Spring 2019

Student, Athlete, or Neither at All: A closer look into the experiences of Black basketball players in the NCAA

Armando D. Dunn
Bard College

Recommended Citation

Student, Athlete, or Neither at All: A closer look into the experiences of Black basketball players in the NCAA

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Social Studies
of Bard College

by
Armando Dunn

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York
May 2018

Table of Contents

Introduction

Welcome to the madness. The bright lights, the large crowds, the heckling fans, and the television and news coverage. There are the boosters, and the college representatives and administrators. Boiling down to the center of the madness, there are the head coaches, the assistants, the officials, and most importantly, the players. All of these individuals contribute to the madness. The gameplay, the rules, the policies-everything, and everyone are affected to keep the madness from becoming a disaster. There is, indeed, vagueness in the first few sentences regarding the madness, but you will begin to understand the madness soon enough. For some readers, you will learn about the madness for the first time. However, others will directly relate and understand the madness. They will specifically be able to connect to the stories of the players that I am interpreting as well as their feelings about the madness. With the center of the madness looming over the players it consumes, there is a lot to say about the madness' effect and the role it plays as a structure. Many believe that the madness is acceptable, but where there is madness, there is influence and power. I do not want to get too far ahead of myself, but I am sure you are wondering: what is the madness? The madness that I am referring to is the NCAA and Division I basketball.

The NCAA is a non-profit organization that creates the rules and policies to regulate intercollegiate athletics. Originally ran by students, the deaths and severe injuries of intercollegiate football players led to the creation of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association (Smith 2000). The IAA was renamed the NCAA in 1910 and Division I basketball became a hall market sport in the development of the organization (Smith 2000). Throughout the 20TH century, Black student-athletes became the main source of revenue due to their play on the court (Smith 2000). High-

flying dunks, wonderful crossovers, and overwhelming amounts of talent took intercollegiate basketball to another level. The costs of the NCAA championship tournament ascended because of the excitement brought to the game by Black basketball players (Smith 2000). As a result, the NCAA continues to profit off of the play of Black Division I student-athletes due to the regulations and practices they currently have in place. Despite the commercial and economic exploitation of these student-athletes, the question which came to mind was: How were the experiences of Black basketball players regulated by the NCAA, the regulatory body of college sports?

Essentially, my study will uncover the ways in which the NCAA acts as an organization which regulates the experiences of Black student-athletes. Based on nine in-depth interviews with Black men's and women's basketball players, I was able to analyze and interpret their experiences through several theoretical frameworks. My research led to significant findings regarding this particular group of Black student-athletes. I discovered that my respondents were being shaped into NCAA student-athletes and alienated from aspects of past social contexts. In addition, my findings demonstrated that my women respondents had bad relationships with their head coaches whereas the men respondents had good relationships with their head coaches. By using Marxist theory regarding alienation and Hylton's critical race theory, I argue that the NCAA's practices, standards, and goals do not foster the well-being of these Black student-athletes. Because of the limited number of interviews, the findings of this study are not generalizable to larger populations of Black student-athletes. However, this study will help to think about the ways in which Black student-athletes and Black people, more generally, are impacted by macro-level institutions like the NCAA.

In the chapters to come, I will lay out my argument and findings which will highlight the NCAA's control over my respondents. In Chapter 1, I focus on the history of the NCAA leading

up to how the organization functions today. Next, I review the existing literature about the NCAA and Black student-athletes and discuss how these studies are in conversation with mine. The last sections of the study will explain the importance of my study, methodology, position, and the main takeaways. In Chapter 2, I describe how my respondents are socialized, shaped, and alienated as NCAA student-athletes and explain the implications of the NCAA's practices and standards. Further, Chapter 3 will focus on my respondents as critical race theorists where they are able to express their feelings regarding their relationships with head coaches. Also, I draw on literature that discusses the underrepresentation of Black head coaches and describes the NCAA preferences in regards to race and gender. To end this study, I will conclude by focusing on the central sociological themes from each chapter, addressing particular findings, and drawing on the shortcomings of the study.

Chapter 1: An Overview of the NCAA and the Experiences of Black Student-Athletes

How Did We Get Here?

The beginning of intercollegiate athletics started in 1840 when students from academic institutions like Harvard and Yale participated in competitive athletic events (Smith, 2000). In this case, Harvard and Yale would receive commercial sponsors to gain advantages in particular sports (Smith 2000). Due to the recruitment of non-students in these athletic events, there were unfair advantages for institutions who did not have the same luxury to do what was essentially cheating in the activities. At the time, all intercollegiate athletics events were controlled by students (Smith 2000). With issues of unfairness, commercialization, and the disregard of academics, faculty members at multiple institutions sought to find ways to regulate these athletic events (Smith 2000). One of the few ways to solve these problems were the creation of conferences to regulate game play as well as facilitate game scheduling (Smith 2000). Still, intercollegiate athletics did not have a thorough system of regulation and, by 1905, there were numerous sports deaths and injuries stemming from collegiate football (Smith 2000). Athletes from a variety of institutions were not protected and subjected to severely harming themselves, which ultimately led to the involvement of Theodore Roosevelt, former president of the United States, to assess and change the rules of football (Smith 2000). Even with the president's intervention, sports violence continued, prompting representatives from different member institutions to convene and create the Rules Committee, an organization made to reform intercollegiate football rules (Smith 2000). This committee eventually expanded the conversation with the support from educators, President Roosevelt, and Henry MacCracken, the chancellor of New York University (Smith 2000). Thus,

the Intercollegiate Athletic Association was formed with sixty-two-member institutions that would go on to create essential rules for intercollegiate athletics' safety and regulations (Smith 2000).

In 1910, the Intercollegiate Athletic Association, or IAA, changed their name to the National Collegiate Athletic Association: the NCAA. The NCAA continued to face the same conflicts that they encountered when the organization first started (Smith 2000). There was such as an emphasis on winning, schemes to profit off of sports, and rules which did not guarantee safe and impartial games (Smith 2000). There was a concerted effort by students and faculty to oversee intercollegiate sports because, by the 1920s, college sports became a large part of higher education in the United States (Smith 2000). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Education made efforts to challenge commercialism in college athletics, but this only led to minor restructuring of NCAA rules and governance (Smith 2000). From the 1920s until the end of the World War II, the number of intercollegiate athletes grew dramatically due to the surge in the number of military recruits going to college, as well as technological advancements, like the television and radio, in addition to the expansion of sports programs across the country (Smith, 2000). Due to various scandals in regards to gambling, and recruiting, the NCAA created the Sanity Code which was enforced to stop these exploitative practices (Smith 2000). In addition, the NCAA formed the Constitutional Compliance Committee that, in 1951, became the Committee on Infractions which gave the committee more power in regards to sanctioning players and coaches (Smith 2000). This began the NCAA's member's first steps toward exerting authority, appointing the first executive director, Walter Byers, and the first negotiation of a television contract valued at one million dollars (Smith, 2000). The NCAA, during the 1950s and 1960s, thrived in terms of acting as an organization which regulated and enforced college sports (Smith 2000).

Following this new era of the NCAA, the organization faced scrutiny based on unfair exercises of authority in 1971 (Smith 2000). Alleviating conflicts with enforcement and serving in an investigative role, NCAA membership created divisions which reflected the level of competition an institution belonged to and reprimanded schools for violations which, in turn, affected athletes, coaches, and administrators (Smith 2000). The NCAA received heavy backlash from hearings held by the United States House of Representatives Subcommittee and, as a result, the organization found itself adjusting its role as an authoritative system heading college sports (Smith 2000). College sports' expenses from different institutions rose and college presidents were worried about their reputations as their success was tied to the prominence of the athletic programs (Smith 2000). These were several other issues the NCAA faced and, as economic times got tougher, university and college presidents found themselves more involved in the governance of the NCAA in order to maintain a sense of authority over their school's interests (Smith 2000). Eventually, these university and college presidents formed an Executive Committee and a Board of Directors for different divisions who were also consider chief officers of the NCAA (Smith 2000). The shift in governance of the NCAA from executive directors to college presidents was a significant development in college sports due to the amount of money that these collegiate sports, specifically football, were making (Smith 2000). After the establishment of a Special Committee to review the NCAA's enforcement, the NCAA developed their enforcement process and governing responsibilities to match with the growing problems that they faced in the 1990s with regards to gender equity, racial ambiguity, and economic issues (Smith 2000). The NCAA relied heavily on the emergence of African American athletes who brought in the most money for their respective schools, and therefore provided the main source of the NCAA's revenue (Smith 2000). The costs of governance, and institutional and conference needs came from, and still come from,

efforts of student-athletes of color from the Division I basketball championship tournament (Smith 2000).

Continuing on from the brief history of the NCAA provided above, the struggle to find ways to diminish the commercialization of student-athletes has proceeded throughout the 20th century. However, Walter Byers explains how the organization persists as an exploitative system without attempting to stop the commercialization of student-athletes in his book *Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Exploiting College Athletes* (1997). Byers analyzes how the NCAA has gotten worse as an organization in this year following his role as the first executive director of the NCAA (Byers and Hammer 1997). Byers writes, "Today, history has been turned upside down. The liberator of the past has become today's oppressor" (Byers and Hammer 1997). In other words, the NCAA was created to support student-athletes, but now they have deviated greatly from their original intent, and are coercing student-athletes through commercialization. The NCAA is committed to what Byers calls the "neo-plantation belief" which emphasizes the exploitation of players. In this form of exploitation, administrators and coaches are the overseers, and the players are workers whose benefits are being controlled (Byers and Hammer 1997). Also, Byers believes the NCAA has reinstituted the notion that players cannot be considered professionals, as well as creating softer rules which do not properly handle restrictions against misconduct (Byers and Hammer 1997). This reaffirmation of amateurism limits athletes to school-provided expenditures and does not allow for athletes to further benefit from their play and image (Byers and Hammer 1997; Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). With an established bureaucracy, Byers also claims the NCAA puts a significant amount of money into public relations to promote their values and the illusion that college presidents have complete power (Byers and Hammer 1997).

In the book *Unwinding Madness: What Went Wrong with College Sports-and How to Fix It,* Gerald Gurney, Donna Lopiano, and Andrew Zimbalist focus on the nuances in college sports regarding specific growing issues, defining amateurism, and the specialization of the NCAA during the 21st century (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). They believe the NCAA has "lost its way," or, in other words, has strayed away from its original goal to protect the safety and fairness of athletes. The scholars claim that the NCAA exploits these athletes through rules regarding amateurism. Amateurism is a term widely used by the NCAA to describe a student-athlete's status as an athlete who is not a professional (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). Originally, amateurs were considered to be athletes who only play their sport for the pleasure of the sport (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). Amateurs are deemed student-athletes who are NCAA affiliated athletes that obtain athletic scholarships. These scholarship expenses include room, board, tuition, books, fees, and a low-end cost of attendance stipend (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). The NCAA changed what it meant to be an athlete who simply loves to play their respective sport, while also not allowing players to accept monetary compensation for their dedication and the new pressures placed upon them outside of the school-provided expenditures (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017). Because they refer to the NCAA as a plutocracy, a system based on power due to wealth, Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist feel the NCAA has corrupted college sports. In addition, they claim that the organization lacks academic integrity, race, class, and gender stability, adherence to their own core values, and fails to comply as a not-for profit organization based on the uses of their revenue (Gurney, Lopiano, and Zimbalist 2017).

The NCAA Today

The NCAA is a non-profit organization which acts as a support system for collegiate athletes. The organization is made up of college presidents, athletic directors, faculty

representatives, compliance officers, governing and academic staff, coaches, sports information directors, and health and safety personnel (NCAA 2019a). The NCAA handles anything regarding the well-being, sport, and division connected to student-athletes within their affiliated institutions (NCAA 2019a). With these different moving parts, the NCAA does its best to ensure the success of college athletes. With over 1,000 colleges and universities, the organization oversees 100 athletic conferences with 40 affiliated sports organizations. the NCAA seeks to act on their mission by implementing seven core values (NCAA 2019a). The first one (1) is upholding the collegiate model of athletics, or supporting students to balance between athletics, social, and academic experiences (NCAA 2019b). Next, they believe in (2) promoting integrity and sportsmanship as well as (3) acknowledging academic and athletic excellence (NCAA 2019b). The NCAA also wants to maintain their role as a (4) support network by fostering a sense of community with member institutions (NCAA 2019b). There is also an emphasis on (5) a culture of inclusivity which accommodates student-athletes, coaches, and administrators from various backgrounds (NCAA 2019b). The last two values include (6) respect toward difference and institutional autonomy and (7) the presence of presidential leadership at the campus, conference, and national level (NCAA 2019b). With these core values, the NCAA preserves three divisions where Division I sit atop the organization as one of the more influential divisions.

For prospective student-athletes across the country, playing at the Division I level is at the pinnacle of college sports. Student-athletes dream of attending Division I affiliated schools because of the afore-mentioned atmosphere and prestige of the schools. The Division I level includes 351 institutions and provides athletic scholarships to athletes that qualify (NCAA 2019c). Because these institutions are large in student population and enrollment numbers, Division I institutions have the largest budgets in comparison to Division II and III institutions (NCAA

2019d). The NCAA also provides these schools with the money they accumulate during games and events. Specifically, the NCAA receives revenue in two main ways: (1) through Division I men's basketball championships television and marketing rights accumulating around 820 million dollars and (2) through championship ticket sales and through membership dues from each institution (NCAA 2019e). Division I institutions bring in the most revenue and compete for and against some of the highest profile level athletes who are not considered professionals. With this understanding of how the NCAA generates money, I look next at Division I governance and the ways in which the NCAA handles policies, rules, and sanctions.

The NCAA acts as a system of support for Division I athletics, but also an organization that governs. Division I athletics consist of several legislative bodies which include volunteers from institutions who are member affiliated (NCAA 2019f). These bodies and committees work together to govern the division and help create policies (NCAA 2019f). The NCAA's values inform the way in which they govern and enact their policies. Rules are created by the division with support from membership committees (NCAA 2019g). The members of the NCAA propose and approve rules that follows the values they created. In regards to enforcement of the rules, the NCAA national office, as well as other staff ranging from administrators to attorneys, oversee possible violations and investigate the dangers surrounding college sports (NCAA 2019g). In addition, they can process minor violations and present cases to the Committee of Infractions (NCAA 2019g). This committee goes over information regarding player infractions and hold hearings to suggest penalties in order to solve these discussions of infractions (NCAA 2019g). Infractions can also be appealed by the Infractions Appeals Committee (NCAA 2019g). This committee determines whether or not a decision can be reversed or maintained (NCAA 2019g). To make sure stipulations following the Infractions Committee decision are being followed, the

committee monitors the schools and players involved in the infraction (NCAA 2019g). They can restore membership or continue to follow-up until the NCAA's stipulations are fulfilled (NCAA 2019g). The ways in which Division I athletics functions will be important to think about especially in regards to the Division I basketball student-athletes who act as the majority.

