

[Bill 5-24-04](#)

[Mark 5-5-04](#)

[Teresa 5-5-04](#)

[Rene 5-3-04](#)

Paul Davis

This post is part my response to Rene's posting on the Anti-Chief and part my own notes of the event as well as the Board of Trustees meeting the following morning (or at least the presentations to the BOT before their meeting).

[What was the date of these events?](#)

I had stopped though and checked out some of the events that went on during the day before the rally. I was never able to stay for very long, however, because I had four classes and the EBC meeting. I heard quite a few speeches by Native people talking about how "chief illiniwek" needs to be removed as the mascot of UIUC. Next to the presentation pro-chiefers had set up a booth and were attempting to promote their beliefs onto passer-bys. I remember standing in a silent vigil against terrorism in solidarity with Spain for the people killed in terrorists bombs on a train and seeing the Pro-Chief people. There were two girls at a booth right across from our spot in front of the Union. They were yelling things Pro-Chief. They would try to give Pro-Chief paraphernalia to passerbyers. I saw people reject it once they heard what it was for which made me happy. I saw one older women come and buy a sweatshirt. After observing are silence and signs of anti-violence. They quieted down and stopped yelling. I had planned on attending as much of the days event as I could and the rally and vigil during the night ever since I heard about it at a PRC (Progressive Resource/Action Cooperative)([RSO?](#)) [Yes Teresa, you might want to be on their list-serv - I'll forward you a message from them that you can use to ask to be put on the list if you want to.](#) meeting in February. Unfortunately I had forgot it was on that specific day and had stayed up late and didn't get much sleep the previous night. I noticed several anti-chief people trying to engage the pro-chiefers in debate. After realizing that repeating the same things over and over (sport illustrated poll (who, besides pro-chiefers, REALLY takes a sports illustrated poll as scientific evidence [hahaha good point](#)), tradition, etc.) [and over and over and over and over ad naseum was not sufficient to answer questions the pro-chiefers refused to talk any more about the chief with anti-chiefers. This is sad, refusing to dialogue.](#) [Would it be worth talking to the pro-chief organization on this??](#)(one of the anti-chief debaters was my friend from last semester's Black Leadership Development course) That night, I arrived at the rally about 15 minutes after it had started. There were quite a few people there (I estimated around 250 people or so) [I would have guessed less people were there at the time I was there \(8-9\).](#) [I am not great at estimating people. In your notes you guessed around 200 so it may be closer to that number.](#) There were several Native Americans; some students at UIUC, some from the Native American House, some from Chicago, some from Wisconsin, and some from other areas of the country (later in the night I talked to one from Los Angeles). [What did you talk about? Learn anything?](#) Also I noticed several professors during my night and day on the Quad and in the Union, including Bill Kelleher, all three professors of my Native

American class (Fred Hoxie, Brenda Farnell, and Phil Millhouse), professor Alejandro Lugo from my Anth 269 class as well as the TA of the class. I also saw Nathaniel Banks and Carol Spindel (author of Dancing at Halftime) during the morning presentations. I saw that movie (are you thinking of the movie "In whose honor?" - I'm familiar with the book Dancing at Halftime, but not the movie?) That program sounded like it was great. One thing, however, Dancing At Halftime is a book. I think the film you are referring to is most likely In Whose Honor, which is a very powerful film. I think they were showing that as well as another documentary at the rally. I had written down the name of the other documentary but I can't find it now. I could find out by asking a few people. in a residence hall event freshman year. They showed the pro-chief movie and Dancing at Halftime. It was a neat program because they showed both sides and afterwards we had a discussion. Like the Diversity Workshop that Nicole attended, most people were women and there were many African Americans. During the debate, one of the only guys who was there (a white male who came late, missing both of the movies, but strategically in time for the free pizza) was very Pro-Chief. It was fun to have him there because it sparked conversation and debate. It is so important to have both sides present, and feeling comfortable enough to speak! It was very interesting that the African American females felt very adamantly anti-chief and the white male was pro. This often seems to be the case. Since racism plays a bigger role in minority's lives (probably) it is easy to see why they can emphasize with other oppressed groups. I know this is not always true but seems to be a trend. I agree. Pro-Chief: mainly all white. Anti-Chief: mix of African American, Native American, Asian, white etc. EOTU really should do some ethnography of the chief debate. That sounds like a great idea.

Is this excerpt from Rene, a memory of her first year, last year?

