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ATHLETIC COMMODITIES:
THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE STUDENT-ATHLETE IN HIGHER
EDUCATION

by
Ruben Dean Berry

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A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE, READING AND CULTURE
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
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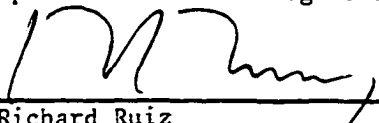
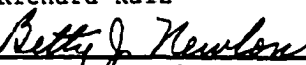
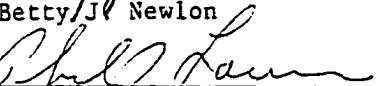
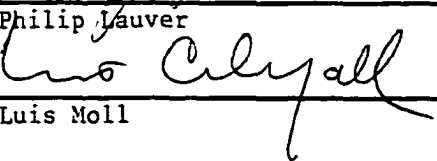
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entitled Athletic Commodities: The African-American Male
Student-Athlete in Higher Education

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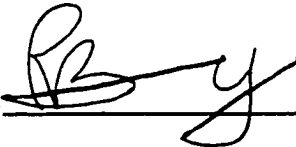
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DEDICATION

I would like to first dedicate this to all the former student athletes who never had an opportunity to ventilate how they felt after their eligibility expired and their retirement from sports. I would also like to dedicate this to the person who taught me to never capitulate to a seemingly impossible obstacle, that I could accomplish anything that I wanted in life. This is dedicated to that person, my mother, Mardis Berry who I love and thank for all the wisdom and support you gave me throughout my life. Without your wisdom and support, I could have never survived this journey. I live vicariously through you, and with that, I am sure to survive and overcome any obstacle in my path. Thank you so much, and I love you dearly.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to interview former African-American male intercollegiate (Division 1) student-athletes in a revenue-producing sport to analyze their feelings about their college experience at a major university in the Southwest. This study is designed to bring together some of the information available in academics and athletics, and to discuss some of the areas of concern in professional sports including retirement, racism, discrimination, employment and the impact of sport in general on the African-American athlete. The insightful overviews of major issues such as graduation rates, retirement, racial isolation, treatment and feelings of African-American athletes after their eligibility expires will assist in underscoring the challenges that counselors must face as they strive to better understand and maximize the positives between academics and athletes. This understanding is necessary if our young men and women are to be assisted during their collegiate years as student athletes. The projected audience for this research study includes counselors, psychologists, social workers, coaches, academic advisors, parents, and the athletes themselves. It will also be an appropriate resource for those involved in sports medicine, recreation, and other areas of sports life. The objective of this study is not to increase graduation rates for athletic departments and minority athletes. Rather, it seeks to give a voice to troubled college athletes who could be better served by athletic departments that wish to assist athletes after eligibility expires.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

College sport has grown into an expensive circus, driven by an insatiable appetite for winning to generate profit, and amateur athletes are getting neither the moral guidance nor the education they bargained for (Sanoff & Schrof, 1995).

Every year, high school athletes are recruited by college coaches to participate in intercollegiate athletics. Approximately two thirds of those prospective recruits will be offered full scholarships to meet the expenses of a college education, in exchange for their participation in varsity sports. According to the NCAA, there are approximately 150,000 seniors among the 525,000 high school students playing interscholastic basketball each year, and about 12,000 collegiate basketball players. Apportioning this number by known percentages reveals that each year there are about 3,800 freshman positions for the 150,000 high school graduates to fill, and about 2,400 college seniors to fill the approximately 64 positions for rookies in professional basketball. Thus, 2.6% (or less than 1 in 30) of high school seniors will progress to college basketball, one half that number will receive basketball scholarships, and only 2.7% (or 3 in 100) will make it for at least one year in professional basketball (NCAA, 1995). Similarly, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations, each year there are approximately 265,000 seniors among the 927,000 high school students playing football, 47,000 NCAA intercollegiate football players in the country, approximately 16,450 new freshman

positions available, 8,930 college seniors, and 215 positions available for rookies in the NFL. These figures indicate that 6.2% or 1 in 16 of high school football players progress to collegiate football and 3.1% or 1 in 32 receive scholarships. Essentially, less than 10% of the student athletes now participating in competitive sports will ever make it into the professional ranks, and of that 10%, 2% will receive injuries prohibiting their continued play, 3% will not be contracted to play for any extended period of time, and less than 1% will achieve superstardom. Ninety-five percent of all professional athletes have an average career of 3 to 4 years and must eventually seek other employment, and 75% of that 95% depend on their new employment for survival (NCAA, 1996). The decision to attend college under such conditions is a major one requiring careful and serious thought. The decision will have an impact on the student athlete for the next 4 to 5 years and quite possibly for the remainder of his life. For example, an African-American high school football player has a 1 in 43 chance of playing for a Division 1 college football team. His chance of playing in the NFL is 6,318 to 1. An African-American male high school basketball player has about a 1 in 130 chance of playing for a Division 1 basketball team and the odds are 10,345 to 1 against his playing in the NBA (Brooks & Althouse, 1993).

Importance of the Problem

Few issues in America have received as much public attention during the last 5 to 10 years as sports. The evidence is becoming clear and overwhelming to the majority of our society that there are some serious problems in the world of athletics. We are also hearing from all sectors of the sports world itself, and from the media, that something is

wrong in intercollegiate athletics. The United States Congress decided it was time to investigate the problems, including payment to players, academic fraud and graduation rates, and it authored several legislative bills to correct abuses and reform in intercollegiate athletics. A number of commissions and task forces from all levels of the sports community are also studying the situation. Most now concede that many of the difficulties have arisen because top leaders in the sports world have failed to recognize the magnitude of the challenges facing collegiate athletics. Many of the reforms today deal with only the symptoms and not with basic issues such as abysmal graduation rates and life after their eligibility expires from the world of sports. College sport is being undermined by such issues as public mistrust, mandatory disclosure of graduation rates, and the ongoing debate of college athletics versus professional sports, and life for athletes after eligibility. Additionally, racial stereotyping and the accusations of widespread exploitation are bases for reform, since these issues are both serious and systemic. Largely as a result of the articles, books, and media attention devoted to intercollegiate athletics, many now believe it is time to redefine the role of athletics in higher education.

For decades, student athletes have informally agreed to a contract with the universities they attend: *Athletic performance in exchange for an education*. The athletes, for the most part, have kept their part of the bargain; the universities have not, if we consider only graduation rates. The NCAA's annual study of the academic performance of athletics-scholarship recipients showed that fewer African-American athletes graduated by the late 1990s than at any time since the mid-1980s. In particular, only 33% of Division 1 African-American male basketball players who enrolled as

freshmen in 1992 received their degrees within six years, according to the report (Welch, 1999). Even more stunning is the 25% graduation rates for men's basketball in the 1996 Final Four, and the 0 percent rates of the nine teams ranked in the final top 25. (Zimbalist, 1999). Universities and athletic departments have gained huge gates receipts, television revenues, national visibility, donations to university programs and more as a result of the performances of gifted basketball and football players, of whom a disproportionate number are African-American.

The focal point of this inquiry is one of these controversial issues, the exploitation of the African-American collegiate basketball and football student athlete. The focus is not meant to imply that white athletes escape being exploited, merely that African-American athletes are especially susceptible to such abuses in revenue producing sports. African-American males make up approximately 22.2% of all scholarship athletes in Division 1 schools, 60% of those in men's basketball, and 43% of those in football. Yet, across Division 1, approximately 6% of all students (male and female) are African-American. At 100 of the 245 colleges in Division 1 during 1993, 20% of the African-American male student body were athletes, and that figure was more than 50% at 21 of these schools (Siegel, 94). The majority of football and basketball players in Division 1, the NCAA's top competition division, are African-American, yet African-Americans receive only 10% of the athletic scholarships awarded in the division. In essence, it is the African-American athlete who provides the blood, sweat and tears that support college sports. LSU basketball coach Dale Brown is equally strident:

"This one-billion dollar TV contract is the paramount example of the injustices in the game. Look at the money we make off predominantly

poor African-American kids. "We're the whore masters" (Zimbalist, 1999).

Student athletes' in college revenue producing sports programs, which are dominated by African-American athletes, continues to reveal a century long pattern of exploitation of student athletes. As African-American athletes increasingly dominate college revenue producing sports, the burden of this exploitation falls on their shoulders. Perhaps the greatest irony of this morally bankrupt system for African-American athletes and their parents is how the work of largely poor African-American athletes, who dominate the top revenue producing football and basketball programs, finances the non-revenue sports programs, million dollar plus coach's salaries, and extremely generous athletic department administration budgets (Meggyesy, 2000).

The conclusion drawn is that student-athletes aren't given athletic scholarships for the purpose of education. They are given scholarships to produce revenue for athletic departments. Their primary responsibility is to the athletic department, and at the end of four years most no degree, job or references. In the present system, the vast majority of revenue-producing athletes athletic careers end in college; less than one percent of Division 1 athlete's gain a professional team roster slot. After four years of athletic labor, they walk away from their university without a college education or worthwhile degree, carrying only memories. Paraphrasing an old saying, "memories and a dollar bill will get you a cup of coffee."

Because there is so much more money at stake and more pressure to get the money, kids with athletic talent are targeted earlier, cut off from reality earlier and immersed in the competition for the big prizes earlier. The African-American society

could be viewed as a co-conspirator in this game by peddling their kids to the highest bidder, known as the college athletic recruiter. When the athletes enter college, the college is supposed to do in four years what families and communities haven't done in 18 years. Thanks to the mass media and long standing traditions of racial discrimination limiting African-American access to many high prestige occupational opportunities, the African-American athletes are much more visible to African-American youths than, say, African-American doctors or African-American lawyers. Within the African-American community, there is a lack of role models for youth outside the fields of entertainment and sport. Our society fails to highlight the African-American doctor, lawyer, and other professionals. As a result many African-American youth see their only opportunity for social and economic success in the narrow fields of sports entertainment.

Therefore, the successes of a few have served to conceal the limited opportunities for the majority (Brooks & Althouse, 1993). Unlike other children who see many different potential role models in the media, African-American children tend to model themselves after masculine African-American athletes, the one prevalent and positive African-American success figure they are exposed to regularly, year in and year out, in America's mass media. Overcoming such stereotypes in sports takes on an added significance when one considers the role of the media in depicting African-American men in general and African-American athletes in particular. All too often African-American men are cast as super-athletes, super-entertainers, and super-criminals, because of what is perceived as their innately athletic, rhythmic, humorous, and violent character (Davis, 1999).

At the root of these problems is the fact that African-American families have been inclined to propel their children toward sports career aspirations, often to the neglect and detriment of other critically important areas of personal and cultural development. Those circumstances have developed largely because of a long standing, widely held racist, and ill-informed presumption of innate, race linked African-American athletic superiority and intellectual deficiency, along with the media propaganda portraying sports as a broadly accessible route to African-American social and economic mobility. And last, there is a lack of comparably visible, working professional African-American role models beyond the sports arena. The result is a single-minded pursuit of sports fame and fortune that has spawned an institutionalized triple tragedy in African-American society (Edwards, 2000).

African-American families along with the community tend to reward athletic achievement much more and earlier than any other activity. This also lures more young African-Americans into sports-career aspirations than the actual opportunities for sports success would warrant. Because African-Americans have fewer opportunities in other fields, African-American culture has embraced athletic excellence as a symbol of high status and sport as an endeavor through which individuals can achieve upward social and economic mobility. The major factors reinforcing African-Americans to pursue athletics at the expense of education included African-American parents who drive their children toward athletic careers. Media coverage that glorifies professional athletes and coaches stressing the importance of sports is also detrimental. The final problem is with the colleges that admit African-American athletes who have little chance of succeeding

academically (Siegel, 1994).

Because most American sports activities are still devoid of any significant African-American presence, the overwhelming majority of aspiring African-American athletes emulate established African-American role models and seek careers primarily in five sports, basketball, football, baseball, boxing and track. The brutally competitive selection process that ensues eliminates all but the most skilled African-American athletes by the time they reach the collegiate and advanced amateur ranks. The competition is made all the more intense because even in these sports, some positions such as quarterback, center, and middle linebacker in football, and catcher in baseball are not completely open for African-Americans, but that thought is slowly evaporating in American sports. Historically, in big-time college and professional football, African-Americans were denied access to what were called the "thinking" positions, the center, two guards and quarterback for example. However, due to increasing economic pressure during the last decade on coaching staffs in the top programs to "win and win now," and changing social attitudes, African-American athletes now star at the collegiate and professional level team positions including quarterback (Meggyesy, 2000).

While African-Americans are not the only student athletes exploited, the abuses usually impact them first and foremost. To understand why, we must understand sport impact upon African-American society starting with the beliefs that African-Americans are innately superior athletes. The outstanding performances of African-American athletes in sport stems from a variety of societal conditions rather than innate physiological or psychological characteristics. Among other things, African-American

youths place a high value on sport and the result is a channeling of a disproportionate number of skilled African-Americans into athletics at both the amateur and professional levels. African-Americans have less visible prestige role models, fewer job opportunities, and a more limited range of occupational choices. African-Americans view sport, and to a lesser degree entertainment, as their most achievable goals and quickest path to stardom and wealth. The career path, unfortunately, has often been paved with bitter disappointments for aspiring African-American athletes. The vast majority return to the ghetto because they lack the talent to become a superstar or they quit the sport altogether because they refuse to comply with the American sport establishment (Edwards, 1992). Alvin F. Poussaint argued, in an essay titled "Sex and the African-American Male," that the need for African-American males to display physical power has accounted for their outstanding performances in sport. Stripped of any social power, African-American males have focused their attention on other symbols of masculinity, particularly on America's playing fields. African-American males will continue to be channeled in three venues with little resistance from mainstream institutions: athletics, entertainment and criminal. Community pressure is needed at both the institutional and individual levels to interrupt this dominant paradigm. The plantation system will continue until other ethnic groups integrate the status quo in professional positions outside of sport. While urban schools deteriorate and inner-city jobs become scarce, hundreds of thousands of African-American and Latino youth continue to see sports as a ticket out of the ghetto. For the vast majority, sports are a round-trip ticket back to the ghetto (Harrison, 2000), if they even get on the bus at all.

Patterns of opportunity for African-Americans in American sports, like those in society at large, are shaped by racial discrimination. This phenomenon explains the disproportionately high number of talented African-American athletes in certain sports and the exclusion of African-Americans from most other American sports, as well as decision-making and authority positions in sports. Most educated people accept the idea that the level of African-American performance in sports has no demonstrable relationship to race-linked genetic characteristics. While some scientists have claimed that the African-American possesses physical characteristics that are advantageous for athletic performance, most social scientists are of the opinion that sociological and psychological factors are the primary reason for African-American athletes' rise to eminence (Brooks & Althouse, 1993). Moreover, the factors determining the caliber of sports performances are so complex and disparate as to render ludicrous any attempt to trace athletic excellence to a single biological feature.

Of those who are eventually awarded collegiate athletic scholarships, as many as 65 to 75 percent may never graduate from college (NCAA, 1993). Of the 25 to 35 percent who eventually graduate, they often receive degrees in majors created specifically for athletes who are held in low repute. The problem with these types of majors is that they produce deficient skills for the job market. One might assume that ample occupational opportunities would be available to outstanding African-American former athletes, at least within the sports world. But the reality is quite different. To begin with, the overwhelming majority of African-American athletes, whether scholarship holders or professionals, have no post-career occupational plans or formal preparation for any type

of post-career employment either inside or outside sports (NCAA, 1993). Now that he is no longer on an athletic scholarship, he will have to enter the real world called "employment." He will also learn that the education and the training he received as a student-athlete are not transferable to other areas outside of sports in relationship to the dual labor market. The dual labor market describes a division in the work force between primary and secondary segments. Primary jobs are characterized by good working conditions, stability of employment, relatively high wages, and promotional job ladders. Secondary jobs reflect high turnover of personnel, do not require stable working habits, pay low wages and provide few avenues for advancement. Secondary jobs are filled mainly by women, minorities and youth (Segura, 1984).

These African-American student-athletes are unemployed more often, and earn less when they do have jobs, than their non-athletic college peers. They are also likely to switch jobs more often, to hold a wider variety of jobs, and to be less satisfied with the jobs they hold. Primarily, because the jobs tend to be dull, dead-end, or minimally rewarding (Andrews, 1998). Few Americans appreciate the extent to which the overwhelming majority of young males seeking affluence and stardom through sports are doomed to fail. A disproportionate number of talented and motivated African-American males are channeled into a few sports having a relatively small number of professional positions across a variety of occupations in which real employment opportunities exist. Of the African-American athletes who play collegiate football, basketball, or baseball, only 1.6% will ever sign a professional contract; within 3 ½ years, over 60% of those who do sign such contracts are out of professional sports, more often than not financially

destitute or in debt, and on the streets without either the credentials or skills to make their way productively (Edwards, 2000).

African-Americans represent 75% of professional basketball players, 65% in football, and 19% in baseball. Only about 1,400 African-American people are making a living as professional athletes in these three major sports today. If one adds all the African-American professional athletes in minor and semi-professional sports leagues, African-American trainers, coaches, and doctors in professional sports, one sees that fewer than 2,400 African-American Americans can be said to be making a living in professional athletics today (American Institutes for Research, 1996). This situation, considered in combination with the African-American athlete's educational development, helps explain why so many African-American athletes not only fail to achieve their expectations of life-long affluence but also frequently fall far short of the levels achieved by their non-athletic peers.

Despite the fact that American basketball, boxing, track, football, and baseball competitions have become more of a minefield for the overwhelming majority of African-American athletes, it has been a treadmill to oblivion rather than the escalator to wealth and glory it was believed to create. The African-American athlete who sets his goals to becoming the next Michael Jordan, Barry Sanders or Jerry Rice, may find himself with no job that he is qualified to do in our modern, technologically sophisticated society. At the end of his sports career, the African-American athlete is not likely to be making commercials to sell products or running and jumping in airports the way O.J. Simpson did for Hertz Rental Car. He is much more likely to be sweeping up airports, if

he has the good fortune to land even that job. Thus, big name athletes who tell African-American kids to "practice and work hard and one day you can be just like me" are playing games with the future of African-American society (Edwards, 1992).

These are the tragic circumstances that prompted Joe Paterno, head football coach at Penn State to exclaim at the NCAA convention in 1983:

For fifteen years we have had a race problem. We have raped a generation of young African-American athletes. We have taken kids and sold them on bouncing a ball and running with a football and that being able to do certain things athletically was going to be an end in itself. We cannot afford to do that to another generation (Lapchick & Slaughter, 1989).

From all of the above issues the African-American athlete face throughout his sports career, at the end, he may become odious from the exploitation of collegiate athletics. When he examines his career in retrospect, his experience may put him in a quandary once he recognizes that all the spurious dreams of a professional athlete beguiled him into a life of misery after his retirement from sports.

Controversy continues in intercollegiate athletics. It is seen in public disclosures of transcript irregularities, illegal inducements for grants-in-aid, human rights violations against athletes and coaches alike, discrimination against both women and men under NCAA eligibility guidelines, economic mismanagement, and the absence of vision in athletic planning, development, and utilization of facilities (College Recruiting, 1991). A number of scandals involving college athletic recruiting practices, grade fixing, and other violations in the late 1970 focused attention on intercollegiate athletics, both in the popular press and in the academic community. Accounts surfaced of athletes who had completed four years of college but could not read, of high attrition rates and low graduation rates for athletes, and of pressures and stresses that prevented athletes from attending to their role as students. Studies were conducted to assess student athlete academic achievement and the differences or similarities between student athletes and their non-athlete counterparts. Analyses were made of the problems faced by student athletes, and recommendations were offered for overcoming these problems. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) voted in 1983 to adopt legislation establishing minimum academic standards athletes must meet upon institutional admission to be eligible to participate in college athletics. Many critics, however, think this legislation, although stepping in the right direction insufficiently addresses problems of student athletes.

Research Questions

Throughout the history of athletics in education, sports have placed increasing demands on young athletes. To be successful at this level of competition requires athletes to devote almost exclusive energy in their quest for athletic excellence. Although focused attention on training and competition may be viewed as necessary to attain athletic goals, it may also place student-athletes in a vulnerable position when they disengage from sports without a college degree. Some athletes do little planning for their eventual disengagement from school, and may have difficulty in leaving their sports roles and making the transition out of collegiate athletes. There are many forms of social support to continue to participate in sport, but there are few support systems to disengage from sport.

Most of the focus and support given to student-athletes is during the time of eligibility. After the eligibility expires, some of these athletes disconnect themselves from the athletic department and become a mere memory of the past. The myriad of unique challenges facing former student-athletes who have not graduated or retired from sports are well documented. Dexter Manley of the Washington Redskins tearfully told a U.S. Senate panel on illiteracy that despite his four years at Oklahoma State University, he had neither graduated nor learned to read. Kevin Ross, former basketball player who did not graduate, complained on national TV talk shows that he had never learned to read in four years at Creighton University (Byers, 1995).

This study focused on the college experiences of African-American student-athletes to better understand the complexities that they encounter during and after their

athletic scholarship. My objective is to examine how former athletes perceive their college experience to establish a service oriented, salubrious program for former student athletes once their eligibility expires along with their retirement from sport. This program will focus on education, counseling for the transition out of active sport competition, and a life long relationship with the athletic department after their eligibility expires. After perusing a myriad of reports on the exploitation of student-athletes in the revenue producing sports, the research questions became: Are these accounts typical? Universal? Do most athletes experience exploitation and abuse? African-Americans more than other racial groups? How representative are these commentaries of the actual sports experiences of college sport participants? In this investigation I will focus on African-American college athletes' attitudes, opinions, experiences, and perceptions surrounding exploitation.

My observational experience with former athletes in how they cope with their feelings during and after their college eligibility expired sparked a point of personal curiosity that is best defined in the following research question.

How do African-American male athletes who participated in football at a Division I school perceive their college experience after their athletic scholarship expired? This question is the focal point of this study. While I have observed casually how athletes perceived their athletic experience after their eligibility expires, I have never collected data for a better understanding of the collegiate experience of African-American student-athletes. While working in an athletic setting at a large Division I institution, it was an auspicious opportunity to explore these questions in greater depth

that propelled me into doing a study on the experiences of African-American athletes in higher education.

The pressures that affect all athletes' lives in the high-powered world of major college sports are often magnified for African-American male athletes. African-American athletes, because of their celebrity, their size, indeed, are often the most visible undergraduates on campus. One of the most salient issues of modern academe is the fact that the majority of the big sport athletes and virtually all of the stars are African-American. The crowning irony is that, in states where African-Americans were only a few years ago barred from voting, the majority of football and basketball players are African-American. There are the mammoth African-American students who mix very little with other students of different racial backgrounds. They are the classic African-American entertainers (Harrison, 2000). In the most competitive programs, they frequently make up four of the five starters on the basketball team, and sometimes 7 of the 11 starters on each unit of the football team. They are often revered as campus heroes for their athletic prowess, but many feel shackled to the pedestals on which they have been placed. They move between two conflicting worlds, education and entertainment, without truly belonging to either.

While increasing numbers of African-American athletes are going to college, many of them have little time to participate in the intellectual or political life of the institution. Thus, the stratification that is taking place in general between athletes and students at schools with big time programs has also widened the gap between African-American student-athletes and other African-American students. African-American

athletes don't get involved with the student government; they don't like to socialize with other African-Americans. Leslie Fair, an African-American student who is a resident dorm adviser at the University of Michigan, said:

A lot of times I feel that they are part of the football team, or the basketball team, but they aren't part of our team. They're indoctrinated as soon as they come here to be on a team, and it's not our team, it's not the African-American team (Shropshire, 1996).

Essentially we've created a subculture on our college campuses. Other racial groups do not accept them, and they're alienated from African-Americans. The African-American athlete is particularly sensitive to these matters because of the lack of other African-American students on campus and the growing emphasis in the African-American community for the development of African-American awareness (Hoberman, 97). The African-American athlete is called upon by the African-American community to take a leadership role in the development of African-American identity. These demands thrust him into conflict with a system designed to prevent the very actions he may be compelled to take within the African-American community.

Definition of Terms

In the follow up narrative I use a variety of terms that may not be familiar to readers who not be familiar to readers who know little about intercollegiate athletes. It is necessary and appropriate that I define terms and athletics facts that are referred to throughout this study.

- **Proposition 48** requires incoming freshman to have a minimum score of 710 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or 17 on the American College Testing Program's

Standardized Test, and a 2.0 grade point average in 11 high school core courses to be eligible to play collegiate sports their first year.

- **Revenue-producing sports** are those that sustain themselves by the funds they generate for Division 1 schools. These funds also help to support other non-revenue producing sports (e.g. swimming, tennis, golf, etc). For the purpose of this study, I am focusing on football scholarship student athletes.
- **Graduation rates** are the percentages of student athletes graduating from Division 1 institutions released by the NCAA within six years.
- **Proposition 16** which is an addendum to proposition 48, will require freshman to have a 2.5 grade point average in a core curriculum of 13 school courses to receive a full athletic scholarship.
- **Minority athletes** refers to African-American student athletes because the term is so defined since there are a limited number of other minority student athletes involved in intercollegiate athletes (particularly revenue producing sports).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program and student-athletes shall be in integral part of the student body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general (National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA], 1991).