A Conversation with Studies Regarding the NCAA

The NCAA insists upon maintaining its status as an organization with the intent of supporting student athletes. John Stieber writes extensively about the NCAA from his perspective as a professor. He refers to the NCAA as being known as a "safety net" for athletes as they continue to improve their rules, manage event marketing, and decrease the number of injuries of athletes (Stieber 1991). However, he views the NCAA as an organization involved in price fixing. Stieber believes there is an unfairness when looking at a student-athlete's scholarship and in-kind monies compared to the NCAA's revenue (Stieber 1991). Stieber also points out that students who receive scholarships for other talents, such as music, are not subject to monetary scrutiny (Stieber 1991). The "behavior" of the NCAA, colleges, and universities, as he describes, is immoral and discriminatory against the student-athletes it claims to support (Stieber 1991). According to another study done about how the NCAA handles infractions, Division I colleges and universities fielding football and basketball do not endure economic damage or problems with reputation after violating NCAA rules (D. R. Smith 2015). Smith's research demonstrates similarities to Stieber based on how the NCAA handles student-athletes and acts immorally. Not only do these institutions not fully serve the student-athletes monetarily, its proven that colleges and universities are unfazed after not following rules and continue to prosper. Stieber is one of many scholars who feels strongly about the NCAA marginalizing black student-athletes (Stieber 1991).

Likewise, a recent study focuses on the organization's structure and corruption. This study takes a socio-historical approach where scholars Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing look at the NCAA as a social control agent. It also goes back through the NCAA's history and breaks down the organization over time (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). Specifically, they look back at past presidents and directors, including Byers, while also citing his work regarding the NCAA (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). The study explains the organization's poor job in handling sanctions and creating rules and policies (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). Their assessment of sanctions and infractions from 1953 to 2016 either did not get resolved or were handled very late when the NCAA had to deal with a number of different cases (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). Based on this fault in the structure, the NCAA continues to not only create more problems for themselves, but persists in not resolving infractions (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). As a result of a failing structure, the NCAA continues to specialize and create special committees in order to combat issues (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). This specialization and expansion of the NCAA's structure gives more control to different committees, therefore lessening the NCAA's role as a social control agent (Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing 2018). Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing's article is hopeful that the NCAA's expansion will help to get different committees to rethink policy. Because infractions are not handled in a timely manner, there is pressure on the NCAA to rethink their structure and policies to be beneficial long-term.

When considering these studies regarding the NCAA, the continuation of research which looks at how the NCAA treats and exploits student-athletes has proven to be significant. As seen above, these studies commonly focus on unfair, economic practices, and the handling of violations by the NCAA. In order to not only establish a functioning system and consider the mistreatment of student-athletes, these studies posit that the NCAA needs to make drastic changes to their rules

and regulations as well as their institutional practices. My study poses similar questions to these studies when considering the "behavior" of the NCAA as Stieber writes. I look at several practices of the NCAA as well as rules which give the NCAA power over the student-athletes I am studying. Although, unlike Stieber, I do not focus solely on the economic aspects of the NCAA, my study provides reasoning as to why this particular group of student-athletes are easily exploitable due to their alignment with the NCAA. Likewise, my study will not necessarily focus on the structuring of the NCAA the same manner as Walker, Seifried, and Soebbing, but rather, how the NCAA has failed these student-athletes by establishing control over their well-being which includes their time, energy, stress, and feelings about being different from other college students.

A Conversation with Studies Regarding the Black Student-Athlete

Earl Smith claims that Black student-athletes as survivors of disease, poverty, and violence (Brook, Scott, and Ross 2004). Because of the disproportionate numbers in regards to deaths, health, and victimization of Blacks, Smith believes Black student-athletes have to better educate themselves based on their unique positions as college students (Brook, Scott, and Ross 2004). Although their voices are not always captured, he claims that these athletes are privileged and can use their talent and their smarts to get ahead (Brook, Scott, and Ross 2004). Despite these sentiments, there are studies which confirm the struggles Black student-athletes face academically and even affect the time in which they graduate (Simiyu 2012; Rubin 2016; Singer 2016; M. P. Smith, Harrison, and Brown 2017; Armstrong and Jennings 2018). There are also studies which employ critical race theory as a way to study Black student-athletes that play Division I sports or at high profile institutions to capture experiences from the lens of race (Simiyu 2012; Rubin 2016; Singer 2016; M. P. Smith, Harrison, and Brown 2017; Armstrong and Jennings 2018). These studies' findings support the idea that racism is still prevalent in Predominantly White Institutions

and as a result, Black student-athletes continue to suffer (Simiyu 2012; Rubin 2016; Singer 2016; M. P. Smith, Harrison, and Brown 2017; Armstrong and Jennings 2018).

Others studies posits that Black student-athletes are not always ready for college prior to their enrollment, which proves the negative correlation between successful sports programs and graduation rates (Mangold, Bean and Adams 2003; Simiyu 2012). Most studies regarding this group of student-athletes tend to be repetitive in terms of their findings when thinking about issues surrounding race, and class (Lawrence 2005; Murty, Roebuck, and McCamey 2014; Murty and Roebuck 2015; Wiggins n.d.). However, one recent study explains that black student-athletes on white campuses are subject to experiences of racial and class stereotyping, economic and academic exploitation, social isolation, and overall exploitative work place (Murty and Roebuck 2015). Timothy Davis' study expresses interest in the NCAA as an organization overall (Davis 1996). He argues that there is a disconnect between NCAA rules and the experiences of these African American student-athletes based on the commercialization of college sports (Davis 1996). The NCAA regulatory scheme allows for institutions to continue to make money, but does not allow for student-athletes to receive any extra impermissible benefits based on amateurism (Davis 1996). Examples of these denied benefits include cash from agents or another outside non-affiliated NCAA member institution (Davis 1996). Despite the similarities in these studies, it is important to note that there are very few studies that go in-depth about the experiences of female Black student-athletes. The one study I did find that focuses on this population posits that these female student-athletes experience classism, racism, and sexism (Withycombe 2011).

Despite taking similar approaches to these studies with regard to race, there needs to be more research done which looks at Black student-athletes across gender. As seen above, these studies focus on themes of class, economic and academic exploitation, but have yet to

acknowledge both men's and women's experiences as student-athletes comparatively. Mistreatment as well as rules and practices created by the NCAA are certainly themes which I want to focus on similarly to Davis; however, I do not want to focus too much on extra benefits and breaking the rules. Instead, I want to express how the rules act as a form of institutional control as well as create a particular type of athlete. In addition, my study provides an overview of practices which are differ from amateurism, as Davis explains, and alienates them from their work and personal lives. Lastly, my study provides black women who are playing Division I basketball with a platform to talk about their experiences, comparable to Withycombe. Considering that sexism is, indeed, a significant topic in general as well as the other themes of Withycombe's argument, my study will focus on how the NCAA, as an institution, has particular gender preferences which negatively affect women's experiences.

Most of these studies express the NCAA as a factor in impeding the progression of Black student-athletes, but Billy Hawkins' *The New Plantation: Black Athletes, College Sports, and Predominantly White NCAA Institutions* explores the exploitation of Black male athletes' experiences through processes similar to slavery (Hawkins 2013). Using historical, quantitative, and qualitative methods, Billy Hawkins looks back at the educational experiences of Black student-athletes in Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Hawkins 2013). He claims that Black student athletes become hyper visible based on their skin color and athletic image and invisible as intellectuals (Hawkins 2013). In addition, Hawkins does an overview of colonialism as an economic system, the role of the NCAA and athletic departments, and exploitation more generally (Hawkins 2013). The book argues that, in intercollegiate athletics, Black male athletes are necessary in generating revenue for athletic departments at many Predominately White Institutions (Hawkins 2013). The main framework

Hawkins uses to solidify his argument is the New Plantation model (Hawkins 2013). The model breakdowns internal colonialism which manifests when a minority is exploited by a dominant colonizer (Hawkins 2013). For Hawkins, the interplay between the colonizer and the colonized describes the relationship between black student-athletes and athletic departments (Hawkins 2013). These student-athletes, as explained in other studies, generate the revenue with their play, but also their image (Hawkins 2013). The New Plantation model, specifically, highlights the sales the NCAA and PWIs gain and the dependence of these student-athletes for the platform and funding to go play professionally or get their degree (Hawkins 2013). Although he expresses the positives of being a black student-athlete at a PWI, Hawkins strongly believes that this model is exploitative and needs to be changed (Hawkins 2013).

Billy Hawkins' study regarding Black student-athletes is significant to the existing literature because of the emphasis he places on the NCAA as an exploitative economic system. He understands the struggles and challenges Black student-athletes face due to their blackness and athletic appearance. His study emphasizes the historical presence of colonialism and the New Plantation model as key factors to keep in mind when understanding the economic exploitation of this group of student-athletes. Although I do not want to go as so far to compare the organization and its system to slavery, my study does focus on the NCAA's power over the student-athletes as well as their preferences regarding race and gender described prior. My study is relatable to his indication on blackness as a marker when my study uses critical race theory as an application to understand experiences with regards to race. If anything, my study contributes to Hawkins' work because my study emphasizes how student-athletes are easily manipulated due to the fact that they are already disciplined to learn a particular set of practices. My study also highlights how the

institutions and coaches who are involved and aligned with the NCAA are complicit in the mistreatment of these Black student-athletes.

Based on the historical developments and studies done with regards to the NCAA and Black student-athletes, there needs to be more of an emphasis placed on qualitative studies which look at the experiences of Black student-athletes across gender. I argue that the NCAA's practices, standards, and goals do not foster the well-being of Black student-athletes. Due to physical, emotional, and mental mistreatment, my respondents face issues of self-esteem, anxiety, stress, as well as loss of time, energy, and experiences as young adults. In addition, they have adverse relationships with coaches and teammates. This study will help to provide a better understanding of how the NCAA shapes Black student-athletes as well as demonstrates the preferences the organization has in regards to race and gender. Through these in-depth interviews and extensive research, we can better understand the effects of the NCAA on a student-athletes' personal life. More research is necessary to consider the lives and experiences of Black student-athletes, who, like other Blacks in our society, face challenges as athletes and still have to attend school. At same time, I bridge the elements from existing literature to further understand how social factors co-exist in a Black student-athlete's experience. There are also no studies which use frameworks like alienation as a way to analyze the experience of Black student-athletes. This project can be further viewed as a sociological case and is important, outside of sports, because the project provides another angle into how and where Black people fit into institutions that make up American society. This study also proves to be an effective way to understand bureaucratic systems/structures in society.

Methods

As part of the study, I wanted to focus on sports specifically basketball because of my love for the game, but also how lucrative basketball was in regards to the NCAA. Division I athletes generate revenue which keeps the division and the organization prospering especially when they make money off of high-profile athletes. I also wanted to focus on Black student-athletes based on my own personal interest and findings of other studies. I did not want to do a comparative study looking at the similarities and differences in experiences between Black and White student-athletes. These two crucial pieces of data swayed my study back in the direction I was originally set on. One study I found showed that there were significant differences between the experiences of Black student athletes versus non-Black student-athletes across division, sport, and academic achievement (Cooper, Davis, and Dougherty 2017, 73). In addition, in 2017-2018, NCAA Division I statistics showed that 56.4% of male basketball players are Black in comparison to 23.8% White basketball players ("Sport Sponsorship, Participation and Demographics Search" 2018). Similarly, 46.7% of female basketball players identify as Black whereas 31.6% of identify as White ("Sport Sponsorship, Participation and Demographics Search" 2018). Based on these percentages, it is clear that NCAA basketball was predominately Black and that Black student-athletes have a much different experience. While doing a comparative analysis would have been interesting, the information previously provided showed findings which proved otherwise.

I continued to narrow my methodology down to considering whether or not I should focus on Black student-athletes who attended Predominantly White Institutions or Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Ultimately, I chose to allow Black student-athletes who attended either type of institution to participate because I wanted to see the variation in responses and experiences. Similarly, I took the same approach to gender when thinking about how to frame my study. As

explained prior, there were not many studies which focused solely on the experiences of Black student-athletes who were women. Going further, there were not many studies which I found that do a comparative study between gender in regards to Black student-athletes. I thought the study would prove to be more fruitful by adding these different elements and also add to the existing literature on this topic. The challenge with following through with these methodological decisions was making sure that I had enough respondents to fit the criteria for the study. I spent several hours of each day attempting find participants after being approved by Bard's Institutional Review Board; however, I struggled to gain the number of respondents that I originally intended.

I conducted nine in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews. This form of interviewing allowed for flexibility, which gave my respondents room to speak their mind and feel comfortable during the interview. The semi-structure and questions format also allowed participants to feel like they were having a conversation rather than feeling like they were being tested. The interviews were designed to last about an hour, but ranged from thirty minutes to an hour depending upon class year. As you will read further into my chapters, there were older participants who had more to say than some of the younger participants. Still, the interviews were packed with information and significant patterns. I audio recorded each respondent's interview as they all gave me permission to record. Due to constraints on time, I had to wrap up my search for respondents for my study. Because my target respondents were in-season, I had much harder time trying to track and set-up interview times. Despite having a hard time, I made the right decision to stop at the time that I did in order to finish the study. The interviews were fruitful and left a lasting impression on myself based on the way my respondents answered with confidence and intelligence.

The respondents of this study were student-athletes who identify as Black, and currently play collegiate basketball at a Division I institution. My respondents were purposely selected based on the following criteria: Black, any gender, student-athlete, and a part of an NCAA Division I basketball program. My respondents came from low to middle class backgrounds and all have stable home backgrounds with the exception of one of my respondents. They all identified as Black, but also identified their ethnic backgrounds based on my first set of questions. In addition, my respondents vary based on their school affiliation with several exceptions where two respondents were teammates and two other respondents attended the same school, but differ in gender. This criterion was used for research purposes where the sampling of my respondents was helpful in regards to the study. These players were subject to different forms of exploitation which did not stem from the monetary compensation and use of their talent argument.

