

## **CISDRC Teaching Module:**

### **Athletics, Assimilation, and Identity at the Carlisle Indian School: Exploring Images**

#### **College Level**

#### **Overview:**

This teaching module will utilize images to inform a conversation about the role of athletics in the lives of the students and the Carlisle Indian School. Using visual analysis and qualitative approaches, students will explore these images to inquire into the role of sports in student/Native identities, concepts of masculinity, and the assimilationist mission of the school.

#### **Selected Primary Sources:**

The primary documents are sourced from the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center (<http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/>). They include photographs, as well as images from newspapers and school publications.

Instructors/students may select additional primary sources by searching the “Images” portion of the Digital Resource Center using the names of specific sports (such as football, baseball, basketball, or lacrosse) or general terms (such as athletics or coach).

[Athletic Teams photos from \*Indian Helper\*, January 1912](#)

[Baseball Team, circa 1895](#)

[Basket Ball Boys, 1902](#)

[Basket Ball Girls, 1902](#)

[Carlisle’s Basketball Team, 1910](#)

[Carlisle Girls Cheering Section, \*Wichita Beacon\* \(Kansas\), Nov. 4, 1911 ?](#)

[Coaching the Carlisle Indians at Football, 1897](#)

[Football Team - 1896](#)

[Football Team, 1912](#)

[Indians to Compete in Marathon Contest, circa 1910](#)

[Jim Thorpe Football Card, 1955](#)

[Lewis Tewanima \(in track uniform\), circa 1912](#)

[Skating on the Conedogwinet, circa 1895](#)

[Tewanima Can Run, 1909](#) – includes news article

[Track Team, 1902](#)

### **Secondary sources:**

*For general background on the school:*

Fear-Segal, and Susan D. Rose. “[Introduction: History of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School \(1879-1918\).](#)” In *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, edited by Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose, 5-12. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016.

*For an understanding of the role of athletics in the mission of the school, student identity, and masculinity:*

Bloom, John. “The Imperial Gridiron: Dealing with the Legacy of Carlisle Indian School Sports.” In *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories, and Reclamations*, edited by Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose, 124-38. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016.

### **Specialized Reading for Additional Research:**

*Carlisle vs. Army.* By Lars Anderson.

*Doctors, Lawyers, and Indian Chiefs* By Tom Benjey

*Fabulous Redmen: The Carlisle Indians and Their Famous Football Teams.* By John Steckbeck.

*Forward Pass: The Play that Saved Football,* by Philip L. Brooks

*Pop Warner: A Life on the Gridiron,* by Jeff Miller

*The Real All Americans.* By Sally Jenkins.

**Procedure:**

This lesson plan may take place over a series of days or one in-class session. To maximize time for student exploration and discussion, the evaluation activities may be assigned as homework outside of class.

- Introduction to the Carlisle Indian School with attention to the history of its athletics program
  - Assign students secondary source readings by Fear-Segal & Rose, and Bloom (see bibliography above).
- Orientation to the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center
  - Provide students with an overview of the different portions of the website (student files, images, publications, etc.)
  - Allow students to explore the database on their own to familiarize themselves with the site's content.
- Analysis of images
  - Assign students or allow them to select from preselected images.
  - Individually or in small groups, have the students explore the images as they complete the provided worksheet (see below) or a similar set of prompt questions.
- Class Discussion
  - Bring the class together as a group and discuss their answers to the worksheet questions. Did they discover anything that surprised them? Did different images convey similar or dissimilar perspectives?

**Assessment Ideas:**

Have each student write a reflection paper on their experience analyzing the images. What surprised them? What questions did the images raise in their mind?

Have each student write a paper connecting the image/s they examined with the larger context of gender roles, student/Native identity, and/or institutional mission at the school. This may require students to connect the images to class readings and/or to do additional research.