Historical Review of the NCAA

After numerous deaths on the gridiron, President Teddy Roosevelt ordered colleges in 1905 to take control of their student – run teams. In doing so, administrators found that football was profitable (Brasch, 1972). Professional sport was considered degrading for institutions of higher learning, but money and football were so intertwined that the colleges could not possibly disentangle the two without destroying the sport altogether. Instead, the universities created the illusion of amateurism by forming the NCAA to retain a clear line of separation between college athletics and professional sports. This "principle of sound academic standards," one of 13 principles for the conduct of intercollegiate athletics set forth in its Constitution, expresses concisely the primary role of the NCAA in achieving the proper relationship between academics and athletics for college student athletes. Since this principle addresses clearly their academic preparation for admission and satisfactory progress in college, it also has tremendous implications for the student athlete in high school and even in lower grades.

Attention must be focused immediately on a myth that continues to have tragic consequences for many young students, especially minorities--the belief that sports is their principal avenue to fame and fortune. That this is indeed myth, rather than reality, is documented vividly by Gates (1991), who reports the following figures: In the U.S., where there are 1,200 African-American professional athletes, there are 12 times more African-American lawyers, 2 1/2 times more African-American dentists, and 15 times more African-American doctors. At each level of sports participation from high school through the pros, competition becomes tighter and the odds of making the team become slimmer. Thus, educational preparation for other fields of endeavor is essential. In its role as regulator of intercollegiate athletics, the NCAA should take on the challenge of ensuring that college athletes receive an education that will prepare them for productive lives once their sports careers are over.

A brief history of intercollegiate sports reveals the difficulties the NCAA has faced in its efforts to achieve that goal expressed in the above principle. For nearly 50 years after the first American intercollegiate contest in 1852 (crew, between Harvard and Yale), college sports were operated by students as a part of their extra curriculum. By the turn of the century, most colleges and universities in our nation had established faculty boards of control, and intercollegiate athletics were being transferred into the institutional structure for governance. This change was the result of concerns about a number of improprieties in college sports, not the least of which had to do with the academic status of participants.

As Smith (1998) documents, the question of eligibility was causing particular concern in the 1890s, due in large part to the fact that individuals were transferring without penalties from one college to another merely to participate in athletics. In an extreme manifestation of this type of abuse, one mid-western university football team had several members who had no connection at all with the university.

After the NCAA was organized in 1906, the Association's efforts were directed primarily to establishing game rules and to working with game officials. In 1922, a 10-point code was adopted in which member institutions were urged to, among other things, adopt eligibility rules. Even though the eligibility rules for NCAA championships began to get more specific in the late 1940s, it was not until 1965 that the NCAA membership adopted a meaningful eligibility requirement--the "1,600 rule," requiring incoming student athletes to have a predicted grade point average (GPA) of 1.600 (based on a maximum of 4.00) in order to be eligible for athletics grant-in-aid and to participate in an institution's program (Falla, 1991). This eligibility requirement was applied for only a few years, for reason which Falla (1991) summarizes:

Concerns about interference with institutional autonomy and responsibility; questions about the validity of predictive tests; changes in the social structure of the nation, particularly the marked increase in federally funded college-aid programs for disadvantaged students and an increase in the number of colleges adopting "open-door" admissions policies.

The NCAA membership abolished the 1.600 rule at its 1973 convention and, in its place, adopted the 2.000 rule (for Division I). The 2.000 rule required graduation from high school with a minimum GPA of 2.000 for all courses taken, for which there were no

subject requirements. Many critics argued that the 2.000 rule was essentially meaningless as a measure of academic preparation for success in most college and universities, and the experience of the following decade proved them correct. Unfortunately, in far too many institutions student athletes were permitted, and indeed often helped, to circumvent, in one way or another, the academic requirements for students generally. The emphasis was on maintaining their eligibility. During that decade there was widespread exploitation of elite athletes by colleges and universities across the country. The institutions used outstanding athletes to generate winning records and consequently increase the visibility of their athletic programs, particularly those in football and basketball. Increased visibility, of course, meant increased revenue.

When the freshman eligibility requirement commonly referred to as Proposition 48 was adopted in 1983, to be implemented in 1986, more meaningful satisfactory progress requirements were adopted for immediate implementation. Having taken this action, the NCAA made plans to initiate a 10-year research project to evaluate the academic performance of student athletes at Division I institutions. The subjects were divided into five cohort groups, the first of which included student athletes on full or partial athletic scholarships who enrolled in the fall of 1984. This timing was destined to have two cohort groups enrolling before the implementation of Proposition 48 and three enrolling after it was in place, with all groups to be followed for 5 years.

The Proposition 48 eligibility requirements (a minimum GPA of 2.000 on 11 core courses and a minimum score of 700 on the SAT or 15 on the ACT) have not been without controversy. The proposition has been challenged particularly with regard to the

appropriateness of the fixed cut score on the pre-college test and to its more negative impact on African-Americans and other minorities. However, it is widely agreed that the requirement had a positive influence in helping students achieve better preparation for satisfactory performance in college. While Proposition 48 and the satisfactory progress requirements have helped overcome some of the problems between athletics and higher education, it is recognized that these academic requirements need to be strengthened if student athletes are to be adequately prepared in universities as higher education moves to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Therefore, the NCAA Presidents Commission is proposed changes in legislation to achieve the next step in strengthening academic requirements for Division I, with the new freshman eligibility requirements established in 1995 and the changes in continuing eligibility requirements to be effective for students enrolling in college in 2001. Some of the changes are proposed for Division II also, but others are being deferred for consideration after more experience has been gained with current requirements. The proposed changes for freshman eligibility include an increase in core courses from 11 to 13 (with the two additional courses to be in English and in either Mathematics or the Natural / Physical Science; an increase in minimum GPA on core courses from 2.000 to 2.500; and a modified indexing for the core GPA and pre-college test score, retaining the minimum requirement of SAT 700 (or equivalent ACT) and 2.000 GPA on the core courses. Using the modified indexing, a student with 900 SAT score and a 2.000 core GPA would be eligible.

Under the proposed changes, student athletes would be required to complete a

progressive percentage of courses required for graduation in the specific degree program in order to maintain eligibility (25%, 50% and 75% for eligibility in the third, fourth, and fifth years, respectively). In addition, the student's cumulative GPA would have to stand at 95% of the minimum GPA required for graduation in order for the student to be eligible in the third year, and at 100% of that minimum in order for the students to be eligible in the fourth and fifth years. (Note: The proposed legislation for satisfactory progress was amended to require 95% of the minimum graduation requirement for eligibility in the fourth and subsequent years). The proposed changes would allow no more than 25% of the credit hours required for eligibility in a given academic year to be taken in the preceding summer, and would require certification of satisfactory progress for midyear transfers to be eligible at the beginning of the next academic year.

Increasing the core GPA makes that standard more comparable to the test score in measuring academic preparation, and the modified indexing is widely recognized as a more equitable and educationally sound way of applying test scores and GPAs in evaluating academic preparation of students for college. Results of the current NCAA research show that "the equally weighted combination of core grade-point average and test score provides the single-best prediction of graduation" (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 1991a, p. 12).

Of particular significance is the fact that even though Proposition 48 has had a greater impact on African-American student athletes than on others, the percent of African-American student athletes on athletic scholarship in Division I was not lower in 1988 than in 1984--2 years after and 2 years before its implementation, respectively. The

conclusion to be drawn from this is that most African-American student athlete's not meeting Proposition 48 requirements are being replaced by other African-American student-athletes who meet requirements. Roberts (1989) predicted this outcome when he expressed the view that athletes who would receive scholarships under Proposition 48 would "be better and more motivated students who are far more likely to get a meaningful college education that will equip them to live successful and productive adult lives" (pp. 9-10).

Taken together, all the evidence leads to the conclusion that, with three years' notice high school student athletes, with the encouragement of parents, counselors, and coaches, will better prepare themselves to be successful in their college work and in life after college. In addition, it will be apparent to entering student athletes that they must take reasonable progress toward their degrees in order to continue their eligibility.

Reference was made initially to the principle of sound academic standards and other principles for the conduct of intercollegiate athletics that are contained in the NCAA Constitution. Another of those is the "principle of competitive equity," which specifies that "the structure and programs of the Association and the activities of its members shall promote opportunity for equity in competition to assure that individual student-athletes and institutions will not be prevented unfairly from achieving the benefits inherent in participation in intercollegiate athletics" (NCAA, 1991b, p. 4). This principle obviously is one that must take into account the setting of minimum academic requirements for student athletes in the different divisions and subdivisions of the Association's member institutions.

The Association's academic requirements for eligibility are minimum requirements, and conferences and individual institutions are expected to adopt and implement higher standards in keeping with their common interests and missions. In this context, it must be emphasized that the NCAA eligibility requirements for freshmen are not admission requirements. The latter are determined by the individual institution, as are requirements for continuation in residence for all students in the institution, which the student athlete is expected to meet. The minimum eligibility requirements adopted by the NCAA membership are to promote both competitive equity and the academic credibility of the member institutions. It is poor strategy for student athletes to "shoot for" the minimum requirement. Their sights should be much higher, and those who help influence them (parents, coaches, and counselors) should always encourage them to strive for higher goals academically.

Given the importance of sports in American culture, it is not surprising that some alumni may at times object strongly to academic requirements of "their institution" that they believe result in its student athletes being placed at a disadvantage to those of rival institutions. A striking example of this is seen in a recent formal request to the president of a major public university to reevaluate and change certain requirements in order to avoid placing its student athletes at an academic disadvantage. The alumni who submitted the request voiced concern about the university's developmental studies program for "at-risk" students, saying it keeps marginally prepared student athletes in the program for too long a time, and criticized the institution for its lack of a curriculum especially tailored to keep student athletes eligible.

Fortunately, the university president responded that he would "never compromise the academic integrity of the [university] in exchange for athletic victories" (Barnhart, 1991). It is pertinent to note that, in taking this position, he called attention to the national movement to strengthen academic standards. The same point was also made in an editorial in a major newspaper in the state commending the president for his strong stand on academic integrity:

The university's obligation is to turn out productive citizens. "Vicarious alumni thrills come in a distant second" (Editor, 1991, p. A8). Disgruntled alumni like those mentioned above reflect the values of society in which sports has been given high status. The American culture itself strongly influences the evolution and current status of sports in our nation (Bailey & Littleton, 1991). In view of the relationship between sports and American culture, major changes affecting the relationship of sports and education can be made successfully only if some of the values attached to sports by society are modified. This point has been expressed well by Whalen (1991): "The reality is that we do have a sports-crazed society--one that is far more developed to entertainment than to education. We have culturally cultivated an addiction for entertainment that has fed our tolerance for abuse" (p. 4).

One university president gave incisive expression to the problem when he stated:

I think that we just basically are saying that there's one thing in America important enough to set up separate rules for--the only thing important enough to society to really exempt you from many of the requirements of the university, and that's athletics. And don't think that our students don't see this. They accept it, don't challenge it, and carry that perception away with them into later life. (Bailey & Littleton, 1991, p. 32).

Helping our society, and helping individuals, understanding the importance of the

proper relationship between academics and athletics is of tremendous importance for the future of our nation as a competitor in a global economy and for the productive lives and welfare of individuals in our nation as we move into the 21st century.

Even for those student athletes who go on to play professional sports, an education is extremely important for a meaningful life. Tony Dorsett, Heisman Trophy winner and 10-year veteran in the NFL, emphasized the importance of education in his message to blue chip recruits:

If I had it to do over again I'd go back and apply myself a little more academically. I have friends who are pro athletes who can't even write a check, or they have to have their wives balance the checkbook. That's sad. I know guys who've gone through the education system and still can't read. You better get a quality education while you can because when it is all over that's what you will have to depend on (Ingram, 1990, p. F6).

It is obvious that the NCAA faces a tremendous challenge as it strives to create the proper relationship between academics and athletics for college student-athletes. Equally obvious is the fact that the Association has given too little emphasis to this responsibility throughout most of its existence. In regard to NCAA legislation on the ethical conduct of students and coaches, young student athletes should be aware that the most frequent violations occur in the areas of recruiting and providing extra benefits to athletes. The principal problems in these areas are addressed in an NCAA guide for college-bound student athletes. High school coaches and counselors should ensure that every prospective college athlete is provided with a copy of the pamphlet, and they should also alert the student athlete that NCAA regulations are complex and can be broken unintentionally unless great care is exercised. Violation of these regulations can

jeopardize the eligibility of a student to compete in intercollegiate athletics. Therefore, it is imperative that students know and comply with applicable rules.

As we await the outcome of the reform movement now underway, it must be emphasized that the NCAA is a voluntary organization of approximately 800 colleges and universities of great diversity. It is the membership, not some perceived hierarchy in the NCAA that adopts and implements all its rules and regulations. As emphasized in the Knight Foundation Commission Report (1991), if the NCAA "did not exist, higher education would have to create it, or something very much like it. It is clear that a governing, rulemaking and disciplinary body of some sort is required" (p. 29). Therefore, success in achieving the proper relationship between academics and athletics will depend on the actions of the member institutions, both individually and collectively. It will be influenced also by the support, or lack thereof, received from alumni and friends of these institutions and from the public generally. Thus, it is obvious that society has a major role to play in achieving a proper relationship between academics and athletics at all levels of education in our nation.

If we are not successful in achieving that relationship in this decade, the only viable alternative may be eliminating intercollegiate athletics from the educational experience of our college students. That would be a great loss for all concerned.

Historical Review of African-American Athlete

Historically, the literature of this problem has little to go on except for stereotypes. There have been good studies of the lives of former college athletes who graduated and/or became successful professionals, and some studies, which fail to differentiate between those who were academically successful and those who were not so fortunate. But there is little systematic information about those, successful neither as student nor as professional athletes, whose assumed problems have resulted in the heaviest charges of exploitation by intercollegiate athletics. *Lack of knowledge and information about student-athletes leaves universities guessing as to what their problems, if any, really are and guessing what remedies may be in order, from the perspective of the individuals affected.*

Stereotypes about unsuccessful athletes come from the popular media, from public officials, and from academics. When introducing a bill, which would have reduced private contributions to college athletes, in the wake of publicity about non-graduating athletics in 1995, congressman James J. Howard (Dem. N.J.) said:

When you consider that only one percent of college athletes sign professional contracts, you have to wonder what happens to those athletes who have been used for their athletic ability, but fall between the cracks without a pro contract or a degree (Farrell, 1996, p. 30).

Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Frederick C. Klein (1990, p. 30) said:

Young athletes (we're talking about teenagers here), some with meager academic credentials, are enticed to campuses with the promise of an education, and then tied to team practice schedules that don't give them time to pursue one. Many are placed in Mickey Mouse courses, awarded grades they don't earn, or both. When their eligibility for sports expires,

they are cast adrift.

In writing about what he calls “exploitation” of college athletes, Coakley (1995) said:

They often wind up with nothing but varsity letters and press clippings while the college gets just as much sports revenue and publicity as if they had graduated.

Jan Kemp, who has a heavy media following as result of her role in the celebrated “Georgia Case,” was quoted recently (Cramer, 1992, p. 3) in a statement that shows her perceptions of unsuccessful athletes:

All over the country athletes are being used to produce to revenue. I have seen what happens when the lights dim and the crowds fade. They’re left with nothing... I don’t want athletes knocking on my door five years from now offering to rake my leaves when they could have had an education.

Some see the unsuccessful athletes as ignored and in trouble. The minute their eligibility expires, the athletic departments concern for welfare suddenly evaporates. The free tutoring stops and an athlete finds himself faced with a flock of different classes, which somebody has put off to keep him eligible. He finds himself encased in the stereotype for the dumb jock and psychologically devastated (Meggysesy, 2000). Despite the prevalence of this negative stereotype, there is an opposing view to the effect that former college athletes do pretty well even though they earn neither a degree nor a professional career. In commenting on the positive effects of college football, Sack (1997, p. 93) said:

A few of them (college players) will receive pro contracts and others will cash in on their celebrity status before a year or two erases them from the

public consciousness.

There are college athletes who see themselves as successful and rewarded despite the fact that they did not graduate and are not professional athletes. Steve Meacham, a former Memphis State basketball player, was quoted in USA Today (Kirk, 1993, p. 6c) as saying: "I never went to school to get a degree. I went to play basketball. I guess I 'm bullheaded, but I'm doing fine without it."

Colleges and universities are supposed to be, along with parents and religious organizations, the guardians of our nation's moral values. When discrimination is part of the hiring system, when exploitation is part of the recruiting process, when athletes do not get an education, our nation's institutions of higher education have forfeited that guardianship (Lapchick, 1991). The need for effectiveness in counseling student athletes has been espoused for many decades (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Goldberg, 1991). Also over the past 20 years, literature has revealed that administrators and faculty tend to disregard the special needs of African-American students (Green et., 1974; Leach & Conners, 1984). Edwards (1995) makes the following point about academic advisors and counselors:

The resulting ineptitude was greatly compounded when the target of counseling effort were African-American student athletes because, among far too many of these advising personnel, ignorance of the overall African-American experience in education was rivaled only by a lack of understanding regarding the institutions dynamics and character of big time collegiate sport and the evolving roles of African-Americans in it.

Sports Role in the African-American Male's Life

In order to understand the exploitation of African-American male athletes, it is heuristic to consider the role sport has and continues to play in the African-American, male experience. Edwards (1993) discusses four primary reasons for sport's important niche in many African-American male' lives: First, and probably most important, racism in the United States has kept many African-Americans from the same economic and employment opportunities enjoyed by the hierarchy. However, since limited opportunities do exist in select professional sports, African-American youths continue to expend much time and energy in honing their athletic skills while entertaining fantasies of a professional athletic career, which Michener (1996) refers to as a downward course in sport specialization.

Second, until quite recently, African-American youths have had a paucity of highly visible, socially esteemed role models other than entertainers and athletes. Arthur Ashe (1988) said:

Our most widely recognized role models are athletes and entertainers—running and jumping and signing...Our greatest heroes of the century have been athletes..." In a few sports African-Americans tend to be over-represented in comparison to their proportionate makeup in the total U.S. population. Since these sports receive extensive media coverage, the African-American professional athlete is highly visible. When African-American youths think of famous African-Americans, it's the athletes that are salient. As a result, sport is perceived as one of the few avenues for achieving vertical social mobility.

Third, the African-American family and community tend to reward athletic achievement earlier and more frequently than other types of achievement. Once a student

is recognized as a star, it is not atypical for others to make sure he makes the grades and continue his goal of becoming an elite athlete. This relates to the high visibility and predominance of African-Americans in the professional team sports of basketball, football, and baseball, track and boxing. Parents of African-American children and the African-American community stress sport, often viewing it as one of the only avenues to achieve economic security and notoriety. After all, they may ask, who are the successful African-Americans?

Fourth, many African-American males see sport participation as a way of proving their manhood. This partially reflects the lack of opportunities for African-Americans in traditional male positions involving authority, power, and prestige. It also relates to the large proportion of African-American households headed by females. Without a male role model in the home, African-American youths may feel compelled to establish their role identify on a basketball court, football field or baseball diamond.

Exploitation of Athletes

Numerous clamoring of the exploitation of college athletes have been heard. While sport social scientists and journalist are fond of talking and writing about the exploitation of student-athletes, few provide consistently clear conceptual and, particularly, operational definitions for the construct. Figler (1991) argued that exploitation “occurs when either side (athlete and institution) is deprived of or impeded from pursuing the desired or expected benefits. Superficially, the way in which full-scholarship college athletes are exploited seems befuddling. Beneath the surface, however, are nefarious patterns of institutionalized powerlessness mechanisms woven into the fabric of the sport institutions that ultimately produce exploitation (Edwards, 1993).

Surprisingly, the NCAA stipulates that student athletes may legally receive monies to cover room, board, tuition, books, and fees. Additionally, athletic grants-in-aid are awarded on a yearly basis; a player has five years to complete four years of eligibility; and transfer students ordinarily sit out one sport season. Finally, only under extenuating circumstances may athletes contract their service with professional sport franchises prior to their class’s graduation.

Coakley (1995) considers these rules and regulations reasonable insofar they facilitate and educational experience in conjunction with sport engagement. However, problems typically surface when commercial interests supersede educational ones. In schools, usually those with major football and/or basketball programs where commercialization prevails, the athlete’s role in the academy equals rank and file workers

in the labor market.

Not only do athletes help generate revenues for their alma mater, they also perform a public relations function without receiving additional compensation. Further, the demands on student-athletes make it virtually impossible to be, simultaneously, a serious student and a serious athlete. Not surprisingly, everyone does not conceive the collegiate sport participant as a helpless, and hopeless soul similar to a slave and embedded in peonage

Former all pro NFL player Gene Upshaw provides a glimpse of the economic exploitation of college athletes:

Once you receive financial aid based on your athletic ability, you are not much different from a professional athlete. A college is paying you to bring money and prestige to the school and to provide commercial entertainment for alumni, students, and the public at large. And the current NCAA battle over hundreds of millions of TV dollars means that the student-players whose time and sweat produce this money are being grossly underpaid.

Sack's (1997) critique of big-time college football programs echoes Upshaw's and conveys a Marxist interpretation:

Given the inadequacy of the education received by the average athlete, his scholarship amounts essentially to room and board. Like Marx's nineteenth century proletarians, college football players literally receive food and lodging while the surplus value they produce is expropriated by their employers.

Sack maintains that several insidious myths must be dispelled before one can fully comprehend the exploitation of college athletes. The first falsehood is perpetrated in the popular expression, "free ride". This phraseology intimates that full-scholarship athletes

have a gratuitous college education. While scholarship recipients are not directly paying money for their schooling, indeed, their physical labor/skill is being expended in exchange. Goffman (1959), stated:

Many people are only familiar with the more glamorous “front-stage region” of athletic contest; they are not privy to the “backstage” or near full-time commitment that sports participants often have (pre and post season activities and weight and conditioning training occur nearly year round).

One financial administrator calculated the average hourly wage of basketball and football players at a Division I school to be \$3.75 and \$4.70 respectively. The important point is not these monetary estimates, but that there is no such thing as a “free ride”. Although the aphorism hones in on football, other sports probably require a similar single mindedness of purpose and focus (Figler, 1981). When this all encompassing mental centering is compounded by the typical physical fatigue factor, studying becomes tedious and burdensome, if not virtually impossible in fact, so problematic that some would prefer not attending class at all. Hence, all one’s time, energy and effort could be concentrated on sport.

Even some coaches have publicly acknowledged the duplicity and hypocrisy surrounding the student-athlete designation. Former Alabama coach Paul “Bear” Bryant (Michener, 1996) provided a candid and sobering remark about the expectations of the athlete in a major sport program:

I used to go along with the idea that football players on scholarship were

student-athletes, which is what the NCAA calls them. Meaning a student first, and an athlete second. We were kidding ourselves, trying to make it more palatable to the academicians. We don't have to say that and we shouldn't. At the level we play, the boy is really an athlete first and a student second.

History of African-Americans in Sports

African-Americans have always been participants in this country's sporting events, from the days of legalized slavery to the present. History informs us that as a group of people, African-Americans have always respected physical activity and sports. Athletic participation was a standard part of the African child's growth in the home villages. Anthropological evidence and eyewitness accounts indicate that several sports were routinely enjoyed in the African villages (Ashe, 1988).

These athletic skills were brought from Africa to the newly colonized America, but as slaves, the first African-Americans were not always permitted to exercise them (Ashe, 1988). Restrictions against athletic activity affected slaves and indentured servants alike and were often based on the religious beliefs of their slave owners. However, despite restrictive laws such as the "African-American Codes," African-Americans slaves and "free Negroes" found opportunities to engage in and enjoy sports such as running, fishing, and town ball.

Currently the skills of African-American athletes are recognized and utilized at both the collegiate and the professional levels. In the late 1940s, when African-Americans began regularly participating in athletics at desegregated universities, their enrollment spared an interest on the part of the fans, which compelled universities to

compete with African-American colleges for potentially valuable athletes. But the African-American student athlete has not fared well on these campuses. Through the years, many have spoken out against racism and embarrassment. As early as 1917, Paul Robeson, a Rutgers University All- American and later a well-known actor, voiced his protest of the unfair treatment of African-American athletes.