I recruited players from a wide range of teams including men and women and reached out to prospective participants by email, Instagram, and Facebook. In addition, I contacted participants who want to be involved in the study over the phone, and by Skype. I also sent out consent forms via email to make sure that I had informed consent and no confusion amongst myself and the respondents. In order to recruit participants, I used a snowball sampling method. The snowball method is a process in which new participants are suggested by individuals interviewed prior. Being a collegiate basketball player, I had access to a wide variety of student-athletes who played basketball across different divisions as well as sports. I began by informally reaching out to individuals I knew could help me and asked them to forward my recruitment advertisement by email. I reached out to these new contacts by email, or phone call and asked them if they would be interested in being interviewed for this research. There was an informal network of black student-athletes which makes this a practical, recruitment method that will work, but not unduly pressure

people. I got informed consent from all the respondents of this study and they were fully aware that they were a part of the study. For reasons regarding confidentiality, the respondents were not named explicitly throughout the paper. To hide their identities, I used pseudonyms for the respondents and the schools they were affiliated. Again, this was done in order to tell their stories without again breaching confidentiality.

Position

While crafting this study, I acknowledged my position as a researcher who could directly relate to these athletes. As a Black male who formerly played collegiate basketball under the NCAA, I knew what it meant to be a black student-athlete at a college institution. I also could sympathize and empathize with my respondents, which brought me closer to the players as well as the research. Because I played Division III basketball, one of my main weakness was knowing when to draw out my biases and to stay objective. To do this, I did my best to focus primarily on the experience of the athletes. I interviewed my respondents and stuck close to my questions as well as formulated follow-up questions in order to stay away from connecting through my own biases. The differences in experiences across divisions varied largely based on money, division size, and the presence of an athletic scholarship. There was much more to be said about Division I student-athletes, specifically my respondents who participated in this study. The experiences of each individual respondent brought about a different dimension to the research because of the way this study looked at a variety of experiences from a diverse group of Black student-athletes. The experiences were also different based on school affiliation and gender. The potential aspects regarding their chances of playing professionally, the similarities and differences in playing time, their schooling and their relationships with the NCAA all played a significant role in the way they

had reported their narratives. The limitations in the literature and my position as a former collegiate athlete helped me further frame my research question/thesis.

Overview of the Study

Again, my study will uncover the ways in which the NCAA acts as an organization which regulates the experiences of Black student-athletes. Based on the information I gathered from these Black men's and women's basketball players, I was able to interpret their experiences using applicable theories from Gwynne Dyer, Karl Marx, and Kevin Hylton. The following two chapters focus on how the NCAA has a significant impact on the Black student-athletes who are a part of this study. To layout my study, the arrangement is as follows:

In Chapter 1, I focused on the history of the NCAA and how the organization currently functions. Following the socio-historical context, I reviewed the relevant literature on the NCAA and Black student-athletes. Lastly, I discussed the similarities and differences between my study and the studies that I researched. Sections in this chapter which are also noteworthy are my methods and my position as a researcher.

In Chapter 2, I define socialization, give a useful example based on Gwynne Dyer's resocialization of Marine recruits, and describe the way in which my respondents become shaped into NCAA student-athletes. In addition, I explain Karl Marx's theories of alienation and describe how NCAA student-athletes are alienated from their work and past social contexts. To end, I clarify the implications of the NCAA's practices and standards to demonstrate how the NCAA has an effect on my respondents' well-being.

In Chapter 3, I will discuss my respondents' experiences through Hylton's definition of critical race theory to describe the relationships they have with their head coaches. By drawing on

literature that discusses the underrepresentation of Black head coaches, I break down the head coaches in my respondents' conferences and in culmination, I express how the NCAA's racial and gender preferences align with my central argument. To conclude my study, I will draw on the significant takeaways from Chapters 2 and 3 as well as describe the findings that surprised me and the shortcomings of the study.

Chapter 2: Becoming an NCAA student-athlete

"I guess seeing how much goes into it like every game. [It's just] I didn't expect it to be, I guess, as big, but I like it because it makes every team feel important every time you play. It was a lot different in high school. We would talk about what a team might do, but when you get to college you talk about what every player might do basically how to beat them. And so, it was something I had to get used to".

-Abi

Abi, a sophomore at an Historically Black College and University (HBCU), was not thinking about college until her second year of high school. Abi was not recruited by a lot of schools coming out of high school. Her father, helping her throughout the recruiting process, believed she would receive an offer and stayed supportive of his daughter. Abi knew she was playing well enough to receive more offers, but one school her offered a full athletic scholarship. High school basketball compared to her experiences in college, as well as the stakes and demands, were different. Abi's initial feelings about college basketball and the transition from high school to college were based on the amount of time and training which goes into being a student-athlete. Yet, these sentiments about her transition were not only specific to her experiences. The rest of my respondents shared similar sentiments to Abi's adjustment to college, which Abi described as something she had to get accustomed to; however, the transition to college basketball involves a set of processes which highlight what it inherently means to be a student-athlete under the NCAA.

The process which I refer to is socialization and based on this process, I argue that my respondents become shaped into NCAA student-athletes due to particular NCAA institutional practices. During the process of being socialized and shaped into NCAA student-athletes by the NCAA, my respondents also become alienated from aspects of their lives as college students, or young adults. These conclusions are based on their feelings in regards to their specific situations.

Due to these institutional practices involved in their conversion process into NCAA student-athletes, we see how the NCAA not only regulated and shaped the identities of my respondents, but also negatively affect their well-being. First, I intend to define socialization as well as provide a useful framework from Gwynne Dyer to explain how the NCAA plays a role in shaping my respondents into NCAA student-athletes. After analyzing my respondent's experiences regarding becoming NCAA student-athletes, I will define alienation and provide accounts where my respondents discuss their experiences in their transitions which will illustrate the way the NCAA functions as regulatory institution.

Socialization

Becoming a NCAA student-athlete, regardless of gender, involves the process of socialization and, with that, a new set of social understandings. The socialization process is defined as follows by the *Dictionary of social sciences*:

> "The process through which individuals internalize the values, beliefs, and norms of a society and learn to function as its members. In addition, socialization, can refer to narrower processes group formation and integration – in accordance, for example, with occupational or ethnic groups. It can also be treated as a more fundamental process of acquisition of the basic cognitive and psychological requisites for social life, such as language"(Calhoun and Oxford University Press 2002).

As stated above, essentially, socialization is a social process by which individuals learn norms, values, behavior, and social skills pertaining to a particular social context. Depending on the social context of an individual, they can become socialized into particular roles (i.e. college student, athlete, teacher, professional). This is not to say that the individuals involved abandon other norms, values, behavior, and social skills learned; rather, they continue to adopt new understandings based on the conditions of their situations. This definition includes institutions which also can have a

hand in socializing individuals in various social contexts. Acceptance into a new institution or society is significant because individuals have to go through the necessary conditions of socialization in order to assimilate and become recognized as a member of the particular context. If these assimilation standards are not met, individuals can be understood as an outsider or deviant. In contexts where conditions are extreme, socialization can be damaging in a way that diminishes understandings and skills from past context(s) learned prior and replace them with new beliefs. Aspects of Gwynne Dyer's example of the resocialization process of the Marines is beneficial to the way in which I describe the socialization process of my respondents.

In Gwynne Dyer's chapter, "Anybody's Son Will Do," from his book entitled *War: The New Edition*, civilians are trained and socialized to become Marines (Dyer 2010). Dyer explains that soldiers are in a profession where their job revolves around killing and death and he credits basic training as the way in which these civilians are shaped into Marines (Dyer 2010). Specifically, basic training, while short and intense, instills the recruits with particular values, specific to the military, and contributes to their change in allegiance to the drill instructors (Dyer 2010). Dyer also describes this Marine training like a machine designed to guarantee the conversion process (Dyer 2010). The conversion process emphasizes the different phases of basic training where the Marine Corps weeds out civilian who are not suitable from the pool of potential recruits (Dyer 2010). Once recruits arrive at Parris Island, the drill instructors put them through physically demanding exercise as well as insult and abuse them to break down their pride (Dyer 2010). This is to ensure that the recruits lose their past understandings and cannot resist the new values and attitudes the Marine Corps plan to instill (Dyer 2010). The next phase includes inspections, where recruits have to be prompt and ready in their uniforms (Dyer 2010). The recruits are rendered submissive because they have to be still, staring straight ahead while examined by

drill instructors (Dyer 2010). Following this phase, drill instructors give regular reminders about flags and insignias, military music, and marching formations which recruits can be a part of "if they submit and conform" (Dyer 2010, 45-47). Lastly, the final phase involves drill instructors describing recruits as being "useless to your unit," as a way to provoke recruits to grow from their experiences in combat training (Dyer 2010). Eventually, basic training does the job and these recruits become Marines (Dyer 2010).

Based on Dyer's book, Marines are socialized to unlearn one way of life and accept a new set of values for another. They are exclusively selected out a pool of possible recruits and once they are chosen, they begin their socialization process through different phases of their basic training (Dyer 2010). These phases demonstrate how recruits, being socialized to become Marines through various forms of training and, as a result, are exploited through the stripping of their pride, rendered submissive, and belittled by the drill instructors (Dyer 2010). According to Dyer, each and every factor including environment, gear, and timing provides the Marine Corps control over a recruit's body (Dyer 2010). In other words, the strategic way in which the Marine Corps exhibits power over a recruit's body is vital in the process of becoming a Marine. Gwynne Dyer's example offers an effective framework highlighting how my respondents have become socialized and shaped into NCAA student-athletes. Gwynne Dyer's framework also will be helpful in understanding how the NCAA impacts the well-being of my respondents. Although Dyer's example differs due to its emphasis on the military and recruits being re-socialized entirely, there are similarities in regards to how institutions socialize individuals to understand a new set of values, norms, and behaviors. Further, this process works in phases, or stages, which contribute to shaping these individuals' identities to assume particular roles to become part of the institution.

The Socialization Process: From High Schooler to NCAA Student-Athlete

The question finally becomes: what is an NCAA student-athlete? In this context, my iteration of an NCAA student-athlete can be defined as an individual who attends a Division I affiliated institution under the NCAA, plays the role of student and an athlete, and signs an agreement to accept an athletic scholarship to fund their schooling. In addition, to be an NCAA student-athlete, this individual is adaptive to their environment and committed to their sport while also being regulated by the NCAA. Lastly, an NCAA student-athlete understands persistence and has the willingness to make sacrifices in order to stay on scholarship. Before any of my respondents became NCAA student-athletes or were even considered to worthy of obtaining a Division I scholarship, my respondents had to have participated in the recruitment process which enables them to come in contact with NCAA coaches. Similar to Dyer's process of weeding out individuals who would not become recruits for the Marines, my respondents had to be considered a prospective student-athlete. According to the NCAA, a prospective student-athlete is "a student who has started classes for the ninth grade"(NCAA 2013). Essentially, the NCAA considers a potential student-athlete any student who has started high school. This definition provides the NCAA with flexibility to assess which high school athletes will attend a Division I school.

The prospective student-athletes that the NCAA identifies stop being considered prospects and become NCAA student-athletes when:

(1)"the individual officially registers and enrolls in a minimum full-time program of studies and attends classes in any term of a four-year collegiate institution's regular academic year (excluding summer); (2) the individual participates in a regular squad practice or competition at a four-year collegiate institution that occurs before the beginning of any term; (3) the individual officially registers, enrolls and attends classes during the certifying institution's summer term prior to his or her initial full-time enrollment at the certifying institution; or (4) the individual reports to an institutional orientation session that is open to all incoming students within 14 calendar days prior to the opening day of classes of a regular academic year term" (NCAA 2013).

Unless an individual is attending an institution, participates in competition at an institution, takes classes for a particular institution in the summer, or goes to an opening orientation at an institution, they cannot be considered an NCAA student-athlete. This proves to be significant because without this confirmation, the process of socialization cannot continue. My respondents have to initially be high school students to be considered prospects which can lead to recognizing themselves as an NCAA student-athlete.

The next stage of the socialization process is aligned with the labeling of high school students as prospective student-athletes. In order to be recognized as an NCAA student-athlete, my respondents had to be recruited by Division I institutions and be signed to the institution where they ultimately, decided to attend. The NCAA described recruiting as a college employee or representative from a specific institution inviting a high school student-athlete to play sports for their college (NCAA 2014). Recruiting occurs when a representative, usually coaches, reach out through face-to-face contact, phone calls or text messaging, mail and email material, or social media (NCAA 2014). After my respondents chose the institution of their choice, they all signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) which was a binding agreement between a prospective student-athlete and an NLI affiliated institution (NLI 2019). Through this agreement, the prospective student-athlete decided to attend this institution for at least a year where the institution provided athletic aid for one full academic year (NLI 2019). This stage in the conversion process of my respondents proved to be significant because without the presence of this stage, my respondents could not have continued the socialization process. These beginning stages were indications of the process in which my respondents experienced prior to even attending their respective institutions. Because they experienced these stages and adhered to the NCAA's definitions of prospective student-athletes and recruiting as well as signing a National Letter of Intent, they were converted

into NCAA student-athletes under the supervision of the NCAA, similar to the Marine Corps and their recruits. This phenomenon will become clearer when reading about the stories of my respondents and their decisions to sign with their respective institutions.

All of the indicators and stages involved in the socialization process of my respondents previously discussed only account for experiences which lead up to their arrival to their respective institutions. In other words, the recruitment and signing stages are crucial in terms of my respondents acquiring the title of NCAA student-athlete; however, there is one final stage which involves my respondents fully understanding what it means to be an NCAA student-athlete. The last stage of conversion which continues to socialize my respondents into this new way of living is assimilating to a new school and basketball culture once they arrive at their institutions. This stage of the socialization processes can be referred to as the adjustment period, one of the most significant ideals embedded in their experience. Particularly, aspects of the adjustment period respondents have to learn to adapt to include the daily regime of practice, lifting, and games, being on and off campus for long periods of time, as well as getting their school work done after long days of playing. Through this adjustment period, my respondents learn the importance of dedication, toughness, perseverance, time-management, and conditioning in order to maintain their bodies. These norms and values become second-nature to my respondents and although they seem obvious, they have a large impact and demonstrate how the NCAA subtly functions in shaping its athletes.

