anthropological Association, Society for the Anthropology of North America, and the Society for Cultural Anthropology.