There was also early protest by African-American student athletes, including those at the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Texas at El Paso, the University of Kansas, and Michigan State University. In 1972, African-American protest came to a peak at Michigan State University. After several African-American student athletes, faculty members, administrators, and researchers had observed and analyzed discriminatory athletic practices; a group of concerned professors presented a detailed protest to the leaders of the Big Ten Conference. This protest was based on a report, "The Status of African-Americans in the Big Ten Conference: Issues and Concerns," which showed that fairness and equal opportunity were a myth in collegiate sports and that the patterns of racial discrimination found in society were also found in U.S. athletics (Green, 1974). There were three areas that were of prime concern: (a) the problems experienced by African-American athletes as a function of their race, (b) number who fail to graduate, and (c) the lack of African-American representation at all levels of employment, especially as coaches and officials (Green 1974). Twenty-six years later these same three areas are still a major concern in collegiate athletics.

The Myth of the Student-Athlete

College sport is being undermined by its own tradition. The entire enterprise is founded on the notion of the amateur, the scholar-athlete who studies and trains hard and is rewarded for his efforts, not with money, but with sporting values and, above all, an education. But this implied bargain has today become a mockery, and the cause is an overriding need, both psychological and economic, to win.

Consider the economics, the teams competing in the football bowl games and basketball final four will earn millions of dollars. College sport is now big business sustained by the dreams of athletes, a disproportionate number are African-American males dreaming of a professional sports career. Few of those dreams come true on the educational and professional levels of sport. These bargains can be traced to the economics of college sports. Despite the enormous sums of money involved, athletic departments are not a profitable enterprise for most colleges. Only about 45 athletic departments operate in the African-American each year. And only a few of those programs do so consistently because college sports as they're staged today, and football in particular, are very expensive business. And the only thing that ensures the income is winning. Football and basketball have to make money, and that's how the system becomes vicious and exploitative for the student-athlete in-regards to falsifying entrance exams, academic and recruiting violations.

Corruption and violence are nothing new in college athletics, but the money has increased the pressure on recruiters to pay more attention to athletic talent than the character. From the beginning of football shortly after the Civil War, football has been

soiled by violence and commercialism, as teams made use of older, tougher "tramp" players, students in name only. While college athletes are technically amateurs, their scholarships cover tuition, fees, books, and room and board. Their sweat is the fuel that runs such a large profitable machine. The most hypocritical justification offered for collegiate sports is the free education and how sports build character. The values that truly can be gained from sports, an appreciation for hard work, sportsmanship, the joy of playing, has been distorted by the desperate needs to win. The athletic alumni booster clubs are giving money to win, not to build character. The money is for beating their rivals and to bring prestige to the institution and the city. The problem with this system is that winning has nothing to do with education.

To be sure, not all athletes object to this system. Some view college as a mere formality standing between them and lucrative professional contracts. Colleges serve as farm teams for the NFL and the NBA. But for every athlete who makes it to the big time there are hundreds more who neglect their studies in the mistaken belief that they too can cash in on their physical skills for a shot at a lifestyle of the rich and famous. In reality, the routes to the pros, where salaries are astronomical, are long and narrow. According to the NCAA, more than 17,000 young men play football and basketball at the collegiate level, and each year only 150 of them will reach the professional league and an even fewer will last more than a year at the professional level. African-American athletes suffer most severely from the worship of sports. According to the NCAA, only 4 percent of college students are African-American, yet they represent 58% of basketball players and 37% of football players. The explanation may be found in the screening and

recruitment of African-American athletes in African-American communities at a very early age. When African-American athletes illustrate athletic prowess even at the elementary and junior high levels, coaches and recruiters start the recruiting process to continue the cycle of big business in sports.

Even those who come to college hoping to exchange their physical skills for a degree often discover the promise of an education is an illusion. On average, football and basketball players devote 30 hours a week to their sport, 16 more hours than they spend in class. Some proponents of reform would go as far as to pay college players, thus ending the hypocrisy of the amateur student-athlete. If athletes are spending more time on sports than the classroom, they might as well get paid if sports are more germane than an education. Coaches, athletic directors, college president and the NCAA must acknowledge that college basketball and football are out of control.

In 1906, historian Frederick Jackson Turner delivered these words at the University of Wisconsin:

Football is now a business, carried on by professionals bringing in vast gate receipts, demoralizing student ethics and confusing the ideals of sport manliness and decency (Breast, 1972).

Almost a hundred years later, these words would apply to the current state of collegiate athletes. Many of the same problems are still prevalent in college athletics, which makes one ponder about the sincerity in the reforms to improve the academic and athletic conditions in college athletics if the same problems are extant from over a hundred years ago.

Athletic Myths

Athletic Myths

One dangerous myth is the belief that African-American athletes enhance their social mobility through sports. The sports literature has given considerable attention to the phenomenon of upward mobility, particularly as it relates to the African-American athlete. Dubois (1974) suggests that for African-American athlete's, sports is a significant vehicle by to become socially mobile. However, not all studies support the contention that social mobility is enhanced through sports. Rather, two opposing view emerge in the literature----- the traditional view and the contemporary view. In the contemporary view, sport is seen as a reflection of the society's development and not necessarily as a means to social mobility. In more recent literature, Rudman (1995), indicates that whether athletic success is regarded as a vehicle for social mobility may be a function of social orientation and what he terms the "culture of poverty." In other words, according to Rudman, the less affluent in our society, irrespective of race, are likely to see sports as a means of social mobility.

There are a number of myths related to the career development of student athletes, and these frequently interfere with the career development process of student-athletes.

Myth: Athletic scholarships are an important way to achieve a successful career.

Reality: Athletes participating in revenue producing sports, especially minority students, graduate at a very low rate. An NCAA study of entering Division 1 athletes indicates that 42.5% of African-American athletes left college in bad standing, compared to 19.6% of White athletes leaving college (Lederman, 1991). In the view of Richard Lapchick, director of the Northeastern University Center for the Study of sport in Society, these

statistics suggest that a disproportionate number of African-American athletes were kept on a non-graduating track. So that by the time their eligibility expired they were so far from graduating that they may have dropped out due to lack of hope (Lederman, 1991).

Myth: Proposition 48 is restoring academic integrity to college athletics and providing career security for student athletes.

Reality: NCAA Propositions 48, 28, and 42 restrict educational access, especially for African-American athletes, and are less than effective in reducing the exploitation of student athletes by colleges and universities (Cheatham and Associates, 1991).

Myth: Student athletes who do not go on to a professional career in sports have few job skills.

Reality: Most student athletes possess a number of unique skills, if marketed effectively, can lead to future career success. The transferable skills can be used in any field the athlete chooses if he applies himself academically as well as athletically (Bolles, 1991).

Myth: Participation in athletics gives student athletes the confidence and exposure needed to make positive career choices.

Reality: Student athletes face a variety of difficulties in regard to career development. These difficulties include lack of identification of academic and career plans, unrealistic goal setting, and lack of self-confidence outside of the athletic arena (Remer, 1978).

Myth: At least for the few student athletes, who ultimately make it into the professional arena, the career education programs currently in place will prove adequate for former athletes.

Reality: Few professional athletes play beyond their 40s (Lerch, 1981). For some team

sports such as baseball, basketball, and football, the average athletic longevity is about 5 to 7 years (Andreano, 1973). Career education must prepare even future professional athletes for a time when they will have to choose a new occupation.

Myth: Academic support and career development services are equally available to all athletes regardless of race.

Reality: Present academic support and career education systems have been designed to remedy the problems encountered by the hierarchy and middle-class students. African-American and White students show vast differences in academic preparation before college (Lederman, 1991). Differences in learning styles and communication styles are also noted for minority students (Jacobs, 1987). Most academic support personnel, from mentors and tutors to upper-level administrators, are untrained in the skills required to deal effectively with student athletes from varied cultural backgrounds.

Myth: Talented athletes can bypass a college education as a step in their career development. If they are not academically prepared for college studies, athletes can go directly into professional programs.

Reality: Colleges are will recognized as the route to using athletic talent to make financial gains in professional careers, especially in football and basketball (Atwell, 1989).

Myth: Most student athletes accepted by 4-year colleges and universities are qualified to do the academic work required for success in a career, if they apply themselves.

Reality: Twenty percent to 30% of high school graduate football and basketball players are functionally illiterate (Atwell, 1989).

The myths and realities illustrate the need for career development programs that are designed to assist student athletes' at all educational levels.

Problems Facing the African-American Athlete

Along with an understanding of the myths and stereotypes associated with African-Americans in athletics, professionals should have an understanding and an appreciation of the issues most often faced by African-American student athletes. Being African-American student and an athlete means dealing with a variety of fears and concerns. Winning, which has become paramount, takes its toll on the African-American athlete in college athletics. Successful football and basketball programs are especially important to the image of most large universities as a source of pride and prestige to alumni, administrators, faculty, and students. Also, the economics of contemporary athletic programs appear to be a direct factor resulting in the stresses that today's coaches and athletes experience. Although colleges and universities imply that the academic, personal, and career needs of their student athletes have high priority, the opposite appears true at many institutions. The meeting of these student needs seems secondary to the need to gain and maintain a winning athletic program at many institutions of higher education. Terms such as exploitation and gladiators have surfaced in regard to the African-American student athlete. In too many cases, college coaches recruit only the best athletes and place little or no emphasis on character, intelligence, study habits, academic ability, or other qualities necessary to succeed in the classroom. As a result, many African-American athletes do not receive their college diplomas. Not enough

attention is being targeted at obtaining a degree. Often the athlete takes classes based on "remaining eligible" rather than on a structured program aimed at graduation.

Learning to balance academic and athletic pursuits is perhaps one of the most obvious challenges that today's collegiate student-athlete confronts. Student-athletes are challenged to find ways of maximizing their involvement and learning in both academic and athletic domains and doing so in an effective and efficient manner. The stress of balancing the academic and athletic activities seems to be particularly acute when the athlete is "in season," when from "sun up to sundown" the student-athlete is involved in some way with the various academic demands (e.g., attending class, keeping tutorial appointments, attending study hall) as well as with the demands of athletics (e.g., going to practice, participating in strength and conditioning programs, attending to a post-practice regimen of bodily aches and pains, eating at the training table). Meeting the academic demands seems especially challenging for the student-athlete who has poor or inadequate academic preparation. To say the least, attempting to effectively maximize one's participation in both domains really does test the mental and physical stamina of even the most well-balanced and committed student-athlete. These competing demands frequently force the student-athlete to make some difficult decisions about the percentage of time that will be devoted to each endeavor. Unfortunately, athletic pursuits are most often given the greater amount of time and attention. These kinds of findings have prompted many observers to seriously wonder whether the notion of the student-athlete is one that is based on fact or fiction.

Unique among athletes in general is competitiveness; an attribute that internally

and externally generates a reward system. Initially, athletes derive satisfaction through competence and excelling in individually related skills such as speed and quickness, dexterity and above average hand-eye coordination. When such skills are manifested through organized athletics, particularly spectator sports, massive fan and media enthusiasm springs up almost spontaneously. This enthusiasm firmly establishes exceptional athletic performance atop the athlete's ego-value system. The athlete, in turn, is then firmly established atop the fan along with the media's praise system. Coleman (1961) found this phenomenon to exist well before the collegiate experience. He asserts that even in high school the athlete in the United States is well entrenched at the top of the status hierarchy. So unless the athlete possesses a natural scholastic aptitude, chances are slim that academic performance can assume equal importance. Whereas academic and athletic performance both attracts immediate attention, it is the media heightened and pervasive appeal for the latter that all too often dominates the student athlete's ego value system. As a major element in the ego value system, the fan and media factor influences the athlete to think and feel obligated. In return for performance the athlete receives praise, recognition and respect, all of which adequately satisfies his emotional and psychological needs in the immediate fashion. The more prominent of those concerns center on academic preparation, loneliness and isolation, time management, faculty expectations.

Academic Preparation

Like other athletes, African-American athletes come to college to become educated, but often their educational background has not prepared them for the rigors of academia. Unfortunately, many of them have received the message that there is no need to make any effort in the classroom. With the focus almost entirely on athletic achievement, they may end up “majoring in eligibility” (Leach 1984). While many colleges and universities have begun to create academic support services for their athletes, the problem remains (Edwards, 1991). Too often academic advisor and counselors lack a comprehensive understanding of ill-prepared African-American student athletes and their academic and career goals.

Loneliness and Isolation

African-American student-athletes attending large universities often have a difficult time making the transition from high school to college. Many experience loneliness and isolation because coaches and athletic personnel keep them away from the non-athletic student body at an important time in their adjustment. The counselor must insist that these young people be provided with opportunities to interact with their non-athlete peers and to attend to all aspects of their personal development.

Time Management

Like most student athletes, African-American student athletes are subjected to the time pressures of practice, training, and travel. They may become frustrated in their attempts to find adequate time for both study and sports. It is particularly difficult for them to coordinate their busy schedules in a way that will allow them to take advantage of the academic resources and services available on campus (Jordan, 1990). Preventative programming is needed to assist these students with time management skills.

Faculty Expectation

While African-American student athletes are glorified for their athletic prowess, they are also considered suspects in terms of academic ability. Leach and Connors (1984) noted that African-American athletes walk a thin line between admiration and resentment. They are often viewed as both hero and scoundrel (Green, 1974).

Counseling the African-American Student Athlete

One reason a disproportionate number of African-American athletes in particular do not excel in academics lies in inadequate advising. The primary objective of the academic advisor is to assist the athlete to achieve an academic goal. In actuality, help is something that each person must accept. An academic advisor cannot force an athlete to do anything that he may perceive as irrelevant. Each student athlete must accept and act on helpful information with the ultimate responsibility on the student-athlete. Indeed, assistance cannot be given to African-American student-athletes; it can only be offered.

Some academic advisors see the helping process as one in which they conduct intricate diagnoses of African-American student athletes and then utilize a variety of helping methods. Still other advisors define African-American student athletes as "disadvantaged" and oblivious to themselves as "advantaged."

These perspectives do not create helping relationships. On the contrary, they are controlling instead of helping relationships. When African-American student athletes are viewed as objects to be controlled rather than subjects to be taught, they become confused with a dearth of academic confidence. Conceptually, a very thin line exists between helping athletes to reach their maximum potential and manipulating them to conform to expectations of their potential. In retrospect, African-American student athletes need to be treated as individuals, to be allowed to express their feelings, to receive empathic responses to problems; to be judged fairly, and to have records kept confidential. No matter how much power or formal authority an organization confers on its advisors, student athletes grant usable power and authority, although it may be to their demise. The authority of the advisor need not be synonymous with domination. The respect student athletes possess for their advisors will be determined by how successful advisors are in helping these students achieve academic success. Therefore, it is also germane for advisors to be aware of African-American student needs along with behavioral theories and cultural awareness. Academic advisors who understand the psychological and sociological backgrounds of African-American students are better able to advise them than colleagues who are lacking knowledge in this area of counseling.

Athletic departments currently face some very clear challenges, many of which

will continue to be present throughout the 2000s. One very important challenge that athletic departments face has to do with discovering ways of effectively and efficiently meeting the growing counseling needs of their student athletes. Student athletes are indeed an at risk group, with special needs where the demands of the student athlete experience make them especially vulnerable to academic, mental and physical distress. There is every indication that the academic needs of student athletes will continue to be present, at least in the very near future. Today's college student enters the university with a preexisting set of serious and complex problems that will render them less able to cope with the stresses and strains characteristic of college and university life. If students are indeed coming to college with more serious problems and are therefore more vulnerable, and if the demands inherent in the student athlete role continue to be present, then student athletes will be faced with greater challenges and increased stress levels. Athletic departments will need to assume a greater responsibility for providing quality and usable services to their students given the current economic realities and the tough fiscal constraints under which most athletic departments must operate. Athletic departments will also need to be extra creative in developing ways to attend to the overall needs of their student athletes.

All athletic departments now have academic counselors to work with the athletes, but those counselors are not trained to deal with the special counseling needs of athletes. Their training typically consist of a bachelor's or master's degree with some work experience and a lot of interest in athletics. Therefore, many academic counselors are ex-coaches, coaches' wives, graduate assistants, or people trained in student personnel. The

academic counselor is usually the one who does all of the scheduling for the athletes. Few of the job descriptions require clinical counseling with athletes. This is probably because the job descriptions are influenced by the coaches, ex-coaches, or an athletic department member who has lived within the world of athletics, where winning and eligibility are more important than working with special problems of the athletes. If the African-American athletes and the athletic departments are to survive economically, the exploitation must stop. How long will society stay in oblivion to the fact that young men lives are being exploited and destroyed for one reason, money; which is the root of all evil.

Cryptic Language In Athletics

This section contains the review of relevant literature in racial stereotypes along with the portrayal and treatment of African-American athletes in relationship to language in sports media. There has been little research on racial prejudice associated with the media and even less research on covert racial language in sports media. The main areas reviewed below are: stereotypes, racism and the portrayal of minorities associated with sports on television, sports newspapers and magazines.

Stereotypes, Images & Language in Sports Media

Many of these relationships and attitudes are based on stereotypes that are extremely prevalent in sports today. Stereotypes and code words still appear in descriptions of African-American athletes. Reference to intelligence, hard work or mental toughness and a willingness to play hurt tend to be linked to athletes who are not African-American. While on the other spectrum, speed, leaping ability or references to natural gifts, tend to be linked to African-American athletes (USA, 12/16/92). Therefore, if college coaches accept stereotypical images of what African-American society is and what kind of men and women it produces, he/she may believe that African-Americans are less motivated, less disciplined, less intelligent, and more physically gifted. John Thompson, among the nation's most successful college basketball coaches, told sports Illustrated why he wants his predominantly African-American teams known as disciplined:

Undisciplined, that means nigger. They're all big and fast and can leap like kangaroos and eat watermelon in the locker room, but they can't play as a team and they choke under pressure. It's the idea that an African-American man doesn't have the intelligence or the character to practice self-control. In basketball it's been a self-fulfilling prophecy. White men run the game. A white coach recruits a good African-American player. He knows the kid's got talent, but he also knows that because he's African-American, he's undisciplined. He puts him in the free-lance, one-on-one, hot dog role, and turns to the little white guard for discipline. Other African-American kids see this and think this how they are expected to play, and so the image is perpetuated (Lapchick, 91).

In addition, if institutional racism is statistically proven in America, then it is feasible that this image is projected in sports media around the country. The stereotypes in these athletic institutions are in turn reflected towards their own programs arising in such places as the media and in fan's support of particular players. It is the media who decide which group of athletes and productions will be underwritten, which almost always usually means that "African-American" projects will have to appeal to the group in power (Hacker, 1992). African-American athletes face a devaluation that grows out of our images of society and the way those images categorizes people. These categories do not have to be taught to the general public. They are created by the images we see around us in advertising, news, movies, television and talk shows etc. These details create an image of society in which African-American athletes simply do not fare very well. These images act as standards against African-American athletes that lead to devaluation. The stereotypes that fit these images we subconsciously accept; and the images that contradict African-American stereotypes we accept with caution. These images set up a double evaluation of African-American athletes that does not exist for the athletes and sports commentators in the hierarchy. In the sports media, the African-

American athletic is expected to be super human. Sports commentators expect them to run faster, jump higher, dribble better, pass fancier, and play longer than other racial groups. Clusters of beliefs and statements that are uniformly applied to certain athletes are prejudicial toward the athlete in question when they are in the negative sense. So, when commentators and society describe African-American athletes talent as being synonymous with animals, having rhythm, jovial with a big smile, athletic, funny, lazy or ignorant etc. he or she is perpetuating an unfair set of conceptions along with contributing to the negative stereotypes and images. Stereotypes, voiced or thought, serve only to damage the image of the group under attack (Bynum, 1991). A former slave name Fredrick Douglas once said: "He who control images, control minds. And he who control minds, have nothing to fear from bodies."

Portrayal of African-American Athletes on TV

Rainville et al. (1990) studied recognition of covert racial prejudice. They chose 90 undergraduates who were not African-American and 90 African-American undergraduates as subjects. The subjects read college game transcripts and were instructed to guess the racial identity of each player. Each name was disguised by the name John Smith for the player who was the subject of the announcer's speech in the transcript. The results showed that subjects were able to identify the correct race of the player 55.77% of the time. Non-African-American undergraduates were correct 56.73% of the time and African-Americans 54.66% of the time in their observations. The study demonstrated that the naïve observer could detect racial prejudice in announcers' speech,

even when all the clues to the personal and racial identity of the players have been removed from the language (Rainville, 1990).

Rainville and McCormick (1990) attempted to measure covert forms of prejudice in television broadcasts of nationally televised football games. The analysis revealed that announcers were covertly discriminating against African-American players by using more favorable descriptions for other players and less favorable ones for African-American players. Announcers used more favorable categories such as: play related praise, cognitive attribution and positive special focus when describing non-African-American players than when talking about African-American players. When talking about African-American players, announcers frequently used descriptions that could be classified in the unfavorable category: negative speculation and unfavorable comparison. This was characterized, as covert prejudice because none of the particular instances of speech involved in the pattern by itself was prejudice (Rainville, 90). Jackson (1989) analyzed professional football and college basketball games and had similar conclusions when it came to praising non-African-American athletes for brains and African-American athletes for brawn.

Messner, Duncan, and Jensen (1991) analyzed the gendered language of televised sports. They found an indication of racial difference in the naming of basketball players by announcers in the 1993 men's Final Four of the NCAA National Championships. Their findings also suggested that television sports commentators are utilizing a hierarchy of naming. At the top of the hierarchy sit the non-African-American players who were referred to by their last name, followed by the first named African-American players

when commentating games.

Pierce (1989) looked at subtle indicators of racism in television and called them "trace contaminants". Television provides "trace elements" that to the non-African-American viewers may aid and sustain their behavior in inter-racial contacts. To the African-American viewer these trace elements may be debilitating or disabling. Pierce observed in basketball, football, and track that non-African-American athletes received more recognition from the announcers despite the African-Americans outperforming the non-African-American athletes. If an African-American player performed well, announcers modulated the praise or more likely shared with a non-African-American player who had not performed as well.

The current mainstream sports openly market racism and ethnic stereotyping through language. Yet this kind of commentary and behavior can be found in professional wrestling. Maguire and Wozniak (1992) gathered data over a 12-month period using content analysis of televised professional wrestling. This analysis was primarily qualitative rather than quantitative. They concluded that racial and ethnic stereotypes might be so marketable that sports could simply be the expression of capitalist social formations. They also suggested that the racism in sport only reflects our present society as a whole.

While appearing on the ABC new show "Nightline" in 1987, Al Campanis, then the vice president of the Los Angeles Dodgers, was careless when making the statement that there were not more African-Americans in top management positions because they lacked the necessities for such jobs (Berkow, 1988). This could be perceived as a subtle

indication of racism since Campanis was later fired for these stereotyped remarks.

Jimmy "The Greek" Synder articulated his views on professional sports and race before a Washington, D.C. camera in 1988 as reported by the Washington Monthly (Rowe, 1988). He mentioned that African-American athletes success could be related to breeding practices during slavery. He was later fired for making these remarks that contained subtle racism, even though research by Rowe supports this theory.

Portrayal of Minorities in Sports Newspaper and Magazines

Many African-American athletes, both amateur and professional, believe that sportswriters have generally tended to downplay their accomplishments while giving praise to their non-African-American counterparts. A large number of African-Americans feel that sports reporters do not always give credit where credit is due. There have been several studies done on the coverage African-American athletes receive compared to non-African-American athletes in the newspapers. Braddock (1990) studied all articles covering the basketball and football programs at the University of Maryland and Howard University that were printed in the sports pages of the Washington Post for a two-year period. The data presented indicated quite clearly that African-American athletes' feelings of unfair treatment by the press might have been justifiable in the coverage of collegiate athletics.

Pearman (1991) completed a content analysis of the sports page of a Pennsylvania newspaper for one year. He examined the coverage given to two state colleges, one predominantly White and one predominantly African-American. The findings of his

study generally supported the belief that African-Americans receive a reduced share of sports page publicity.

Condor and Anderson (1994) developed a longitudinal analysis of coverage accorded African-American and White athletes in feature articles of *Sports Illustrated* from 1960-1980. They found that coverage related to African-American athletes over the period investigated displayed close association with the stereotypes concerning African-American athletes. Written coverage of African-Americans was initially heavily associated with boxing, basketball, and track. Condor and Anderson added that it could be argued that it is not the media's role to undo stereotypes if athletes of one race or another dominate the sport in question. The media's role should be to cover any sporting event that they wish. They also suggested they need to realize that they are partially responsible for the intentional and subtle stereotype language used by our society when talking about sports.

Regoli (1991) looked at racism in baseball card collecting. The focus was the impact a player's ethnicity on the value of his rookie baseball card. Data on the ethnicity of members of the Baseball Hall of Fame and the value of their rookie card were obtained. The principal finding of the study was that race and the value of a player's rookie baseball card were not related.

The studies completed by the above authors' demonstrate the unequal treatment of African-Americans and minorities in the print media. This area of racism in language through the print media was extremely deficient in the amount of research conducted. Stereotypes influence the way information is processed. It was also determined that there

is clearly limited research relationship to language in television, minority discrimination and sport.