The creation of a NCAA Student-Athlete

Abi was a sophomore in high school when she began to consider going to college to play collegiate basketball. Although she was not recruited by many schools out of high school, Abi was

contacted by an HBCU located in the Northeast. She believed that her play in high school would have garnered more attention from colleges and universities to recruit her, but it was not enough. Eventually, toward the end of her senior year, Abi would choose to attend the HBCU that recruited her and, following her basketball season, she signed her letter of intent to play basketball at the HBCU in the Northeast. Based on her experiences in alignment with the conversion process, one could conceptualize how Abi became an NCAA student-athlete. She could be considered a prospective student-athlete because she was previously in high school. In addition, Abi was recruited and contacted by the institution she attended and signed to not only be a part of the school's women basketball team, but also a student-athlete under the NCAA. In terms of her adjustment period on campus, she described that, "everything was faster and I had to learn how to adjust I was playing with a bunch of seniors." Abi's adjustments were more basketball related and she had to learn to play with older, more experienced players. She also described that she had to "get a rhythm going," or maintain regularity with balancing basketball and her school work. When away on trips to games, Abi's phone would be taken, so she could prep for the opponent and focus on games. Once Abi was signed and arrived at her school, she had prioritized basketball to a level where she had to fit into a new system of play and regulate her phone use on game trips.

Compared to some of my other respondents, Alan's collegiate transition was not a conventional one. Being recruited and courted by several high major institutions out of high school, Alan chose a Predominately White Institution in New Jersey and signed his National Letter of Intent at his high school. Once he stepped on campus and tried to get acclimated, Alan struggled to find his footing because he felt like he "needed a year to develop academically and athletically." He went talk more about his experiences when he said, "My first semester was last year, although I had been in college for 3 [years]." Alan felt as if he were "finding himself all

over again," because he had not played basketball in a year. Eventually, he caught his stride and made it back on the court after his tough start as an NCAA student-athlete. He learned to persevere and came back to establish himself as a force on his team, playing at a high level. He appreciated being able to travel, and credits basketball for giving him the opportunity to do so. On the other hand, Alan was frustrated that he had to miss a lot of his classes due to his team traveling a lot during the basketball season. He had to find a strong balance between basketball and school work by managing his time. Alan explained that he learned to strengthen his body for rigorous practices and games because he knew he had to make an adjustment to the way he was used to balancing sports, academics, and take care of himself. When looking at the cases of Abi and Alan together, the patterns which overlap amongst the two include the struggle to regulate their time, and adjusting to the commitment that came with playing Division I basketball. They had to develop a new set of understandings in order to excel at their institutions.

Robert was one of two respondents I interviewed to transfer schools. Robert started considering attending college to play Division I basketball in the 8th grade. In high school, Robert was considered a prospect early on and was recruited by several Division I institutions across the country, but did not have any solid scholarship offers. Initially, Robert was offered by a Predominately White Institution in the Northeast towards the end of his senior year of high school. He accepted the offer and signed his National Letter of Intent. Robert goes from his prospect status and being recruited to signing his NLI in order to make the full transition to becoming an NCAA student-athlete. After attending the institution for a year, Robert decided to leave due a lack of playing time and disliking the institution overall. During the summer, he visited several schools and was contacted by another PWI located on Long Island. He transferred and signed with his new school that same week. Sitting out a year because of transfer rules was hard for Robert, but he

found college to be challenging. He describes the rigor of being a student-athlete: "I had a lot of balancing to do with both school and basketball practices." Robert had to adjust to his new situation by changing the way he would go about scheduling his time. He committed fully to practicing and lifting on his own as well as finding a way to get school work done. Although he had to start his whole college experience over, he adjusted to not only play the game he loved, but also to keep his scholarship.

Comparably, coming from a struggling West Indian family, Izzy's mother was thrilled when her daughter began receiving attention from Division I schools for basketball. She knew her family could not afford to pay for college and an athletic scholarship would be her means of getting an education. Izzy wanted to attend college since 8th grade and after being recruited by schools from all over the country, she was offered a scholarship by a PWI not far from her home in New York. Once she signed her National Letter of Intent at her high school, Izzy described that it felt as if a "burden left her shoulders," with transition to NCAA student-athlete status. Still, she explained that her first semester playing in college was tough and the transition was a "big adjustment." She struggled and eventually, figured out how to manage her time effectively. She also disliked waking up early and practicing all the time, staying on campus during breaks, and not having time to interact with family. Yet, she knew that adapting to practice and game schedules was essential in order to keep her athletic scholarship, adapting to the practice and game schedule was essential. Her expressions about her adjustment included committing to the transition, learning time management, and neglecting her family at times to continue playing. In the case of Robert and Izzy, both experienced major adjustments in the way they committed to their time to Division I basketball. Both understood that they had to stay on top of their commitments not only to play,

but also to keep their scholarship. Lastly, the closeness to their families proved to be significant to my respondents in their decisions to continue playing basketball at the Division I level.

Isaiah's journey to college led him to PWI located in upstate New York, but his love for basketball started in the middle school. His mother always wanted him to attend college because she did not have to opportunity to, but Isaiah was focused on playing basketball at the Division I level. With his mother coming from Haiti, he admits that she did not know much about sports other than soccer. He wanted to be like the athletes he saw on the television screen in his small apartment. Going into high school, Isaiah was one of the most sought out recruits in the state he lived in. He finally decided to sign a National Letter of Intent with his current institution because they told him if he worked hard, he would play right away. Considered to be an NCAA student-athlete after signing his NLI, Isaiah was hopeful for his first season playing basketball citing that he expected the process to be enjoyable. However, Isaiah's first year of college basketball was challenging due to the physicality of practices and mental energy exerted during games, practices, and scouting. Isaiah believed that student-athletes do not have much time to gain work experience, manage their mental and emotional health, and learn leadership in a different forum outside. Isaiah also jokingly said, "We are basically together from June to June." Isaiah admits that he exaggerates the time span of how long they are on campus, but not by that much. By spending so much time on campus and on the court, Isaiah learned to be committed to valuing the practices and games he played in over the course of four years.

Cam, a teammate of Isaiah, had a different experience due to attending a PWI in upstate New York for the first time this year. From a young age, Cam always knew he would be attending college. He explained that seeing his sister go to college and playing basketball at the collegiate level were motivators for him. The recruiting process was hard for Cam because he was not being

heavily recruited by colleges out of college. When Cam received an offer from his current institution, he was relieved to be an NCAA student-athlete with an opportunity to sign for an athletic scholarship. He expressed that this was the only Division I school that believed in him and was a good fit for him academically and athletically. Cam's adjustment period was him getting used to the speed of the game and consistently producing at a high level. In addition, he talked about his up and down playing time based on production and balancing school work. He expressed concern for himself as well as his teammates in the aspect of school work because they were hardly on campus during the season to get extra support. Although he struggled in his first semester, he started to adapt to playing college basketball by getting all of his work done in a timely manner and gaining a new-found toughness which elevated his play on the court.

Hale started thinking about college as a freshman in high school, with parents who were heavily involved in the recruiting process. She would eventually narrow all of the schools that were recruiting her down to a few Patriot League schools. Ultimately, Hale chose and signed a letter of intent with an institution located in Massachusetts. She believed she could get the best of both worlds with the strong academic and athletic program and wanted to be close to her older sister, who attends a school nearby. Once she acquired student-athlete status and arrived on campus, Hale expressed time management as one of the biggest adjustments. She would attend all of her classes in the morning and then she would lift, practice, and watch film leading her to be up until eight or nine at night. After her long days, she explained how she would sneak time in to get school work done. Through her experiences, she learned perseverance and confidence, but also was subject to high amounts of stress which caused her to get down on herself. Hale had to get accustomed to the college game similar to Isaiah and Cam. They all went through the recruiting process where they felt that their school was the best for them and that they would thrive; however,

it seemed as though they mightily struggled at their schools when they initially started. Isaiah struggled with managing mental health and personal well-being while Cam could not find a steady balance to get help with school work and the tempo of the game. Hale was not used to the level of stress that came with playing and doing school work.

Erica knew she was going to college regardless of an athletic scholarship. At a young age, she had the feeling she had the ability to play basketball at the college level. Erica found the recruiting process exciting because she received letters from big name schools; however, she did not receive any scholarship offers until her senior year of high school. Erica chose a PWI in Georgia because she liked the coaching staff and being close to home. Erica described signing her NLI to become a NCAA student-athlete like "a lot of weight was lifted off of her shoulders," but that would change when she stepped on campus. Erica had trouble adjusting to maintain her grades and simultaneously play basketball her freshmen year and athletically, she had a tough time transitioning to all the conditioning, lifting weights, and practicing. She did not like the idea of getting bulky, but she had no choice; she was on scholarship and had to assimilate into the new basketball culture. Now as a sophomore, she feels that the practices have gotten easier and believes it will get better each year. Erica learned to value her free education, staying physically active, the gear, and being a part of a team. She interpreted these as aspects of value because they align with her adjustment period. She had to wear the school gear on game days and road trips as well as stay in shape to compete for a spot to play. Erica understood these standards as a way to committing to the basketball program and maintaining her scholarship.

To conclude, the last respondent who took part in this socialization process and became a NCAA student-athlete was Lance. He was the second respondent who transferred from one school to another during his college basketball experience. During high school, Lance consistently found

himself in different living situations and grew up spending more time running for track and field than actually playing basketball. He was introduced to the game of basketball in high school where he obtained an athletic scholarship from a junior college in Pennsylvania. During his second year of junior college, he received another scholarship offer to play at a PWI affiliated with the NCAA located in New York. Once he graduated from junior college and signed his NLI, his career at his new school started out on a negative note as he had to sit out a year dealing with an injury. Lance explains that "the free tuition, fear gear, free meals, academic opportunity, future connections, treatment/rehabilitation, gym and fitness center access" are all positive factors of the collegiate basketball experience. He also talked about the lengthy practices, lifting, and games which he had to get used to due to the difference in competition. He understood these as aspects of the experience that he valued and adjusted to throughout his time at school. He learned to play harder and was expected to give his all based on his coaches' expectations to give one-hundred percent at all times. Although he played college basketball at the junior college, his experience at his new school was different. The stakes were higher regarding playing and keeping his scholarship, Lance described, and the emphasis on balancing basketball with academics to stay on the court became more important.

To sum up my evidence, the patterns and trends that bridge my respondent's experiences were the conversion processes which created their new identities as NCAA student-athletes. They all experienced the recruiting process as prospects, or prospective student-athletes. My respondents' decisions to play Division I basketball, leading up to them choosing an institution to attend, were indicative of the first two stages of the conversion process. The signing of the National Letter of Intent gave my respondents the new title of NCAA student-athlete; as explained prior, the socialization process continued as soon as they arrived on their respective campuses. There is

an emphasis on adjusting to their situations regardless of the conditions. Whether they had personal issues or struggles, each of my respondents found ways to regulate their lives in order to further align with the title of NCAA student-athlete. These institutional practices and norms were implemented by the NCAA to have control over the process. My respondents had not experienced anything like the recruiting process, signing a NLI, or, even expecting an adjustment period prior to their senior years of high school. The daily regime of practice, lifting, and games acted as a way to further teach my respondents the proper condition and maintenance that their bodies had to be in. Also, with my respondents traveling for games and being on campus for long periods of time practicing, they had to learn put an emphasis on changing their habits regarding school work and basketball duties. Through this adjustment period, they learn to be committed and persistent to Division I basketball while managing their time to fit the schedule that was put in place for them.

Based on my respondents' socialization processes, the patterns in all of their experiences leading up to their arrivals on campus and playing over the course of the year illuminated the role of the NCAA in their experiences. Essentially, the NCAA used particular practices prior to my respondents arriving on campus and at the level of the institutions affiliated with the organization. The NCAA manages the operations of the National Letter of Intent program which gives them the power to rescind or approve the agreement (NLI 2019). The NCAA has a great deal of control over the presence of my respondents on campus. In addition, the NCAA define my respondents moving forward using labels such as prospective student-athlete and NCAA student-athlete (NCAA 2013). Not to mention the rules and mandates the organization has over coaches, and the extended privileges, granted by the NCAA, to manage the number of practices, games, and physical activity (NCAA LSDBi 2019). In essence, the NCAA has placed importance on these practices and methods to shape the identities of my respondents. These practices contributed to

discipling my respondents to prioritize and commit to values and norms which come with playing Division I basketball. Although my respondents did not lose full sense of their previous identities, the shift from being high school student to becoming an NCAA student-athlete was also the time in which they shifted their identities in alignment with the NCAA's standards.

When considering these experiences, I briefly touch on how my respondents actually feel while they are in school. My respondents report the results of this adjustment period as losing valuable time, suffering from stress and anxiety, lacking energy to get involved or do other things on campus, or ultimately, not feeling like a college student at all. Having analyzed the conversion process from prospect to student-athlete under the NCAA, in this section, I, now want to highlight how my respondents feel about their experiences being at their respective institutions. Because I focus on how these student-athletes are similar and go through this transitional process, I did not talk extensively about how they feel about their situations. My respondents become socialized into these new conditions and continue to cultivate these new identities which make them similar; still, they express differences in feelings based on their contextual situation. Their feelings are significant to this chapter because the negative aspects of their experiences are quite revealing. These sentiments are not only revealing because they are filled with frustration or concern; rather, they focus on realistic issues about playing basketball on the college level. Their experiences also reveal more about how the NCAA functions as top down institution. Some of my respondents talk more extensively about their experiences than other due to the fact that these student-athletes in this study have been at their institutions longer.

Alienation

To understand the feelings expressed by my respondents, Karl Marx's theories regarding alienation are important applications to consider. In the *Marx-Engels Reader*, Marx provides four different ways in which workers become alienated (Tucker, Marx, and Engels 1978). They can either be alienated from the products they create, their production or work activity, their "species being," or individual existence, and from other workers (Tucker, Marx, and Engels 1978). The form of alienation which applies to my case in regards to my respondents is the alienation of a worker from their production or their work activity (Tucker, Marx, and Engels 1978). To start, Marx writes about this form of alienation explaining that, "His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it" (Tucker, Marx, and Engels 1978). Essentially, in interpreting the words of Marx, a worker's labor is controlled and involuntary. In continuation, this labor done by the worker is not something that directly appeals to them, but appeals to anything outside of worker's needs.