As I walked up to the event I noticed several monitors playing an anti-chief video near the back of the crowd. I walked through the crowd and made my way near the front. As I got to the front I noticed Rene was standing by me. The rolled up white things Rene mentions were sage sticks, which are burned by Native Americans to purify and clear the mind. Like Rene, I have noticed that the pro-chief side is almost entirely white, which is shocking since, as they love to say, "80% of Native Americans support the chief" Where do the pro-chief people get these statistics? I too, would really like to know this. We should find the sports illustrated poll

<http://websearch.si.cnn.com/search/search?invocationType=help%2Ftop&source=si&sites=google&query=Chief+Illini+poll> - I think this also raises an interesting point about the ways that groups of people gain authority/look authoritative on these issues, whether through statistics or associating with particular groups (like the pro-Chief people seem to have more ground to stand on when they can point to Native Americans who validate their position. I agree, yet they are quick to say that it doesn't matter what Native Americans think when it suits them. I believe the proportion of Native Americans that support the chief is FAR less than 80% - when evidence of that is presented to pro-chief folks they quickly retreat and say well he's OUR symbol, not theirs! -I can try and find either a printout or link to the entire article. It is interesting that pro-chiefers mention the

poll in the article but fail to mention that, in that very same article it states Native Americans, however, are opposed to mascots such as the University of Illinois' Chief Illiniwek...and yes it does mention chief illiniwek specifically. I also noticed that the pro-chief side had the more prominent picture in the DI (and also that the DI had two columns dealing with the day; one supposed to deal with the anti-chief side and one dealing with the pro-chief side. The pro-chief side talked only about the pro-chiefs beliefs but the supposedly anti-chief side included quotes from the pro-chief side and said that anti-chief people were bombarded students who past by with their views. Also, even though more openly anti-chief people were at the Board meeting, the News-Gazette's picture of the students lined up only the showed the orange "chief" shirt wearers lined up at the front of the line to enter the lounge were the presentations were given). I also noticed this bias in the DI and News-Gazette. The armbands wore was not really a sign of those responsible for security, but was instead a way of the Native Americans involved in the event to show solidarity. Actually, before you arrived, they said that the people who were wearing the armbands were their for security and not to be afraid. I think they were fearful of Pro-Chiefers. Oops, I guess during the night I was working security and didn't even know it. The PRC organized the event alongside Red Roots, the Native American student association of UIUC, and the American Indian Center of Chicago Interesting, I did not know that we had a Native American student association. I also hadn't heard of PRC before this but they sound great. I would like to learn more about their group. I'll send you one of their e-mails too. Since there are very few Native students at UIUC the group is very small. We are In the process of trying to better organize ourselves. I arrived at the rally just as Antor was finishing his speech. Leonard Malatare from the American Indian Center of Chicago is the Native American with the long hair and cowboy hat. He was responsible for organizing the rally from the Chicago end. (I wonder what would happen if the student vote for the chief was opened to all three campuses? Especially the Chicago campus??) Dialogue with pro-chief people is largely impossible. Do you think that the pro-chief folks feel the same way about the anti-chief people? Do you?? The pro-chief leaders have made it clear to their members that only a select few are to speak for the organization and all others are to avoid any discussion with anti-chief people. How do you know this? It would be interesting to document. During the day rally one of the pro-chief students passing out stickers specifically said something to this account. I have also heard it from other people as well. I will look more into it. What makes discussion/dialogue seem so impossible? That seems to be one of the central questions that we've been grappling with this year. Discussion and dialogue was supposed to be among the main goals of the Brown Commemoration. We should probably consider factors across events that foster (or prevent) it from happening because it's not always because people are instructed to avoid discussion. Agreed.

When Rene let she handed me the anti-chief sign she had been holding. After she left there were a few more speakers including a couple very important ones. The first of these v.i.p.s to speak was alumni Charlene Teters. She was met with several minutes of applause before and after her speech. She is Spokane Indian, and founder of the anti-Chief Illiniwek movement. She

spoke about the need to continue the fight to get rid of “chief illiniwek” and to get other involved. She said that it was necessary to remember that the pressure on the B.O.T. could not be let up but needs to be increased. Next it was announced that student trustee Nate Allen (what is his stance?) was at the rally, however, he did not speak. The surprise guest of the evening was Chancellor Nancy Cantor Hooray for Nancy Cantor! Pillar of social justice! Sadly, we will be without her from now on. . Lian Alan, a member of the PRC, who thanked her for her fighting to increase diversity at UIUC, introduced her. As soon as it was announced that she was at the rally applause thundered for several minutes. When she walked up to the mic more applause followed. She told the crowd that she was proud of us **fighting** keyword our fight and that we have to remain **active** key word in fighting to make this University the one we want it to be. After that Lian gave a few closing remarks and then the rally was over. The vigil was cold, long and tiring. There was coffee and food available for us and port-a-potties on the side of the quad. I lasted until around 4 in the morning but most other people had already either left or went to sleep in the tents on the quad. At what point did the momentum of the event die down? I'm curious about what the mood was like once the rally was over. Did most people disperse immediately or did people talk to each other about what happened? The majority of the crowd dispersed once the official rally was over. About a half hour after the last speaker, their was probably about 30 -35 or so people still there and the crowd dwindled as the night went on. Some of the people stayed until the bars closed to make sure there were no incidents with drunken students. (There was also a rumor going around that pro-chief students planned to hold a vigil on the other side of the quad during the night) After the bars closed the number of people dwindled rapidly. There was about 6 people still up when I decided to go to my dorm room and get a little (and I really mean little) sleep. I got to my room about 4:30 wow Paul, you sure are dedicated! It was quite chilly and rainy. and set my alarm for 7:30 to make it to the morning meeting. I will add on to this posting with the details of the meeting at a later time but I will go ahead and post this