Retirement from Sports

Many athletes are poorly prepared for their retirement from competition and may face considerable difficulties in their coping with the significant life changes that accompany the end of their sports careers identities. Retirement from competitive sports often poses significant difficulties for an athlete, whether competing at the high school, college, or professional levels. Retirement from active sports competition is an inevitable part of the life span of every athlete. Whether the athlete chooses to disengage or forced from sports into retirement, leaving competition is inevitable. The transition often occurs at predictable times, at the end of high school, when he or she is unable to make the college team, at the end of college, or at the end of a professional career.

However, few athletes make sufficient preparations for this major life event, and many struggle with their adjustment to retirement (Baillie & Danish, 1992; Lerch, 1981; McPherson, 1980; Oglivie & Howe, 1982; Werthner & Orlick, 1986). The time of disengagement occurs between the end of high school and entry into college, when the largest number of athletes is forced into retirement by not receiving an athletic scholarship (Ogilvie, 1984). Early involvement in sports is often reinforced by significant others, coupled with personal successes in sports that leads to a definition and ego involvement of the self as an athlete. The dedication and commitment that athletes see as necessary for success in sports may result in a narrowing of focus, with education

and social goals becoming subordinated to athletic achievement.

Historically, the priority of the athletic establishment has centered on the recruitment, training, and performance outcomes of the athlete. For the most part, an underlying paternalism, which starts with the identification of talent and ends with the display of that talent, has served as the institutional guide for conduct in what has been essentially a use/exchange relationship. In this context, the athlete is an entity who becomes special and singled out for favored treatment.

Society, in general, seeks heroes, and the athletic establishment obliges us with its creation of a physically gifted aristocracy to which we all pay social and financial homage. Consequently athletes are, in many respects, a reflection of a social need. In his examination, "Rookies at Reality," Myslenski (1986, p. 14) calls elite athletes "America's guests," living in an environment where everyday needs are cared for as long as the talent lasts. The sport sociology literature is replete with positive and negative aspects of the socialization process that occurs in the sport setting. Myslenski's remarks offer an adequate summary:

The pampering often begins early, as soon as a child manifests precocious physical skills and the ... concept of reality can be clouded even before he enters high school.... Now begins the process that makes him feel special and distorts his view of himself, the world, and his place in society. He gets stroked by the grammar school teacher, who lets him slip in his studies; by the high school coach, who pulls him from the classroom, flatters him, and then slips him five bucks or a new pair of shoes; and by family or friends, who marvel at his talents.... He receives more privileges and pats on the back, more favors, more accolades, and acknowledgements that he is somehow different, i.e., better. (p. 10).

All of this behavior falls under the broad moral guidelines of "caring for" the youngster. And if we see this as a genuine concern for human development in situations like education or athletics (the helping professions) where a dependence relationship is inevitable, the athletic establishment could be seen as highly moral in meeting its obligations to the athlete. Yet what we see happening with the gifted athlete is not a caring for the whole person but all too often a caring for the athletic person. We allow the individual to define the self in terms of athletic talent and to lose touch with the truer self. We allow the athlete to narrow his or her personal development and self-concept and become identified only in terms of athletic achievement. The same scenario is often played out for youngsters who demonstrate prodigy in music, science, or the arts. However, it must be argued that while pursuit of such activity creates the same developmental problems, such endeavors frequently become vocations from which the individual is not forced to retire at an early age.

The time requirements and skills necessary to attend to the sport participant are easily dismissed in favor of such claims that athletic development will challenge and test limits, provide upward social mobility, and accommodate social development. The shift from fostering human development is therefore justified even in educational settings or age group sports. The paternalistic commitment to finding the competitive edge and building the bionic jock is under way with little quarrel from the athlete who sees the athletic route as entry to a world of privilege, status, and the single-minded pursuit of superiority and excellence. Hence, what is created is a willing victim whose self-worth and self-esteem increasingly become synonymous with athletic prowess and success.

If education is committed to developing critical thinkers, informed decision makers, and individuals with the ability to understand themselves and the world around them, any activity that precludes meeting of these objectives is untenable.

The danger of this attitude of specialized development and subsequent behavior is not immediate. In fact, we often mistake the image projected by the young athlete at the moments of success and privilege as a confidence and self-assurance of personal and social development. In the long run, however, danger looms because:

The papered treatment he has long received may have left him without basic skills for coping with life, skills like reading and writing, looking for a sale or balancing a checkbook, and now he suddenly confronts a mystifying world that is normal to most. The countless people who have long stroked his ego may have left him with an unrealistic appraisal of himself and his value to the world, and now he suddenly confronts a society that is indifferent to his physical skills and is asking if he has any others.... He has long felt himself invincible ... but now he must confront his own wretched mortality. (Myslenski, 1986, p. 20).

The athlete's dependency is not unlike that of the patient or the student in medicine or education. Yet, the intervention of informed consent has, at least for the patient and in many instances for the student, placed them at the center of a mutual decision-making process. The coach and other managers in the athletic establishment have traditionally remained the autocratic center of the athlete's world. Retaining the knowledge, control, and ultimate responsibility for the athlete's world is often justified in order to achieve outcome objectives. It is the sincere belief of the coaching establishment that a favor is being done for the athlete of whom they have control over by taking care of the details, decisions, and literally spoiling the athlete so that his full attention can be

directed to the quest for athletic excellence. In the name of excellence and education and in the desire to have our heroes, we find we are often left with only "athletic brats" who are unlikely to know themselves and less likely to be able to care for themselves, particularly when they leave the comfortable confines of the paternal athletic nest.

Transition From Sports

The transition from a successful sport life to an unknown future life represents perhaps the ultimate dilemma: "Who am I? What am I? Where am I going? Many athletes make this transition smoothly--perhaps with depression or the tears one would typically shed at the loss of a loved one. These are the athletes who see sport as a chapter and look forward to moving on to write more of their life story. These are the athletes who have an education or marketable skills, who have good health, positive self-esteem, or who have enough financial security to at least not be preoccupied by money. And, they are the ones whose family and friends know and care for the nonsport self. It is a sense of the future that seems to point these athletes toward the same kinds of challenges, goals, and rewards that were once sought in the athletic world.

Then there are the athletes whose retirement was involuntary because of injury or because of their failure to recognize and accept declining skills. Being "cut" creates a person who will be poorly prepared for retirement. For these athletes the transition is uneven. Among those who don't make it a smooth transition, we hear of the extremes--alcohol and drug abuse, antisocial behavior, failure to find or keep a job, suicide. But for those few whom we here about, others are just miserable in their retirement. McPherson

(1980) concludes that, in general, most former athletes adjust successfully to retirement from sport careers, although the second occupation or career may be less psychologically or financially rewarding.

The stress associated with any retirement is often negative and anxiety producing. Most adults retire late in life and have time for considering options, and making tentative plans. We have 20 years or so to ease into a transition. But some of our planning is done so that we can enjoy the next chapter of our lives. Yet athletes retire at 20, or 30, or maybe as late as 35, and do not have 20 years to plan the next move. In fact, because the sport life is often time absorbing, it is difficult to set long-term goals. Couple this dedication and sacrifice with the privileges and being taken care of, and one's last priority during the athletic life is the next life.

Hill and Lowe (1974) point out that retirement marks the first time in an athlete's life that he or she is deprived of the satisfactions that sport has always given. Looking over one's shoulder to relive those moments and satisfaction is difficult to resist, even among those who make successful adjustments. Snyder (1983) has pointed to social support factors and the extrinsic satisfactions in sport as central to what becomes the athlete's "sport self" and for many athletes, the social or nonsport self as well. He has noted that "as a consequences of the satisfactions that flow from the social attachments, mutual esteem, and companionship, [the] social system" (p. 20) is a primary factor for involvement and staying in sport even beyond one's prime. To turn one's back on this built-in buddy system that meets affiliation needs is a difficult process if there is not a new group waiting in the outside world. There are perhaps no greater bores than athletes

whose conversation is limited to historical accounts of their own performances.

The extrinsic satisfactions need not be described, but it is evident that, for many, "the intrinsic nature of sport shifts primarily to the extrinsic side" during the adolescent years. Consequently, the centrality of one's identity is likely "to reflect one's success in achieving the extrinsic rewards of sport" (Snyder, 1983, p. 101). Snyder warns that identities built primarily on successful performances are especially fragile and that athletes live a life of incredible peaks and valleys. Their self-esteem is high when they win and low when they lose. Mike Adamle, former Chicago Bear, says that "one of the biggest mistakes players make--they're taught to equate their personal self-worth with their performance on the field. So you drop a pass and you're not a good person" (Myslenski, 1986, p. 19).

The End

Athletic careers end voluntarily or involuntarily, from any number of factors: age, injury, educational needs, or economic or family pressures. The realization that it's time to move on is welcome but also meets with ambivalence and resentment. Werthner and Orlick (1982) suggest that retirement should not be viewed as an end but rather as the loss of an intense and very important relationship. Their position is that:

Sport is not a relationship of neutrality.... From an athlete's standpoint, it is a living, loving relationship. It is a kind of love/hate relationship with challenge, struggle, sacrifice, victory, defeat, self-improvement, coaches, teammates, etc.... The relationship grows into something very intimate and intense.... A relationship of passion and pain with intense highs and intense lows. (p. 188)

The timing of the retirement may be critical to the success of the transition, but nobody wants to leave "Disneyland" if they believe the best is yet to come. Premature endings caused by injury are perhaps the most devastating because they shatter the belief that one is invincible. The sport world afforded the individual the opportunity to choose and actively seek a goal, to enter into a love affair uncomplicated by the demands of the other worlds that we know are out there but don't really want to know about. Ermler (1980) identifies some athletes as potentially tragic because the goal has become synonymous with the total self. Failure, injury, declines in performance, becomes a symbolic death. It represents a collapse of the narrow world to which all attention and energy has been directed, and the inability to actualize a goal or to continue the quest. It is an end with no future.

Their world collapses, and with it many of the amenities so long taken for granted. Perhaps the most critical losses are those of identity and the camaraderie. Here evolves the consummate existential dilemma: "I am an athlete, an excellent one, a superior one. I am the captain of this ship. But the ship went down. Now what? Now where? Now who am I? The athlete must venture out to make new friends. The recognition, mobility, and entry into special circles, special deals, special treatment are lost. The party is over and the athlete is finally alone with no place to go outside of the world of collegiate athletes.

The experienced loss of social recognition is one of the more immediate changes the athlete must face. Unlike the European or communist bloc countries, where the athlete continues to be recognized after retirement, the North American athlete is quickly forgotten by once ardent fans and the media. This loss of recognition is most poignantly exemplified by the

athlete's "friends" who seem to disappear when they no longer can share in the "glory" (Ogilvie & Howe, 1982, p. 178).

The skills the athlete has perfected for so long are now useless in a world that no longer sees him as special. Much of our personal identity and self-esteem rests on what we are able to do--cognitively, affectively, and physically. To be able to do nothing very skillfully in the real world, in some cases not even read or write is to be cast into loneliness and isolation.

The Obligations

In turning attention to the moral obligations of the athletic establishment as they relate to the athletes both in it and moving out of it, two assumptions appear valid. First, a power relationship exists, and second, a utilitarian system has been the dominant moral basis for action.

Power is classically defined as the "probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests" (Weber, 1947, p. 13). In a free society, professional power relationships entail certain obligations. And, while the specific dilemmas change and are often highly debated issues, the power relationship is constrained by the notion that the person in the dependent position is an informed and autonomous decision maker whose individual welfare comes before institutional outcomes.

It is less clear in the institution we call athletics just what the coach or

administrator owes the athlete. Much of this is due to the confusion about what ends are really being sought and the different definitions of outcomes or ends. Equally ambiguous are the codes of ethics that guide behavior, since much of our athletics are outside traditional educational institutions. Essentially, what has evolved is an ethical theory in which there are no universal or absolute moral standards. In the absence of moral standards, right and wrong become situational and the hierarchy decides the basis for judgment.

No universal set of obligations or ethical guidelines serves as the basis for amateur sport in this country. In conflicts, there has been a predisposition to do what is good for the program and what is good for the team. While concerns have been voiced about the rights of athletes, and injustices have been chronicled for decades, the actual development of ethical theories that guide other service relationships is, at best, a farce. Hence, it is unclear to the athlete, the coach, or the general public what constitutes a good relationship. Taking care of the athlete's athletic self and all the special treatment that goes along with it has been considered the good thing to do for the athlete. But this principle begs the question: Is it the right thing to do? In other words, knowing that we can do something does not mean that we should do it. The ability to act does not justify the action.

In establishing obligations, two additional assumptions are made: (a) by virtue of power, an obligation exists that should protect the individual autonomy of the athlete, who is in a dependent position, and (b) the legitimate and moral outcome of athletics should be the success of the people in the program rather than the success of the program.

Based on one of the severest criticism of utilitarianism, specifically that it appears to justify the great suffering on a few people (athletes) for the benefit of many people (the athletic establishment and the general public).

Autonomy

Autonomy, a term derived from the Greek *autos* (self) and *nomos* (rule, governance, or law), was first used to refer to self-rule in Greek city-states. The most general idea of personal autonomy is still that of self-governance--being one's own person, without constraints either by another's action or by psychological or physical limitations. Two philosophers, Mill in *On Liberty* and Kant in *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, have shaped our understanding of autonomy as freedom of action and freedom of will, respectively. Mill argued that social and political control over individuals is legitimate only if it is necessary to prevent harm to other individuals. In his view, the promotion of autonomous expression maximizes the benefits for all concerned. Mill holds that a person with true character is one of genuine individuality, whereas an authoritative environment such as church, state, parents, or family controls a person without character. Ravizza and Daruty (1985) extent Mill's argument to sport, stating that "we live in a free society and it is unacceptable for the athlete to be treated as a sacrificial animal to the goals of winning. The American athlete is fundamentally a member of a free society and individual sovereignty should be reasonably protected in the athletic environment" (p. 72).

Where athletics are conducted under the auspices of educational institutions, it

seems reasonable to believe they are also activities connected to the educational mission of those institutions. Aside from the specific professional preparation, it is generally agreed that education is intended to foster self-understanding, critical thinking, and decision-making skills aimed at developing fully functioning and autonomous citizens. The stated values of athletics--teaching the lessons of life, leadership, grace under fire, and decision-making skills--would lead us to believe, at least in theory, that athletics are on the right track in fostering autonomy. However, upon closer examination we are more likely to find that such lessons are restricted to the on-field, on-court portion of the athletic experience.

Kant argued that persons should always treat each other as autonomous ends. To be autonomous is to govern oneself, including making one's own choices. Given that power relationships exist in all facets of social interactions, Macklin (1982) points out that autonomy is bound to be a matter of degree and that a more fundamental principle should be central to our professional obligation:

Powerful influences operate to shape people's values, choices, and decisions, often rendering those decisions less than fully authentic or independent. One need not be crazy, senile or have below average intelligence to suffer from diminished autonomy. To show respect for persons [seen as part of the obligation of autonomy] is not only to treat them as autonomous agents; it is to recognize that degrees of autonomy exist and whatever may be the reasons for lessened autonomy, individuals are entitled to appropriate protection...[it] is an expression of another ethical percept: concern for the welfare of our fellow human beings. (Pp. 6-7).

Those in power positions have the information, the experience, the insight and competence to make decisions. Providing information to young athletes and developing

in them both competence and decision-making skills is time-consuming in both the training and game phase of athletics. It is often more expedient for the coach to make decisions based on his or her own values that are directed toward the ends or the good the coach has defined, not only for the program but for the individual athlete as well. "It is easier for me to force you to do something for your own good than it is for me to explain why it is good for you and then allow you to make your own choice, which may be the wrong one. More significantly, your decision may get in the way of desired ends to which I as a coach or administrator am committed."

Coaches and management have long believed that student-athletes were incompetent to make decisions in their own best interests and have assumed the responsibility of making decisions for student-athletes. In reality, some validity does exist for this claim, yet the fact that information dissemination and explanation is time-consuming, often technical, and sometimes with fiscal and political subtleties. The athlete may not be in a position to understand is hardly a legitimate basis for concluding that people should resign their right to determine what is done to or for them on a college campus. Autonomous decision-making requires genuine deliberation, which in turn requires both information and understanding. Not giving the athlete information or not taking the time to explain what is happening or what the options are robs the individual of autonomy. Brown (1985), in arguing for weak paternalism in children's sport, also argues that the onus is on those in a power position to educate those over whom they have charge. Such education has the combined effects of countering "the thoughtless or irrational or emotionally immature behavior of our students" (p. 17) and providing the

information and the mechanism for giving consent and preserving autonomy.

Withholding information and choice sets up the risk of injury even though the harm may not be evident until years later. For the most part, a coach, a trainer, a physician, and management in general do take a great deal of liberty with an athlete's body. They ask the athlete to change his or her diet. They ask the athlete to follow training patterns. They ask the athlete to play while injured. They ask the athlete to think certain kinds of things, to believe what he is told, and to behave in certain ways without questioning. None of these directives serves to foster the critical thought, decision-making, or self-understanding necessary for the athlete after their retirement from sport.

An even greater mystery is the psychological harm or good that evolves in the power relationship. Competitive people usually understand competitive drives, but helping others develop, restrain, or redirect their drives is a serious concern. We make assumptions about athletes' social development when we see them relating well or fairly well with other athletes and perhaps with those who provide the favors. Seldom do we know if they are socially integrated people able to go outside the athletic world and get along with a new cast of characters who are far less tolerant of athletics. Isolating athletes in athletic dorms or from fellow students or the general public does little to broaden the social awareness necessary to shift to the nonsport role. Much of what is done for athletes is done in the name of preventing injury and fostering wholesome physical development. But again Brown (1985) warns:

The effort here should never be merely to prescribe, but also to educate by explaining the rationale for the requirements, presenting the evidence available to substantiate the judgments, and requiring that the athlete

understand as much as possible about how decisions were made (p. 17).

Meeting the Obligations

Separating oneself from the athletic life to assume nonsport responsibilities requires a new set of skills: verbal skills to communicate with people with nonsport, backgrounds. It necessitates critical thinking, decision-making, and some degree of independence, social interaction skills, and enough self-understanding to be self-sufficient. In addition, a clear sense of what one values and self-esteem is often listed as objectives of educational institutions.

Knowing that many athletes become absorbed in their cloistered athletic world at an early age and remain in it through the formative years when these life skills are developed in their peer group, one must look to the athletic establishment (including parents) to develop the skills that will permit a successful transition and retirement from sport. We are tempted, with any gifted child, to cross the line to the strong paternalism that robs the young person of developing autonomy and practicing the decision-making skills that go along with it. We are tempted to shelter the young person from normal duties, anxieties, and social interactions so that he or she may concentrate on the quest for excellence. Consequently, many of the daily skills and the knowledge other youngsters acquire are bypassed by the athlete. The protection of and the exceptions made for the athlete continue through the collegiate experience and, along with them, a growing dependence stemming from the knowledge that someone else will take care of things.

In meeting the obligations, the onus is on the establishment to remain competent. And this competence goes beyond knowledge of the game. Remaining in touch with the

demand and pressures on young athletes, sensing the problems that transition will create, and remaining in touch with the world outside the stadium are in keeping with these obligations. Advocating adherence to social, behavioral, and academic standards; providing tutoring specific to career counseling; and not turning a blind eye to drug use or antisocial behavior not only sets a positive role model but keeps the athlete in touch with standards that will be in place outside the athletic establishment.

It is possible and necessary to foster critical thinking, decision-making, and autonomy even in team settings if we are committed to a smooth retirement. This becomes easier if basic coaching competence is not a question and if a balance can be struck between protection and letting go--a balance every parent must also achieve.

The power relationship exists but the abuse of power cannot be at the expense of human development. Autonomous and informed decision making as the basis for continuous life adjustment is not a new concept. Smiles, in 1859 (cited in Harper, 1984, p. 30) argued "the spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual." The athletic establishment is morally wrong in its promotion of learned helplessness when it denies autonomy, takes care of selected parts of the "me" at the expense of other parts, and is maleficent in its failure to provide the information, aid, and comfort necessary for the athlete to make a successful transfer to a second career. As Smiles notes,

Help from without is often enfeebling in its effects, but help from within invariably invigorates. Whatever is done *for* men or classes to a certain extent takes away the stimulus and necessity of doing [earning] for themselves; and where men are subjected to over-guidance and over-government, the inevitable tendency is to render them comparatively

helpless. (Cited in Harper, 1984, pp. 30-31)

To develop in an athlete only athletic excellence is a waste of human resources by a group of professionals who are in one of the best positions to reclaim those resources. The moral imperative to develop human resources through the athletic medium appears clear. Not doing so makes no contribution to the larger society of which athletics are a part and creates a liability rather than an asset when the athlete retires into the nonsport world.

Power / Dependency Relationship

For the college athlete, gaining emotional independence from parents is replaced with gaining emotional independence from the coach. At many institutions, the athletic department determines most of the academic and student life decisions for the student athlete. As a consequence, many athletes do not develop the social skills necessary to successfully negotiate campus life. They feel uncomfortable approaching a typical university situation, and usually are characterized as irresponsible for leaving things undone (Whittemore, 1995). While the typical college student's development of emotional and instrumental autonomy is aided by the physical distance separating the student from his or her parents, the collegiate athlete is thrown into a tighter web with adults, namely coaches and academic staff members. Rigid structure around meetings, training, practice and study times leaves little emotional or physical space to develop autonomy.

For the over-whelming majority of these students, their dream will not become

reality, and the disappointment of retirement from competition will be met between the ages of 18 and 25 years, at a time when many of their nonsports peers are just beginning their careers. Hundreds of thousands of athletes, from high school teams to professional leagues will have to face retirement from competition. For some, the transition will be smooth and unremarkable. For others, it may be seen as an off-time event that seriously disrupts the plans, values, and expectations of the individual. Not making the team is the most frequent reason for retirement from sports and also one of the most difficult for many athletes to accept. Distress may therefore occur at any level of competition. The special issues posed by the retirement of athletes exist because of the intensity of involvement and commitment of identity that athletes often make to achieve success in their sports. Viewing retirement as a process rather than as an event, counselors need to consider how an athlete's reaction to retirement may reflect feelings of loss and disappointment. Such feelings, however, occur within the context of other life events, and an intervention that is both proactive and responsive to the needs of the athletes may provide assistance to these individuals who are likely to experience difficulty in their adjustment to retirement from competitive sports. It seems clear, then, that although many athletes make successful and satisfactory transitions from sports to retirement, there are, at the high school, college, elite, and professional levels, significant numbers of athletes for whom the adjustment is difficult, incomplete, and traumatic.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe qualitative research as any research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Qualitative methods are exploratory in nature, making it reasonable to allow in-depth study and a deeper understanding of the issues (Patton, 1990).

According to Patton (1990), qualitative research is appropriate when the researcher seeks to describe the experience of people involved in a particular phenomenon. When focused on individual participants, qualitative research allows the researcher to learn about the individual's perspectives regarding the phenomenon being studied (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Merriam (1998) emphasized that qualitative research is the most appropriate methodology when the research seeks to enhance the understanding of problems that will result in the improvement of practice. She also emphasized the appropriateness of qualitative research when the researcher seeks to understand the problem from the subjects' perspectives. In this study, the significance of qualitative research engenders a more intrinsic study and a better discerning of the issues, and was not limited by predetermined categories of analysis.

This chapter presents the methods and procedures that were used to conduct this study. The purpose of this study is to 1) examine the field of athletics in relationship to

African-American athletes, 2) needed resources, 3) analyze the past and current experiences of African-American athletes at a Division I school.

Research Questions

The following questions were pivotal to guiding this study to better understand the experiences of African-American student athletes at Division I institutions:

1. What are the demographic descriptors of the participants in this study?
2. What factors are cited by African-American student athletes for not completing their degree?
3. What are the needs of African-American athletes that would improve their post-sport adjustment?
4. What roles do family and community play in strengthening the athlete's post-sport adjustment?
5. What assistance or resources could be provided for these former athletes that would allow them to achieve their goals.
6. What role could the university play in assisting former athletes with their retirement from sport?
7. What assistance, if any, could the professional leagues give in helping athletes who did not have careers in professional sports?
8. How former African-American male football players perceive their college experience during and after their scholarship expired?