Marx makes very strong connections between the worker and their labor as a way to shed light on their situations when writing about alienation. Marx returns his theoretical framework in conjunction with alienation when he writes:

> "This relation is the relation of the worker to his own activity as an alien activity not belonging to him; it is activity as suffering, strength as weakness, begetting as emasculating, the worker's own physical and mental energy, his personal life or what is life other than activity – as activity which is turned against him, neither depends on nor belongs to him. Here we have *self-estrangement*, as we had previously the estrangement of the *thing"* (Tucker, Marx, and Engels 1978)

Based on Marx's quotation, the activity in which the worker is involved does not belong directly to them which eventually, leads to the worker feeling worse about their situation. The worker's

energy is being drained and this has an impact on the way the worker views their life and their activities. The worker experiences "self-estrangement," or a loss of self in the workplace, as a result of doing activity or laboring for something other than themselves. This theoretical framework that Marx presents in regards to self-estrangement and alienation from production becomes a significant application to analyze the experiences of my respondents. Following the sections which focus on socialization in this chapter, I present the feelings that my respondents express as they discuss what they lose as a result of becoming an NCAA student-athlete.

Aforementioned, I explain Marx's theories of alienation and break the different ways a worker can alienated from their line of work. The form of alienation which I highlighted is the alienation of the worker from their work activity or act of production. The worker experiences self-estrangement due to not feeling a connection to their labor. The worker loses energy and eventually experiences a loss of self in the workplace because they are performing their activity or laboring for something or someone other than themselves. I argue that my respondents have a similar experience when describing their feelings towards being an NCAA student-athlete. The aspects of their experience that they have as a high school student, or young adult are taken away from them as NCAA student-athletes. Based on the adjustments and level of commitment my respondents learn consequently due to the socialization process, they lose valuable time, suffer from stress and anxiety, lack energy to get involved or do other things on campus, or do not feel like average college students. These losses are described as consequences of the socialization process as the result of self-estrangement from playing Division I basketball. In other words, the more my respondents align themselves with the NCAA, based on the different institutional practices they learn, the more intense is the alienation from aspects of their life which they originally have. Marx's lens of alienation will show the disproportionate relationship between their alignment with

the title of NCAA student-athlete and the loss of aspects that they have originally as young, high school students.

The respondents in this study felt as though their experience differed from those who attend college regularly and are not on an athletic scholarship. Particularly, Abi and Alan expressed sentiments explaining that they do not feel everyone else. Abi expressed that her experience is not like that of an average, college student. She explicitly says, "You don't get to experience everything like everyone else does, since you are a student-athlete and you have to dedicate yourself to your sport." In terms of dedication and putting time into sports, she explained how in high school playing and scouting other teams was not as elaborate as it is in college. In high school, there was less of an emphasis on scouting and Abi made sure she was ready to play when games came around. Based on these sentiments, Abi could not have a full college experience because she was a student-athlete. She also knew that her experiences in high school were much different which played a role in her new-found dedication as a student-athlete. In addition, she felt proud to be a part of the women's team, but she understood that being on the team came at a cost to other activities she had wanted to experience on campus such as going out to parties and joining clubs on campus. Alan expressed a similar sentiment, but from a different perspective. He explained that he missed out on a lot of classes and did not have the chance to be a "regular kid." Alan explained, "[There is] no hanging out, no parties, and everything you do is always monitored." Alan understood that missing out on being a normal college student was because of his commitment to basketball. He is watched by coaches and other faculty members to ensure he does not slip up. Similar to Abi, Alan lost out on being a college student and they both understand that this is the consequence of being a student-athlete had on their experience.

The lack of time to do anything else but play Division I basketball was an issue that each of my respondents faced at some point when they stepped on their college campuses. This became more of a concern when I spoke to Izzy and Robert about their experiences with time limitations. Surprised about the time she was playing basketball, Izzy also expressed the lack of time she had, in general, whether she was in study hall, classes, practice, games or team activities. She felt as though she was doing a good job at managing her time, but she still seemed to fall short somehow. She explained that anytime she gets was spent sleeping, doing laundry, or homework. Izzy explained more differences between high school and college sports:

> "You're with your teammate the majority of the day outside of classes. You are not in school for 7-8 hours. You do film, have individual workouts, and lifts. It's a whole new ball game. It's more about your knowledge of the game and how hard you work, less about the talent. There are plays and you have to know them…"

Izzy's sentiments are significant because although my other respondents talked about how they learned time management skills, was that really enough? Despite attempting to find ways to manage her time, Izzy still could not find enough for herself. This loss of time shows how being a student-athlete impacted aspects of her life she used to have as a high school student.

Robert also had conflicts in regards to the limitations of time when he transferred to his new school. Robert aspired to be a physician's assistant, but his current major did not fully reflect what he wanted to do with his life after college. Robert explained that being a student-athlete made it "almost impossible to major in something that was hard" and to pursue a real career after college. Robert was referring to the inability to have a major which would help him pursue his career path and also catered to basketball. This was not the case with my other respondents: Hale was on the pre-med track at her school, but she was also a freshman. I would be curious to see if that held up,

but his observation regarding time and major was interesting and was a direct effect of him being a student-athlete.

Another aspect of their experiences which began in the recruiting process for some of my respondents was anxiety and stress to the body and mind. Two of my respondents who continued to experience different forms of anxiety were Isaiah and Cam. Isaiah got what he was promised when he arrived at school. He was told that if he worked hard, he would start and play a lot of minutes as a freshman. Isaiah was excited, but the exhaustion completely killed his spirit. He was playing starter's minutes, which could range from thirty to thirty-five minutes a game. Isaiah talked about how playing took a toll on his body; compounded with losing games and a lack of leadership, he did not know how to handle the pressure. Additionally, Isaiah struggled to balance his academics and completely shut down. He had no guidance, could not talk to anyone from home, and did not even feel comfortable talking to his coaches. The anxiety and pressure led to him feeling alone:

> "[The things] I had to do mentally and I had to do for myself. Also, I had to do that and maintain on the court as well as the classroom, so it was really tough. Every other month I was throwing up because it was too much anxiety and so much was going on. It was just too much at the moment. I didn't know what to expect because nobody in my family played or went to college, so everything I did was on my own."

Isaiah learned to better handle the anxiety, but continually on his own. Now as a senior, he strived to act as a leader to the younger players on his team. He knew, as a student-athlete, that he was committed to his team and had to maintain his composure in order to continue playing; although, he was losing an aspect of his mental health.

Similarly, Cam was surprised about the physicality of the college game. He did not feel as though his body was up to par and had now built up anxiety about the way he looked. He also

talked about developing his body to transition more seamlessly into the college game. Cam believed he did not prepare himself well enough before his first year. He had not spoken to anyone about his feelings surrounding his body, but he did not seem very comfortable about it when talking to him. Instead being comfortable in his own skin, Cam knew he had to bulk up as a student-athlete because of the college game. The game becomes different for Cam at this point in his young career and losses a part of his mental confidence due to the pressure to be stronger.

Stress was the name of the game for Hale as she struggled to adjust and always cited time management and perseverance as a way to handle her problems. In the beginning of her career; however, she talked about how stress continued to creep up with every practice, game, and lifting session. Hale believed that stress, at a such a young age, worked two-fold. She thought that stress was not great in the moment, but could be beneficial for when she got older. For Hale, there was one question that she always asks herself when it comes down to a stressful time: "Do you want to play Division I sports or not?" I found this question striking because instead of this question, I thought about if the stress from this lifestyle was worth it. Ultimately, Hale always decided, so far, that she wanted to continue to play Division I sports. This was similar to the ways Isaiah and Cam handled their anxiety and stress. They kept their problems to themselves instead of seeking help or reaching out to familiar faces such as coaching staff and teammates. Their drive to play at this level got them through the issues that they faced on a daily basis and allowed them to continue playing and doing their work.

The last set of sentiments upon which I would like to focus on are ideas involving having energy or the lack thereof. In this case, I describe the exertion that goes into playing basketball at the collegiate level. Lance, Erica, and Izzy commented on energy, but commented on this exertion in different ways. One thing that surprised Lance the most was the energy needed to be exerted

every game. Lance explained that in high school there was not a premium put on playing hard especially if a player had talent. When he transitioned from high school to college, everything changed for him. Lance described the energy he played with in college: "Nothing really surprised me aside from the energy that comes from every part of the game from the passion of every player to the crowds." Lance's willingness to play harder came from his persistence to win games. Erica, as described before, felt like she exerted too much energy when playing basketball. From the lifting and not wanting to practice at times, Erica knew that this was something she had to do due to her being on scholarship, a commitment she understood to be important. Likewise, Izzy believed she would have more time to relax based on her experiences in high school. She talked about her high school experience, in comparison to college when she said, "I didn't think my time would be this occupied. In high school, I didn't go as hard in practice… I did drills half way and I felt like a lot was optional." Based on this description, high school was easier for Izzy because she could do everything half speed, but now in college, she had to put her one hundred percent into everything. Although she was working harder, Izzy was not used to overexerting herself this way and felt less energetic when doing anything else.

Based on my respondents' reports regarding their feelings about playing Division I basketball, the patterns in all of their experiences are connected to them being NCAA student-athletes as well as realizing that they lose important aspects of their experiences as young adults attending a university or things they experience prior as high schoolers. My respondents become alienated from these aspects of their lives because they are NCAA student-athletes playing Division I basketball under the NCAA. Additionally, from analyzing their experiences through Marx's alienation, there are patterns which show how the socialization process plays into alienation. Because they are dedicated to playing and being a student-athlete, they continue to

persevere despite the negative effects on their well-being. Most of my respondents explain that their situations are a result of being a student-athlete and they are fully aware of this phenomenon.

What does this mean?

The question which lingers is: what does this tell us about the NCAA? The answer is that the NCAA acts as a social control agent based on their direct influence and control of the institutional practices in place. To recap, the socialization process transforms my respondents into full-fledge NCAA student-athletes; however, calling my respondents students seems to contradict what they are doing the majority of their time in their college careers. It also seems odd that I am referring to them as NCAA student-athletes rather than using the term student-athlete by itself. I make this distinction because the NCAA standards and practices are constantly shaping my respondents' experiences. Because the NCAA is also affiliated with the institutions and coaches of my respondents, they act as an extension of the NCAA contributing to the NCAA's institutional practices. As seen prior, based on rules the NCAA has put into place in compliance with institutions, coaches are allowed to bring student-athletes back to campus early during their seasons. Likewise, these coaches create the schedules which include practice, lifting, and games. Institutions, like the NCAA, use athletic scholarships as a way to bind student-athletes in an agreement which is renewable every year. Erica, one of the female participants, expressed that she does not have a choice but to lift and practice even when she does not feel like it. This process of socialization to become an NCAA student-athlete proves to be significant because these institutions consistently contribute to the control of these black student-athletes. There needs to be a larger focus on the excessive physical, mental, and emotional treatment of these NCAA student-athletes. Although they are willing decide to become these types of athletes, their initial excitement

and happiness about getting an athletic scholarship changes as they go through the socialization process.

Chapter 3: Can You Relate?

"He has always been there for support. He doesn't treat us like the teachers. He doesn't treat us any different."

-Isaiah

As long as Isaiah attended his school, he felt as though his coach always had been there for him. He did not feel like his coach treated him differently from his other teammates and he appreciated him for that. Despite everything he had gone through regarding his anxiety and feelings of isolation, Isaiah knew he could reach out to his coach. When speaking with Isaiah, he explicitly recalled the moment when his coach was someone he could count on. Isaiah continued talking about his head coach: "He is somebody that never gave up on us, and on me. Our relationship and our bond are strong. We had a protest at our school and he said, 'if you all are going to protest, I will protest with you.'" Based on Isaiah's sentiments about his head coach, he trusted him and believed that he had the best interest in the team. Isaiah's description of his relationship with his head coach was not abnormal. This short anecdote was, indeed, unique to Isaiah's experience and a significant aspect of being part of a team and stepping on to a new campus where players were still getting acclimated. Isaiah's feelings toward his coach were also noteworthy because of trends and patterns concerning relationships between head coaches and Black student-athletes. Generally, my men respondents did not have any issues when describing their relationships with their head coaches; however, the women respondents of this study had negative relationships with their head coaches.

When referring back to my interviews and tracking patterns between my respondents, their experiences suggested that there were racial and gendered implications which impacted interactions with their head coaches. My respondents explicitly commented on the distinct racial differences between their head coaches as well as how it impacted the relationships they

established with their assistant coaches. Because seven out of my nine respondents report that their head coaches were white, the trend that most head coaches were white was not surprising considering the information that I found regarding the head coaches in each conference. This only heightened the prevalence of racial differences present in NCAA Division I basketball, especially with the overwhelming number of Black student-athletes. When the women respondents spoke about their relationships with head coaches, they expressed that their relationships with assistant coaches were stronger based on racial identity. A majority of their assistant coaches were black women and readily able to identify with them on a personal level. Considering the findings that I presented, we can understand how the NCAA works as an organization which focuses on racial and gender preferences when it comes to Division I basketball.

In this chapter, I argue that the NCAA operates differently for women because of my respondents' adverse relationships with their head coaches. This argument shows the impact of underrepresentation of Black head coaches, the role of money in Division I basketball, and the persistence of racism and masculinity that exist in macro-level institutions like the NCAA. In order to illustrate the experiences of my respondents, I intend to define and explain how critical race theory (CRT) has been useful as an application to sport. Following the explanation of CRT, I will look at the conferences in which my respondents belong to because conferences have acted as facilitators in conjunction with the NCAA. Conferences promote their own vision which aligns with the NCAA's employment of dedication and commitment to athletics discussed in my previous chapter. In sum, they help enforce NCAA rules and regulation, but also function independently. Next, I break down and analyze trends regarding the head coaches within these conferences and draw on other scholars who write extensively about representation in coaching. To conclude my final empirical chapter, I will address the experiences of my respondents through the lens of CRT,

and explain how the NCAA shapes the experiences of my respondents which negatively affects their well-being.

Critical race theory

There are several theories which are applicable and can be helpful in understanding the experience of a Black student-athlete. However, I want to suggest critical race theory as a framework to interpret my data. According to Kevin Hylton, critical race theory is a framework used to "explore and examine the racism in society that privileges whiteness as it disadvantages others because of their 'blackness" (Hylton 2009, 22). In other words, critical race theory looks at the ways in which racism and whiteness hinder the advancement of individuals who identify with blackness. Armstrong and Jennings nicely lay out Hylton's tenets of critical race theory in their own study which looks at Black student-athletes in higher education (Hylton 2009; Armstrong and Jennings 2018). They posit that critical race theory examines and includes: (a) the centralizing of race, or recognizing how race and racism connect to forms of subordination and oppression; (b) the challenging of race-neutral, color-blind ideologies, or challenging ideologies which promote equal opportunity and are not based on race that, eventually, effect Black people (c) a commitment to social justice that includes liberation and transformation; and (d) a centralizing of the culturally marginalized voice, or exploring the experiences of those who are inadequately represented (Hylton 2009; Armstrong and Jennings 2018). Essentially, CRT challenges these tenets by focusing on social relations and processes of power.

Several studies use CRT, in the case of Black student-athletes, as a way to track patterns of racism in particular practices and most recently, in sport (Simiyu 2012; Rubin 2016; Singer 2016; M. P. Smith, Harrison, and Brown 2017; Armstrong and Jennings 2018). Although critical

race theory also works as a framework to promote change based on the experiences of Black people, I do not wish to propose solutions to the problem; rather, I want to highlight what these Black student-athletes experience on a day to day basis or have experienced while attending their institution. As explained in the last chapter, my respondents learn to handle their situations by adapting and enduring. Notably, my respondents are socialized to commit to Division I basketball which persists through the student-athlete conformity, but they do not always conceptualize their experiences through a racial lens until they talk about their coaches. Because they report varying racial experiences in regards to their relationships with coaches, their awareness of their position highlights their roles as their own critical race theorist. The CRT tenet which aligns the most closely to their experiences is "centralizing the culturally marginalized voice", or, to understand the experiences of those who are not fully represented through sport (Hylton 2009, 33). In the case of my respondents, they are not always in positions where they can speak their minds and make changes to their situations. The platform that comes with this study allows my respondents to speak on their experiences freely as being underrepresented student-athletes as part of an organization which does not hold them in high regard.

Conference and Head Coaching Breakdowns

Before understanding the breakdown of head coaches at the institutions my respondents are affiliated, there has to be an initial breakdown of the conferences which my respondents belong to. Conferences have been around longer than the creation of the NCAA based on the history of intercollegiate athletics (Smith 2000). Today, conferences are a focal point of the NCAA's regulatory control. These conferences act as sub-sections of the NCAA, which allows them to enforce all of their rules and regulations. With a majority of my respondents belonging to the

MAAC, it is important to understand what the MAAC is and how the conference functions. The Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference is a conference where five of my respondents participate in due to their attendance of the member schools. Founded in 1980, he MAAC oversees the competition of twenty-four sports as well as the championships for those sports ("About the MAAC" 2019). Sixteen sports including men's and women's basketball have the opportunity to play in the NCAA post season tournament if they win the conference championship ("About the MAAC" 2019). The conference is also associated with other schools based on particular sports. The MAAC is currently in its thirty-eighth year, and similarly, has promoted the integrity of academics and athletics ("About the MAAC" 2019). According to the MAAC, the conference "prides itself on the accomplishments of its student-athletes in the classroom, as well as the field" ("About the MAAC" 2019). In other words, the MAAC values the achievements of student-athletes and continue to be supportive of student-athletes affiliated with the conference.

The Patriot League is a conference in which one of my respondents belongs to. The Patriot League was founded on the idea of accepting individuals that are well-rounded athletes and students ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019). Their mission is to promote opportunities for students to compete in Division I with high integrity and academic standards ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019). The growth of student-athletes is at the forefront of the league's mission and vision that allows them to maintain their name academically ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019). Their vision reads, "Patriot League will be the exemplary intercollegiate athletics conference in the country for student-athletes who demonstrate success both in academic achievement and athletic competition." ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019) Originally, the league was a created as a Division 1-AA football conference in 1986, but expanded to become home to twenty-four sports including men's and women's basketball ("Patriot League - Who We

Are" 2019). The principles of the league mention that league members work together with the NCAA ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019). Additionally, all of the institutions associated with the Patriot League are eligible to qualify for the NCAA post-season tourney ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019). Lastly, they emphasize the importance of "professionals" or faculty, which include coaches and athletic/academic administrators, to uphold the values of the league ("Patriot League - Who We Are" 2019).

One of my respondents belongs to The Colonial Athletic Association, or the CAA. Affiliated as a conference under the NCAA, the CAA was founded in 1985 and has been considered one of countries' top conferences athletically and academically("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). Enjoying more thirty years of academic and athletic achievement from its student-athletes, the CAA's members makes up institutions located in the largest metropolitan areas geographically ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). The CAA is home to ten-member institutions and comprised of twenty-two sports which include men's and women's basketball ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). Like the MAAC and the Patriot League, if one of these teams wins their conference championship, the respective team earns a berth into the NCAA post season tourney ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). Specifically, the conference has made strides nationally in men's basketball and have accumulated many NCAA tournament wins ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). The institutions of the CAA are committed to athletics, but also have put an emphasis on academic excellence ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). The conference has created the Colonial Academic Alliance which partners with universities to expand education and opportunities outside of athletics ("The CAA & CAA Football" 2019). The CAA and the conferences expressed prior are comparable and this is important to note based on the NCAA's goals as an institution.

The last conference I want to focus on is the Atlantic Sun, or the ASUN. The ASUN is a Division I conference that believes they are "building winners for life" ("About Us" 2019). As a conference, the ASUN's identity is to lead from a position of strength in order to reinforce higher education ("About Us" 2019). Particularly, the ASUN has created four beams which acts as a platform for their identity ("About Us" 2019). The first beam explains how students always come first in everything the ASUN does ("About Us" 2019). The conference does its best by leading by example while enhancing a winning culture for student athletes on and off the site of competition ("About Us" 2019). The second beam is to rise which is described as building off past success ("About Us" 2019). The conference strives to elevate the experiences of student-athletes for the betterment of the conference's future as well as the student-athletes future ("About Us" 2019). The third beam is to have an impact where the conference is focused on consistently improving the lives on student-athletes in competition, in the classroom, and the community ("About Us" 2019). The last beam is to connect which describes the promotion of unity amongst students, athletes, coaches, faculty, administrators, staff, and fans ("About Us" 2019). The ASUN consists of nine-member institutions which cannot be named due to confidentially.

These conferences are significant to note to understand the alignment between the NCAA and my respondents and the connection between the head coaches at these institutions. There is a disproportionate number of coaches who do not racially identify with the respondents of my study. As explained in my first chapter, NCAA Division I men's and women's basketball is dominated by Black student-athletes, but are there enough Black head coaches who can relate to their experiences? Are Black student-athletes properly supported by their head coaches despite identifying differently from them? These are some of the questions I plan to tackle in this chapter. Seven out of the nine participants a part of my study have cited that their head coaches are white.

The two student-athletes who have Black head coaches explain that they have good relationships with them. Before I go deeper into their experiences, there are few things to note regarding a trend I found when researching the head coaches of these conferences.

Moving forward, I break down each of the conference's head coaches based on my respondent's affiliation. To start, I want to look at the breakdown of the MAAC basketball head coaches by race and gender. In MAAC women's basketball, there are eight white identifying coaches in contrast, to only three Black identifying coaches.[1] Out of the eleven coaches representing the MAAC in women's basketball, seven of the head coaches are female and the remaining four are male. For men's basketball, the MAAC head coaches' breakdown is a little bit different. Four head coaches identify as Black whereas seven head coaches identify as white. The head coaches involved in men's basketball are all male identifying with no women representing men's basketball as a head coach. In total, between the men's and women's basketball coaches, there are fourteen white identifying head coaches versus seven Black identifying head coaches in the MAAC. It is also important to note that the MAAC is male-dominated in terms of the overwhelming number of head coaches who are men in comparison to head coaches who are women across men's and women's basketball. This is a trend that will continue to come up especially when looking at the other conferences in the study.

<div align="center">

Women's Basketball Conference Breakdown
Count by Head Coaches

</div>

Conference	Teams	Male	Female	Black	White
MAAC	11	4	7	3	8
Patriot League	10	4	6	2	8
Atlantic Sun	9*	3	5	2	6

*Denotes a team with a vacancy

---

[1] Denotes the breakdown of head coaches from the MAAC conference which accounts for the men's and women's basketball teams. The breakdown is counted by head coaches and identifies their race and gender. The breakdown of head coaches comes from a variety of websites which profile the head coaches in the conference. The citations for the head coaching profiles can be found in my bibliography.

Men's Basketball Conference Breakdown
Count by Head Coaches

Conference	Teams	Male	Female	Black	White
MAAC	11	11	0	4	7
CAA	10	10	0	2	8

With a majority of my respondents belonging to the MAAC conference across gender, I will focus on the rest of my respondents who are affiliated with the Patriot League, Atlantic Sun, and the CAA. For this breakdown, I will only focus on either the men's or women's side of the conference depending on where my respondents are affiliated. The first conference that I break down is the Patriot League, specifically, the women's basketball head coaches.[2] There are currently four head coaches who are men and six head coaches who women with two Black head coaches in comparison to eight that are white. Similarly, the ASUN conference women's basketball coaching breakdown has more women head coaches, but a disproportionate number of White coaches to Black coaches.[3] Despite being a conference of nine with one vacant coaching position, there are three head coaches who are men in contrast to five head coaches who are women. To go back to the racial breakdown of these coaches, there are only two Black head coaches in comparison to six White head coaches. Finally, the CAA breakdown will only look at the men's basketball coaches due to one respondent partaking in this conference.[4] Out of the ten

---

[2] Denotes the breakdown of head coaches from the Patriot League conference which accounts for the women's basketball teams. The breakdown is counted by head coaches and identifies their race and gender. The breakdown of head coaches comes from a variety of websites which profile the head coaches in the conference. The citations for the head coaching profiles can be found in my bibliography.

[3] Denotes the breakdown of head coaches from the ASUN conference which accounts for women's basketball teams. The breakdown is counted by head coaches and identifies their race and gender. The breakdown of head coaches comes from a variety of websites which profile the head coaches in the conference. The citations for the head coaching profiles can be found in my bibliography.

[4] Denotes the breakdown of head coaches from the CAA conference which accounts for the men's and women's teams. The breakdown is counted by head coaches and identifies their race and gender. The breakdown of head

teams, all of the head coaches are men; however, there are only two Black head coaches. The other eight head coaches identify as White.

The men's and women's head coaching breakdowns are telling, but explainable by research done by scholars focusing on representation of African American coaches in the college sports. According to George Cunningham's study regarding the role of African American coaches at the level of universities, he argues that macro, meso, and micro-level factors contribute to the under-representation of African American coaches (Cunningham 2010). Using a multi-level framework and aspects of systems theory, Cunningham provides reasons as to why African Americans have trouble becoming head coaches and proposes possible policy and initiative changes in order for more African Americans head coaches to be hired in the future (Cunningham 2010). The macro-level factors in his study are institutionalized practices, political climate, stakeholder expectations (Cunningham 2010). He believes that, as organizations continue to implement institutional forms of activity, practices will be habitual and, ultimately, create cycle of perpetuation (Cunningham 2010). He cites other scholars to explain how racism has become institutionalized not only at the national level, but also at the level of sport (Cunningham 2010). Cunningham writes extensively about racist ideologies that persist in sport using the example of Whites having more intelligence, leadership skills, and ethical knowledge compared to African Americans (Cunningham 2010). Cunningham claims that institutional racism reinforces stereotypes which further limits the hiring of African American head coaches (Cunningham 2010). However, he suggests that with an increased progressive, liberal environment, so to comes the hiring of more African Americans (Cunningham 2010). Cunningham goes into further detail about the meso and micro factors which contribute to unequal hiring practices (Cunningham 2010). These factors include prejudices on the

---

coaches comes from a variety of websites which profile the head coaches in the conference. The citations for the head coaching profiles can be found in my bibliography.

part of decision makers, discrimination, leadership prototypes, organizational culture of diversity, head coaching expectations and intentions, and occupational turnover intentions (Cunningham 2010). All of these factors contribute to the historical trends African Americans have dealt with over time. The impact of the trends continues to influence the hiring of African American coaches negatively as well.

Based on the research provided explaining the racial and gendered breakdown of head coaches in these specific conferences across men's and women's basketball, the conferences are dominated by White men. There are no women who coach a men's team and the number of White head coaches in men's basketball are staggering compared to the Black head coaches. Based on Nefertiti Walker and Trevor Bopp's study regarding the underrepresentation of women in sports-affiliated workplaces, their data suggests that male-exclusive social networks, and pressures to work at an alarming rate for being a female were negative results of opportunities of women to sustain and pursue careers (Walker and Bopp 2010). It is especially challenging to get jobs in male-dominated workplaces such as working in men's college basketball (Walker and Bopp 2010). Although the women's basketball head coaches are dominated by women, a majority of these women are White. Akilah Carter and Algerian Hart concluded that Black women student-athletes look for qualities similar to that of a guide, a role model, or a supporter (Carter and Hart 2010). This is not to say that White women coaches cannot do this for Black female student-athletes, but there is no representation for this group of athletes. There is no relation between their experiences as contrasting racial groups. John Borland and Jennifer Bruening demonstrate the under-representation of Black women in head coaching jobs in their study regarding Division I women's basketball (Borland and Bruening 2010). The assistant coaches at different Division I schools explain that discrimination, lack of support, and prevalent stereotypes are reasons why they cannot

move out of their positions (Borland and Bruening 2010). These Black women do their best to get into head coaching jobs by expanding their networks and establishing relationships with other administrators and personnel at their respective institutions (Borland and Bruening 2010).

There is a difference between not performing as a Division I head coach as a woman and not being able to have the opportunity to become a Division I head coach as Black woman. This is something I want to take issue with based on the interactions my respondents have with their head coaches and assistant coaches. I also want to look at the differences between the relationships my men respondents have with their head coaches and relationships the women have with their head coaches. Essentially, there are staggering comparisons based on gender and race, but this is something that I definitely did not expect to find. Again, I want to argue NCAA operates differently for women due to the fact that they have negative experiences with their head coaches. With the exception of one outlier, all of my women respondents express that they have adverse relationships with their head coaches, but better, relationships with their assistant coaches or other staff. This does not happen on the men's side where they all, generally, have good, solid relationships with their head coaches. Explained prior, John Borland and Jennifer Bruening's conclusions regarding the underrepresentation of Black women head coaches may be the defining factor (Borland and Bruening 2010). Also, considering particular hiring practices, and male dominated workspaces in Division I basketball, it is not surprising that the number of Black women who are head coaches are low. Based on my respondents' experiences through the lens of critical race theory, the racial aspects of their experiences become highlighted and provide significant insight about how the NCAA is working in regards to gender and race.