Participants

I interviewed twenty former African-American male student-athletes who attended college on a football scholarship at a Southwest Division 1 institution to analyze their experiences while attending school as an African-American student athlete to collect data for this study. All of the participants for this study resided in the city of this Southwest institution of the United States during the interviews. The following table summarizes their characteristics:

TABLE 1	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Participants' Age Range	24-49 Years Old
Played in the 1970's	3
Played in the 1980's	8
Played in the 1990's	9
Married	11
Single	9
Have Children	16
Graduated	5
Did Not Graduate	15
Attended Public High School	20
First Family Member to Attend College	16
Still Living With Parents	1
Interviewed in Person	20
Interviewed by Phone	0
Raised in Single Parent Household	15
Two Parent Household	5
Parents on Public Assistance	3
Lower Class Parental Income	12
Middle Class Parental Income	6
Higher Class Parental Income	2

Of the twenty athletes participating in the study, all attended college a minimum of four years, and some re-entered college since departing. All the participants attended college on a football scholarship. All of the participants left college prior to 1996. Fifteen of the respondents are from single-family backgrounds with five from two parent households. One respondent had no parents, but was raised in foster homes or lived with his coach. Three of the respondents were from families that were either on or had been on public assistance, and twelve reported that they came from low-income family backgrounds. Six of the respondents considered themselves middle-class families with incomes in the \$40,000 range. Two reported that they came from high-income families with combined incomes of \$80,000 or more. All the participants have brothers or sisters and sixteen indicated that they were the first in their family to ever attend college. All of the participants attended public high schools before entering college. The jobs they have worked since leaving college vary from playing professional football in foreign countries or the United States, along with being laborers, substitute teachers, and one drug dealer. Their current income ranges from \$150,000 (professional athlete) to \$2,000 per day (drug dealer).

The face-to-face interviews yielded more of a chance for follow-up questions because the researcher could observe the respondents non-verbal responses. Some of the participants were extremely apprehensive about participating in the study if their identities were revealed because they feared reprisals from coaches and administrators.

Because most of the criticism and concerns about college athletes have been directed toward the revenue producing sports, this study is restricted to African-American

male athletes in football. For the purpose of this study, "African-American male athlete" is defined as a person who:

- 1) Identifies himself as an African-American / Black male
- 2) Was on an athletic grant-in-aid (scholarship) for at least four seasons at a NCAA Division 1 institution, or at another institution from which he transferred including a junior college
- 3) His scholarship expired five years ago from the time of the study
- 4) He may or may not have played professional sports
- 5) Is within one year of a college degree or has received a college degree

The five-year span was chosen arbitrarily so I could locate the athletes for interviews. I also surmised that five years is enough time for athletes to experience life outside of sports and reflect on their experiences during and after college.

Four years is the amount of time given to an athlete to receive scholarship aid during athletic eligibility. One year away from a college degree was chosen because results show that most athletes leave college needing only a year to complete degree requirements.

Data Collection

A pilot test was used on respondents who closely resembled the former student-athletes I interviewed for this study. The pilot test eliminated confusing wording, ambiguous questions for which the results would be difficult to interpret, and frustration

between the respondents and myself as the interviewer. The participants in the pilot study were selected for their sensitivity, knowledge, and insights into their situation, their willingness to talk about their athletic experience, and their ability to help gain access to new situations and new individuals. The pilot test consisted of six former student-athletes who recently lost their eligibility due to the end of their four-year scholarship. These respondents for the pilot test did not meet the criteria to participate in this study due to not being out of school for at least four years after their eligibility expired. At the end of the pilot testing, I reviewed a sufficient sample of the pilot group, question by question, what they reacted to, what they meant by their answer, and why they answered as they did during the interviews. I did not have a large sample size for the pilot test because I planned to interview until saturated with information from the participants to create effective research questions for the participants participating in the study. The pilot testing confirmed what I intended by each question and I can interpret the responses to what I was asking the former student-athletes to respond to during the interviews for this study.

After working with the participants in the pilot study, twenty participants were randomly selected from the alumni list of thirty former football players provided by informants living in the Southwest city and then contacting all subjects to participate in the study. Key informants provided the addresses and telephone numbers of the subjects, for the purpose of communicating with the participants. Twenty students were selected to balance the amount of participants who participated in football from 1970, 1980 and the 1990's. The majority of the former football players living in the Southwest city

played in the 1990's, so I limited my research to twenty participants to get a better analysis on the experiences of African-American athletes at a large Division 1 institution. This study focused on their experiences from attending school at the Southwest school in regards to: academics, support from staff, coaches, faculty, student body, community, media, employment, treatment after eligibility expires, retirement and exploitation in the university's pursuit of a winning record and athletic income.

The ultimate structure was standardized and semi-structured during the interviews for all respondents. To increase structure, preplanning included: general areas to cover, specific topics to include, suggested questions to ask, and specific questions to ask in a particular order. Similarly, the respondent's role was semi-structured with open-end responses being sought, and structured in terms of choosing among options in response to questions.

The interviews were at times exploratory if an athlete wanted to express his feelings, albeit digressing away from the research questions, I allowed the participant to express himself. However, I chose to do a semi-structured interview because I was intent on covering certain topics or areas, answering certain questions, or getting specific information. I started with broad exploratory questions and eventually focus on the five areas of interest during the interviews. To find answers to the experiences and perceptions of African-American student athletes at a Division 1 institution after their scholarship expired, I collected answers from the interviews and searched for patterns that assisted me in answering the research question from five areas of concern. The areas investigated came from a variety of sources, for example, reading about stereotypes of

unsuccessful athletes, conversations with former athletes who were not quite eligible to participate in the study, parents, fans, athletic department staff, along with high school and college coaches. The five areas are:

1. Sports Activities
2. College Experience
3. Returning to College
4. Employment
5. Retirement From Sports

Confidentiality was promised and the athlete assured that a list of names would not accompany the results of this study. The interviews were conducted in a variety of places including homes, apartments, campus and work sites. Prior to the data collection session, the athlete was provided with a copy of the permission form explaining the purpose of the study. I made these sessions no longer than one hour because I noticed in the pilot test that the participants would lose their zeal after one hour and a half of interviewing. From the pilot test, I realized a need to be sensitive to the participants psychological state of mind as it pertains his college experience. During the interviews, I was willing to stop any session should the behaviors of the participants indicate that the tasks involved were causing undue physical or psychological stress on the participant.

Instruments

Information was first solicited for the athlete's Characteristics Data Form. (See Appendix) This form provided demographic information needed to better understand the backgrounds of the participants prior to entering college. Thirty-eight interview questions were asked. The investigator developed the interview questions with approval from the committee and the questions were asked of athletes who attended a large Division 1 institution on a football athletic scholarship during the pilot test to determine the proper phrasing. The audio tape recordings were the primary source of input: specific anecdotes or comments were transcribed to preserve the accuracy of contextual language or jargon. Notes were also taken during the interviews to supplement and enhance the information obtained on the audiotapes. These notes also were used to clarify any particular information related to the interviewee's facial expressions and physical responses to questions, as well as any environment factors that could affect the interview process. Rubin and Rubin (1995) note that "with subject-defined data, the length, detail, context, and relevance of the data are not determined by the researcher, but recorded 'as spoken' or 'as it happens,' usually in the form of notes or tape recordings" (p. 14).

Data Analysis

Data analysis included checking triangulation across person to person and situations. To answer the research question, I presented the data by combining the explanation with sufficient participant quotations to give the feel of student-athletes, the climate of the situation, and the atmosphere during and after college, all the while

preserving the anonymity of the respondents.

The researcher developed a list of themes after coding, analyzing and tabulating the data from the interviews of the participants. Categories were identified that qualitatively suggested findings that could be generalized using content analysis. The content analysis was derived from the number of similar responses to each question. All thirty-eight questions were listed and the researcher recorded the responses to all of the questions for each participant. Themes were identified based upon answers from the participants that the investigator deemed significant to answering the research question in regards to the experiences of African-American student athletes at Division I institutions.

The data for the study were derived from the interviews conducted with each participant. Interview material was coded, categorized and interpreted based on the data. All of the interviews were transcribed verbatim. All transcriptions used in this study were verified and edited for accuracy. Specific codes for the identification of each transcript were generated. The codes consisted of numbers and letters. Line numbering was used to facilitate the analysis. All of the participants were assigned a number. During the interview, themes and keywords were recorded in the interviewer's notes. Themes were also underlined on the transcripts. Relevant responses were cut from the transcript and placed on a board. The board displayed each question asked in the interview and the responses from each of the participants. The underlined themes were coded with the participant's number, question number, a general code, and a specific code. Themes were then grouped combined and placed onto another board for clustering and recurring themes.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings resulting from administering the instruments selected for this study. First, the Athlete Characteristics Data Form is discussed which presents a detailed description of the respondents in the sample. Demographic variables were assessed using percentages and other statistics. These included age, sex, family size, type of high school attended, and jobs held since separating from college. Significant socio-economic and psychological research was read by the researcher to provide a composite view of the respondents. An analysis was presented of responses to each of the interview questions.

Each question is presented along with the data that was tabulated and reported using frequencies and percentages of responses along with a comment that represents the findings. The researcher interviewed twenty participants during the summer of 2001.

Interview Survey Responses

Answers to the interview questions were tabulated and are presented in the tables which follow:

Question # 1:

Describe Your Goals Upon Entering College. Did You Give Any Consideration To Any Other Career?

Table # 2	
Career Goals	
	Percent
To Get A Degree	100 %
To Play Professionally	100 %
Total	100%

The goal of all 20 respondents (100%) was to receive a college degree to secure a respectable job after departing from college. Their other career consideration was to play professional football after their athletic collegiate scholarship expired.

After probing the issue, their non-verbal responses indicated there were some underlying goals. The majority believed they would play professional football after college and the academic majors they selected were actually based on goals they wanted to achieve after they retired from sports along with being financially secure.

All I ever wanted as a kid was to play in the NFL. I played football starting at the age of nine. When I got a scholarship to play college football... I knew I was one step closer to reaching my goal of playing in the NFL. I knew the percentages of athletes who did not make it into the NFL, but I thought I could overcome those odds if I worked hard on my game. (Subject # 2)

Question # 2:

What Were Your Reasons For Wanting A Career In Professional Football?

Table # 3	
Reason For Wanting A Professional Career	
	Percent
Money For Family	85%
Power & Respect	10%
Life Long Dream	5%
Total	100%

All of the athletes stated that playing in the NFL was a life long dream, but eighty-five percent of the athletes stated that their primary reason for wanting a career in sports was to assist their families financially. Fifteen stated that they were from single-family households and that they wanted to play professionally so their mothers would not have to work degrading and arduous jobs for the remaining years of their lives. The participants stated that the money generated from football would be their way of reimbursing their mothers for all the support given to them throughout their athletic career. Another (10%) wanted a career in sports for the recognition and the power that goes along with being a professional athlete. Only one athlete (5%), stated that sports was a life long dream and that he never considered the money as being paramount in his decision to pursue a career in sports.

All I have ever wanted to do my whole life was to help my mother financially. It would hurt me so bad to see her going to work everyday working for minimal wages. We were very poor and my father was never

around. She always sacrificed for me to have tennis shoes so I could play sports. I can still recall times when we did not have any food...or couldn't pay a bill...but she would still find money to buy my shoes or clothes. I wanted so bad to make it in the NFL to pay her back for all of her sacrifices to me. (Subject # 7)

All I ever wanted to do was play in the NFL. I started playing football at nine in the Boys Club. Then I played in Junior High...then on to High School. I was good throughout my whole career...so I thought I had a chance playing in the NFL. Everyone in my town knew me...and I was always on TV ...and on the news. I really enjoyed being popular...it was a good feeling. I knew people liked me because I played football...so I kept playing to keep that attention I was receiving. When I got to college...I saw the cars and money the guys had who made it to the NFL. They would come back to school with the nice cars and a pocket full of money. I started visualizing myself playing in the NFL and having the money...cars...and a big house for my mother. The worst thing was when people started telling me that I was going to make it in the NFL. I started listening and believing that stuff. That is what made it so difficult on me when I didn't make it...I believed everyone who was telling me that I would make it. I wanted that money so bad that I became obsessed with making it into the NFL.

(Subject # 2)

Question # 3:

Personally, What Do You Feel Were Some Of The Obstacles That Caused You Not to Achieve Your Goal As A Professional Athlete?

Table # 4	
Barrier To Achievement	
	Percent
Not Enough Exposure	65%
Didn't Attend Right College	20%
Not Enough Playing Time	10%
Problems With The Coach	5%
Total	100%

Most of the athletes (65%) felt they did not get enough exposure from television and the news media. Some felt that they did not attend the best college suited for their skills (20%). Others felt that they did not get enough playing time (10%), and (5%) felt it was the coach's fault because he did not like him as an athlete. The majority of the athletes said they did not see their dreams being met until after their freshman year. This is when participants realized the promises made during recruitment, starting, media exposure, connections with the NFL, employment after eligibility were not true, and transferring to another school without penalties wasn't an option. The participants were all full of promise and high expectations and in awe of their new environment. Some even stated that although others from their school did not make it, they thought they would be the one exception.

The coaches and the media had their favorites....they knew who they wanted to promote for the NFL...if you were not the superstar on the team, you got very little exposure, even if you were a great player. They

only focused on the guys that the coaches told them to focus on for interviews...It seemed like they didn't care very much about spending any time or money trying to promote players who did not fit the superstar label. (Subject # 3)

The bottom line for me...is that I went to the wrong school...I should have never chose this school...The first time they lied to me once I arrived on campus...I should have left because they never stopped lying after that and I never got a real chance to show my talent on the field. Ever time I thought about leaving...they would lie to me and tell me that I would start or get a lot playing time the next year. I believed them each time like a fool...by the time I figured out that they only wanted me to stay for insurance if someone got hurt...it was too late for me to transfer to another school. If I could have transferred to another school...I would have had a better chance to play in the NFL. (Subject # 17)

Question # 4:

In Your Opinion, Why Did You Fail In Achieving Your Goal of Becoming A Professional Athlete?

Table # 5	
Reasons For Not Making The Pros	
	Percent
Attitude	65%
Lack of Interest	25%
Lack of Exposure	5%
Lack of Playing Time	5%
Total	100%

Sixty-five percent of the respondents interviewed thought the reason they did not have a career in the NFL because of their inability to take the opportunity of playing college football serious. Twenty-five percent lacked the interest to pursue their dream after completing their four years of eligibility. Some of the participants did not get adequate media exposure (5%) and 5% felt they never received enough playing time. The majority of the athletes blamed the coaching staff and their offensive and defensive systems for not having a career in the football at the professional level. The participants stated the coaches did not honor their promises given during the recruiting process, thus affecting their attitude and eventually leading to a lack of interest to play in the NFL or at the professional level.

My attitude was wrong at the time...and I was too immature to understand how important it was to take advantage of the scholarship. (Subject # 14).

Question # 5:

You Haven't Mentioned Yourself In Relationship to The University. Do You Blame The University For Your Failure?

Table # 6	
Blaming University For Athletes Failure	
	Percent
Yes	80%
No	20%
Total	100%

An overwhelming (80%) of the responding athletes determined that their institutions did not do enough to enhance their chances of having a career at the professional level of athletic competition. Only (20%) did not feel the university was responsible for their demise in collegiate athletics while on scholarship.

After probing this issue carefully to determine what was meant by "enhancing their chances," the athletes concluded that the sports information departments and the coaches did not do enough public relations work on their behalf to make their names more notable. Some of the participants stated that they were forced to play the wrong positions in college to help the team. When they arrived to the professional level, many of the participants discovered that the positions they played in college was wrong when the professional level changed their position due to lack of their size or speed. Due to this change, they expressed not being prepared to compete with other athletes who were in the correct positions during their athletic careers in college.

I remember being recruited to play running back...but when I got to

school...they moved me to wide receiver because they said we did not have enough talent at that position...and that I could maybe start or get a lot of playing time if I moved to that position. Like a fool...I believed the coaches and went to play receiver. I was only thinking about the opportunity to play right away...and I was not thinking about if I had the talent to switch positions and still reach my dream of playing in the NFL. It was a terrible move for me because I was a good college receiver...but I did not have the skills needed to play that position in the NFL. If I had stayed at running back...I would have had a much better chance to play in the NFL. Now that I am older, I understand that they were putting guys in positions so that they could win games. They were not thinking about putting players in positions that would give them the best opportunity to play in the NFL. (Subject # 5)

Question # 6:

While In College, Did You Know The Percentage Of African-American Male Football Players Who Did Not Achieve Their Goal To Play In The NFL. What Made You Think You Could Play At the Professional Level?

Table # 7	
Why Could You Play At The Professional Level	
	Percent
Confidence In Own Ability	85%
Better Opportunities	10%
Made All-American	5%
Total	100%

Surprisingly, all of the respondents were cognizant of the statistics on how many African-American athletes accomplished their goals of having a career in professional football. However, 85% of the athletes felt confident in their own ability to change the odds, and thought that their opportunities were better than their predecessors (10%). One felt he was guaranteed a career in the NFL because he had been named to an All-American team in high school and college.

In talking further with the athletes, everyone thought he could become the next superstar in the NFL. All stated confidence in their athletic ability if they were given an opportunity to showcase their talent in the NFL.

I knew the percentages...but I was young and stupid at the time. I was a high school All-American and I was a star in college. All kinds of people were telling me that I was a lock to make it into the NFL...like a fool...I listened. I didn't really understand how difficult it would be to make it in the NFL. I did not understand how many other athletes are trying to reach the same goal that I had. When I got to the NFL camp for a tryout, then I understood how many people were trying to reach the same goal of having

a career in the NFL. It was shocking. (Subject #5)

Yes...I knew the percentages...but when you are young and somewhat immature...you don't really pay attention to the numbers. And your academic advisor tells the numbers to you during some academic sessions because they want you to focus more on academics. It's not like you are being told this information by coaches or former athletes who did not make it. I think I only heard the percentages once during college. And I might have read about it during a college report for a class. Other than that...I never heard about the percentages. And what exactly do those percentage mean to a young athlete who sees himself as the man. He doesn't understand numbers...he only understands reality. They should have brought in former athletes if they really wanted us to understand the percent of athletes who do not make it. But the key is this...they did not want us to know the percentages because we might not play as hard or put enough emphasis into sports. They wanted all of our focus on sports...not on percentages. (Subject # 1)

Question # 7:

Retrospectively, If You Had The Opportunity To Repeat Your First Two Years Of College, How Would You Change It Academically? How Would You Change It Athletically?

Table # 8	
How Would You Change Your College Experience	
	Percent
(Academically)	
More Serious	80%
Studied More	10%
Requested More Help	5%
Selected Another School	5%
Total	100%
(Athletically)	
Put Athletics Second	45%
Selected Another School	30%
Worked Harder For The NFL	25%
Total	100%

Again, this question is significant in helping to prevent other athletes from falling into the same predicament. Of the twenty participants in the study, (80%) stated that if they had the chance to repeat the first two years of college, academically, they would take it more seriously. Ten percent said they would study more, (5%) stated they would have requested more academic help, and (5%) said they would have selected another school. Athletically, (45%) stated they would change their priorities if given a second chance by focusing more on academics instead of athletics. Thirty percent thought they would have selected another school, preferably a smaller school with less emphasis on athletics, and (25%) stated they would have worked harder on the finer points to achieve their goal of

playing in the NFL.

The first thing I would do...get a tutor and talk to the seniors on the team about classes and majors. I would focus that first semester in school on getting a very high grade point average. No one ever told me that the first semester in college is the most important semester because the grade point average you get after the first semester...is the grade point you will have to work with the entire time in college. I didn't do very well that first semester...so I spent the majority of my college days trying to stay eligible and increasing my grade point average. I learned very quickly....that it's easier to maintain a high grade point average than it is to increase a low grade point average into a high grade point average.

(Subject # 2)

I think I would have gotten involved with the community more to meet some people outside of athletics. I think they had too much control over our lives...that hurt me because I needed some advice outside of athletics. I needed someone to talk to me about the future outside of athletics...and how to achieve that goal. You have get away from the brainwashing...and talk to someone with no interest in the athletic department. (Subject # 13)

Table # 9	
College Majors	
Majors	Numbers Per Major
Business	1
Communication	1
Education	1
Media Arts	1
Physical Education	3
Psychology	2
Sociology	11
Total	20

The Athlete Background Information Form did not include a category for the number of credits completed or needed for graduation. Most of the athletes did not have that information nor did they know their grade point average after their eligibility expired. The majority of the athletes felt that they only needed about a year of school to complete their degree requirements for graduation.

Question # 8:

What Is Your Reason For Not Graduating?

Table # 10	
Reasons Given For Not Graduating	
	Total Numbers
Lacked Enough Credits	9
Failed Academically (Below 2.0 GPA Requirement)	4
Not In A Degree Program (Disqualified)	2
Graduated With Degree	5
Total	20

All of the athletes blamed themselves for not getting a degree. They contend that the opportunity was there to graduate from school. Most expressed being too young, immature, or not focused enough to take advantage of their athletic scholarship through the academic services offered by the athletic department. Most stated being gulled into the fallacy of believing that they had a promising career at the professional level of sports entertainment.

Hey...I can't blame no one but myself. I was stupid and young. I knew that they were exploiting us athletically. I knew that the only way for me to overcome the exploitation was for me to graduate. I was so caught up in going to the NFL...that I did not take my academics serious throughout my career. Even though I was young...and the coaches and administrators took advantage of that...it was still my responsibility to not fall into the trap of trying to make it into the NFL. The bottom line is this...I was stupid for falling for the trick of choosing athletics over education. That was one of the biggest mistakes I have ever made in my life...because now I am paying for it. (Subject #8)

Question # 9:

How Comfortable Were You In The Academic Environment?

Table # 11	
Comfortable Academic Environment	
	Percent
Comfortable	30%
Not Comfortable	70%
Total	100%

Seventy percent of the respondents remarked that they did not feel comfortable in the academic setting at their college. To these athletes, "comfortable" meant how they felt among other students who were not athletes as they moved around the campus involving themselves in non-athletic events. Most of the participants stated that they did not become comfortable on campus until their final year of college. Another 30% of the respondents stated that they were comfortable once they became starters on the team and publicly known on campus. In fact, they even felt special because they were part of an elite group of college students and were valued by their peers. Some stated that many students often asked for their autographs.

I wasn't very comfortable at all...I remember the first time going to class... I was so scared to be in a college class...I didn't know what to expect...I was so nervous. I remember sitting in the back of the class trying to hide from the instructor so that he would not ask me a question. I also remember the instructor using vocabulary words that I had never heard before in my neighborhood or school. I remember feeling so out of place that first semester. Eventually I became more comfortable and confident once I realized that I didn't have a choice in my new environment if I wanted to stay in school on scholarship. (Subject # 1)

Question # 10:

Did The University Support You Academically? Do You Feel The School Could Have Done More?

Table # 12		
Institutional Support		
	Percent	
	Yes	No
Did The Institution Support You	100%	0%
Could They Have Done More	90%	10%
Total	100%	100%

All of the respondents (100%) noted that the institution they attended made efforts to assist them academically while on scholarship. All of the participants agreed that the onus is on the individual to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the scholarship. Many of the participants (90%) expressed the school could have done more to help them succeed academically; such as permitting the participants to continue their education even though their athletic eligibility expired. Another (10%) felt the college did enough academically to assist them with graduation by supplying academic support personnel throughout their athletic scholarship. After exploring this issue further, the research discovered that no special effort was made to encourage the athletes to take advantage of the services provided by the athletic department. Many stated that the coaching staffs were more concerned with athletics and seldom showed any concern for academics or graduation. Some of the participants stated they had a personal responsibility to graduate and play professionally, but they lost their motivation to achieve due to the primary focus being on sports. Many of the participants expressed that

academics and graduation were secondary merely to remain eligible for athletic competition. The recurring theme during the interviews was athletics was emphasized and how academics were more secondary to remain eligible for competition.

In my five years on the team...coach never once said anything about graduation during team or individual meetings. (Subject # 15)

Yes there was some support from the academic area with the advisors...they did a great job trying to keep us in school. I am not sure if they were sincere...but I think they really cared about us because they understood the amount of time we were putting into practice. They saw how tired we were after practice...trying to study at seven o'clock after reporting for practice at one o'clock. I think the counselors were the only ones who truly cared about us academically. I do not know if they only cared because that was their job...but they were there for me...and without the counselors...I would have never survived five years of college. (Subject # 13)

Question # 11:

Did Your College Experience Prepare You For Success Or Failure After Retiring From Football?

Table # 13		
Educational Preparation		
	Percent	
	Yes	No
Prepared For Success	20%	80%
Prepared For Failure	0%	100%
Total	100%	100%

Twenty percent of the athletes felt that college prepared them for success after college, although many stated they did not take advantage of the educational opportunity from their athletic scholarship. An astounding, (80%) stated the school did not honor its responsibility in preparing them for success after college as promised during the recruiting process. The recurring theme was how the participants were recruited and prepared to play football by the coaches and administrators, leaving them ill-prepared for the job market at the end of their athletic scholarship.

As for failure, all twenty (100%) of the respondents stated the college they attended prepared them for failure after college in regards to the job market. This is a significant finding in light of the fact that many of the participants in the study did not have a degree and never played professional football. The coaches, according to some players, were more interested in winning to retain their jobs. Most of the participants stated that their athletic talent was paramount to the coaches and the athletic department

to generate revenue for the colossal salaries of the coaches and administrators. Most expressed that their athletic talent was the only skill the coaches were truly interested in, and if it weren't for that talent, they would have never attended college on an academic scholarship.