My men's respondents all described that they had pretty good relationships with their head coaches, despite their coach being White. Lance described his relationship with his head coach

and the assistant coaches as "great" citing that they only "expect high energy and respect." Cam also described his relationship with all of his coaches as "great." He got along with all of his coaches and said he "has no problems with them." Cam continued by saying, "I treat them with respect and they treat me with respect. I don't really get into beefing with coaches. I am cool with my coaches." Similarly, Isaiah established a strong relationship with his coaches, but he, specifically, had a special relationship with his head coach. Isaiah described his head coach as his "guy" and somebody who never gave up on him and his teammates. Isaiah's head coach, even, participated in a protest with his team. He explained that his coach was always supportive of anything they did. Robert also mentioned that he had a good relationship with his head coach and felt like he would have a better, basketball career because of their relationship. Finally, Alan's relationship with his coaches were good they cared for him outside of basketball. Alan clarified his feelings about the relationship he had with his coaches in more detail: "They're preparing us for life after college which is the best part of this. It's mainly respecting ourselves, our family, and most importantly, the program. They trust us, as long as we buy in." Although Alan is the one of two respondents with a head coach that is Black, race and gender does not seem like it plays a factor as much in men's basketball than it does with women's basketball.

Based on the reports of the men respondents, the relationships they have with their head and assistant coaches are generally positive. Considering their experiences through critical race theory, this group of respondents are not always given the opportunity to express their experiences about Division I basketball. Specifically, my respondents do not always get the opportunity to talk about their experiences in regards to race due to the fact that all of their experiences are related to basketball. On the other hand, their experiences do begin to illustrate the NCAA's preference of race and gender. According to the monetary breakdown of the NCAA, a majority of the money the

NCAA accumulates comes from Division I men's basketball championships television and marketing rights (NCAA 2019e). Considering this information, men's basketball can be viewed as a higher stakes game in comparison to the women's game. George Cunningham, Michael Sagas, Melanie L. Sartore, Michelle L. Amsden, and Anne Schellhase examined the gender representation in the *NCAA News* to test the gender equitability in women's sports coverage (Cunningham et al. 2004). They found that the NCAA was more representative prior to 1988 and 1991. Between 1988 and 1991, the news coverage was staggeringly different where women's sports coverage was less representative compared to men's sports coverage (Cunningham et al. 2004). A recent study from 2016 discusses how masculinity operates in sports institutions and is reinforced in the media (Senne 2016). Because women's sports are feminized and construed as passive and soft, men's sports are considered the dominant norm and as a result, women's sports fall short of representation which portrays women as less capable in regards to sport (Senne 2016).

After weighing in on the experiences of the men respondents, the women participating in the study with the exception of one do not have great relationships with their head coaches. Izzy explains, "I have close relationships with the director of operations, and the associate head coach, but not with my head coach and positional coach". She talks to the Director of Operations every day and goes on outings with the other coaches, but rarely spoke about her head coach. When asked about her head coach and positional coach, she expressed that they did not have great relationships with them because of "misunderstandings and lack of communication." In addition, she understood the value of having coaches who were Black. Izzy realized that the coaches she was closest to were all black and knew that they had a significant impact on her staying in school. Looking at Izzy's relationships with her coach through the lens of CRT, Izzy is able to speak about her experiences as her own critical race theorist by understanding her relationships from a racial

perspective. She understands the significance of having coaches who are black, but realizes that her relationship with her head coach is not as strong because of the racial difference. Izzy knows that she has to settle with the relationship she has with the head coach because her head coach has the final say in everything Izzy's team does. In addition, Izzy understands how this relationship can be beneficial for her in the future in terms of getting jobs after school. This pattern continues when looking at the experiences of Hale and Erica.

Hale found herself easily adapting to White spaces at her school because she had experiences in these spaces for most of her life. She does explain that White people have high expectations of her based on her physical characteristics, which I found, particularly, disturbing. In addition, she goes on to describe how she breaks away from White spaces:

> "I feel like college also is a little bit bigger than my high school, so I have my own group of friends who are mixed from different backgrounds, so I can relate to them in a different way, so they are like another outlet for me when I'm not with my basketball team all the time. Yeah, well, since I am a freshman, it's only been one semester for me".

Moving further, Hale believed that her relationship with her assistant coach is stronger than with her head coach. Out of her four coaches, Hale's strongest relationship was with her assistant coach who was Black. She expressed that her assistant coach connected with her on a "different level" because they had relatable experiences. They had one on one meetings outside of practice and interacted about their experiences with their white counterparts. However, Hale described her relationship with her head coach as "pretty basic". She did not talk to the head coach, unless they were talking about basketball or he asked about how she was adjusting to college. She thought he was a nice man, but their relationship was not strong. Specifically, Hale finds herself in a similar position to Izzy where she has a better relationship with her assistant coach rather than her head coach. Because Hale's head coach is a White man, she knows that her conversations with him are

limited because their experiences do not readily align. She finds that the connection between the head coach and herself stays at a cordial level. This is not to say that the relationship cannot become stronger, but rather it demonstrates the racial and gender dynamics that are present that can alter a relationship between player and head coach.

Finally, Erica expressed having negative experiences with her head coach which led to her being mistreated and ostracized. Her experiences led her to conceptualize the ways she was treated differently in comparison to her White and foreign teammates. Erica goes in to more detail about her experiences playing at her school:

> "I do think there is a group of us who are treated differently compared to my foreign teammates and White teammates. We have a lot of foreigners on our team, but there are a lot of foreigners on a lot of U.S. college teams. I would say that the foreigners are treated the best, but they don't get incentives or anything, it is just the way they are talked to… If we were to do the same thing [in a particularly heated situation], we would probably get a double suicide if I did it. Also, I am not the most understanding person like it is hard for people to understand me…I'm not the most social [person]. People who are on the team who talk a lot, or are close to the head coach, like the foreigners or my White teammates, they just talk about their lives or their families; they just talk about anything like it's a regular conversation".

Erica explained that her White and foreign teammates were treated better than she was, but recognized the racial difference as the signifier of discrimination. She described how the team would get punished by doing more running drills if she talked back to her head coach; however, this was not the case if her white or foreign teammates in the same situation. Erica also discussed her discontent with her head coach. She described her as intimidating, and unapproachable, as well as a coach who only favored her white teammates. During our interview, Erica realized that all of her other assistant coaches were Black or identified as a person of color. One assistant coach that was really close to Erica and her family made sure that Erica was having a good experience in

college. Erica experiences blatant racism in regards to her being unfavorable to her head coach and receiving mistreatment. Her relationship with her assistant coach is strengthened due to the horrible relationship she establishes with her head coach. The racial differences in regards to Erica's relationship with her head coach align with Izzy and Hale's experiences. Erica's experience is a little bit different due to the fact that she is mistreated and underappreciated by her head coach.

What does this mean?

Again, the question becomes: How does this relate to the NCAA? Based on the literature and evidence from my respondents' experiences, the NCAA establishes racial and gender differences in their organizational practices which leads to the underrepresentation of Black head coaches specifically Black women head coaches and contributes to the idea that women's players have to be treated differently. In summary, this chapter focuses on the significance of my respondents' experiences regarding relationships with their head and assistant coaches, affiliations to conferences and teams, and literature which supports my findings. With the application of critical race theory, my respondents are able to conceptualize their experiences as marginalized voices, despite making up a majority of the NCAA. In the process, they are able to conceptualize themselves in regards to their White counterparts. The women's head coaches of my respondents had bad relationships with my women respondents in comparison to my men respondents. This was the obvious conclusion based on my evidence, but another thing to consider was the way in which these student-athletes were represented. Despite two outlier respondents, my respondents' accounts also suggested the ways in which the NCAA was working against them. The underrepresentation of Black head coaches, especially the women, is alarming and does not sufficiently promote the goals the NCAA encourage. With massive underrepresentation of Black

head coaches, women's sports news coverage, and the presence of masculinity in large institutions in today's society, the NCAA has contributed to the issues of my respondents due to their focus on Division I men's basketball revenue and their presence as institution built on masculinity. This forced my women respondents to find coaches who readily understood their issues and experiences. These turned out to be their assistant coaches; however, these assistant coaches are on the lower-end of the totem pole. Based on the studies I mentioned prior, the hierarchies created by male-dominated workspaces and systematic racism contribute to marginalization of Black assistant coaches to become head coaches. There has been some movement to make more Black assistant coaches to become head coaches, but it challenging and involves building strong networks. Still, this does not guarantee them a position. These patterns confirm the conditions that my respondents are placed in while under the control of the NCAA, and in turn, effects their well-being.

Conclusion

"Success or greatness come with a roller-coaster ride… anybody can apply the marathon concept to what they do."

– Nipsey Hussle[5]

This study intended to look at the experiences of Black student-athletes who play Division I basketball under the NCAA. The question I posed was: How are the experiences of Black basketball players influenced by the NCAA, the regulatory body of college sports? This study proves to be another significant way in which we can understand how Black people navigate large institutions in American society. In the case of my respondents, they struggled to effectively adapt to the NCAA's practices, but became committed to Division I basketball which was also a commitment to the NCAA. The central argument of this study was that the NCAA's practices, standards, and goals did not foster the well-being of Black student-athletes. The two empirical chapters contributed to this argument by looking at how the NCAA acted as a social control agent by shaping and alienating these Black student-athletes and the NCAA's racial and gender preferences in regards to head coaching and women's basketball. Prior to making these arguments, I focused on the history of the NCAA and how the organization works today in Chapter 1. In reviewing the history, I also reviewed studies regarding the NCAA and Black student-athletes in order to find how they relate to my study. To end Chapter 1, I discussed my methodology as well as considered my positionality as the researcher.

In Chapter 2, I explained how the NCAA acted as a social control agent based on their direct influence and control of the institutional practices that shaped and alienated these Black

---

[5] This quote was from California rapper, Nipsey Hussle, who passed due to gun violence. He was known for this staple idea of life being like a marathon which was the case for my respondents who constantly struggled under the National Collegiate Athletic Association. For some of my respondents, they will be done with college, but for others it is only the beginning. Citation for the quote's website is in the bibliography.

student-athletes. The NCAA's standards and practices were constantly shaping my respondents' experiences which extended to the coaches and institutions that my respondents belong to. Although they are willing decide to become these types of athletes, their initial excitement and happiness becomes dissatisfaction towards their new role as an NCAA student-athlete. To end, Chapter 3 discussed my respondents' experiences through critical race theory to describe the relationships they have with their head coaches. Ultimately, I explained how the NCAA established racial and gender differences which led to the underrepresentation of Black head coaches (specifically Black women head coaches) and contributes to the idea that women's players are treated differently. By drawing on my respondents' experiences, different studies in regard to head coaching and women's sports, and breaking down the racial and gender differences within each conference, I expressed how the NCAA's racial and gender preferences align with my central argument in regards to my respondents' well-being. Despite two outlier respondents, my respondents' accounts also suggested the ways in which the NCAA was working against them and how it affected their well-being.

In doing this research, I never expected that the findings would lead me to elaborate these complex arguments. The findings which surprised me the most were the relationships between the head coaches, assistant coaches, and my respondents. These were findings that shocked me because of the nature of their relationships. As someone who played collegiate sports, I could resonate with the sentiments of some of my respondents. But then again, Division III basketball was not comparable in terms of the stakes that Division I games held. Additionally, the blatant mistreatment of Erica was slightly disturbing and alarming, but she handled it very differently from the way I thought she would. Again, this was an impact that the NCAA had on their experience. It is not easy to give up a scholarship, especially because of the situations that my

respondents are placed in. Most of them come from low to middle class families and are using basketball to change get their degree to hopefully change their situations in the future. I wish all my respondents the best of luck and I hope that their careers go smoother than what is portrayed in this study.

In regards to shortcomings, my biggest mistake was not interviewing individuals until second semester of this year. I thought that I would be able to interview more people for the project to further my arguments and provide more evidence. Also, I wished that I would have gotten approval from the Institutional Review Board sooner, so I could have caught possible interviewees before their seasons started. Despite these shortcomings, this qualitative research regarding Black student-athletes and the NCAA has to continue because there are more ways in which we can explore and highlight the experiences of this pool of athletes. Moving forward, there needs to be an emphasis on studies which track the well-being of Black student-athletes across gender to meet the needs of these student-athletes. To close, the shortage of Black head coaches is also noteworthy and must be taken into consideration as well. Race and gender are large themes in Division I basketball and in order to track trends and patterns, scholars have to put this topic at the forefront of significant sociological conversations.

Appendix

Appendix A-

Interview Questions:

1. How old are you?
2. Where'd you grow up?
3. Where is your family from?
4. When did you start thinking about college?
    a. What did your family say and were they involved?
5. How did you choose to attend your college/university?
    a. What was the process like?
6. Tell me about your first semester playing in college?
7. What are some of the positives of being a college athlete?
8. What are the negatives of being a college athlete?
9. Do you think your experiences are different from white athletes/white students?
10. Talk about what surprised you most about college sports?
11. How has your experience as an athlete in college been different from in high school?

12. How would you describe the relationship between you and your coaches?
13. What rules and expectations do your coaches have of you?
14. Tell me about other things you are involved in on campus?
15. Has coming to college shaped your plans for the future?
    a. What does your family think about what you should with your future?
16. What are your plans after college?
17. Do you hope to play professional sports?
18. When did you first hear about the NCAA?
19. Did you know about the NCAA prior to play college sports?
20. Tell me about your thoughts regarding the NCAA?
21. If any, what NCAA rules do you have to follow?