I think playing football and attending college helped me after I left school. But the school did not help me in teaching me the skills needed to get a job. No one ever sat down with me and talked about careers and salaries. I remember looking at the coaching staff thinking that I would never be a coach when I leave school. Now I realize that they are some of the highest paid in the job market. It's interesting that the coaching staff never talked to us about becoming a coach. They never thought about us in the job market...or what would happen when our eligibility expired and we were no longer on scholarship. (Subject # 16)

In my opinion...they prepared us for failure because they took us and put us in a system that revolved around athletics...and nothing else. We were not exposed are trained to think about careers outside of sports. They straight brain washed us into focusing on football and nothing else. I am sure they knew that all of us could not have a career in the NFL....but they never once said that in a team or individual meeting. Once I left school...all I really knew was the life of athletics. I realized quick...that employers could care less if you played college football...they only wanted to know two things...what could you do to help them...and did you graduate. (Subject # 12)

Question # 12:

When Did You Realize Your Athletic Was Not coming True? How About Your Education Dream?

Table # 14	
Loss Of Athletic Dream	
	Percent
1 ST Year	10%
2 ND Year	10%
3 RD Year	15%
4 TH Year	65%
Total	100%

Table # 15	
Loss Of Educational Dream	
	Percent
1 ST Year	5%
2 ND Year	10%
3 RD Year	20%
4 TH Year	65%
Total	100%

By the time they were into their fourth year, over (65%) of the responding athletes realized hard work and their dream of making the NFL might not come to fruition. However, many felt their athletic dreams were not totally defunct, and that all they needed was a tryout with a professional team to showcase their talent. The same was true when it pertained to their academic dream of receiving a college degree. An overwhelming majority (65%) survived their fourth year before realizing the degree was not in their grasp, and many hold steadfast today to the idea that they will someday get

their degree.

In probing this question, the majority of the athletes stated they had time to complete their academic requirements because most students did not graduate in four years of school. They did reveal that the one issue they did not take seriously until it was too late was their education, and if they had it to do all over again, they would put education first and athletics second.

By the time I hit my last year....I realized then that the odds of playing in the NFL would be somewhat difficult. Although I knew that I was not rated high for the draft...I guess I was in denial to think that I still had a small chance to play in the NFL. (Subject # 9)

I knew by my last year that I would not graduate on time. It was obvious from the degree check that I was about a year from graduation. Some of the guys left school after the season ended to start preparing for the NFL draft. They gave up their last semester of their scholarship to chase that NFL dream. I knew I wanted to graduate...I just didn't know how I was going to do it once my scholarship ended. I knew I would have to go home or try to find a job if I didn't make a team in the NFL. My thinking was to take advantage of the last semester on scholarship...because I knew I wasn't going to graduate on time...and that I would need about a year to graduate...which I was going to have to pay for out of my pocket. (Subject # 14)

Question # 13:

Did You Seek Tutoring Or Professional Help?

Table # 16	
Tutoring / Professional Help	
	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

All twenty of the participants (100%) stated that study hall and tutoring was mandatory for all athletes. However, most claimed they did not take it seriously, nor did they go beyond what was offered. The tutors helped, but most said they really did not understand the material to the point that they felt comfortable enough to handle it on their own. Most stated there was not enough time to go beyond what was mandatory because of their practice and travel schedules.

I worked with the tutors all the time. If it weren't for the tutors...I would have never made it through five years of college. I think the tutoring was the best thing they could have offered us academically. Without the tutors, half of the team would have been on probation. I think the tutors and the counselors are very important in helping athletes with their academics. The only problem...I guess...is that I wasn't studying the right subject for tutoring...because when I left school...that tutoring did not do me any good in the job market because I was studying in the wrong field for a good and respectable job. (Subject # 16)

Question # 14:

When You Realized You Might Not Play In The NFL, How Did That Affect Your Classroom Activity?

Table # 17	
Loss Of Athletic Dream And Classroom Activity	
	Percent
No Affect	50%
Stopped Attending Class	25%
Left School	20%
Studied Harder	5%
Total	100%

After realizing their dream of playing in the NFL might not happen. (50%) claimed it had no affect on their college activities, either positively or negatively. However, (25%), realizing they were not going to get a degree, stated that they stopped attending classes, and started to just hang out and enjoy the campus scene. Twenty percent left school to go home because there was no motive to remain in school if the NFL or graduation were no longer conceivable. Only one participant stated that he started to study harder in hopes of getting his college degree. Ironically, the participants who stopped attending class and left school were in the fourth and fifth years of their scholarship.

When I realized that I would not make it in the NFL...I continued to do the same things that I was accustomed to doing. I think for most guys...you want to graduate along with making it to the NFL. Once I realized that I would not make it...I just continued to go to class and enjoy school life. I know some guys left school....and some guys dropped out once they realized their dream of playing in the league was gone. I bet you that those guys regret those moves now. (Subject # 14)

Question # 15:

Would You Return To School To Complete Your Degree Requirement If The NCAA Permitted You To Attend The School Of Your Choice With Tuition Paid Until You Complete Your Degree Requirements?

Table # 18	
Returning To School For Degree Completion	
	Percent
Yes	80%
No	20%
Total	100%

The question is significant as to intervention for counselors for those participants who wish to return to school to obtain their degree. Eighty percent of the participants stated that if the NCAA provided an avenue by which they could finish college and obtain their degree, they would take advantage of that opportunity. Surprisingly, (20%) felt that they had been out too long and that obtaining a degree would not grossly change their income status.

The NCAA has made provisions for athletes to return to their colleges to complete requirements for their degrees, but they have to return to the school that gave them an athletic scholarship. They cannot attend another member institution near where they live, which, according to some, is very inconvenient because it may require moving to another state. The participants living near their scholarship school stated that they could not return to school because they have to work and that the scholarship only pays for tuition. They stated that their employers would not give them time off to attend class

for degree requirements. Some even stated that the NCAA should return the former athletes to a full athletic scholarship for a period of time to complete degree requirements.

The few who felt they had been out of college too long did not want to leave their current jobs to complete their degree requirements only to return to making just a little more in salary than they are making now.

I am not sure if a degree would do me any good now. I am little old now to start a new career. I needed that degree years ago...I am not sure about now. (Subject # 3)

I would definitely take advantage of that opportunity if they gave me a second chance. My only problem is working...taking care of a family....and going to school full or part-time. I know they offer assistance to former players, but they don't put back on scholarship. They only pay for your tuition. When you have a family and a job, it is difficult work part time hours while trying to get a degree...but I guess if you really want that degree...you will do anything to get it. I just wish they would give some type of monetary assistance to help supplement the income for older athletes with families. (Subject # 8)

Question # 16:

How Were You Treated During Your College Career?

Table # 19			
Treatment During College			
	Well	Bad	Percent
Coaches	25%	75%	100%
Administrators	100%	0%	100%
Faculty	100%	0%	100%
Fans	100%	0%	100%
Media	85%	15%	100%
Total	100%	100%	100%

The majority of the athletes (75%) felt that the coaching staff did not treat them well during their collegiate experience. Most expressed that the coaches did not keep their promises made during recruitment from high school. They also expressed that the coaches did not care about their academics and that it was obvious that they only cared about winning. They also stated that coaches were verbally and sometimes physically abusive while on scholarship. Some stated that they were very depressed during their collegiate career due to the abusive treatment from the coaching staff. Another twenty-five percent felt that the coaching staff treated them very well once they became starters and that they did not have any negative feeling towards the coaching staff. All of the participants (100%) felt that the athletic administrators, faculty and fans treated them very well and that some of them remained friends after their collegiate eligibility expired. Some of the athletes (15%) felt that the media did not treat them fairly during their collegiate experience. Some expressed that the some of the newspaper articles were

disparaging, which lead to stress and embarrassment during their collegiate experience.

The majority (85%) felt that the media was fair in reporting the sports news on an individual basis.

You had some individual coaches who treated everyone fairly. For the most part, they did not even speak to you at times unless you were a starter. They only cared about one thing...winning games. I never heard them once talk about the importance of graduating. (Subject # 17)

Hey...if it weren't for coach...I would have never made it through college. Even though they used us for winning...he was there for me when I needed him the most. He recruited me to school...and he kept his promise to help me after school. (Subject # 2)

Thank God for the academic counselors...without them I would have never made it through college. The other administrators never showed any interest in me. I don't even think they knew my name...or even cared to know my name. They seemed to only care about making money in my opinion. (Subject # 13)

I never had any major problems with the media people. They treated me pretty good throughout my career. My only problem with them...was how certain individuals seemed to receive different treatment in the media. I thought it was wrong to take an athletic that was not very good, or did something in a game that was not very good, and make it sound like he won the game. Or they would take an athlete who was not good, and build him up like a superstar. Some of it was racist and discriminatory. (Subject # 12)

Question # 17:

Did You Feel Different From Other Students While Attending College?

Table # 20	
Feeling Different From Other Students	
	Percent
Yes	80%
No	20%
Total	100%

Eighty percent of the athletes reported a sense of being different from other students. The participants reported that the relationship established during the recruitment process with the coach created a sense of being different from other students. Many of the participants stated that the recruiting process gave them a false sense of what a student should expect during their college career. Some of participants reported that they were told by the coaching staff to stay in the athletic environment, which created psychological problems in feeling privileged and different from other students while on athletic scholarship. Twenty percent of the athletes reported they never felt different from other students while attending college.

Everybody always think that athletes just come to school to play sports. They don't care about nothing else...they don't care about nobody else. But we want to be a part of the frats, be friends with them...help the community like they do. We don't want the girls thinking that we want to rape them...we feel like outcast. We're African-American, we're athletes. Other students move away from us at test times, thinking we're going to cheat off of them. That makes me feel bad. It makes me feel bad when we walk by and they cover up, they don't talk to us. I don't want them to

be scared of me. We want to be apart of the campus, socially as well as academically and athletically. (Subject # 20)

I knew from the first time I hit the campus that we were different. Everything was separate from the student body. We did not socialize with the student body until school started. They kept us isolated from the student body. It was like the military...we were there to play football and nothing else. (Subject # 16)

Question # 18:

Did You Experience Racial Isolation?

Table # 21	
Racial Isolation	
	Percent
Yes	90%
No	10%
Total	100%

Ninety percent of the participants reported isolating themselves during their collegiate experience to avoid physical and verbal attacks. Many of the participants in this group reported they protected themselves from racism by avoiding many campus activities including university student services departments while attending college. Another (10%) stated they never isolated themselves from the campus to avoid racism because there was nothing they could do about racism on a college campus. They also indicated that they were accustomed to experiencing racism, which assisted in not isolating themselves from the campus environment.

We're on this side of the campus and they're all on the other. We went to one party and we were the only African-American people. I thought everything would be like in high school...they would accept us. But when we walked in...some guy said, "Oh, oh, here comes trouble". (Subject #1)

QUESTION # 19:

Did You Feel A Lack Of Control Over Your Life While On Scholarship?

Table # 22	
Lacked Control Over Your Lives	
	Percent
Yes	70%
No	30%
Total	100%

Seventy percent of the participants experienced the feeling of lacking control of their lives while on athletic scholarship. Many of the participants recounted how the attitudes of the coaches changed once they signed the scholarship agreement and their arrival on campus. Some of the participants reported the berating of players by the coaching staff for intimidation purposes to establish a foundation for the controlling of their lives throughout their college experience. Some of the participants stated that their college experience was occasionally similar to the lifestyle of someone in the military or prison.

Thirty percent of the athletes reported that they did not feel a lack of control over their lives while attending college on an athletic scholarship. The participants in this group emphasized that they were able to discern from the time they arrived on campus that the coaching staff was trying to control their lives to exploit them athletically.

It was like military and prison...they told us when to eat and sleep... practice....meet...everything. They brain washed us as soon as we arrived...then they took control over our lives by letting us know that we could not transfer and that they would take our scholarship if we caused any trouble. (Subject # 19)

Question # 20:

Did You Experience Racial Discrimination During College?

Table # 23			
Racial Discrimination In College			
	Yes	No	Percent
Teammates	100%	0%	100%
Coaches	100%	0%	100%
Faculty	0%	100%	100%
Student Body	50%	50%	100%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Surprisingly, all of the participants (100%) stated that they experienced racism from teammates during their athletic scholarship, however, none of the participants experienced blatant racism. Some of the participants stated that the racism was subtle but still salient among the teammates. The recurring theme was that the team was segregated and that the only time the students congregated as a whole was during athletic events. Off the playing field, the student-athletes were segregated during meals, housing, social events and even the bus ride to the games.

In regards to the coaches, all of the participants (100%) felt that they coaching staff practiced racism during their collegiate experience. The recurring theme here was that the African-American players were not treated the same as other racial groups. Some stated that if an African-American player athletic skills were tantamount to another player in talent of a difference race, he would not receive the starting position due to his race. Some also stated that the coaching staff would routinely practice racism by

“staking” the two best African-American players in one position for competition against one another to keep them from competing against lesser talented athletes of another race for competition.

Fifty percent of the athletes said they experienced racism from the student body during their collegiate experience. Most expressed that they experienced racism during their stay in the dormitories, their visits to campus departments and campus parties.

Yes there was racism on the team...but it was somewhat covert. You could see how the different races would isolate themselves away from others during team meals...meetings...social events. You could also see how racial groups would support their own when it came to two players being equal in talent for a starting position. You could see and feel the animosity amongst the players and the coaches when it came to choosing sides for a starting position. (Subject # 15)

I remember before a game...we were in a team meeting and after the meeting...the African-American players left the meeting and closed the door with the position coach and the white players in the room. I heard the position coach tell the white players...you guys be ready because I am not going to play those guys, meaning the African-American guys. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. To my surprise...one of the White players stood up to the coach by telling him that he thought we deserved to play and that we would do really well if given an opportunity to play. I will never forget that, I was in disbelief. (Subject # 7)

I remember this student yelling out of his car...you guys don't belong here. Go back to the ghettos. (Subject # 6)

Question # 21:

Did You Fell Isolated From Other Students?

Table # 24	
Did You Feel Isolated	
	Percent
Yes	80%
No	20%
Total	100%

Eighty percent reported they did feel isolated from other students while attending school on an athletic scholarship. Most of the participants in this group reported that they were encouraged by the athletic department to avoid using the services of other departments on campus. This practice of avoiding other departments and activities lead to the isolation felt by some of the participants during their athletic scholarship as a student-athlete. Twenty percent of the respondents reported not feeling isolated from the student body while on athletic scholarship. Even though they were encouraged to avoid campus services and activities, they never felt isolated from the campus student body because their objective was to enjoy college by assimilating into the campus environment.

You may be the only African-American student in a college classroom or the only one at a social gathering. You feel every eye is on you...and you are not clear what posture to present. You realize that your presence makes other students uncomfortable...most of them probably wish you were not there at all. But since you are, they want to see you smile...so they can believe you are being treated well...and that you are happy. Not only is an upbeat air expected from you...but also you must never show anger or an attitude...let alone anything that could look like you have a chip on your shoulder. (Subject # 20)

Question # 22:

How Were You Treated After Your Scholarship Expired?

Table # 25			
Treatment After Scholarship Expired			
	Well	Bad	Percent
Administrators	30%	70%	100%
Coaches	10%	90%	100%
Alumni Boosters	0%	100%	100%
Fans	100%	0%	100%
Friends	100%	0%	100%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Thirty percent of the participants stated that the athletic administrators treated them fairly during their scholarship. Another (70%) stated the athletic administrators treated them poorly after their eligibility expired. Most of the complaints were aimed at the administrators who were not involved in student services. Some of the participants stated that after their eligibility expired the administration would not allow them to utilize the athletic services once offered while on scholarship. None of the participants stated that the athletic counselors treated them unfavorably and that they were very supportive after their eligibility expired.

Ninety percent of the athletes indicated that the coaching staff treated them unfairly after their eligibility expired. Some of the athletes stated that they were not as interested in their personal lives once their eligibility expired. Some stated that the coach seemed to be more concerned about the new recruits by avoiding their phone calls and meetings.

All of the participants (100%) felt that the alumni boosters treated them poorly

after their eligibility expired. The recurring theme from the athletes was that the alumni never sincerely cared about them as people from the genesis of the relationship. Most felt that the alumni boosters were only around to benefit from the expenses paid athletic trips and the entertainment of athletics. Most stated that if they were not athletes, the alumni boosters would have not shown interest in them if they were only students attending college on an academic scholarship.

All of the participants reported that they received excellent treatment from their friends and fans after their eligibility expired. Some of the participants stated that after the negative treatment from coaches and administrators, they assumed their friends and fans would abandon them after their eligibility expired.

Once my eligibility ended...no one wanted anything to deal with me anymore. Their whole attitude changed towards me. Before my eligibility expired...I was always greeted with a smile...and how can I help you. They always had time for me. As soon as my eligibility expired...immediately their attitudes changed...I could sense that they did not want to be bothered with me anymore. It was very depressing to realize that the people that you thought were your friends and cared about you...really only cared because you were an athlete with some popularity.
(Subject # 14)

It's like making an investment, like a long term investment or a short term investment. Coaches like to say, if I had a senior that was worth six points, and a freshman that was worth twelve, they would play the freshman. And I think you can relate that to the booster situation. I thought I had a close relationship with some of the boosters...but it turned out that it wasn't the way that I thought it was. I liked couple of boosters a lot...an I liked their wives...but it turned out that they were blowing smoke. I thought they really cared for me...but as soon as I went down on my knee...it was unbelievable. They straight turned me off...and that kind of hurt me. No question...you are forgotten once you are out.
(Subject # 17)

Question # 23:

Do You Think The Athletic Department Discourage African-American Student Athletes From Associating With The African-American Community And Student Body?

Table # 26	
Discouraging Athletes From The Community	
	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

All of the athletes (100%) were in agreement that the athletic department discouraged them from associating with the African-American community and student body. Most of the participants stated that the coaches and the administrators were fearful and uncomfortable with African-American leaders in the community and on the campus. Some stated that the athletic department did not want African-American leaders having access to African-American athletes due to the fear that the leaders will educate the young African-American athletes on the exploitation inside collegiate athletics. All of the participants insinuated that the athletic department never planned athletic community activities within the African-American community to prohibit the African-American athletes from having relationships with the African-American community.

Of course they do...we never went into the African-American community during community events with kids. We always went into areas that did not have any African-American people in them. The only African-American people that they wanted us to see were the African-American coaches...and they had no power. They were being used just like the players. (Subject # 11)

They didn't want us around the African-American community because

they were scared that the African-American leaders in the community would organize us into speaking out against the exploitation in athletics...that's why they didn't want us to deal with the African-American community. (Subject # 2)

I never once spoke to kids in the African-American community. We always went to areas that had no African-American kids. We never said anything to coach at the time because we figured that they did not want to go into the African-American neighborhoods. The only time I saw African-American kids was when I went to church. When I look back at it now...I should have done something to make sure that we went into the African-American neighborhoods to speak to those kids who were just like me when I first started playing ball. Those kids needed us to talk to them about sports and life in general. They saw on TV...but never in the community. In retrospect...those kids were doing the same things we did as youngsters...they were see African-American athletes on TV...wishing to be like us. I wonder if they will fall for the same traps we fell for in athletics...they probably will since they do not have access to the high profile athletes to get the truth about what goes on in athletics and on campus. (Subject # 13)

Question # 24:

Were You Given A Scholarship To Graduate Or Produce Revenue For The Athletic Department?

Table # 27	
Scholarship For Graduation Or Revenue	
	Percent
Graduation	
Yes	0%
No	100%
Total	100%
Revenue	
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

All of the participants (100%) stated that they were not given a scholarship for a college degree. Most of the athletes noticed during their first semester as a freshman that they were not recruited to college to earn a degree. They indicated that the coaching staff emphasized early that they were in school for athletics and the only reason academics were significant was for athletic eligibility for competition. Most stated that their coaches never spoke about graduation, only eligibility requirements for competition.

The participants all agreed (100%) that they were recruited to college to produce revenue for the athletic departments and not to graduate. Most stated that the pressure to win games made it obvious as to why they were recruited to the university. Some talked about the pressure to win games or the coaching staff would lose their jobs at the end of the season if they did not have a winning record. Others talked about being pressured to

play injured with dangerous medication that affected their health after their eligibility expired.

During the recruiting process...I thought they were offering me a scholarship for graduation and athletics. After I arrived on campus...I knew from the first week...that I was there to play ball first...and get my degree on my own time. (Subject # 10)

We were recruited to bring in money. I didn't understand it until after the first year. We pay for all the other sports and salaries. Without us, there is no athletic department. We don't bring in money by receiving our degrees...we only bring in money by winning games and putting people in those stands. They could care less if we graduated. They only want to make money so they can enjoy those big salaries and lifestyles. (Subject # 17)

Question # 25:

Do You Support Your Alma Mater?

Table # 28	
Supporting Alma Mater	
	Percent
No	50%
Yes	25%
Don't Watch	20%
Occasionally	5%
Total	100%

Amazingly, (50%) of the participants stated that they do not support their alma mater. The participants in this group indicated that supporting their alma mater was extremely difficult because of the exploitation involved in college football. Some of the participants also stated that they could not support their alma mater because after their eligibility expired, they felt that they were no longer apart of their alma mater due to the negative treatment. Some of the participants in this group stated that they occasionally cheer for the opposing team due to the enmity they have for their alma mater from their negative experiences during and after their scholarship expired. Twenty-five percent of the participants stated that they do support their alma mater. Another (20%), stated that they do not watch or stay abreast on the activities involving their alma mater, but they do support them athletically against opposing teams. Albeit, (5%) stated that they support their alma mater occasionally, all of the participants stated they would not support their alma mater financially.

It is very hard for me to support them because I understand what they are doing to those athletes. One side of me is proud to a part of something that I worked so hard for at one time in my life. On the other hand...I am so angry at what that system did to me and what it continues to do to athletes today. (Subject # 5)

Yes...I will always support my alma mater because I look at the good times with my teammates and friends. It's my way of feeling good about something in my life now that I am proud of. I don't tell people what happened to me...it's just good to know that I went to a large university when so many people never had that opportunity. It makes me feel good when I can tell people that I attended college and played football.
(Subject # 13)

Question # 26:

When You Realized Your Career As An Athlete Was Officially Over, How Did You Feel?

Table # 29	
Retirement From Sport	
	Percent
Depressed	100%
Happy	0%
Neither	0%
Total	100%

All of the participants (100%) stated that they were depressed after realizing their career as an athlete had officially ended. Some of the participants stated that the adjustment to retirement was very difficult because they started playing sports as children throughout their adult years. The participants stated that they did not have anyone to talk with about the adjustment they had to make after their retirement from sports. The participants stated that it was very difficult to stop playing a sport that they had been playing all of their lives. Every year they would prepare themselves athletically through training, and suddenly they did not have to train anymore because their career as an athlete had officially ended.

It wasn't something that happened in one day. It was a gradual process. But when I realize that I might not make it to the NFL...I felt like I had no reason to live anymore. I put off that time into preparing myself for the NFL and now I have to face the fact that I not going to make it...and my mother will never get that big house along with all that money that I dreamed about for so many years. I was very depressed. Today this day...it's difficult. (Subject # 6)

Question # 27:

When You Retired From Sports, Did You Need Counseling To Deprogram Yourself From Playing Football?

Table # 30	
Deprogramming From Sport	
	Percent
Yes	50%
No	25%
Not Sure	25%
Total	100%

Fifty percent of the participants expressed that they needed counseling after their retirement from sports to deprogram themselves from the life of an athlete. Many of the participants stated that the sports administrators and coaches have many support systems for the athlete in relationship to improving their athletic talent. The participants stated that the emphasis was on sports training and not the retirement from sports. Some of the athletes stated that there are no programs at the elite level of football preparing athletes for the retirement after sports. Some stated that the athletic departments are not interested in counseling the athletes once their eligibility expires because they are no longer producing revenue for the department along with the financial cost for counseling. Others stated that their athletic department did not want to know the counseling needs of the former athletes because they feared the negative counseling sessions being leaked to the media and precipitating an embarrassment for the athletic department.

Another (25%) stated that they did not need counseling after their retirement from sports. The majority in this group indicated that they had relinquished their dreams to play professionally at an early stage in their athletic careers. Most stated that they had already prepared themselves for their retirement long before they retired. Although the participants in this group said that they did not need counseling, all of the participants stated that they needed family and friends to help with the adjustment from sports.

Another (25%) said that they were somewhat dubious to the thought of clinical counseling after their retirement from sports. Amazingly, most of the participants in this group stated that they have never thought about counseling to help with their adjustment from sports until after the question was asked during this study. Ironically, all of the participants stated that they never received any type of professional counseling throughout their athletic careers or after their retirement from sports.

I think all athletes should receive some type of counseling when their career ends. They might not realize it...but we were brain washed for so many years...and it is not so easy to all of a sudden...just put football out of your life. When schools hire professional counselors to help athletes when their eligibility expires...then I will know that they sincerely care about the welfare of athletes. There are so many psychological problems we have to face after we are forced to retire. We don't have anyone with professional training to help us adjust to not being an athlete anymore. How do you play a sport for all your life...and then one day you are told you can't play anymore? It's like an addiction... you just don't give up something without some psychological problems. It is very difficult to give up unless you find something to replace that drive you have for sports. (Subject # 12)

Question # 28:

Was It Difficult Not Being In The Public View As An Athlete After Your Career Ended?

Table # 31	
Being In The Public View	
	Percent
Yes	65%
No	45%
Total	100%

Sixty-five percent of the participants reported they that did have problems adjusting to not being in the public view as an athlete. Some of the participants expressed that they were accustomed to being recognized publicly throughout their athletic careers. Some of the participants expressed being unprepared for the adjustment they would have to make in not being recognized by the public or the attention given from the media. Another (45%) reported having no problem adjusting to the lack of media and public attention after their retirement from football.

It was difficult on me...I was accustomed to being recognized everywhere I went around town. To play a game your entire life and get accustomed to being noticed in the paper and on TV...and then all of a sudden...you are no longer acknowledged by fans and friends...it was very difficult because I never realized how much I enjoyed that feeling until it was over. Being noticed is like a high...I guess everyone wants to be noticed in life...and when you lose that...you might need some counseling to understand how to deal with no longer being noticed by the public. It's almost depressing...it makes you feel like you are no longer important...and that people don't want to deal with you anymore since you are no longer a star. (Subject # 18)

Question # 29:

If A High School Athletes Asked You For Advice On Pursing A Career In College Football Or The NFL, Would You Advise Him To Pursue A career In Football?

Table # 32	
Advising Potential Athletes	
	Percent
Yes	10%
No	80%
Not Sure	10%
Total	100%

Ten percent of the participants reported they would advise the athlete to pursue a career in collegiate and professional football. Many of the participants in this group felt that the money and the euphoria of living the lifestyle of an athlete are worth the risk for an aspiring football player.

A surprisingly (80%), stated they would not advise a high school student athlete to pursue a career in football unless athletics was their only option to attending college. The recurring theme in this group was the amount of exploitation in collegiate athletes and the abysmal graduation rates along with the low percentage of athletes having careers at the professional level. Another (10%), reported not being sure what they would tell an aspiring high school athlete seeking a career in college and professional football. Some of the participants stated they understood that the only option for many high school athletes who want to attend college is through football via a college scholarship.

I would never advise a high school or any athlete to pursue a career in

professional football. I would never want anyone to go through what I went through trying to play in the NFL. It is too tough of a road...I don't think athletes really understand how difficult it is to have a career in the NFL. I would tell a high school kid to pursue another sport other than basketball or football. I would also tell a high school athlete to play sports for the love of playing...not to make money to get his family out of poverty. Because if you try to make it to the NFL and get your family out of poverty...you will put so much energy into it that you will probably end up not graduating...and you will never make it into the NFL. You end up with neither of the two. I think it's easier to just go to school...I sure the odds are much better to get an education...then it is to play in the NFL. (Subject 20)

Question # 30:

Do You Feel Being A Former Athlete Help Or Hurt Yu In The Job Market? When Interviewing For A Job, Do You Tell Employers You're A Former Student-Athlete?

Table # 33	
Athlete In Job Market	
	Percent
Help	15%
Hurt	80%
Neither	5%
Total	100%

Table # 34	
Revealing Athletic Past To Employers	
	Percent
Yes	20%
No	25%
Depends On The Job	55%
Total	100%

Fifteen percent of the participants stated being a former athlete helps in the job market. Some of the participants expressed they clinched their job after the employer discovered their past history of being a former student-athlete. Others in this group expressed being promoted to management level positions because of their experience in leadership from their athletic background.

Another (80%) reported that being a former student-athlete impedes their

employment in the job market. Most of the participants expressed that they felt stereotyped as athletes and not capable of anything else while searching in the job market. Many of the participants stated that their athletic past was only beneficial in job areas associated with the physical or entertainment business. Many of the participants expressed that employers envisioned them with athletic skills for physical work and not for the administrative positions in the job market. Another (5%) stated that being a former student-athlete did not help or hinder his employment opportunities in the job market. Twenty percent of the participants stated they do reveal on their resume or inform the employers about being a former student-athlete. Another (25%) reported they do not volunteer their athletic background information to employers unless asked during the job interview. Additionally, (55%) of the participants reported they reveal their athletic background to employers only after analyzing the experience needed and the job requirements. The majority of the participants expressed that the professional jobs with excellent pay seldom seek someone with a background in the field of athletics. Most participants stated that if they are seeking a job not related to athletics, they refrain from disclosing athletic information on their resume.

After college...I thought I would get a job because I went to college and I was a student athlete. I thought I was special...I thought the employers would treat me like the fans. To my surprise...they could have cared less. I remember putting all of my athletic information on the application thinking that would carry some weight on the job. They never once asked me about college or athletics...all they wanted to know... did I graduate. I did not graduate...but I thought I was different from the other employees because I went to college. The only problem with that thinking...was the fact that I didn't graduate. If you don't graduate from college...it doesn't matter if you went to college for twenty years...without a degree...you are just another employee working a job that does not pay well unless you

have your degree. I had to learn that the hard way...so that is why I went back to school and finished my degree. (Subject # 13)

I never tell employers that I am a former student athlete. I refuse to put it on my resume unless the job requires some skill related to athletes. From my experience...if the employer know your background of being a former student athlete...they stereotype you as being unintelligent...like the dumb jock theory. I have learned that it is best to keep my background as a student athlete private unless the employer ask...if they don't ask...I never tell. Employment and athletics don't mix...they want intelligence...not strength or quickness. From being athletes all of our lives...they do not see us as someone they would want to pay for a job...they only time they want to pay us...is when we are entertaining them on the field or the court. (Subject # 2)

Question # 31:

How Was Your Relationship With Teammates?

Table # 35	
Team Relationships	
	Percent
Firm	80%
Causal	15%
Animosity	5%
Total	100%

Eighty percent of the participants responded that they perceived the relationships among teammates to be firm and positive. However, (15%) stated they had a causal relationship with their team members due mostly to jealousy regarding playing time or publicity. One participant reported that he a tumultuous relationship with other members because he was the only person on the team to express his discontent with the exploitation, the double standards from the coaching staff.

The researcher learned that former teammates had information on players even when the registrar and coaches could not produce their whereabouts. Some are even godparents to their children and continue to talk at least every week.

I think the relationships were good among the players. I think sports are very good at bringing different racial groups together to work together for one common goal. Even though there was racism on the team...I would still die for those guys. Something about being on a team make you have to trust guys. I can honestly say that those guys would support me if I ever needed anything in life. We have a bond that can never be broken because of the good and bad times we shared as student athletes.
(Subject # 11)

Question # 32:

How Is Your Current Relationship With Your College Coach?

Table # 36	
Current Relationship With College Coach	
	Percent
Good	5%
Bad	10%
Indifferent	5%
No Relationship	80%
Total	100%

Most of these athletes have not had a relationship with their former coaches since they left college. In this group, (80%) still do not maintain a relationship with their former coaches. Most of them reported that it wasn't necessary to have a relationship with the coach now when they never had one with him when they were on scholarship. The overwhelming view seemed to be that if the coach never cared about them during school, why would he care about them now that they were out of school. Ten percent reported having a really bad relationship with their former coach. However, one participant was indifferent because he remembers his coach heartfelt support academically and athletically throughout his college career. One of the participants stated that he calls his former coach once a month and considers their relationship to be excellent.

I haven't spoken to my coach since I left school. I think the last time we spoke was at the last game of the season. They didn't seem to care about getting our phone numbers or addresses. I knew from the treatment we

received during our scholarship that they didn't care about us...so I knew they were not concerned about us once our eligibility expired. It was kind of strange...because the players left also without leaving information with other members. It was like...they were just happy to get out of a system that took a lot out of their lives. It was like...we just wanted to get out of there as soon as possible...we didn't realize that we may never see each other again...and for the most part...I haven't seen the majority of those guys since that last game. It is kind of sad just thinking about it.

(Subject # 13)

I called coach several years after I left school to ask for some help finding a job. He referred me to a guy who owned a construction company. I went to the job...and the guy explained that the pay was minimal wage. I ask coach if he had any suggestions and he explained to me that he really couldn't help me out. He basically avoided me...so I never approached him again. To this day...I have never seen or spoken to him. I am not angry with him...I just wish he had shown more interest in me when my eligibility expired. That would tell me that he truly cared about me as a person...and not only as a football player. (Subject # 9)

Question # 33:

What Role Did Your Family Play In Helping You Adjust To Life After Playing Football?

Table # 37	
Parental Role In Adjustment	
	Percent
Supportive	95%
Not Supportive	0%
Not Applicable	5%
Total	100%

Once they left college, (95%) stated that they received a tremendous amount of support from their families and friends. None of the participants felt any shame or pressure from their families once it was apparent that they would not have a career in the NFL. Only one participant reported that he had no immediate family. This individual had no family and lived with his high school coach the last two years of high school. He indicated he received love and support from his high school and college coach after his retirement from football.

If it weren't for my mother...I would have never made it psychologically after I realized my career in football was over. I had no one else to talk with because I was trained to be tough...I didn't want anyone to see me as being weak. (Subject # 3)

Question # 34:

What Role Did Your Community Play In Helping You Adjust To Life After Playing Football?

Table # 38	
Community Role In Adjustment	
	Percent
Positive	100%
Negative	0%
Total	100%

All of the athletes (100 %) stated that they received no harassment from their respective communities once they returned home to stay or visit. Some expressed that they were the first in their community to attend college and play collegiate football. Other than a few people who were jealous of their success to escape an impoverished neighborhood, everyone was supportive and proud that they were fortunate to attend college.

The community was great in supporting me after my eligibility expired. I think the majority of the people were just proud that I went to college. I was somewhat of a hero in the neighborhood. To this day...people from the community are proud of me. I did notice that there were a couple of people from the neighborhood who were happy that I didn't have a career in the NFL. I don't think they wanted to see me in the NFL due to jealousy. (Subject # 4)

Table 39 presents a breakdown of what these athletes were doing when contacted. Job categories are presented with the amount of former student-athletes in each field.

Table # 39	
Where Are They Now	
Jobs	Numbers
Recreation	2
Laborer	2
Counselor	3
Teacher	3
Postal Employee	1
Drug Dealer	1
Salesman	3
Office Manager	3
Entertainment Promoter	1
Professional Athlete	1
Total	20

Although most of the athletes majored in Sociology, Physical Education, or some form of Communication when they attended college, most are not pursuing careers in those fields. From a counseling standpoint, this is a very significant issue in terms of failure and success, self-esteem, and retraining for career and post-sport adjustment.

Question # 35:

Are You Successful?

Table # 40	
Are You Successful Now	
	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

All twenty (100 %) of the participants said they felt successful in their chosen field of work. After considerable probing, the athletes stated that their lives were a success in that they were better off financially now than they would have been had they never attended college. However, none of the athletes felt satisfied in their chosen careers and would change careers if an opportunity presented itself in the future. The majority indicated that what they are doing now is not what they would like to be doing ten years from now in the job market.

Coming from where I came from...I am very successful. Before I went to college... I didn't have any plans or goals in life. I was thinking about going into the military. When I look back at my life...I am very successful in comparison to where I came from before college.
(Subject # 13)

Question # 36:

What Do You Need To Become More Successful?

Table # 41	
What Do You Need To Become More Successful	
	Percent
Degree	70%
Money	10%
Better Job	10%
Better Attitude	5%
Do Not Know	5%
Total	100%

Again, this is a pertinent question regarding intervention for counseling if (70%) of the participants' felt that getting a degree would assist them now. Another (10%) reported that their success would come from obtaining a better job. In addition, another (10%) thought good health and mental attitude were the solutions to being successful now. To most, attaining a degree was more than anyone in their families had ever accomplished. Regardless of how inconvenient it was to return to school, most of the participants realized that a degree is a social requirement that would aid in boosting their happiness, self-esteem and income.

For me...if I had my degree...I could make more money and move up in the company. I have missed out on so many opportunities because I didn't have my degree. I remember my advisor telling me...that someday I would need that degree. I thought I could get by without a degree. Eventually...I will have to go back to school if I want better pay and position on the job.

(Subject # 15)

Question # 37:

Are You Happy?

Table # 42	
Are You Happy	
	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

Surprisingly, all of the athletes stated that regardless of their trials and tribulations during their careers, they were currently happy. Some are still pursuing their athletic dreams, while others regardless of their field of endeavor are happy and not depressed at the current stage in their lives. Most of the participants explained that the depression stage was during the first and second year of adjusting to realization that their athletic career was officially over. After they realized their career was over, the depression stage subsided around the third year of their retirement from sports.

I am extremely happy because I look at my friends back home and I realize that I am blessed to get out of home and go to college. Of course...I would like to do better in the job market...which would make me happier...but I look at the big picture in my life. I have been blessed to be where I am at in life. I don't have a lot of money or a great job... but I am happy with where I am in life for now.
(Subject # 18)

Question # 38:

Retrospectively, Would You Choose A Career In Football?

Table # 43	
Would You Choose A Career In Football	
	Percent
Yes	100%
No	0%
Total	100%

In retrospect, all of the participants (100%) reported they would not change their decision to pursue a career in professional football if they were given the opportunity to choose another career. Albeit, all of the participants reported that their experience in collegiate athletics was sometimes arduous, they would not trade their athletic experience. Many of the participants stated that their athletic experience was unfavorable once they entered college where the game was being played for financial motives and not for the spirit of the game. For this question, the participants emphasized the total amount of years involved in football as to why they would not change their career. The five-year collegiate experience they encountered while on athletic scholarship was not enough to discourage them to change their minds in choosing a football for a second time.

The only reason I would choose a career in football again...is because I feel I got so much out of being an athlete. Although I didn't reach my goal to play in the NFL...I got a lot of good out of playing sports. I know of a lot of people who are not very strong in life because...maybe they didn't get the experiences needed for life from the activities they pursued while being a youth. Although I would not want anyone to go through what I went through of being an athlete...I would not change my life...and

I would do it the same way by choosing a career in football. There were so many things that were good in football. The only bad things are the way people treat you that are running sports....and the depression you might have if you don't make it to the NFL... other wise....I would do it again. (Subject # 3)

Discussion

Major findings from this study suggest that there is a crisis among the student-athletes who participated in this study. Nearly all regret not being focused enough during their undergraduate years to take advantage of the academic component of their athletic scholarship to receive a college degree. Thirteen participants are not pursuing careers in their college major discipline, which suggest their need for retraining in a new career. On the issue of failure versus success, (80%) of the respondents indicated that their university prepared them for failure by primarily focusing on athletics instead of academics and job skills. The consensus was that the coaches and administrators placed a tremendous amount of emphasis on sports and very little guidance towards academics. After their retirement from sports, some of the participants expressed that it was very difficult entering the employment world with very limited experience in the job market due to the majority of the lives being dedicated to athletics. Many of the participants felt that they would need additional training in some other field to become totally successful in their future endeavors.

Most of the athletes would welcome the opportunity to offer advice to the present generation of student-athletes. Some of the athletes indicated that even though they did not graduate, they were among the few in their communities to ever attend college. At no time did the athletes feel concerned that they were taking longer than the four years to complete their degrees. Eighty percent indicated that they would return to college provided they could attend with some financial assistance to help supplement their income while away from their jobs to support their families.

Although the study revealed that all of the participants knew the high percentage of African-American football players who did not accomplish their dream of playing in the NFL, they still felt confident in their ability to achieve where others had failed.

The findings of the perceived psychological experiences of African-American student athletes revealed that over (80%) of the participants experienced a sense of being different from other students, (90%) felt racial isolation, and (70%) stated that they lacked control over their lives. However, only (50%) of African-American student-athletes experienced racial discrimination and isolation from the student body, and none of the participants stated racial discrimination from the faculty.

Racial Isolation

Racism will be used to give an explanation for the racial isolation that the African-American student athletes experience at Division I institutions. Racial characteristics, primarily skin color, are the factors that regulate racism on these campuses at the individual level. However, there are also institutional practices that may promote the racial isolation of African-American student athletes. These two forms of racism, individual and institutional will be used to examine the racial isolation African-American student-athletes experience.

The individual racism African-Americans experience on Division I campuses consists of physical and verbal attacks. The way individual racism contributes to racial isolation is by causing African-American student athletes to isolate themselves from other students in order to avoid these attacks. Monroe (1975) referred to this as racial

isolation that is "self-induced" where African-American student athletes shield themselves from individual racism.

Institutional racism can also contribute to the feeling of racial isolation of African-American student athletes. Although these institutions advertise their cultural diversity plans and minority recruitment programs, they appear to be in denial about other areas of institutional racism. Often, these institutional practices are overlooked as a contributor to racial isolation because the individual racist practices are usually isolated incidents and never reported.

Another indication of institutional racism is the disproportionate representation of African-American students on these Division 1 institutions. This is considered an institutional racist practice because of the low percentages of African-American students on these campuses, but the over representation of African-American student athletes on the basketball and football teams. If these colleges work feverishly in recruiting African-American athletes, they should increase the enrollment percentages of African-American students. Unequivocally, these institutions value African-Americans as athletes and not as students who can contribute and compete academically in higher education.

Another area for institutionalized racist practice is in the classrooms where African-American student-athletes are isolated from the student body. At many Division 1 institutions, there is a scarcity of African-American students in the classrooms which isolates African-American students in two ways: 1) they are racially isolated by professors and other students to the point that most of their actions involving the classroom is extremely salient; 2) they are also racially isolated among themselves where

they immediately notice that they are the only African-Americans in class. This is a detriment to African-American athletes because this will exacerbate racial isolation that is self-induced and may affect their networking with other students academically.

Control Over Their Lives

Many of the African-American student athletes experienced the feeling that they lacked control of their lives at the large Divisions 1 institution. The lack of control translates into a sense of powerlessness because there is an unequal relation that causes the African-American athletes to compromise their autonomy to take charge of their lives to university and athletic administrators. In a capitalist society, an individual or group that does not own anything is powerless (Cruse, 1967). To expand on Cruse's statement, an individual or group that has limited access in developing the policies that govern their lives is also powerless.

To use economics to explain African-American student athletes and their perceptions of being powerless in the field of athletics, it may be appropriate to view their involvement in intercollegiate athletics to a travail labor system. The yearly scholarships, considered a gratuitous scholarship for the trade of their athletic talent, can only be described as a farce. Their athletic talents are contracted to these institutions for exploitation of their talent to obtain licensing contracts that generate colossal sums of revenue in marketing sport paraphernalia, television and sporting events. The supreme payoff is the end product, which is the athletic skill displayed on game day that is sold to fans at stadiums and arenas around the country.

The television market appears to bring these institutions the most revenue. For example, the most lucrative collegiate sport television contract was in 2001 when the NCAA signed a \$1 billion contract with CBS – TV to televise basketball and other sporting events during the next seven years (Lapchick, 2001). According to Ferrell (2001), this averages out to about \$143 million a year that the NCAA is receiving from the television contract alone. Just from these figures, it is evident the amount of money athletes in revenue earning sports can generate. When considering the revenue generated by these athletes compared to the minimal expenditures made to athletes, one can draw the conclusion that economic exploitation exist in college athletics.

The feeling of being powerless may result from the economic exploitation of student-athletes because they have no ownership, besides their yearly scholarships in the product of entertainment that they produce. They receive no commission from television contracts, sales from licensing programs, or gate receipts. Basically, these large Division I institutions benefit from cheap labor that is primarily produced by African-American student athletes who migrate to these universities every year for the fallacy of having a career in professional sports as a panacea for their financial problems.

As migrant laborers, these institutions recruit student-athletes as labor ready for hire. They come to these institutions ready for work with their basic athletic skills already developed. These institutions receive student-athletes as skilled laborers who only need to learn the operations of the team offensive and defensive systems.

Another aspect of student-athletes' experiencing powerlessness stems from their lack of political power and equitable representation at the administrative level in these

athletic departments. Student athletes are governed by policies that they do not create nor develop, which subject African-American student athletes at a greater disadvantage because of the lack of adequate representation, i.e., few African-American role models in coaching, athletic directors, or administrators. For example, the Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society calculated the number of African-Americans that filled head and assistant coaches positions in NCAA Division I sports during the 1992 season and concluded that out of 1165 head coaching positions only 52 (4%) were African-American and out of 5000 assistant coaching positions only 192 (4%) were African-American (Jackson, 1993). These numbers show the lack of representation African-Americans have at the coaching level. Without proper representation, the voice for African-American student athletes is often muted, and they remain powerless within the political system of these athletic departments.

In the few cases where there is physical representation, African-Americans in administrative and coaching positions, their agendas have already been chosen for them.

Edwards (1993) states:

Though many of these institutions acceded to African-American demands, the revolt of the African-American athlete in the late 1960's demanded the hiring of African-American coaches and athletic administrators, within a decade – by the late 1970's – it was clear that the unprecedented hiring of African-American assistant basketball and football coaches and African-American administrators amounted to little beyond cosmetic transition devoid of any substantive potential for transformation.

By the onset of the 1980s, what had long been obvious to the honest and objective observer of the collegiate sport scene was being openly admitted by many African-American athletic administrators and assistant coaches: to wit, African-American assistant coaches were almost universally consigned to the principal role of recruiting African-American athletic

talent, while African-American administrators in an inordinate proportion of cases were relegated to the role of leveraging African-American athletes academic eligibility with faculty and otherwise assuring that they were technically prepared to fulfill their athletics obligation – the roles of plantation slave catcher and slave overseer, respectively, in the stark and uncompromising rhetoric of some sports activists and critics p.4

Edward's statement reveals another problem regarding the miniscule amount of African-American representation in administrative and coaching positions by subjugating a group of people by using members of that group. Apparently, political dominance is maintained despite the cosmetic transitions that take place in higher education in athletic departments. These transitions, as Edwards stated, are without substance for transformation where student-athletes have no representation or political power, thus inevitably yielding them to the sense of being powerless.

Economic exploitation and insufficient political representation, no economic or political power, can create a lack of autonomy and control in the lives of student-athletes. They are powerless because they have no control over the product they produce, nor do they have a voice in the governance of their daily lives on large Division 1 campuses.

Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination or the practice of racism is a power structure that oppresses and exploits people on the basis of their race. Racism distinguishes the experiences of African-American student athletes from those of other students. All of the African-American student athletes in this study report experiencing racial discrimination from

coaches and teammates.

Racism also forces African-American student athletes to take a different structural position in relation to their experiences at Division I institutions. The relatively high percent of African-American student athletes reporting racial discrimination may be the result of greater racial isolation. Consequently, when African-American student athletes withdraw from the campus body, the less racism they will encounter.

Another unique explanation for the high percent of African-American student athletes experiencing racial discrimination may be related to their size and status on a college campus. Rhoden (1990) interviewed African-American student athletes at several major universities and discovered that their status and size protected them from much of the racial tension other African-American students experience. This is discriminatory if African-American student-athletes are befriended by the campus and city residents for their athletic talent and not for their race as an African-American student. Racial discrimination is masked behind this community's ability to see African-American student-athletes as semi-celebrities who seek factitious and disingenuous relationships with the athlete while on scholarship.

At the institutional level, special admission requirements are made to permit many African-American student athletes into these institutions so that the institution can benefit from the athletic talents and qualify these admissions as benevolent, giving a chance to academically at-risk students. Therefore, racial discrimination is dissembled behind the "benefits" student-athletes appear to receive for their athletic ability.

Isolation From Other Students

The social component of the student athlete that is similar to the migrant worker, suggest that individuals rotate from home residences to work sites that have a different social setting. One example of the different social setting student-athletes must encounter when attending Division 1 institutions is in relation to their socioeconomic status. Twelve of the African-American student athletes were from low-income families, thus they leave a different social setting than the middle to upper class social setting they are entering on these campuses. This difference in socioeconomic status can create the experience of isolation from other students because the African-American student-athletes are in a minority with a lack of power or influence. To avoid a feeling of discontent, African-American student-athletes may find comfort in isolation away from the campus body.

The cultural component of the student athlete that is similar to the migrant worker, suggest that individuals migrate to work sites that have different cultural settings. For instance, cultural adjustments will occur with simply things like, haircuts, churches, food, social events, lack of African-Americans etc. Therefore, some of the cultural expressions African-American student athletes are familiar with in their communities are not available at Division 1 institutions. Subsequently, when African-American student-athletes arrive on campus, they experience culture shock because they are unexpectedly exposed to many cultural expressions from different racial groups. Until they become adjusted (become more bicultural) to these different cultural expressions, if they do at all, they will experience isolation from other students. Becoming bi-culturally literate – i.e.,

knowing, understanding, and respecting different cultural expressions – is probably the inevitable process that will dictate the amount of success or lack of success African-American student athletes will experience at these institutions. This process, becoming bicultural, may be accelerated for African-American student athlete because of the athletic demands that compels them to interact with teammates of different races, coaching staff and administrators.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Many studies have focused on African-American male athletes prior to college and after they arrive on campus, but few studies concentrate on their experiences while on scholarship along with retirement from sport. Due to the limited related literature regarding this subject, counseling and training interventions that address these psychosocial concerns will have to be developed for a better understanding of this problem. The question remains, if they had a negative experience in college and did not graduate or play at the professional level, how can the athletic department assist them after their eligibility expires? Also in terms of failure and success, could the fact that most of the athletes majored in fields not related to their current jobs may have an impact on their self-esteem and post-sport adjustment.