Bibliography

1. "About the MAAC." 2019. April 2019.
   https://maacsports.com/sports/2017/6/20/GEN_0620175706.aspx.
2. "About Us." 2019. ASUN Conference. April 2019. //asunsports.org/quick_hits/about_us.
3. "Agnus Berenato - Head Coach - Staff Directory." 2019. Kennesaw State University Athletics.
   April 2019. https://ksuowls.com/staff.aspx?staff=520.
4. "Ali Jaques - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Siena College Athletics. April 2019.
   https://sienasaints.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1327&path=wbball.
5. "American University." 2019. American University. April 2019. //www.aueagles.com/sports/w-
   baskbl/coaches/gebbia_megan.html.
6. "Ann McInerney Bio - GoHolyCross.Com - The Official Site of the Holy Cross Crusaders." 2019.
   April 2019.
   https://goholycross.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=33100&ATCLID=210237898.
7. Armstrong, Ketra L., and Michael A. Jennings. 2018. "Race, Sport, and Sociocognitive 'Place' in
   Higher Education: Black Male Student-Athletes as Critical Theorists." *Journal of Black Studies*
   49 (4): 349–69. https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934718760721.
8. "Army West Point Athletics - Dave Magarity - Staff Directory - Army West Point." 2019. April
   2019. https://goarmywestpoint.com/staff.aspx?staff=151.
9. "Baker Dunleavy - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Quinnipiac University Athletics. April 2019.
   http://quinnipiacbobcats.com/coaches.aspx?rc=2447&path=mbball.
10. "Bill Cleary - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Colgate University Athletics. April 2019.
    https://gocolgateraiders.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1253.
11. "Bill Coen - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Northeastern University Athletics. April 2019.
    http://nuhuskies.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1814.
12. "Billi Chambers - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Iona College Athletics. April 2019.
    http://icgaels.com/coaches.aspx?rc=895.
13. Borland, John F., and Jennifer E. Bruening. 2010. "Navigating Barriers: A Qualitative
    Examination of the under-Representation of Black Females as Head Coaches in Collegiate
    Basketball." *Sport Management Review* 13 (4): 407–20.
    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2010.05.002.

14. "Brian Giorgis - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Marist College Athletics. April 2019. https://goredfoxes.com/coaches.aspx?rc=812&path=wbball.

15. Brooks, Scott, and Charles Kenyatta Ross. 2004. *Race and Sport: The Struggle for Equality on and off the Field*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, c2004.

16. Byers, W., and C. H. Hammer. 1997. *Unsportsmanlike Conduct: Exploiting College Athletes*. University of Michigan Press. https://books.google.com/books?id=Lp6TxXFZ7xEC.

17. Calhoun, Craig J., and Oxford University Press, eds. 2002. *Dictionary of the Social Sciences*. New York: Oxford University Press.

18. "Carey Green | Women's Basketball | Liberty Flames." 2019. April 2019. https://www.liberty.edu/flames/index.cfm?pid=37305&TeamID=7&CoachID=1224.

19. "Carmen Maciariello - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Siena College Athletics. April 2019. https://sienasaints.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1276.

20. Carter, Akilah R., and Algerian Hart. 2010. "Perspectives of Mentoring: The Black Female Student-Athlete." *Sport Management Review* 13 (4): 382–94. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2010.01.003.

21. "C.B. McGrath - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. UNC Wilmington Athletics. April 2019. http://uncwsports.com/coaches.aspx?rc=244.

22. Cooper, Joseph N., Tiffany J. Davis, and Shaun Dougherty. 2017. "Not So Black and White: A Multi-Divisional Exploratory Analysis of Male Student-Athletes' Experiences at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Institutions." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 34 (1): 59–78. https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.2016-0015.

23. Cunningham, George B. 2010. "Understanding the Under-Representation of African American Coaches: A Multilevel Perspective." *Sport Management Review*, Managing ethnocultural and "racial" diversity in sport, 13 (4): 395–406. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2009.07.006.

24. Cunningham, George B., Michael Sagas, Melanie L. Sartore, Michelle L. Amsden, and Anne Schelihase. 2004. "Gender Representation in the NCAA News: Is the Glass Half Full or Half Empty?" *Sex Roles* 50 (11–12): 861–70. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:SERS.0000029103.82043.a4.

25. "Darnell Haney - Head Coach - Women's Basketball Coaches." 2019. Jacksonville University. April 2019. https://judolphins.com/coaches.aspx?rc=24.

26. "Darrick Gibbs - Staff Directory - University of North Florida." 2019. April 2019. https://unfospreys.com/staff.aspx?staff=263.

27. Davis, Timothy.1996. "African-American Student-Athletes: Marginalizing the NCAA Regulatory Structure?" 6: 31.

28. "Drexel Dragons - Zach Spiker - 2018-19 Men's Basketball Coaching Staff - Drexel University." 2019. April 2019. https://drexeldragons.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1060&path=mbball.

29. Dyer, Gwynne. 2010. *War: The New Edition*. Random House of Canada.

30. "Earl Grant - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. College of Charleston Athletics. April 2019. https://cofcsports.com/coaches.aspx?rc=541.

31. "Florida Gulf Coast University Eagles Athletics - Karl Smesko - 2017-18 Women's Basketball Coaching Staff - Florida Gulf Coast University." 2019. April 2019. https://admin.fgcuathletics.com/coaches.aspx?rc=498.

32. Gurney, Gerald, Donna A. Lopiano, and Andrew Zimbalist. 2017. *Unwinding Madness: What Went Wrong with College Sports and How to Fix It*. Brookings Institution Press.

33. Hawkins, Billy. 2013. *The New Plantation: Black Athletes, College Sports, and Predominantly White NCAA Institutions*. Palgrave Macmillan.

34. "Heather Vulin - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Manhattan College Athletics. April 2019. https://gojaspers.com/coaches.aspx?rc=503&path=wbball.

35. Hylton, Kevin. 2009. *"Race" and Sport: Critical Race Theory*. London: Routledge.

36. "Jada Pierce - Head Coach - Women's Basketball Coaches." 2019. Niagara University Athletics. April 2019. https://purpleeagles.com/coaches.aspx?rc=479.

37. "Jody Craig - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Monmouth University Athletics. April 2019. https://monmouthhawks.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1981&path=wbball.

38. "Joe Frager - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Fairfield University Athletics. April 2019. https://fairfieldstags.com/coaches.aspx?rc=466&path=wbball.

39. "Joe Logan - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Loyola University Maryland Athletics. April 2019. https://loyolagreyhounds.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1177&path=wbball.

40. "Joe Mihalich - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Hofstra University Athletics. April 2019. https://gohofstra.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1543.

41. "John Dunne - Head Coach - Staff Directory." 2019. Marist College Athletics. April 2019. https://goredfoxes.com/staff.aspx?staff=251.

42. "Kevin Baggett - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Rider University Athletics. April 2019. https://gobroncs.com/coaches.aspx?rc=745.

43. "Kia Damon-Olson - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Lafayette College Athletics. April 2019. http://www.goleopards.com/coaches.aspx?rc=399&path=wbball.

44. "King Rice - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Monmouth University Athletics. April 2019. https://monmouthhawks.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1986.

45. Lawrence, Suzanne Malia. 2005. "African American Athletes' Experiences of Race in Sport." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40 (1): 99–110. https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690205052171.

46. "Louis Rowe - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. James Madison University Athletics. April 2019. https://jmusports.com/coaches.aspx?rc=2735&path=mbball.

47. "Lynn Bria - Head Coach - Staff Directory." 2019. Stetson University Athletics. April 2019. https://gohatters.com/staff.aspx?staff=105.

48. "Lynn Milligan - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Rider University Athletics. April 2019. https://gobroncs.com/coaches.aspx?rc=686.

49. Mangold, William D., Luann Bean, and Douglas Adams. 2003. "The Impact of Intercollegiate Athletics on Graduation Rates Among Major NCAA Division I Universities: Implications for College Persistence Theory and Practice." *The Journal of Higher Education* 74 (5): 540–62. https://doi.org/10.1353/jhe.2003.0037.

50. "Marc Mitchell - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Saint Peter's University Athletics. April 2019. https://saintpeterspeacocks.com/coaches.aspx?rc=1040&path=wbball.

51. "Marisa Moseley - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Boston University Athletics. April 2019. http://goterriers.com/coaches.aspx?rc=4223&path=wbball.

52. "Martin Ingelsby - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. University of Delaware Athletics. April 2019. https://bluehens.com/coaches.aspx?rc=811.

53. "Mike Lane - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. New Jersey Institute of Technology Athletics. April 2019. https://www.njithighlanders.com/coaches.aspx?rc=960&path=wbball.

54. Murty, Komanduri S., Julian B. Roebuck, and Jimmy D. McCamey Jr. 2014. "Race and Class Exploitation: A Study of Black Male Student Athletes (BSAS) on White Campuses," 19.

55. Murty, Komanduri S., and Julian B. Roebuck. 2015. "Deviant Exploitation of Black Male Student Athletes on White Campuses." *Deviant Behavior* 36 (6): 429–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2014.935691.

56. NCAA. 2013. "Definition of 'Prospective Student-Athlete.'" Text. NCAA.Org - The Official Site of the NCAA. November 25, 2013. http://www.ncaa.org/enforcement/basketball-certification/definition-prospective-student-athlete.

57. NCAA. 2014. "Recruiting." Text. NCAA.Org - The Official Site of the NCAA. October 8, 2014. http://www.ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/recruiting.

58. NCAA. 2019. "NCAA.org- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://ncaa.org.

    a. NCAA. 2019. "What is the NCAA- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/ncaa-101/what-ncaa.

    b. NCAA. 2019. "NCAA Core Values- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. https://www.ncaa.org/about/ncaa-core-values.

    c. NCAA. 2019. "Our Three Divisions- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/media-center/ncaa-101/our-three-divisions.

    d. NCAA. 2019. "About- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/about?division=d1.

    e. NCAA. 2019. "Where Does the Money Go- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/about/where-does-money-go.

    f. NCAA. 2019. "Governance- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/governance?division=d1.

    g. NCAA. 2019. "Division 1 Infractions Process- The Official Site of the NCAA". Accessed November 30th. http://www.ncaa.org/enforcement/division-i-infractions-process.

59. NCAA LSDBi. 2019. "Legislative Services Database - LSDBi." Division 1 Legislation - Search Results. April 2019. https://web3.ncaa.org/lsdbi/search/bylawView?id=8830#result.

60. NLI. 2019. "About the NLI." April 2019. http://www.nationalletter.org/aboutTheNli/index.html.

61. "Pat Skerry - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Towson University Athletics. April 2019. https://towsontigers.com/coaches.aspx?rc=582.

62. "Patriot League - Who We Are." 2019. April 2019. http://www.patriotleague.org/sports/2016/6/13/school-bio-patr-school-bio-aboutpl-html.aspx?

63. "Reggie Witherspoon - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Canisius College Athletics. April 2019. http://gogriffs.com/coaches.aspx?rc=673.

64. Rubin, Lisa M. 2016. "The Detrimental Effects of Big-Time College Sports on Black Student-Athletes' Academic Success." *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education* 10 (3): 185–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/19357397.2016.1258966.

65. "Scott Hemer - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Canisius College Athletics. April 2019. http://gogriffs.com/coaches.aspx?rc=782&path=wbball.

66. Senne, Joshua A. 2016. "Examination of Gender Equity and Female Participation in Sport." *The Sport Journal* (blog). February 26, 2016. http://thesportjournal.org/article/examination-of-gender-equity-and-female-participation-in-sport/.

67. "Shaheen Holloway - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Saint Peter's University Athletics. April 2019. https://saintpeterspeacocks.com/coaches.aspx?rc=31&path=mbball.

68. Simiyu, Wycliffe W Njororai. 2012. "Challenges of Being a Black Student Athlete on U.S. College Campuses," 25.

69. Singer, John N. 2016. "African American Male College Athletes' Narratives on Education and Racism." *Urban Education* 51 (9): 1065–95. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916669749.

70. Smith, D. Randall. 2015. "It Pays to Bend the Rules: The Consequences of NCAA Athletic Sanctions." *Sociological Perspectives* 58 (1): 97–119. https://doi.org/10.1177/0731121414556844.

71. Smith, Martin P., Louis Harrison, and Anthony L. Brown. 2017. "The Misintegration of the Negro: A Historical Analysis of Black Male Habitus in Sport and Schooling." *Urban Education* 52 (6): 745–74. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085915574526.

72. Smith, Rodney K. 2000. "A Brief History of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's Role in Regulating Intercollegiate Athletics" 11 (January): 15. https://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1393&context=sportslaw.

73. "Sport Sponsorship, Participation and Demographics Search." 2018. December 2018. http://web1.ncaa.org/rgdSearch/exec/saSearch.

74. "Stefanie Pemper - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Naval Academy Athletics. April 2019. http://navysports.com/coaches.aspx?rc=334.

75. "Steve Masiello - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Manhattan College Athletics. April 2019. https://gojaspers.com/coaches.aspx?rc=475.

76. Stieber, John. 1991. "The Behavior of the NCAA: A Question of Ethics." *Journal of Business Ethics* 10 (6): 445–49. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00382827.

77. "Sue Troyan - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Lehigh University Athletics. April 2019. https://lehighsports.com/coaches.aspx?rc=2206.

78. Team, Everyday Power. 2019. "30 Nipsey Hussle Quotes Celebrating His Life and Music." Everyday Power. April 1, 2019. https://everydaypowerblog.com/nipsey-hussle-quotes/.

79. "The CAA & CAA Football." 2019. April 2019. https://caasports.com/sports/2014/5/16/caabio.aspx.

80. "Tim Cluess - Men's Basketball Coach." 2019. Iona College Athletics. April 2019. http://icgaels.com/coaches.aspx?rc=850.

81. "Trevor Woodruff - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Bucknell University Athletics. April 2019. https://bucknellbison.com/coaches.aspx?rc=721&path=wbball.

82. "Tricia Fabbri - Women's Basketball Coach." 2019. Quinnipiac University Athletics. April 2019. http://quinnipiacbobcats.com/coaches.aspx?rc=2453&path=wbball.

83. Tucker, Robert C., Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels, eds. 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. 2d ed. New York: Norton.

84. "University of North Alabama - Missy Tiber - Staff Directory - University of North Alabama." 2019. April 2019. https://roarlions.com/staff.aspx?staff=25.

85. Walker, Khirey B., Chad S. Seifried, and Brian P. Soebbing. 2018. "The National Collegiate Athletic Association as a Social-Control Agent: Addressing Misconduct Through Organizational Layering." *Journal of Sport Management* 32 (1): 53–71. https://doi.org/10.1123/jsm.2017-0197.

86. Walker, Nefertiti A., and Trevor Bopp. 2010. "The Underrepresentation of Women in the Male-Dominated Sport Workplace: Perspectives of Female Coaches." *Journal of Workplace Rights* 15 (1): 47–64. https://doi.org/10.2190/WR.15.1.d.

87. Wiggins, David K. n.d. "Strange Mix of Entitlement and Exploitation: The African American Experience in Predominantly White College Sport." Race, Racism and the Law. Accessed October 14, 2018. http://www.racism.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1500:entitlement-and-exploitation&catid=55&Itemid=178.

88. Withycombe, Jenny Lind. 2011. "Intersecting Selves: African American Female Athletes'
Experiences of Sport." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 28 (4): 478–93.
https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.28.4.478.