Although I am not able to ascertain why relationships differ between the African-American athlete and the athletic department, I am always led back to the same conclusion: that revenue and race are the determinant in the vast majority of negative experiences of African-American athletes after their eligibility expires. As stated, African-Americans are viewed in this society as excellent athletes and entertainers. Many African-American youth are training everyday to become the next superstar to play in the NFL to support their families along with status of being a professional athlete. Due to the fact that African-American youth are investing so much of their time into athletics, it is only obvious that the college recruiters will covet their athletic talent to generate

money to maintain the lavish lifestyles of the college coaches and administrators. I am cognitive to the fact that the coaches would exploit any student regardless of race if they could engender revenue for the athletic department along with maintaining a level of job security. But the problem in athletics is much more intrinsic because the administrators and coaches are not majority African-American and the African-American parents do not have the political nor the economic power to grapple with a billion dollar industry. When the graduation rates and the evidence of exploitation impact student athletes in the hierarchy, then you may see changes because the parents in the hierarchy will have the economic and political power. These institutions are moving toward two societies, one wealthy, one disadvantage and poor---separate and unequal. These relationships can prove to provoke undesirable consequences for student-athletes. Many excuses are offered by the athletic departments to explain these differences in the relationship, in part by using the athletes' demeanor or perceived attitude to justify their treatment. Race and producing revenue accounts for an athletes' ill treatment at these institutions, which permeates all levels of collegiate and professional sports.

Though I concentrated solely on college football to give the best examples possible, no sport is immune to my conclusion. Furthermore, I restricted my examples solely to African-American athletes since they are the most addressed in sports print. My intentions in using these examples to understand the adverse college experiences of African-American athletes was to explain the relationships in terms of money and race, and simply indicate the consequences.

Often we think of sports as having been one of the first institutions to break the

color barrier. However, being first does not mean that it remained the catalyst for improving the adverse college experiences of African-American athletes along with the racial tension on large Division 1 campuses. The dilemma for the African-American athlete on these campuses arises from the dismal and repressive social conditions he encounters while attending these schools. The African-American experience at a large institution can become isolation and rejection. Since support from the hierarchy is not dependable, African-American athletes are increasingly turning toward themselves.

The old cliché, "you give us your athletic ability, we give you a free education" is one of the biggest fabrications ever concocted by these athletic institutions. There is no such thing as a "free ride" in life. The African-American athletes pay dearly with their blood, sweat and tears for the indoctrination he receives while attending these large Division 1 schools. The argument to increase more scholarships for African-American athletes because it gives some disadvantage African-American athlete the opportunity to attend college would have some credence if the coaches were truly concerned with educating athletes. It appears that some coaches and athletic directors recruit athletes who are outstanding on the playing fields, just for their athletic prowess to produce revenue. They have been accused of exploiting African-American athletes in order to have a powerhouse team and to win. Some sports figures have blatantly said that if the athlete could not sustain his academic requirements, then it is not the fault of the athletic department. Seventy percent of all African-American athletes who enroll in four year Division 1 institutions, drop out at some point, compared with only (45%) of whites (Arizona Daily Star, Dec. 12, 94).

Then why are African-American athletes recruited? Individual schools generate millions from amateur athletics. The African-American athlete at a large institution is primarily an athletic commodity. Athletic receipts build stadiums, arenas, increase salaries, libraries etc. An African-American athlete with great athletic ability, during the course of his college eligibility, is worth approximately three million dollars in gate receipts and television rights to these departments. Every coach who recruits an African-American athlete hopes that he has uncovered a potential great athlete because it means job security, money and prestige for the coach and the school. What does the student athlete receive in return for his athletic talent? Most often, with few exceptions, he receives his walking papers as soon as his eligibility has expired. The paper I am referring to usually does not have the university seal of degree certification showing the completion of degree requirements.

Another area that may cause the negative experiences when African-American athletes leave school could stem from "staking" African-American players. These conditions, added to the fact that other athletes do not have to be and are not expected to be as good as African-American athletes. Most of the positions at these schools could be manned by all African-American players producing an all African-American team. But the coaches neatly avoid this predicament by "staking" African-American players at one position or another. The results are usually the same, African-Americans make the team usually at first-string positions. Other African-Americans with athletic ability far and above that of many of the other players who make the team are discharged or told that they can remain on the team without full scholarship or with no support at all. This could

be one of the factors as to why many African-American athletes have negative experiences when their eligibility expires.

Another area of concern is with the alumni boosters. Entering into a large Division 1 institution for an African-American athlete can be somewhat of a culture shock to say the least. From the time they enter school, ostensibly sincere boosters are around to make the African-American athletes feel privileged and supported. This undesired pressure to interact with strangers associated with these athletic departments is placed on student-athletes without their request. Many African-American athletes come from large cities and have no experience living or socializing with people who live a lifestyle of the rich, powerful and famous. You can't find it astonishing that so many African-American athletes seek relief from those tensions (Hacker, 1992). Culturally, the rules seemed to have changed for the African-American athlete once he arrives on campus along with discomfort in sharing their lives with these wealthy boosters. Adler (1991) reported the results from his study indicated that nine out of ten African-American players on a Division 1 basketball team felt uncomfortable when socializing with boosters. From differences in table manners to their overall treatment by the boosters continuously showed them that they were outsiders. This awkwardness in with boosters may be due to the fact that many of these players are from disadvantaged backgrounds and they perceive boosters as people who were above them in ways that we traditionally judge as having status in our society: income, age, education level and occupation (Adler, 1991). From orientation, African-American student athletes feel alienation that other non-minority students are free from once entering college. Unfortunately, these

relationships with the boosters, though they start out with seemingly sincerity and generosity on the part of the boosters, is never long lived for any one individual player. From this empirical experience while attending college, there is a profound affect on the way the athlete will scrutinize his relationships with people in the future after his eligibility expires and his retirement from sports.

A clear majority of African-American student athletes reported a sense of being different from other students. In the colonial relationship, as described by Memmi (1965), a bond of mutual dependence is established between the colonizers and colonized. In terms of African-American student-athletes, the recruitment of the athletes is the process that initiates this relationship. This recruiting process establishes a mutual dependence between African-American student-athletes and Division 1 institutions, which is mediated by the athletic staff. Most NCAA Division 1 institutions actively recruit student athletes by mail, telephone, and in-home visits along with a paid trip to visit the campus. This intensive recruitment does not happen for students who do not participate in intercollegiate athletes. Although some college departments recruit students, that process is not as intensive or as highly publicized as the recruitment of student athletes.

The relationship that is established during the recruitment process between African-American student-athletes and Division 1 institutions can create a sense of being different from other students. African-American athletes may sense that their existences at these institutions are different from other students after arriving on campus. Their recruitment to these campuses and the privileges they receive during the visits creates

differences between the athlete and the student body. Even on campus, their status as athletes creates a difference from the student body. African-Americans have historically been viewed and accepted mainly for their physical abilities and athletic prowess. This is an unjust presumption especially when a society views intellectual ability as superior to physical ability. When the NCAA examined the percentages of the football and basketball team at Division 1 institutions to the percentages of overall African-American students on campus, they found a striking difference. African-American students have high percentages in football, men and women's basketball, but only a paucity of African-American students in the student body. This disproportionate representation of African-American athletes on these teams could create a sense of being different from other students. It seems to indicate that the first and foremost interest these institutions have with African-American students is for the use of their athletic talents, valuing them more as athletes than as students. Therefore, the minuscule amount of African-American students on these campuses and the large percentage of African-American athletes can be considered a form of institutional racism that creates negative experiences at the end of their athletic eligibility. African-American athletes are somewhat analogous to migrant workers who work locations with unfamiliar cultural and social settings, which could be an explanation as to why athletes perceive themselves different from other students. In their study of college athletes, Adler and Adler (1991), suggest that racial and socioeconomic barriers "left African-American student athletes with little in common, culturally, with other students" (p.107).

The cultural and social settings at Division 1 institutions may be alien to many

African-American student athletes, thus presenting adverse experiences at the end of their athletic eligibility. For example, the cultural and social settings that are unique to African-American communities may not exist for African-American athletes at Division 1 institutions. Despite the fact that many Division 1 institutions have established African-American studies departments and cultural centers, there continues to be a void in these institutions that create unfavorable perceptions and experiences of these institutions when their eligibility expires. Also, the racial differences that are evident in the demographics of the campuses could also be an explanation for this experience.

Implications

The findings suggest that to the African-American male athlete, academics can't compete in the same arena with athletics in terms of residual rewards. A good education is something that is indefeasible, but the successful athlete sees it as something that also can't be flaunted or seen with the naked eye by his peers. It does not lead to millions of dollars, expensive jewelry, fancy cars, commercial endorsements, and beautiful women. Therefore, a degree pales in comparison to academics for these men and becomes secondary or low on their list of priorities. Education remains important only as a means of staying academically eligible in order to play football.

The quality of African-American student-athletes' lives after their playing days are over is likely to be related to the quality of their education. Those African-American student-athletes who are able to obtain a college education are likely to enjoy greater economic, social, and psychological benefits than are those who end their college athletic

careers without receiving equitable compensation for their talent. Coming from very different backgrounds than their fellow student-athletes and fellow African-American college students, they may have unique post-athletic career experience. More enlightened efforts by the NCAA and individual institutions can enhance the chances of African-American students-athletes' spending their post-athletic days reaping the benefits of a college education instead of recovering from exploitation. Since African-American student-athletes and their families will have to endure the consequences of an exploitative athletic career, they must also shoulder the responsibility for obtaining a meaningful college education in a system that is not as responsive to their needs as student-athletes, and not athlete-students.

Peters (1991), in her review of literature on parenting in African-American families, concluded that African-American mothers educate their children about expected encounters with racism and, consequently, attempt to develop high self-esteem and self confidence in their children to overcome these anticipated experiences. In addition, African-American history is filled with instances of racial exclusion and unfair treatment in sport, much of which is known to African-American athletes today. Thus it is not surprising that many African-American athletes likely approach the sport situation with a predisposition and heightened sensitivity toward racism. And, the perceived insensitivity of coaches toward the needs of African-American athletes will only reinforce this perception.

This is not to say that African-American athletes deserve or are expected to adhere to a different set of rules or guideline than other players. Instead it means that

coaches must be cognizant of the importance of building a firm psychological foundation with African-American players on which his expectations and interactions with the athlete can grow; a reprimand aimed at the player's actions, never at his race, athletic ability, character or personality. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the development of a healthy relationship between the athletic department and the athlete should balance the needs of both parties. If a coach expects African-American athletes to have loyalty and respect, persist at making an optimal effort, be responsive to feedback, and support team goals, then the coach must provide the athletes with security (no fear of punishment), sensitivity (actively seeking out and hearing the views of others), flexibility (receptive to individual needs) and mutual trust, respect, and honesty.

The most repulsive feature of college football today is that many universities engage in what amounts to professional football, but hold fast to the illusion that their athletes are amateurs. The NCAA can be viewed as a business enterprise whose primary function is the production of competitive sporting events. Without question the primary labor force for the NCAA is the student athlete. Much debate has centered around the label amateur applied to student athletes in revenue producing sports at universities that produce colossal sums of revenue from the athletic talents of these student athletes. A case can be made that the athletic scholarship is a form of payment to the athlete for his ability to generate money to these athletic departments. If one supports this supposition, given the amount of money generated by these athletes for the perspective schools, college athletes are some of the most underpaid workers in this country. African-American along with other athletes in revenue producing sports deserve workman's

compensation, the right to form unions, and the right to share in the TV contracts. All twenty of the participants in this study felt that they deserved a percentage of the athletic revenue generated to the athletic department. It seems that if the NCAA is to rectify the problems facing African-American athletes, it must first address the economic and racial exploitation of athletes before the problems can be ameliorated.

Given the corporate involvement in college athletics and the huge profits from television contracts, the notion of college athletes being called amateurs is highly questionable. The interest of universities and athletic departments are dissembled behind the label of calling student athletes "amateurs", in reality student athletes in revenue producing sports are the primary labor force of a multi-million dollar a year business. It is not surprising that those who benefit economically from collegiate sports rebuff the idea of paying college athletes. In rejecting this idea, we often hear the argument that scholarship athletes are being paid with a free education. This argument does not clearly explain what is meant by the word "free" and most importantly it does not address the requisites involved in obtaining this so called "free" education.

Limitations

This study included several limitations that might restrict the ability to generalize some of the results in this study. The players interviewed in this study attended a university in the Southwest. Similar documentation is needed from other geographical locations to validate the perceptions found in this study. In addition, highly skilled male football players from a single Division 1 university may or may not reflect the views and

needs of African-American athletes in other sports, universities, coaches, skill levels, or the views of African-American females. Another limitation is the win-loss record of the players may have impacted the psychological thinking, team cohesion and overall college experience of some athletes that may not reflect African-American athletes from a successful athletic program.

Unfortunately, the research literature on the psychological consequences of athletic retirement has several conceptual shortcomings that severely limit our understanding of post-athletic life for African-American athletes. First, the research literature has conceptualized post-athletic retirement as a monolithic event with all athletes having similar reasons for their participation in athletics. It is assumed that all athletes participate in intercollegiate athletics because of their love for the sport. Such an assumption overlooks those student athletes who view participation in college athletics as an experience that is tolerated in exchange for an opportunity for an education and wealth.

Most of the research has utilized retrospective techniques to assess changes in individuals' perceptions of their athletic experience and adjustment. In other words, the former athletes are asked questions in the present about what their perceptions of their experiences were at a previous point in time when they were athletes. Such techniques are vulnerable to distortions and deficits in the subject's memory, as well as to the possibility of the athletes' providing responses that make them appear more favorable. Another limitation is the failure to use representative samples of student-athletes, which makes generalizing the finding beyond the samples in the studies very tenuous. Finally,

the lack of clarity and uniformity in the definition of such concepts as athletic retirement, psychological adjustment, and life satisfaction has resulted in the use of imprecise measures of these concepts. In order for this research to progress in a meaningful manner, a more sophisticated model of retirement is needed. These models should be sensitive to differences in athletic experience and orientation that are the result of such demographic factors as the athlete's race, gender, and socioeconomic status.

Recommendations

After viewing the findings of this study, several recommendations can be offered to better meet the needs of current student athletes. There is much more that can and should be done to overhaul college sports and assist student-athletes. As stated, the NCAA recently signed a billion dollar contract with CBS TV to televise basketball games and various other sporting events over the next seven years. How about allocating some of that money to the athletes, whose blood, sweat, and tears build the arenas and stadiums?

I'm not proposing paying players, which would make them professionals. What I'm talking about is a stipend. Under current NCAA rules, scholarship athletes only can receive room, board, tuition, and books. They are not allowed to work, so the poor ones literally have no cash to take a girlfriend to the movies, buy a late night snack, or even get a haircut. A small stipend would cover such expenses and at least curtail on the temptation to accept money surreptitiously. As the NCAA's new television contract demonstrates, college sports are a lucrative source for producing more and more money.

The NCAA should create an academic "superfund" to support the education of past, current, and future student-athletes. Such a fund could be established by tapping into sports annual gross national product. Administered by a central agency, it could be used to assist athletes at institutions that are not making money from their sports programs.

This would link-in with NCAA executive director Cedrick Dempsey's challenge to the associations executive committees and the entire membership to develop ideas for distributing the billion dollars from the CBS contract to ease competitive pressure, improve integrity, and bolster graduation rates among student athletes.

Once established, each institution could hire an additional outreach counselor to work with returning athletes. The superfund could provide academic support for high school athletes and establish internships for minorities so that every Division I institution might be able to address the dismal percentage of minorities employed in college athletics. Under the current rules, scholarships are renewable annually, with no guarantee until an athlete completes his education. This would ensure that an education is available, that the contract between an institution and an athlete is real.

What if a coach's salary were tied to graduation rates? He would be much more likely to make sure his players attend classes and that those who need help would receive assistance. Additional, colleges should hire more minority coaches, athletic administrators, faculty, and staff so that cultural diversity is reflected on more than just the basketball and football teams, and minority athletes would have more mentors and role models. While it might take time to establish, the superfund would assist student-

athletes in finishing their education and help the public regain confidence in intercollegiate athletes.

To be successful at the collegiate and professional level of competition requires athletes to devote almost exclusive energy in their quest for athletic excellence. Although focused attention on training and competition may be viewed as necessary to attain athletic goals, it may also place student-athletes in a vulnerable position when they disengage from sports with or without a college degree. There are many forms of social support to continue to participate in sport, but there are few supports systems to disengage from sport. Most of the focus given to student-athletes is during the time of athletic eligibility. After the eligibility expires, some of these athletes disconnect themselves from the athletic department and become a mere memory of the past. The National Collegiate Athletic Association should establish and mandate a service-oriented program for all athletic institutions to assist former student athletes with graduation, personal counseling and development along with a life long relationship with the university through the alumni. The crux of this program should serve as a mechanism to abet retired athletes with counseling out of active sport competition and graduation.

Counseling interventions for student athletes must focus on the development of coping skills in response to or in anticipation of transition from sport (Chartrand & Lent, 1987). Transition from sport may signal loss or a threat that has personal, social, and emotional affects that, if not addressed, may have serious consequences. For example, because the athletic profession fosters player dependence, many student athletes routinely expect that others will do their personal decision making such as choosing academic

majors, class schedules, and summer employment. Consequently, many student athletes have not developed career problem solving and decision making skills important for later career development and transition. Pearson and Petipas (1990) extrapolated Schlossberg's (1981) model of transition and predicted that transition would be more difficult for athletes who (a) exclusively based identity on athletics; (b) have a gap between level of aspiration and ability; (c) are inexperienced with transition; (d) have limited ability to adapt to emotional or behavioral deficits; (e) lack supportive relationships; and (f) lack resources to cope with transition. Nonetheless, few models probe the emotional and cognitive aspects involved in the transition from sport.

Athletic departments should implement the Hopson and Adams's Seven Phase Model of Stages Accompanying Transition if they want to address the cognitive and emotional problems of retiring athletes. The integration of this model explains the emotional factors accompanying a transition and the information processing of career and personal decision-making. Hopson and Adam's model addresses emotional and self-esteem reactions accompanying a transition. Stages related to experienced feelings are characterized by an initial downward spiral and are followed by upward stages of emotion.

Shock and immobilization characterize stage 1. The amount of time spent in this phase depends on the individual's psychological make-up and the nature of the transitional event. Involuntary changers (e.g., the athlete who is injured) are more likely to react in an overwhelmed or shocked manner.

Stage 2 is characterized by the desire to make the transition smaller by

minimizing its importance or denying the truth of the matter. Feelings of frustration, depression, and anxiety are characteristic of the stage.

Stage 3 is marked by intensified feelings of anxiety and depression as individuals begin to doubt their abilities to provide for themselves and may become self-deprecating. Emotional responses include sadness, fear of the future, and anger.

Stage 4 suggests that an individual reaches a critical point of acceptance of the event and begins to look toward the future. Individuals let go of their negative emotions and begin an upward spiral.

Stage 5 is a time for exploration of new options. Individuals get a burst of energy and adopt a new way of looking at transition. They have a sense of moving forward and want to act on or test out new ideas.

Stage 6 is a reflective phase following the roller coaster of emotion. This stage involves active participation in exploring and changing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Individuals begin to make sense of what has happened and are able to attach new meaning to their experiences.

Stage 7 is a point of integration and renewal. Exploration brings new ways of behaving and thinking. Individuals are at a higher level of functioning and have learned new skills for coping with future transitions.

Instead of being a part of the problem and blaming the student for not meeting academic demands, the academic advisor can become a part of the solution by providing a supportive atmosphere for African-American student athletes, so they may gain the full benefit of being a student and an athlete. Athletes are human and have feelings just like

others when it comes to wanting to be treated fairly. Not only do they have concerns away from the sport arena, they're also students striving for academic credentials for lifetime professional careers. It is imperative, then, that advisors take the time to know the athlete's history and other aspects of his life on and off campus. The counselor should be seen as someone who is interested in the whole person. Injured athletes are in particular need of attention and emotional support.

Further Research

Further research is recommended to study what would be the effect on athletes if coaches were given long term contracts and the "win at all cost" attitude were taken out of the scenario. Further research is also needed to study the effects of preventive professional counseling prior to the athlete's entrance and exit out of college. More research is needed to determine the effects on the game if coaches recruited only athletes who were academically sound instead of athletically superior.

While colleges currently set up tutoring programs and mandatory study halls, they do not establish mandatory psychological counseling on a regular basis. If professional counseling were made available to athletes, a substantial amount of the social, psychological and normative transitional problems could be avoided or better managed. Counseling has never been more needed on the collegiate level than it is now in the field of athletics. Counseling for coaches could enable them to better deal with this problem of African-American student-athletes having unfavorable experiences during and after their athletic scholarship expires. The issue of individual differences as a function of race runs

counter to the goals and aspirations of many coaches who prefer to view the team as a group rather than as a collection of individuals, each of whom contributes to the group's welfare to benefit of its other members. Consequently, rather than treating all players alike, a more individualized approach is needed, one that is sensitive to the unique personal history, culture, and emotional and psychological needs of each member. Although this study has dealt primarily with the experiences of African-American male athletes in general, the related literature discloses that significant evidence exists illustrating that there are class differences within the African-American community in relationship to athletes. Middle-class African-American athletes may respond differently to certain communication styles and motivational strategies than the underclass African-American athlete. Research in understanding racial and class differences in sport is very much needed with respect to (a) identifying psychological and behavioral tendencies of African-American athletes, perhaps as a function of socioeconomic and cultural background; (b) understanding the factors that promote or inhibit interracial relationships with teammates and coaches; and (c) implementing strategies that coaches, athletic trainers, counselors, administrators should use in assisting African-American student athletes. At the present, the African-American experience at large Division I institutions is a story of hope, frustration, and disillusionment. If no remedies are made, will the African-American student-athlete survive, or will he be added to the dusty pages of history.

APPENDIX INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Describe your goals upon entering college. Did you give any consideration to any other career?
2. What were your reasons for wanting a career in professional football?
3. Personally, what do you feel were some of the obstacles that caused you not to achieve your goal as a professional athlete?
4. In your opinion, why did you fail in achieving your goal of becoming a professional athlete?
5. You have not mentioned yourself in relationship to the university. Do you feel they played a role?
6. When you were in college, did you know the percentage of African-American male football players who did not achieve their goal to play in the NFL? What made you think you could play at the professional level?
7. Retrospectively, if you had the opportunity to repeat your first two years of college, how would you change it academically? How would you change it athletically?
8. What is your reason for not graduating?
9. How comfortable were you in the academic environment?
10. Do you feel the university made an effort to help you succeed academically? Do you feel the school could have done more?
11. Did your college experience prepare you for success or failure after retiring from football?
12. When did you realize your athletic dream was not coming true? How about your education dream?
13. Did you seek tutoring or professional help?
14. When you realized you might not play in the NFL, how did that affect your classroom activity?

APPENDIX INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - Continued

15. Would you return to school to complete your degree requirements if the NCAA permitted you to attend the school of your choice with tuition paid until you complete your degree requirements?
16. How were you treated during your college career?
17. Did you feel different from other students while attending college?
18. Did you experience racial isolation?
19. Did you feel a lack of control over your life while on scholarship?
20. Did you experience racial discrimination during college?
21. Did you feel isolated from other students?
22. How were you treated after your scholarship expired?
23. Do you think the athletic department discouraged African-American student athletes from associating with the African-American community and student body?
24. Do you feel you were given a scholarship to graduate or produce revenue for the athletic department?
25. Do you support your alma mater athletically and financially?
26. When you realized your career as an athlete was officially over, how did you feel?
27. When you retired from sports, did you need counseling to deprogram yourself from playing football?
28. Was it difficult not being in the public view as an athlete after your career ended?
29. If a high school athlete asked you for advice on pursuing a career in college football or the NFL, would you advise him to pursue a career in football?
30. Do you feel being a former athlete help or hurt you in the job market? When interviewing for a job, do you tell employers you were a former student-athlete?

APPENDIX INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - Continued

31. How was your relationship with teammates?
32. How is your current relationship with your college coach?
33. What role did your family play in helping you adjust to life after playing football?
34. What role did your community play in helping you adjust to life after playing football?
35. Are you successful?
36. What do you need to become more successful?
37. Are you happy?
38. Retrospectively, would you choose a career in football?

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